


When picking hay for your horse, consider the following:

- 1. The type of hay available
- 2. The maturity of the hay when it was harvested
- 3. The region of the country where the hay was grown

1) Different types of hay offer different nutrition.

GRASS HAY
(timothy, orchard grass, fescue, etc.)


- Typically higher in fiber
- Contains less energy (calories) per pound
- Low in vitamins such as vitamin E



vs.

LEGUME HAY
(alfalfa and clover)

- Typically lower in starch and sugar (NSC)
- Higher in protein and calcium
- Low in vitamins such as vitamin E



- The sugar and starch (nonstructural carbohydrates, or NSC) levels in grass varies between varieties.
- Mineral levels in both grass and legumes vary depending on the soil types the hay is grow in.
- Hay that contains both grass and legumes will vary in energy and nutrition depending on the percent of the mix.

2) Plant maturity at time of harvest impacts the levels of energy and nutrients.

- As a plant matures and grows, it produces more of a fiber called lignin.
- Lignin gives the stalk of a plant its strength as it grows tall.
- Lignin is indigestible and plants high in lignin will contribute fewer nutrients and less energy to the diet.

As a plant matures it will have thicker stems, fewer leaves, and more seed heads.

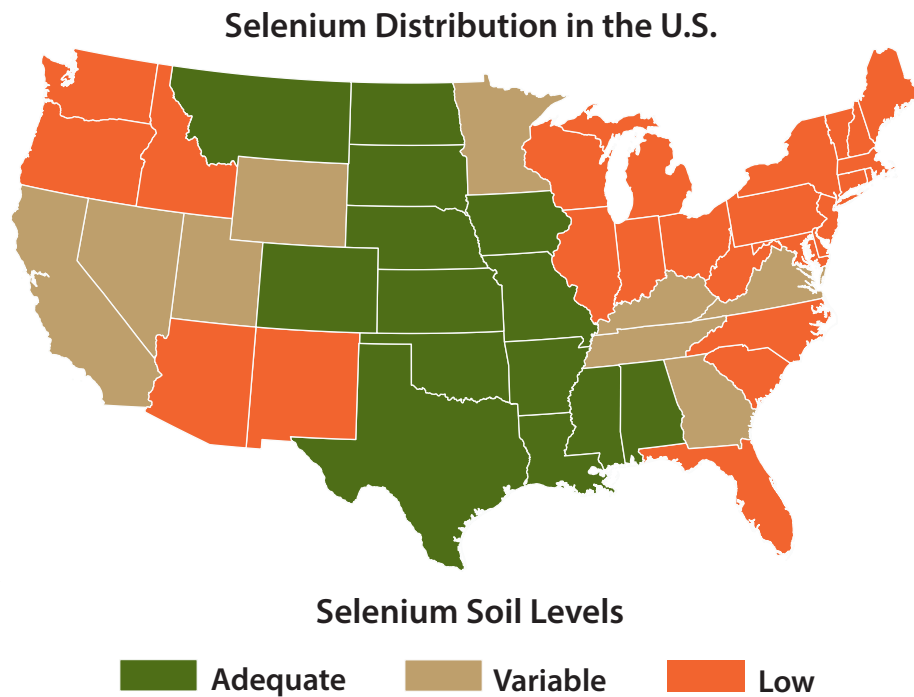
The older a plant is when it is cut for hay, the more fiber and the less energy it provides.



Micro-Phase™

Hay can lack the vitamins and minerals your horse needs. Micro-Phase offers the perfect solution by providing the vitamins and trace minerals necessary to support good health in a tasty, low-calorie pellet.

3) The geographic areas in which forages are grown supply different nutrients.



- The mineral content of a hay is determined by the soil it is grown in.
- This is especially true for the mineral selenium.
- Selenium levels in the soil vary greatly from one part of the country to the other.
- Contact your local cooperative extension or check out this website where you can see selenium levels by county: <http://mrdata.usgs.gov/geochem/doc/averages/se/usa.html>



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