



# Guide to feeding for condition without fizz

**pure**  
FEED COMPANY

## Is your horse a fizzy rascal?

If you've got a fizzy horse, you will certainly know about it - unlike with many other issues that affect them which can be masked, making them hard to spot.

Whether your horse seems ready to jump out of their stable or cannot stop dancing around when you ride, excitability is something that you will want to address. And the good news is that there are lots of positive steps you can follow to take the edge off an excitable horse.

Dietary issues will very often underpin behavioural issues in horses, and this guide will explore the reasons behind this. It will look at the science of a good feeding approach and provide practical steps for feeding your horse to add or maintain condition, without the fizz. Finally, it will share a case study of one horse owner who calmed their fizzy rascal.

Diet is a good place to start and a change of diet plan will take at least four weeks before it has its full impact - so persevere. Do consider though that sometimes there may be an underlying health condition that is spooking your horse. Horses are good at hiding pain - sometimes by displaying bad behaviour - so it is worth checking for discomfort in the teeth, back and saddle among other places.

We care passionately about the well-being of horses, and through good nutrition we are glad we can make a difference. On page 6 you will find some recommendations from our Pure Feed range that will help you feed your fizzy horse. These are easy to buy and can all be purchased online and by phone with free delivery, or in store at most local feed shops.

I hope you find this guide useful. If it raises any further questions for you, please do not hesitate to call our nutritional team on 01458 333 333. They can give you advice or prepare a bespoke diet plan.

**Stephanie Mapletoft**

BSC (HONS) PGCERT EQUINE SCIENCE

Head of Nutrition, The Pure Feed Company

Dietary issues  
will very often  
underpin  
behavioural  
issues in horses.





## How did horses evolve to eat and what is wrong with many horse diets today?


The life of the modern horse varies greatly from how they originated. Contemporary equine management reflects very few of the horse's natural behavioural instincts as grazing and browsing animals, roaming in herds across open, lush grass plains.

The picture is further blurred by the fact that in between their natural origins and current leisure use, horses were hard workers for mankind over centuries, indeed millennia.

Having gone from being casual grazers to hard workers to recreational companions, the modern horse suffers from a range of problems which appear to be related to domestication. These include laminitis, tying-up, colic, equine metabolic syndrome (EMS), obesity, respiratory disease and stereotypic or fizzy behaviour.

It's of interest that many of these may have a nutritional component. Studies have shown that many owners overestimate how hard their horse is working and, as a result, provide too much feed.

High-starch, highly-digestible feeds and small numbers of large meals may contribute to laminitis, colic, EMS, excitability and obesity. In the wild, the horse would not be used to eating such highly-digestible feeds which provide high levels of nutrients for absorption.



It is vital to the horse to provide the right environment and allow your horse to express natural behaviour. This can also help to prevent the development of stereotypic behaviours.



