

Questions & Answers

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Q Can feed tags be used to compare different horse feeds? Do feed manufacturers purposely write them to be confusing to horse owners?

A Yes, feed tags can be used to compare different feed products, and yes, they can be confusing. Government regulations mandate that feed tags are attached to all feed bags to reduce the incidence of fraud. Each state is responsible for monitoring tagging systems for all products sold in the state.

Over the last several years, feed tag regulations have been redefined and therefore have become more useful to consumers. Feed tags must contain the name of the product and a purpose statement, two pieces of information which should give the purchaser a clear understanding of the type of animal for which the feed is intended. All tags must list a guaranteed analysis for the following nutrients: crude protein, crude fat, crude fiber, calcium, phosphorus, copper, zinc, selenium and vitamin A. Not long ago, feed tags were only required to list values for protein, fat and fiber. Feed tags must also include an ingredient list. Ingredients should be listed in order of highest concentration to lowest concentration. Ingredient lists can be written in one of two ways, depending upon the state in which the feed is manufactured. First, individual terms can be used. If oats, barley and corn are ingredients in a feed, for example, each would be listed separately. Alternatively, collective terms can be used. In this instance, oats, barley and corn could be collectively referred to as "grain products" with no mention of them individually. Finally, a feed tag is required to list feeding instructions.


From a practical standpoint, a feed tag will generally explain what class of horse the feed is intended. For example, a tag may state a feed is "for maintenance of mature horses." The guaranteed analysis tells the nutrient profile of the feed but does not indicate the quality of those nutrients. The ingredient list does tell the different feedstuff components used in the formulation but will not tell the absolute amounts of those ingredients. Further, if a state requires only collective terms, a consumer may never determine the exact ingredients. More often than not, simple feeding recommendations are given with very little explanation or detail. If a horse is not being fed the amount recommended by the manufacturer, the feed may not be appropriate for that horse.

Q My nine-year-old son has been told that sweets coupled with not brushing his teeth will cause dental cavities. He would like to know if his horse will get cavities because he eats sweet feed and is unable to brush his teeth.

A Horses can develop cavities, but the incidence of cavities in horses and ponies is far less than in humans. Equine dentists report cavities in approximately one of every 15 horses referred for professional dentistry services. Diet composition accounts for the general lack of decay in horse teeth; horses eat less sugar than humans. Even horses that consume feed coated with molasses (sweet feed) ingest only small amounts of sugar because the staple of their diet is likely forage (hay or pasture), which contains only minimal sugar. Progression of a cavity is arrested in horses the same way it is in humans. The decay is eradicated and the subsequent hole is patched with a composite filling.

Q There has been a lot of discussion about ways to stop wear and tear on joints, and I've seen lots of ads in magazines for supplements that are supposed to help horses. I've also been told oral supplements don't work and injections do. What is the truth? I have a warmblood that I use for dressage. Do I need a joint supplement or do I need to get the vet to give him injections? If so, how many injections?

A There is good evidence that the injectible products such as cartrophen or Adequan used to help horses with joint problems really do have some benefit for the joint. In my mind, the tricky part is to know if you should use these products as a preventative in the horse that is showing no signs of joint disorders. With the feed supplements, there are not the same amount of controlled data showing the benefit of the products. They tend to contain glucosamine and or chondroitin sulphate. There are data showing that glucosamine can get to the joint. Chondroitin is a very large molecule and it is doubtful if this is absorbed whole in the gut. There are also some test tube data showing that glucosamine can play a role in suppressing some of the enzymes that cause cartilage breakdown.

There are too many anecdotal reports that these products do work to ignore them. These come mainly from the US and Europe but there are some very good reports about a new product, Saddleworld Joint Food. Some previously lame and stiff horses are now jumping and working freely. If the oral products work they will be the best bet as they are cheaper and are not as invasive, but severe cases may need the injectible products. 

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Pfeffingen, CH-4148
Switzerland
011-41-61-751-7501
011-41-61-753-9620 FAX

Armada Grain Co.

73180 South Fulton
P.O. Box 918
Armada, MI 48005-0919
810-784-5911
810-784-5918 FAX

Aslin Finch

10424 W. Aero Road
Spokane, WA 99204
800-538-8700
509-455-5635 FAX

Bagdad Roller Mills, Inc.

5740 Elmburg Rd.
P.O. Box 7
Bagdad, KY 40003
502-747-8968
502-747-8960 FAX

Banks Mill

1270 Banks Mill Rd.
Aiken, SC 29803
803-641-0007
803-502-0600 FAX

Bartlett Milling Co.

701 South Center, 28677
P.O. Box 831
Statesville, NC 28687
800-438-6016
704-873-8956 FAX

Brandt's Mill

630 N. 9th Street
Lebanon, PA 17046
717-272-6781
717-272-7009 FAX

Brooks Feed Store

RR #4
1580 Hwy 7A
Port Perry, ONT L9L 1B5
Canada
905-985-7992
905-985-8297 FAX

Brumfield Hay & Grain

671 Bizzell Dr.
Lexington, KY 40510
859-255-0788
859-254-5722 FAX

Burkman Feeds

1111 Perryville Road
Danville, KY 40422
859-236-0400
859-236-7307 FAX

Cooperative Plus, Inc.

