



Spring Feeding Tips:

Watch out for that spring grass!

Grass quality varies enormously, depending on how well it is maintained and how the paddock is stocked. Certain grass types also play an important role in nutritional values.

Most horse owners are conscious of the dangers of spring grass, in particular laminitis. Nutritionally induced laminitis is synonymous with excess soluble carbohydrate (starches and sugars) in the diet and in well maintained paddocks these levels can be as high as 30%. Most paddocks will not reach such dizzy heights, but even at a level of 20% there can be problems. An average 15.2 hh horse weighing 500 kg can easily polish off around 13 kg of grass a day (dry matter) equating to 2.5kg of sugar; the equivalent of two and a half bags daily!

This is where **Hickstead Hi Fibre Cubes** come into their own. With a sugar content lower than 5% they make an excellent complete feed for horses and ponies unable to tolerate high levels of sugar in the diet. These cubes are appropriate for natives, box resting horses, those prone to laminitis and for horses and ponies commencing work after the winter. They are low calorie, yet include soya bean hulls which generate slow release stamina energy. A perfect 'all-round' cubes.

Feeding the fatties

Native horse owners tend to fight a losing battle at this time of year. The secret is to monitor weight gain during the winter months and be prepared for the first shoots of spring grass. An essential piece of equipment is a grazing muzzle which reduces grazing dramatically yet still allows the freedom of a field kept horse (also perfect for those prone to laminitis). It is important to correctly fit the muzzle and follow instructions closely.

Overweight horses frequently lack energy. Low energy concentrates are likely to be laid down as fat, therefore more drastic measures are called for. Feed small amounts of **Hickstead Eventa Sports Mix** several times a day. This competition mix will boost energy levels without putting on weight and make the horse a more enjoyable ride. The soya hulls and sugar beet shreds will support a healthy gut and offer stamina energy and the oats will give essential oomph.



Feeding fussy eaters

With all that spring grass around after the winter, many horses choose to ignore their concentrate feeds. **Hickstead Herbal Meadow Mix** is a lovely tasty muesli incorporating herbs such as rosemary and mint for health and palatability together with high digestible fibres, micronised cereals and flaked soya for promoting top-line and muscle definition.

Breeding Mares

For mares in the final three months of pregnancy and lactating mares, **Hickstead Stud Mix** will offer all the nutrients required for optimum foetal growth and quality milk production. Soya hulls supply 'super fibres', significant for correct gut function in the lactating mare where high calorie feeds are essential to meet the demands of her foal.

To find out more about **Hickstead Horse Feeds** and their range of feeds, or for friendly, professional feeding advice, phone 0845 0250 444.