



# What you need to know about hay analysis

## DOES YOUR HAY MAKE THE GRADE?

You know a good quality forage should be the bulk of your horse's diet. But do you know the nutritional content of the forage you're feeding? Below we break down everything you need to know to make sure your forage is making the grade!

Understanding the actual nutrient content of your hay is critical to ensuring your horse is consuming a balanced diet. Yet the nutritional composition of hay can vary tremendously between suppliers, pastures and even from year to year. Testing your hay is the only way to truly know what your forage is made of – and how you might need to supplement or replace portions to ensure a balanced diet.

### THE VALUE OF HAY ANALYSIS

How your horse looks, feels and performs is directly related to their diet. Poor quality hay can result in health issues, including illness, weight gain/loss, digestive discomfort and more. Besides the obvious quality of life concerns these issues present for your horse, they can also be costly to treat or manage.

In contrast, hay analysis is a relatively simple and affordable process. Many horse owners and professionals trust Equi-Analytical to test their hay and provide the information they need to create properly balanced nutritional plans.



#### Step 1

Write a descriptive label on a quart-sized sample bag.



#### Step 2

Randomly select 12-20 bales to sample. Collect the sample from the center of the bales.



#### Step 3

Cut your hay sample into smaller, one-inch sized pieces if collected without the use of a hay probe. If a hay probe is used, deposit directly into the sample bag.



#### Step 4

After all the samples are deposited, the hay should fill a quart-sized sealable plastic bag.



#### Step 5

Complete the paperwork and send the sample package to the lab.

Mail to: Equi-Analytical  
730 Warren Road,  
Ithaca, New York 14850

## MAINTAINING GOOD HAY

After you have analyzed and confirmed you're feeding a high quality hay, maintain those nutrient values through proper storage. Make sure your hay is stored in a cool, dry place out of the elements – moisture attracts insects and causes mold growth and too much heat can over dry the hay, decreasing digestibility.

Periodically check the quality of your hay by pulling a sample from the center of a bale and check for appropriate color, smell and texture.



### APPEARANCE

Color can be important because green hay is an indication that hay has been cured under good conditions. However, judging hay on color alone is a mistake because green hay may be of inferior nutritional quality to off-colored hays, and some brown hays are better than some green hays. Hay should contain little dust and have no visible mold.

### SMELL

Good hay should smell fresh and a little sweet – never musty. A musty scent indicates mold growth and should not be fed.

### TEXTURE

You should be able to ball up a handful of hay in the palm of your bare hand without scratching your skin. If you are being scratched and poked by the hay, it is likely too tough and stemmy for your horse to digest easily.

## WHEN HIGH QUALITY HAY IS IN SHORT SUPPLY

If you find yourself struggling to find a high quality forage supply, hay extenders are an easy, reliable way to supplement or replace forage in your horse's diet. All Triple Crown chopped forage products, Senior or Senior Gold and hay cubes, act as hay extenders and can be fed as a one to one replacement for forage.

Learn more about feeding hay extenders from a Triple Crown expert today!

1-800-451-9916  
[triplecrownfeed.com/contact-us](http://triplecrownfeed.com/contact-us)

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