# **Feeding Round Bales to Horses**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul> <li>Lower cost and more convenient.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Waste from horses dragging</li> <li>and trampling hay.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Less labor intensive on a daily basis.</li> </ul>	More likely to develop mold from exposure to damp conditions. Increased risk of
• Keeps hay available 24/7	harboring botulism bacteria.
when bales are replaced in a timely manner.	• Requires a tractor to move.
Factors that affect round bale quality	
Type of forage	Storage method
Conditions during harvest	Length of storage

## A University of Minnesota study showed:

#### **FEEDING ROUND BALES**



Horses fed from feeders tend to consume more hay. Feeder-fed horses ate 2% to 2.4% of their body weight in hay, while nonfeeder-fed horses only ate 1.3% of their body weight.

### **CONSUMPTION OF HAY**



Percentage of body weight

This study shows that horses eating round bales not placed in a feeder may have trouble meeting their energy requirements even when hay is present, because of contamination and waste.

> REFERENCE Round-bale feeder design affects hay waste and economics during horse feeding. Martinson K, Wilson J, Cleary K, Lazarus W, Thomas W, Hathaway M. J Anim Sci. 2012 Mar;90(3):1047-55. doi: 10.2527/jas.2011-4087. Epub 2011 Oct 7

# **Tips on feeding round bales**

- fed and stored.
- Purchase a feeder designed for horses.
- surface area in contact with the ground.
- Store round bales indoors or on an elevated surface covered with tarps. Look for tarps designed specifically to store hay. Hay tarps are treated to be waterproof, UV resistant, mildew resistant, and rot proof.
- to moisture.
- selecting-a-round-bale-feeder

Levels of vitamins and other nutrients in forage decrease significantly during harvesting and storage. Micro-Phase<sup>™</sup> was developed to fill the nutritional gaps created by feeding processed forages.



• Elevate round bales on a gravel surface or wood pallet to allow moisture to drain underneath both where they are

• Look for tightly rolled bales. Tight bales keep their shape longer, are less susceptible to moisture damage, and have less

• Store round bales end to end with flat sides touching.

• Avoid storing bales under trees, in order to reduce exposure

• For more information on picking a round bale feeder, visit www.extension.umn.edu/agriculture/horse/nutrition/

> info@KPPusa.com 859-873-2974

