

PONY CLUB



Feed your Pony Mini Achievement Badge Workbook



Objectives

- Feed from a flat hand
- Clean and fill a water bucket
- Recognise hay/haylage
- Recognise chaff
- Recognise salt
- A basic understanding that water and fibre are essential to the pony's diet

This workbook is an introduction to the subject that it covers. As it is addressed primarily to young children, it is important that the instructor must be prepared to demonstrate the subject practically, and allow the member to practice the skills as frequently as required. It is highly recommended that the parent or the instructor read or explain the contents of the workbook to the child as it cannot be assumed that the child is able to read the information or instructions sufficiently well to achieve understanding.

Name

Branch

In this workbook you learn about the two things your pony has to have - water and grass; the thing you should add to his diet, salt; and about a treat you can give him and how to give it to him.

How to feed a carrot to your pony

It is best to chop the carrot into longish strips, not into rounds, and don't try and give them the whole carrot at once because they will probably land up dropping some of it out of their mouth.



Never hold a carrot at the end and try and feed it to a pony - you will get your fingers bitten!



Your hand must be flat, your fingers together, and your thumb straight and close to your palm - now your fingers are safe ☺

- Feed your pony one piece of carrot at a time
- Stand next to your pony, facing in the same direction while feeding
- Don't stand directly in front
- If your pony tries to snatch the carrot from you, it is probably best to put the pieces of carrot into their feed bucket so that they can eat it from there
- Your pony might like apples too, and many ponies like bread rolls. You can try these as a treat, but don't feed them chocolates or sweets!



Horses need water

- Water is very important for any living creature (and for you too)
- A horse can survive even if they lose a lot of body fat, but if they lose too much water this is dangerous. They become dehydrated and very sick
- Horses need **2 – 3 times** more water than any other food, or about 3 to 5 buckets of water a day. When it gets hot, a horse normally gets even thirstier and wants more water



More than half of the body weight of the horse is made up of water (about 70%)

Why do horses need water?

- It helps them to digest their food more easily, so that
 - they get more nutrients out of the food and
 - don't get colic (stomach ache)
- Helps them make saliva
- keeps their temperature constant (not too hot nor too cold)
- if your pony is feeding a foal, she needs to get more water so that she can make enough milk

Every system in their body needs water to keep in good health.

Clean and fill a water bucket

Horses and ponies need to have fresh water all the time. You need to clean out the water bucket and fill it up every day.

1. Empty most of the water out of the bucket
2. Give the inside of the bucket a scrub with a cloth or brush
3. Throw out the rest of the dirty water, and rinse the bucket with fresh water
4. If possible, leave the empty bucket in the sun for a while – this will kill off any algae (that yucky green slime that grows in the bucket if you're not careful) as it can't grow in the sun
5. Fill up the bucket with clean water



Horses need fibre

- Fibre provides energy
- The fibre in a horse's diet provides the bulk or roughage that keeps the gut full
- Fibre is able to soak up and hold water in the horse's gut, which then acts to lubricate the gut, and helps the horse to digest his food

The types of fibre you can feed your horse include all types of hay and chaff (like teff, eragrostis, Lucerne, grass, oat hay) and also sugar beet pulp, oats, or sunflower seeds. You need to recognize hay and chaff.

Recognise hay/haylage

Hay is grass that has been cut and dried for use as food. Common grasses used in South Africa are eragrostis, teff and oat hay. The cut grass, once it is dried, is rolled into huge round bales, or into square bales. The grass in the bale is still in long pieces, so that you can put it into a hay net without the pieces falling out through the holes.



Recognise chaff

Chaff is chopped hay and/or straw that is commonly fed to horses and ponies. Chaff is quite simply dried forage that has been cut into small pieces, in contrast to the long grass stems in hay and haylage. It is fed from a food bowl or manger.

A common chaff is Lucerne and Oat hay / Oat straw



Look around the yard where your pony is kept. Can you see some hay / haylage? Can you see some chaff?

What if my horse doesn't get enough fibre?

- They may get colic (stomach ache)
- They may get diarrhoea (runny wet pooh)
- They may become dehydrated (not getting enough water)
- They may seem tired and lazy, with not enough energy to do what you want them to do (energy deficiency)
- Boredom - ponies that have grass that they can eat most of the day don't get bored
- Your pony will always feel hungry

Recognise salt

Salt is an important part of a horse's diet. There are two ways to give your horse salt: by adding salt to their food, or as a salt lick. The salt is the same as the salt your mother uses in the kitchen, but you can often buy big bags of salt at your feed supplier which is cheaper and often crunchier than using the little bags from the kitchen.



How much do I remember?

1. Is this a good way to feed a pony a carrot? Why do you think so?



2. Walk around your stable or stable yard, and collect some hay and some chaff. Put it in a bag or stick some pieces in your workbook so you will always remember what it looks like

3. How would you look after your pony's need for water? What must you do with their water bucket every day?
