

Horse Care Basics

AN INFOGRAPHIC FOR HORSE OWNERS

Vital Signs

Temperature:
99–101.5° Fahrenheit

Resting
Heart Rate: 28–44 beats
per minute

Resting Respiration
Rate: 10–24 breaths per
minute

Horses require at
least 1.5–2 acres of
pasture per animal



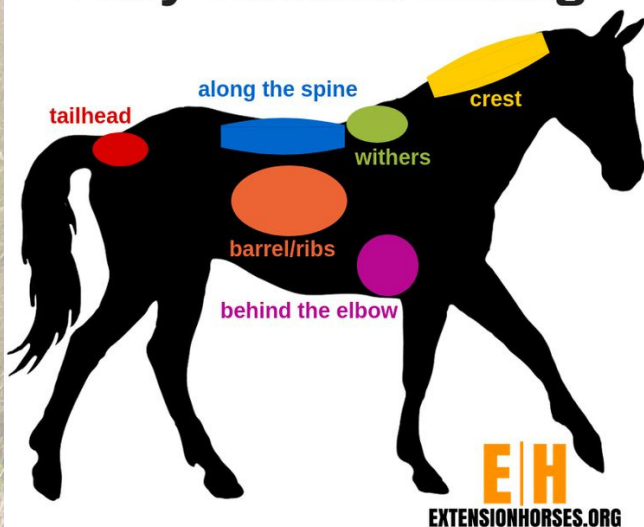
Hind-Gut Fermenters

Horses have a special organ called a cecum that ferments complex carbohydrates (fiber).

In order to maintain digestive health, horses need long stemmed fiber such as grass and hay.

If not on pasture for the majority of the day, spread hay feedings out throughout the day to simulate natural grazing behavior.

Six Areas of Focus for Equine Body Condition Scoring



Nutritional Requirements

	Mature Body Weight, lbs.	Digestible Energy, Mcal/day	Crude Protein, lbs/day	Crude Protein, % of diet
Mature Horse - maintenance	440	7.4	0.65	8
	880	13.4	1.18	8
	1100	16.4	1.45	8
Mature Horse - moderate work	440	11.1	0.98	10
	880	20.1	1.77	10
	1100	24.6	2.17	10

NC COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION



For more information about the care and management of horses,
contact your local county Extension office. ces.ncsu.edu

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Routine Health Care

Annual Core Vaccinations:

Rabies, Tetanus, West Nile Virus, EEE/WEE

Farrier: Typically every 4-8 weeks

Dental: Depends on age, usually, teeth should be examined annually

How Much Hay?

- Horses will eat about 2% of their body weight each day in dry matter (not counting any weight from moisture)
- A 1200 lb horse will, therefore, eat about 24 pounds of hay on a dry matter basis or about 26 pounds of hay as fed daily.
- A forage test will determine the nutritive quality of the hay.



Pasture Management

- Avoid overgrazing! Leave 4 inches of residual for cool-season grasses and 2-3 inches for warm-season grasses.
- Rotating animals between pastures or sections of pastures gives the forage a recovery period and helps it stay healthier and more productive. This can be done by using temporary electric fencing to create sections to a pasture.
- Look out for toxic weeds and plants such as wilted cherry leaves, horsetail, nightshade, yew, and oleander.
- Take a soil sample every 2-3 years to determine what fertilizers need to be applied. Creating a fertilizer plan can help increase the productivity of your pasture and help reduce hay costs.