638 Kane St.
P.O. Box 220
Burlington, WI 53105
414-767-2019
414-767-2026 FAX

Cache Commodities

860 W. 24th St.
Ogden, UT 84402
800-327-3234
801-392-2498 FAX

Culpeper Farmers Cooperative

15172 Brandy Rd.
P.O. Box 2002
Culpeper, VA 22701
540-825-2200
540-825-2210 FAX

Dodson & Horrell, Ltd.

Spencer Street
Ringstead
Northants NN14 4BX
United Kingdom
011-44-1933-624-221
011-44-1933-625-461 FAX

Farmers Feed Mill

251 W. Loudon Ave.
Lexington, KY 40508
859-255-7602
859-255-9815 FAX

Farmers Warehouse Co.

4367 Jessup Rd.
P.O. Box 160
Keyes, CA 95328-0160
800-400-6377
209-634-6341 FAX

Feed-Rite

17 Speers Road
Winnipeg, MB R2J 1M1
Canada
204-233-8418
204-235-1260 FAX

Fitmin a.s.

Helvikovice 90
Zamberk 56401
Czech Republic
011-42-446-27-49
011-42-446-23-57

Flint River Mills

1100 Dothan Rd., 31717
P.O. Box 995
Bainbridge, GA 31718
800-841-8502
800-288-4376 FAX

Hamilton Farm Bureau

4670 East Washington St.
P.O. Box 186
Hamilton, MI 49419
800-442-4137
616-751-7032 FAX

Hubbard Feeds, Inc.

424 N. Riverfront Dr.
Mankato, MN 56002-8500
507-388-9400
507-388-9453 FAX

Hy Gain Feeds PTY. Ltd.

10 Hickson Road
Officer, Victoria 3809
Australia
011-61-03-5943-2255
011-61-03-5943-2258 FAX

Jenco Feeds

47 Warwick St.
Allora, QLD 4362
Australia
011-61-07-4666-3366
011-61-07-4666-3400 FAX

La Hacienda SA de CV

Homero 1804 Piso II
Los Morales, Polanco
Mexico D.F. 11510
525-557-7200
525-395-1537 FAX

Lakeland

Animal Nutrition
502 Lake Mirror, 33801
P.O. Box 24868
Lakeland, FL 33802-4868
800-682-6144
941-686-9427 FAX

Lakin Milling Co.

4456 S. Dysart Road
Avondale, AZ 85323
623-932-3970
623-932-2798 FAX

LMF Feeds Incorporated

967 Haas Rd.
Weiser, ID 83672
800-344-0563
208-549-4123 FAX

Master Blend Feeds

P.O. Box 24
Old Harbour
St. Catherine, Jamaica, W.I.
876-983-2305
876-983-9241 FAX

NRM NZ

100 Carlton Gore Rd.
4A Private Bag 99927
Newmarket, Auckland
New Zealand
011-64-09-379-1869
011-64-03-300-3185 FAX

Nutribec, Ltee

2950 Rue Ontario Est
Montreal,
QUE H2K-1X3
Canada
514-527-9661
514-527-9452 FAX

Nutrition Services, Inc.

501 Division Ave.
York, NE 68467
800-697-1998
402-362-1750 FAX

Otter Co-Op

P.O. Box 4200
3600-248th Street
Aldergrove, BC V4W 2V1
Canada
604-856-2517
604-856-3598 FAX

Pennfield Corp.

711 Rohrerstown Rd.
Lancaster, PA 17603
800-995-0333
717-295-8783 FAX

Pivot Stock Feed Mill

Oaks Road
Carrick Via Launceston
Tasmania
Australia
011-61-03-6393-6655
011-61-03-6393-6771 FAX

O.H. Kruse

5150 Blue Mound Rd.
Fort Worth, TX 76106
817-624-7183
817-624-7281 FAX

Milne Feeds Pl

103-105 Welshpool Rd
Welshpool, Western
Australia 6106
011-61-8-9351-0700
011-61-8-9351-0705 FAX

Poulin Grain, Inc.

24 Railroad Square
Newport, VT 05855
802-334-6731
802-334-7791 FAX

Premier Feeds

238 Melvin Road
Wilmington, OH 45177
800-888-8162
937-584-4874 FAX

Producer Feeds

165 North Clay Street
Louisville, KY 40202
800-295-2836
502-568-2293 FAX

Pryde's Animal Feed Specialists

Quia Rd.
Gunnedah, NSW 2380
Australia
011-61-02-6742-3966
011-61-02-6742-4423 FAX

Sunglo Feeds, Inc.

300 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 789
Hesston, KS 67062
316-327-2280
316-327-4949 FAX

Tottenham Feed Services

41 Mill Street
Tottenham, ONT LOG 1W0
Canada
905-936-4163
905-936-2812 FAX

Woodford Feed

498 Lexington Rd.
Versailles, KY 40383
859-873-4811
859-873-5430 FAX

