

There seems to be much confusion as which of the Vitamin/Mineral supplemental pellets to use: the **Regular** (yellow label) or the **Plus** (purple label). They are a part of the Basics for any horse program.

When we started our AQHA horses on the Program in 1993 (here in northern Colorado), we began with the **Plus** at 2 ounces per day and saw some good results. Then we heard that broodstock should have 3 ounces per day so we upped it to that and saw more results. Then we heard that the **Regular** actually had a higher concentration of vitamins and minerals so we switched to that and saw really fantastic results. We have kept all our horses on the **Regular** ever since and that is generally what we suggest for others as we believe it to be more cost effective. But let's go over the differences so you can make your own decision. All suggestions/directions are given for "average" 1000# horses; please adjust amounts according to the size and use of your animal.

Plus—Purple Label

This pellet is loaded with really good nutrition for all sorts of herbivores—in fact, it is the exact same formula as the **Exotics Plus** with label directions for horses. In addition to lots of good vitamins and minerals, it also contains many herbs, trace minerals, digestive aids, etc. which makes it a superior "one-a-day" sort of supplement.

It is a super choice for feeding out of hand as a treat instead of those sugar/chemical-laden ones usually found; all horses love it. If you choose not to go on the entire free-choice program, it is also a good choice because of its higher trace mineral content or in high selenium areas where the **Regular** with its higher selenium content might be an issue. It is also a good choice for lightly used horses. Some people prefer to feed it to straight foundation-bred horses and many barrel racers like to feed it also.

Unfortunately, too many people do not feed enough of it. We have learned over the years to suggest starting a horse off with 3 ounces per day for one month. Then, if the horse is a "pasture potato," you can cut back to 2 ounces per day maintenance; otherwise, maintain a riding horse at 3 ounces per day and harder used animals can receive up to 4 ounces per day preferably split into two feedings. Granted these suggestions are more than the label advises, but through experience, this is what we have found works best.

We have had people call complaining that their dogs are getting into the **Plus** and questioning that it might hurt them. Our answer is "it won't" - in fact dogs do love it and may start looking better for chowing down on it! We have also been called by frantic owners of horses who have gotten into it eating up to one half of a new bucket—the only damage is to the owner's wallet. We of course advise to not supplement for a few days making sure the horse has plenty of water and grass hay, but it has never foundered a horse yet.

Regular—Yellow Label

This is the original blood-builder formula designed for the California race tracks and which the famous 1948 triple-crown winner Citation was fed. Slightly tweaked but essentially the same.

Generally this is the formula suggested for any horse expending more energy in competitive events or in the breeding barn; in other words where greater concentrations of vitamins are necessary and where someone is feeding all the Free Choice minerals [**NTM Salt, Izmine, 1 to 1, & 2 to 1**].

We have found some horses resist eating the **Regular** initially because it does have a "vitamin" odor to it. In those cases, we suggest falling back to just the familiar grain ration or **PGR** and once they are eating that fine again, to add one or two pellets of **Regular** at a time. You can also add a half ounce of **DynaSpark** (or organic blackstrap molasses) to the ration as that seems to hide the smell until the horse is used to it. We have fed literally dozens upon dozens of horses coming in for breeding to our stallion or for boarding and have personally faced this resistance only once with a newly purchased broodmare. Even the extremely rare super-sensitive ones seem to get past their "oooh-it's-strange" attitude quite quickly.

We have found the amounts needed to be about half that of the **Plus**: 1 oz/day maintenance for pasture potatoes and 1.5-2 oz/day for using horses which makes it quite cost-effective. Do not overfeed it as it is highly concentrated. While we have never received a call from an owner that their horses has dived into it like with the **Plus**, we have had many say their dogs really go for it with the same excellent results.

Some individuals believe that only "hot" horses such as TB's should be fed the **Regular** and that "colder" horses such as QH's should be fed the **Plus**. Well, we have AQHA, both foundation and racing stock, and have found the **Regular** equally excellent for either. As far as we are concerned, the higher concentration of nutrients makes it very welcome for breeding stock. In fact for horses on it regularly, we advise increasing the dosage slightly (one half to one ounce) if a horse is facing a health challenge just to get that many more nutrients into their systems.

Nor does it make horses "hot." What it does do is give them the nutrition they need to feel good: lethargic horses will gain more "good" energy and excitable horses tend to even out. Some horses are sensitive to the *avenin*, a central nervous system stimulating alkaloid, in oats; because **DYNAMITE** encourages better usage of all nutrients, sometimes the oats can cause too much "heat." We even have suggested **Regular** for ponies and minis with great success. Obviously the amounts are geared down according to weight since all label directions are given for 1000# horses.

Ultimately, the choice is yours. Both are excellent products and each will aid the horse to make better use of all nutrients. Because of this, many owners find themselves able to cut back on amounts of grain fed. Some people like to feed the **Plus** in the spring and summer while the pastures (hopefully fertilized with **HumiZyme!**) are growing and have more food value and then switch to the **Regular** in the fall and winter when their horses have more need of the higher concentrations of vitamins. Others, like ourselves, just feed it year-round for ease. Of course it is optimal to feed either one with free choice good grass hay and all four free-choice minerals: **1 to 1, 2 to 1, Izmine, and NTM Salt.** ■