



WEANLING *Nutrition*

*By the time
a foal
is weaned
the transition
from a purely
milk diet
to one
incorporating
forage and
other feeds
has already
begun.*



The older foal is grazing and either taking creep feed or some of the supplementary concentrates the mare has been fed. Despite that, the sudden removal of its milk supply, coupled with separation stress on removal from the mare, generally causes a set back and drop in growth rate as measured by a fall in Average Daily Gain (ADG).

Minimising this set back is critical for two reasons. Weanlings which are backward post weaning may not reach desired growth and weight targets, but also there is a temptation to push them to catch up by increasing concentrate feeding. This can drive a growth spurt which is a recipe for problems such as Developmental Orthopaedic Diseases like Physisitis and OCD. Minimising growth drop off at weaning coupled with good but steady growth thereafter is the key to producing well developed, sound athletic yearlings and beyond, and the way to achieve that is through optimal balanced nutrition.

Growth requires protein and an adequate supply of the right amino acids, the first limiting one of which is Lysine. Even when protein is plentiful, if the Lysine content is poor, growth will be retarded. Good sources of Lysine include Lucerne, Clover, and seeds such as Soya, Sunflower and Lupin so including these in weaner diets either straight or in appropriate supplementary feed is useful. Grains are generally quite low in Lysine by comparison.

Whilst protein enables growth, the main driver for growth is energy, and high energy diets will push growth rates provided protein is adequate. Controlling the energy intake puts the horse owner in the driver's seat to control growth rate. In general the energy source is grain based, with protein topped up from good pasture or supplementary Lucerne. However, Australian soils, and hence grains and most pastures are often low in minerals and trace elements and if these are not provided in addition to grain and pasture, then deficiency during the rapid growth phase post weaning may result in impaired development and diseases like OCD. Provision of supplementary Lysine along with minerals, particularly Calcium and Phosphorous plus the trace elements Copper, Zinc, Manganese, Selenium and Iodine will balance the diet and counter the common deficiencies seen in Australia.

Horsepower Stud Supplement provides all the above in appropriate proportions along with a full range of vitamins to ensure adequate intake levels in foals and weanlings right through to the yearling stage.

Now available in a convenient 15kg bucket, Horsepower Stud Supplement can be purchased through your local produce store, or you can buy it direct from us via our online store by [clicking here](#)

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