

GAIN

Horse FEEDS

Feeding the Broodmare

Taking care of your mares' nutrition in pregnancy and lactation will ensure that you maximize the return on your investment and will ensure better health for both the mare and developing foal. Optimal nutrition of the mare throughout pregnancy is critical to ensure correct skeletal development of the foal and good quality colostrum production. Although the foetus generally gains about 35% of its foaling weight in the first 7 months of pregnancy, a well-balanced diet is vital from conception to provide all the necessary nutrients to support the growth and differentiation of tissues in the foetus. This improves the health of the neonatal foal and ensures normal development throughout the whole pregnancy.



Broodmares in pregnancy have specific nutritional requirements that must be met. In later pregnancy the foetus begins to grow bigger, ready for birth. Although nutrient requirements increase later on in pregnancy, Digestible Energy requirements increase only by a relatively small amount, about 15%. During this time nutrient requirements are generally met by good quality forage and a proven stud balancer in GAIN Opti-Care or Stud-Care 32.



Trace mineral supplementation is very important during this period because the foetus stores iron, zinc, copper and manganese in its liver for use during the first few months after it is born. GAIN Feeds contain Bioplex® or protected trace minerals which deliver these nutrients more effectively. For mares requiring more condition, then a higher energy feed should be fed such as GAIN Stud Cubes or GAIN Stud Mix. It is important that mares in late pregnancy are not overfed energy. If the pregnant mare becomes overweight during late pregnancy (later foaling mares are most susceptible particularly in areas where grass has become plentiful in spring months) this may lead to difficulty in foaling. GAIN Opti-Care and Stud-Care 32 balancers provide all the key nutrients required for foetal development without over-supply of calories.

Barren mares that are being bred will benefit from being fed prior to conception and then through early pregnancy, on

GAIN Opti-Care or Stud-Care 32 balancers which will provide essential micronutrients and quality amino acids during the early developmental stages of pregnancy.



Vitamin E is absolutely vital for broodmares during pregnancy. Broodmares that have little access to green grass or good quality hay/haylage are at risk of a reduced vitamin E intake. The GAIN Horse Feeds range of stud feeds, contain high levels of vitamin E and Proviox® a natural plant antioxidant. This should result in desirable blood levels of vitamin E which have been shown to improve immune responses to vaccination and increase immunoglobulin IgG in the milk.



After foaling, the mare's milk is the main source of nutrients for the growing foal and her nutrient requirements increase significantly during the first three months of lactation in particular. It is essential that new born foals receive adequate quantity and quality of colostrum in the first 24 hours of life to provide them with immunity from microbial challenges in their environment. During the first three months of lactation mares produce milk at a rate equal to about 3% of their body weight per day. This milk is rich in energy, protein, calcium, phosphorus and vitamins. If she does not receive adequate nutrition during this period she may dip into her own body reserves and lose condition. Rebreeding may then be problematic. Therefore, the mare should be fed appropriate concentrates. Mares that are good doers can be fed GAIN Opti-Care balancer and ad lib best quality forage. For mares that are more likely to lose condition then feed a higher calorie feed such as GAIN Stud Cubes or GAIN Stud Mix in conjunction with good quality forage to meet these increased requirements.

If you have any nutritional queries please contact our team:

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Gain the Advantage