

## Is Your Horse Eating Enough?

Have a hard keeper? Looking for a supplement to help keep weight on? If so, you are not alone. These are some of the most commonly asked questions fielded by our customer service reps. With a little investigation, we often discover these concerned owners are only feeding one scoop or a couple of pounds of feed each day. For whatever reason, they believe this small amount is appropriate and that adding various supplements is the way to maintain weight. The truth is, usually the easiest and least expensive option is feeding more feed

Many owners are unaware that the minimum feeding rate for most horse feeds is 5 lbs. to 8 lbs. per day for a 1,000 lb. horse. This minimum amount is designed to provide all the needed vitamins and minerals, along with the calories and protein required by an average horse.

So let's say a horse that has always had a problem maintaining proper weight is fed 2 lbs. of feed per day, in addition to a common weight builder supplement and a typical vitamin/mineral supplement. If a bag of feed costs \$20, the total cost to feed that horse is \$2.35/day (feed @ \$.80, fat supplement @ \$.90 and vitamin/mineral supplement @ \$.65). If the feeding rate is increased to 5 lbs. per day, the horse will get all the calories and vitamins and minerals required from the additional feed, eliminating the need for supplements and reducing the cost of feeding the horse by \$.35/day.

Daily Feeding Scenario	Feed Cost	Fat Supplement Cost	Vitamin/Mineral Supplement Cost	Total Cost
2 lbs. feed + supplements	\$0.80	\$0.90	\$0.65	\$2.35
5 lbs. of feed	\$2.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2.00

If you are concerned about how much to feed your easy keeper, we have some good articles on our website such as [Is Your Overweight Horse Eating Enough?](http://www.triplecrownfeed.com/articles/your-horse-eating-enough/) (<http://www.triplecrownfeed.com/articles/your-horse-eating-enough/>) and [Feeding and Management of the Overweight Horse](http://www.triplecrownfeed.com/articles/feeding-and-management-equine-insulin-resistance/) (<http://www.triplecrownfeed.com/articles/feeding-and-management-equine-insulin-resistance/>). While easy keepers don't need additional calories and protein, they can benefit from higher nutrient feeds with lower feeding rates such as Triple Crown Lite (<http://www.triplecrownfeed.com/products/feeds/equine-supplement-lite-formula-equinesupplement>) or 30% Supplement (<http://www.triplecrownfeed.com/products/supplements/equinesupplement30percent-equine-supplement/>).

Supplements can be necessary when feed is not an option, but for meeting your horse's basic nutritional requirements for calories, protein, vitamins and minerals, buying the right feed and using it properly can save you time and money. A common mistake owners make is not considering the total cost of feeding their horses, which includes not only the bag of feed, but the cost of various supplements and hay. Don't overlook the obvious and complicate your feeding program— sometimes the best answer is to simply feed more.

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