

Feeding Poor Horses

A Step by Step Process

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Modified from *Recovering the Malnourished Horse* by Jennie Ivey and Lew Strickland, UT Department of Animal Science



Step 1: Check Teeth. As horses get older the more likely teeth issues will appear. Without teeth or painful chewing, horses will reject feeding. Veterinary Exam is necessary to correct teeth issues.

Step 2: Day 1-14 Introduce Good Quality Forage. Remove all low quality forages and introduce good quality alfalfa hay. Compressed bale, cubes or pellets is another option when hay is not available. If pellets are introduced and horse does not eat them, then soak the pellets in water until they break apart, but not swimming in water. Alfalfa should be feed alone in the first 14 days. No more than 2% of body weight should be feed per day.

Step 3: Day 15-30 Introduce Concentrated Feeds. Feeds should be high in fats and lower in fibers. Ask feed store for assistance if unsure. Feeds should be pelleted if horse will eat it. If horse refuses, try adding apple sauce to the top of feeds. Feed should be at $\frac{3}{4}$ percent of body weight. A good rule of thumb is animal weighing a 1000 pounds should have no more than 7.5 pounds of feed per meal.

Step 4: Day 31 until good level. Add Vegetable/Soybean Oil (Corn Oil can be used as last option) on Feed. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of oil on feed at each feeding. Then over the next 3 weeks increase oil slowly until 1 cup is being added to the feed.