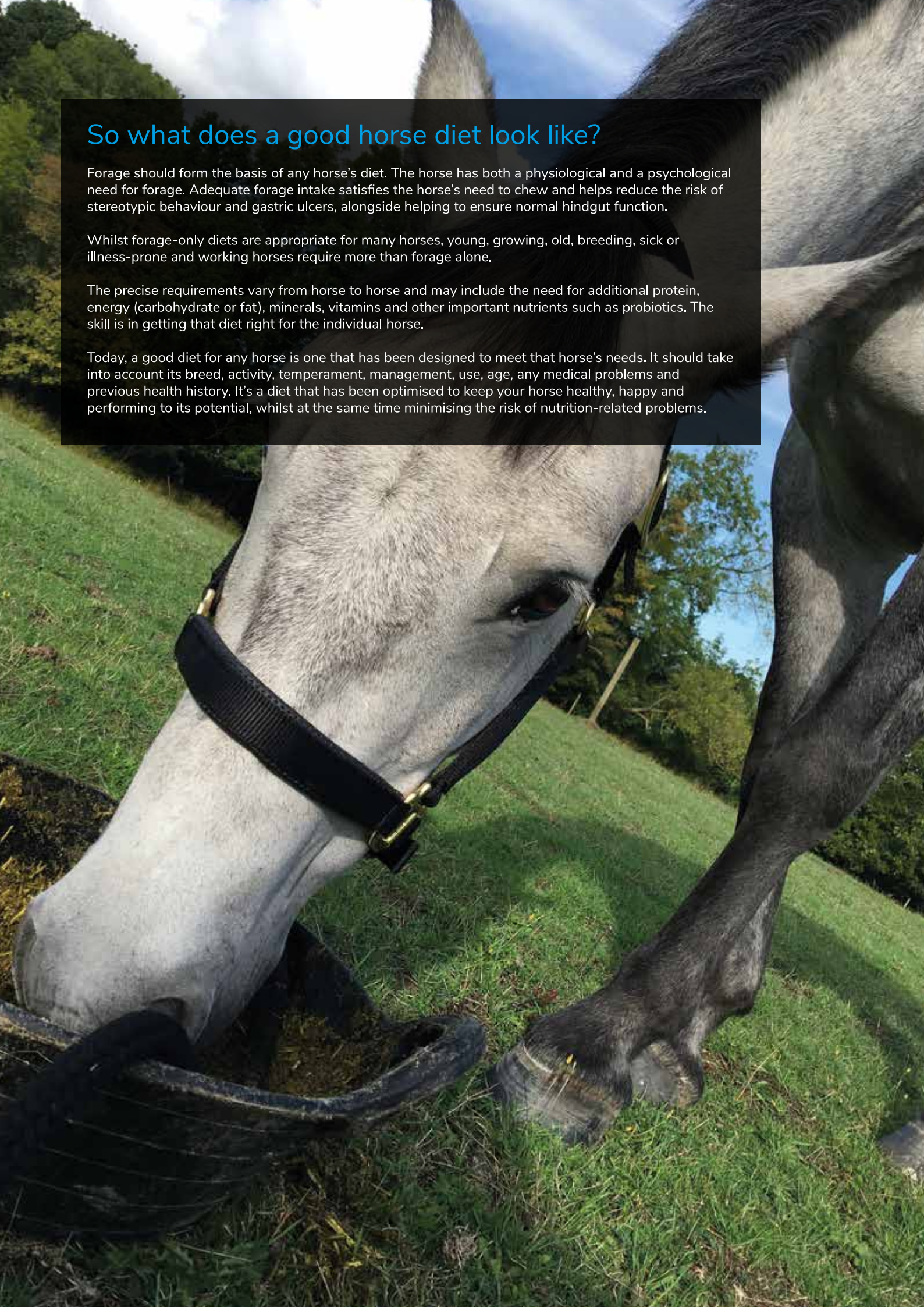
## So what does a good horse diet look like?

Forage should form the basis of any horse's diet. The horse has both a physiological and a psychological need for forage. Adequate forage intake satisfies the horse's need to chew and helps reduce the risk of stereotypic behaviour and gastric ulcers, alongside helping to ensure normal hindgut function.

Whilst forage-only diets are appropriate for many horses, young, growing, old, breeding, sick or illness-prone and working horses require more than forage alone.

The precise requirements vary from horse to horse and may include the need for additional protein, energy (carbohydrate or fat), minerals, vitamins and other important nutrients such as probiotics. The skill is in getting that diet right for the individual horse.

Today, a good diet for any horse is one that has been designed to meet that horse's needs. It should take into account its breed, activity, temperament, management, use, age, any medical problems and previous health history. It's a diet that has been optimised to keep your horse healthy, happy and performing to its potential, whilst at the same time minimising the risk of nutrition-related problems.





## How to add more condition whilst keeping your horse calm

Fibre, oil, sugar and starch provide the main source of energy in the horse's diet. Protein is not a main source of energy for the horse as its breakdown is not that efficient. Feeds with a high starch content, usually provided by cereal grains, are referred to as a 'fast-release' source of energy.

This reflects the fact that it is broken down fast by the horse during digestion and rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream. Because sugars and starch can get into the blood stream very quickly, they can cause excitability in horses. In contrast, oil acts as a slow-release energy source, and when fed at a like for like quantity it provides approximately two and a half times more energy.

Energy and calories represent the same thing and for this reason it is impossible to serve a high calorie feed that is low in energy. Looking at your horse's body condition score is the best way to tell if their energy or calorie requirements are being met.

Horses will generally maintain their condition better over the summer period when the grass is of better quality. Over the winter they tend to need a little extra help because when the weather is colder, they use more energy to keep warm and the grass quality decreases.

