

Sales Preparation for Yearlings

Achieving the best coat shine, topline and behaviour of yearlings entering the sales ring is aspired by many breeders and for that yearling to maintain sound development to become successful in their future performance career.

Bone Development

The relationship between nutrition, bone strength, development, body weight and forces applied are a careful balance to achieve optimal growth. A yearling has reached 76% of its maximal bone mineral content, and so supporting nutrition needs start from as early as gestation for the developing foetus up to the performance athlete.

Understanding bone development helps to explain the growth process in horses. There are two anatomical types of bone; flat and long bone. Both have different processes of development;

- Flat bones by intramembranous ossification
- Long bones by endochondral ossification, this has greatest interest as it can impact soundness.

High quality protein, vitamins and minerals are essential for the successful development of bone and cartilage, in particular calcium, phosphorus, zinc, copper, manganese, magnesium and vitamin A, D and K.

Growth Rates

A slow, steady growth rate is desired to avoid development problems such as Developmental Orthopaedic Disease (DOD), associated with rapid growth from over feeding, followed by slow or decreased growth. DOD is an umbrella term for growth disturbances and orthopaedic problems in growing foals and older horses. Genetical influences and nutritional implications can be contributing factors to the development of DOD.

Bluegrass Horse Feed work with breeders to closely monitor the growth and development of their youngstock through the Kentucky Equine Research software **Grotrac**. This unique software helps to track daily or weekly growth and weight gain with comparisons to other youngstock across the world.



Condition and Topline

Nutrition and exercise go together when preparing for the sale ring shine and condition. The diet must provide high quality proteins for muscle development, amino acids are the building blocks for muscle and the horse must consume 10 essential amino acids in the diet to meet their requirements. Protein is also key for skin, coat, hoof health, connective tissue and nervous tissue. It is recommended to provide yearlings with a 14-17% protein feed balanced in macro and microminerals, fat and water-soluble vitamins.

High quality forage is the foundation to any equine diet to promote gut health, however yearlings preparing for sales will not receive enough energy from forage alone. Additional oil supplementation to the diet will help to increase the calorie content and avoid high gran diets. Feeds high in omega fatty acids 6 and 3, help to promote weight gain, coat shine and skin health. Omega -3 has been associated with reducing joint inflammation.

Reducing the starch content of the diet can help to avoid hindgut acidosis often seen in yearlings on high cereal feeds. This can be done by using alternative energy sources through super fibres and fat such as

oils or stabilised rice bran. These slow release energy source will also contribute towards mannerly behaviour, good attitude and flowing walk in the sales ring.



Bluegrass Horse Feed Products:

- **Bluegrass Prep 14:** Provides 20% more calories than conventional mixes, fortified in Stamm 30 balancer and super fibres for slow release energy sources.
- **Bluegrass Stamm 30:** High quality protein, vitamin and mineral balancer containing live yeast cultures to enhance bioavailability of nutrients.
- **Bluegrass Foal and Yearling Mix:** 17% protein mix fortified in Stamm 30 balancer containing high quality protein, vitamin and minerals for sound skeletal growth.
- **Bluegrass Equi-Jewel:** Stabilised Rice Bran designed to increase the calorie content, with additional marine derived calcium (BCM) shown to increase bone density and support gut health.



It's important to get the balance right between fit and fat, achieving the perfect sale ring shine and condition takes both correct nutrition and exercise. Supplying the nutritional foundations to support bone development and increased mechanical stress on joints and bones will support the yearling throughout their career and to achieve their athletic performance potential.

