

The daily nutrient requirements of the horse are based on a critical need for protein, energy, vitamins, minerals and water, to enable the horse doing a specific job to achieve his genetic and physical capabilities. The daily requirements are indicated in Table 1, and vary according to the age, size, use and reproductive status of the horse.

Table 1 Nutrient Requirements of Horses

Age (Month)	Body Wt. (Lb.)	Daily Feed (Lb.)	Protein		TDN (%)	CA (%)	P (%)
			Total (%)	Dig. (%)			
Growing Horses, 1,100 Lb. Mature Weight							
3	250	9.7	19.0	14.1	69	0.89	0.69
6	500	11.0	13.4	9.6	69	0.80	0.55
12	700	13.4	12.3	7.7	69	0.60	0.44
18	900	13.7	11.3	6.7	69	0.34	0.26
42	1,100	13.1	10.0	5.3	69	0.34	0.25
Mature Horses At Rest (Maintenance)							
	900	11.1	10.0	5.3	69	0.31	0.24
	1,100	13.1	10.0	5.3	69	0.34	0.26
Mature Horses At Light Work (2 Hr/Day)							
	900	19.0	10.0	5.3	69	0.24	0.18
	1,100	17.5	10.0	5.3	69	0.25	0.18
Mature Horses At Medium Work (2 Hr/Day)							
	900	19.0	10.0	5.3	69	0.20	0.15
	1,100	22.9	10.0	5.3	69	0.20	0.15
Mares, Last 90 Days of Pregnancy							
	900	11.9	11.5	6.9	69	0.44	0.33
	1,100	13.7	11.5	6.9	69	0.45	0.35
Mares, Peak of Lactation							
	900	19.6	13.3	8.4	69	0.57	0.45
	1,100	22.1	13.1	8.3	69	0.60	0.45

Young growing horses consume small amounts of feed but require more protein, energy, calcium and phosphorous than mature horses on a percentage basis. The TDN, or energy, needs of the horse increase as the horse becomes larger and as more work is added to his daily routine. As a result, hard working horses require considerably more energy but only slightly more protein than idle horses of the same age and size, as indicated by the increases in feed intake.

Pregnant mares require essentially the same protein, energy and minerals as a mature horse at rest, until the last 90 days of pregnancy where their protein and calcium-phosphorous needs are increased slightly. When a mare has a foal, her lactational needs increase substantially and more feed must be fed in order to meet her lactation requirements. In fact, daily feed indicates essentially a doubling of the amount of feed required for the lactating mare versus the pregnant mare. Increases in calcium and phosphorous for the lactating mare and in the young growing foal are needed for bone growth.