For many owners the thought of giving a higher energy feed to an already excitable horse can seem daunting, especially when poor weather and shorter days can lead to more time in the stable for the horse - and in some cases, less exercise.

This in turn can cause an increase in energy levels. However, you don't have to compromise your horse's temperament if they need to gain weight. Just choose your additional source of energy wisely.

Providing a good quality source of fibre is not only essential to help maintain a healthy digestive system, it is also particularly beneficial in the winter period as it can help to maintain your horse's condition.

The horse has a very specialised mechanism for fibre digestion. The large microbial population in the hind gut ferments the fibre and produces a significant amount of heat. In the colder months, when precious fat reserves and energy are lost through keeping warm, fibre provides a kind of "central heating for horses".

Oil is also a great way to provide extra energy (calories) for your horse. Choosing a high oil feed or adding additional oil to your horse's ration can help to top up the calorie content of the diet and encourage weight gain. Oil is generally very calorie dense and, in comparison to cereals, you don't need to feed it in large quantities to get the same amount of energy.



If your horse isn't used to being fed a high oil diet, it is advisable to introduce it slowly to allow their digestive system chance to adjust.



# How the Pure Feed range can help you feed for condition without the fizz

## For horses requiring a calorie top up to their current feed Pure Linseed

Our micronised linseed can be added to the feed as a calorie top up to help encourage weight gain and maintain condition. Linseed is palatable, easy to feed and low in starch. It doesn't need to be served in large quantities either, so isn't going to increase the bulk of your horse's feed. We suggest 100g per day for a pony and 200g per day for a horse.



## For horses requiring a new complete feed Pure Condition

Our Pure Condition is a complete feed which will ensure that your horse is getting all the important daily nutrients that they need, including vitamins, minerals, amino acids and prebiotics and probiotics too.

In addition to this, it is high in oil to provide extra calories but low in starch - this helps to keep them calm whilst adding and maintaining condition. It is free from both molasses and wholegrain cereals. The oil also acts as a slow-released, controlled energy source.



## For fussy eaters, horses with poor dentition and horses that don't like chaff-based feeds Pure Condition Pellets

These have the same nutritional benefits as our Pure Condition feed but are in pelleted form. They can be used instead of our Pure Condition feed for horses that don't like a chaff-based feed, in combination with our Pure Condition feed to vary the texture. It is ideal for fussy eaters or used alongside any of our other feeds to top up the calorie content of your horse's diet. The Pure Condition Pellets can be fed as they are, straight from the bag or soaked with water prior to feeding to form a soft mash. This makes them much easier to chew and suitable to feed to horses with poor dentition.



## For horses that have been diagnosed with laminitis, Cushing's or require a low-starch diet, but need to gain weight Pure Working

Our Pure Working feed can be fed to horses that have been diagnosed with laminitis, Cushing's, EMS or other similar conditions that require them to be on a low-starch diet, but that need to gain some weight. It is higher in oil but still has a combined sugar and starch level of less than 10%.



## “Added energy without the fizz”



### Gemma Wells & Finnon

"I started using the Pure Linseed last winter. My horse is 21 and still in full work and out competing, but he started to lose a little condition when there was no grass. I feed Pure anyway so thought I'd try him on Pure Linseed. After only a week on it he looked amazing - his condition really picked up, his coat is always shiny (even after a day rolling in mud!) and it really gives him just a little added energy without the fizz when competing. Because of this we've been able to step up a level and still pull some PB scores!"

## “Your horse is getting everything they need – but without the excitability”



### Sarah Gadd & Milli and Roxie

"Roxie has been on the Condition feeds from Pure Feed since I switched. As she is a bit of a princess and can be a bit fussy, she had both the Pure Condition and Pure Condition Pellets. If we needed that extra bit of condition, I added Linseed to the diet. I love the fact that all the feeds contain a balancer - so you know your horse is getting everything they need but without the excitability, which is so important. I also like that you don't have to feed massive amounts of the feed as well, which helps save a few extra pennies."



## How to contact The Pure Feed Company

Helpline: 01458 333 333 ( 9:00 – 17.00 Monday to Friday )

General and nutritional enquiries: [info@purefeed.com](mailto:info@purefeed.com)

