



# Feeding Study Guide



## Digestion:

Horses have small stomachs so their digestion works best when they eat small amounts often. A pony's digestion can upset if not fed properly.

**Colic:** (belly pain) can be quite serious and even fatal

**Founder:** a condition that can cripple the feet

Changes in feed should be made gradually over 10 days or 2 weeks. You can cut back on grain quickly but add slowly.

Feed according to condition and size. Clean fresh water should be available at all times. Salt should be available at all times.

## Four basic rules:

1. Feed according to condition of your horse
2. Always water before feeding
3. Feed little; Feed often
4. Don't work excessively after feeding

## Basic types of food: (Ponies need five basic kinds of nutrition)

### Roughage

Grass	Timothy hay	Orchard grass hay
Bermuda hay	Alfalfa (Legume)	Clover (Legume)
Mixed combination of the above		

*Always inspect hay: Moldy hay kills horses.*

Four characteristics of moldy hay:

1. Musty
2. Dusty
3. Moldy
4. Yellow or dark brown in color

*Never feed grass clippings to a pony.*

They wilt quickly and cause colic. They may even have lawn care chemicals that can poison a pony.

**Proper feeding of Hay:** Hay can be fed in a manger, hay net or on the ground. If feeding on the ground, place in a dry corner of the stall to prevent getting manure it and picking up internal parasites or worms. Do not feed on sandy ground. Swallowing sand with the hay causes "sand colic".

## Concentrates

Grain: Oats Corn Barley Bran Soybean

Mixed Feed & Pellets (Compressed hay and concentrates)

Supplements: Vitamin and Mineral supplements are sometimes added

*Keep your grain safely locked up.* Grains can make a pony colic or founder if he gets too much. Grain is fed after pony has had water and hay and is completely cooled out. Never mix old stale feed with fresh.

### Succulents

Fresh grass    Carrots    Apples

*Pasture grass:* very rich pasture grass is not good for ponies. He can become overweight and founder.

### Water

Acts as a lubricant, especially in joints  
Carries nutrients from digestive system to all body parts  
Picks up waste products  
Serves as a built in cooling system

### Salt

Ponies lose salt when they sweat. They need salt at all times because they usually cannot get enough salt from their natural food. Can be given loose or as a salt block.

### Minerals

Two minerals important to the development of bones are:

1. Calcium
2. Phosphorous

Salt is necessary to:

1. Regulate metabolism
2. Carry nutrients to the cells
3. Replace minerals lost in sweating

Vitamin K is necessary for blood coagulation

