

Got clients with fat horses? When and how to recommend NutrientWise™

Horses on Restricted Diets Are Often Missing Nutrients. Many of your clients own overweight or metabolically challenged horses. These owners are constantly struggling to meet their horse's nutritional needs without overfeeding calories. Your patients are probably not able to tolerate grazing; typically overweight horses are restricted to a dry lot or are muzzled. It is most likely your patient is getting a handful or less of concentrate (grain or pellets) a day because they couldn't possibly eat the required 5+ lbs of feed the manufacturer recommends. You understand the importance of fiber in the diet, so you have already instructed your client to feed plenty of good quality, clean but mature hay. However, hay doesn't provide all the minerals and vitamins a horse needs to remain healthy. The addition of a well-balanced, low-calorie vitamin and mineral supplement like [NutrientWise](#) will fill in the nutritional gaps found in restricted diets.

Educating Your Client. The facts are very simple: overweight horses need to remain on a high plane of nutrition, even though they don't need high levels of energy. Overweight horses are actually more likely to be lacking in nutrients because of their restricted diets. It is important that your clients understand that under these circumstances, what they are feeding is probably not meeting their horse's total nutrient requirements.

Many owners are unaware that when they feed a handful of concentrate a day their horse is getting only a fraction of the nutrition needed. Feed manufacturers formulate concentrates to be fed at certain levels (usually at least 5 lbs per day). When that level is fed, the nutrient requirements are met, but when the amount fed is less than the minimum level, the diet can be lacking in essential nutrients. Processed fiber such as hay, hay cubes, and alfalfa pellets lose up to 75% of their vitamin content within weeks of being harvested and stored. While processed fiber provides energy and much-needed bulk, it falls short in the area of vitamins and minerals. Once made aware of these facts, most horse owners are enthusiastic about providing a vitamin mineral supplement such as NutrientWise to their horse.

Recommending NutrientWise. Often horses that have been maintained on a high-fiber diet with little or no concentrate or grass begin to look poor. Their coats



become dull and they develop a "hay belly." These are signs that essential nutrients are missing from the diet. At this point it is best to recommend NutrientWise at the level of supplementation best suited for the horse's needs. Supplementation levels will depend on age and level of work. Refer to the feeding guidelines on the NutrientWise label under "Serving/Storage." (Guidelines are also found on the NutrientWise product bulletin and on the [Wiser Concepts website](#)).

For horses that have just started on a low-calorie diet, you can avoid a lot of future problems by starting them on NutrientWise immediately. As a horse's age, diet, reproductive status, or work load changes, the level of supplementation should be adjusted accordingly.

Horses love NutrientWise, so it can be fed plain or top dressed over a small amount of concentrate or a pelleted fiber source. It is awesome mixed with soaked beet pulp.

Why NutrientWise Is the Best Choice. NutrientWise provides the vitamins and minerals most often missing from a diet consisting of mostly dried fiber. It is an alfalfa-based pellet that contains the important trace minerals copper, zinc, and selenium. These minerals are chelated for optimal absorption. It also provides calcium and phosphorus at the proper ratio. A complement of B vitamins, plus vitamins A and D, are included, as well as natural vitamin E. Natural vitamin E is preferentially absorbed and retained in the tissue as compared to synthetic E. Vitamin E is considered an essential vitamin and the lack of vitamin E has been linked to the development of equine motor neuron disease (EMND). To help with overall health and digestion, yeast cultures were added as well. Yeast cultures stimulate the beneficial microflora in the gut and increase the digestibility of the entire diet.