

We frequently refer to “the Basics” since it is from there that all horses “should” start. Also, you simply cannot go wrong with them. However, just what does “the Basics” mean? When we use that term, we generally are referring to various essential **DYNAMITE®** products. Of course the first two real Basics for ANY horse are adequate water and free choice grass hay. For more information on those subjects, please see HORSE BASICS: WATER; HORSE BASICS: FORAGE; HORSE FAQ: HAYS; HORSE FAQ: HAY ALTERNATIVES. Assuming those are adequate, then concentrates and supplements are in order and the ideal **DYNAMITE®** Basics of those items are:

NTM Salt Free Choice
1:1 Free Choice
2:1 Free Choice
Izmine Free Choice
DYNAMITE® Regular or Plus
DynaPro
PGR

But in real life, all of these may not be possible. Let’s look at some relatively common scenarios to see what adjustments can be made from a practical standpoint.

PASTURE HORSES

Many people keep their herds of horses in large pasture areas making it impossible to attend to each individual on a one-to-one basis. Hay is usually fed in rounds but what to do about minerals and supplements? In such cases, we suggest getting at least 2 vane feeders depending on herd size; with larger herds, more may be needed. The reason we suggest a minimum of 2 is because within the hierarchical structure of horse herds, dominant animals can quite successfully, by the mere fact of their presence alone, deter underlings from free choicing anything.

All vane feeders have some sort of a movable roof which swings around to keep weather from the contents and are usually available through livestock feed companies or agricultural co-ops. Within each feeder, bolt down a minimum of 4 Forti-flex (not rubber which can contain formaldehyde) tubs to contain:

NTM Salt
1:1 OR 2:1 Free Choice
Izmine
Vitamin/Mineral Salt Mix

If the feeder will allow, do offer both the **1:1** and the **2:1**, but usually only 4 tubs will fit. This combination will give the horses access to not only the minerals lacking in soils, forage and hays, but the **VM Salt Mix** also offers a modicum of vitamins to help spark the proper mineral usage. Since the **VM** is salt-driven, we always suggest offering the **NTM Salt** also in order to control over consumption of **VM**. Many individuals like to add 1 oz. **Izmine** per 1# **VM**, mixing it thoroughly; this gives just a little more trace mineral value to the **VM**. Do not fill the tubs full as this can engender waste; adjust your amounts to the number of horses present and the frequency of visiting for refills. Generally speaking, more will be consumed initially and during seasonal changes.

BOARDING PASTURE

In a pasture boarding situation when your horse is in with others, about the only option is to take concentrates with you when you visit. What many people have done, quite successfully, is to get a large, flat Forti-Flex pan and put the supplements in one area and a small amount each of the Free Choice minerals spotted around. Assuming you collect your horse and take it out of the pasture to at least visit and groom, the pan can be placed on the ground during such activity and the horse will consume what it wishes to. If one Free Choice is licked clean, next visit offer more of that one.

Bare bones would be to at least offer some **Plus**, from your hand if necessary, as a “treat” either when you go into the pasture to collect your horse or when you groom and tack up. There is a goodly variety of minerals and clays contained in the formulation, so it can act as a pretty decent single item. Amounts will depend on frequency of visits, but certainly a minimum of 2-3 oz. per day would be better than nothing. If you only visit a few times per week, upping the amount fed to 3-4 oz. per visit could be an option.

Another possibility, especially if you have

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an older horse, would be to “treat” it with **TNT** instead of the **Plus**; this would supply at least some **Izmine** for trace minerals and **Excel** for digestion.

INDIVIDUAL BOARDING with shelter

This sort of boarding definitely offers more options depending on the flexibility of the owners/manager. If possible, affixing little Forti-Flex mineral feeders to the shelter wall would be ideal for free choice mineral feeding. Jeffers (1-800-JEFFERS or www.jeffers.com) offers handy little double-sided “min feeds” for that purpose; at this writing, they are about \$3 each. Or perhaps your local feed store has appropriate items. Make sure they are bolted or wired down so your horse cannot play with them. Two per shelter affords the option of all 4 free choice items being offered; you can check each and refill during visits.

If someone else is doing the daily feeding, or especially if there are many “someones,” the simpler the feeding of the concentrates the better. In such instances we find that offering the **Plus** rather than the more concentrated **Regular** is safer in case of over-feeding. Most owners we know of in such situations find it best to provide a lidded trash can (labeled permanently with horse’s name, owner’s name & contact info, and general feeding instructions) into which they pour their **PGR**, providing a labeled “scoop” for that alone. One single scoop, be it coffee can, plastic measuring bowl or whatever, should hold exactly ONE serving of **PGR** so that no judgment calls (ie: ½ or ⅓ or 2 or rounded) need to be made. A 5# refillable bucket of **Plus** will easily fit right down into the container for supplement storage. Again, as with the **PGR**, measure out exactly the amount of **Plus** your horse should have per feeding (whether once or twice per day) and find some sort of item that will hold that exact measure; you might try varying sizes of kitchen measuring cups. Whatever scoop/measurer you arrive at should also be clearly labeled.

In difficult situations, owners have been known to actually put each feeding of both grain and supplement into zip-lock baggies (in which case the **Regular** could be used if desired) and simply say: “Feed this and this only!” This is especially true if only ½ or 1 cup or so of **PGR** is being fed per feeding. So many “feeders” used to serving up literally gallons of grain, have great difficulty in understanding such small quantities and will auto-

matically increase the amount figuring the instructions just have to be wrong! The advent of **TNT** has also made feeding supplements far easier since you can provide for a variety of needs with one pellet. Again though, make sure your measuring implement holds exactly one feeding’s worth. For your information, one Cambell’s condensed soup can provides exactly 1⅓ cups (the suggested serving) of **TNT** if that is the appropriate amount for your horse.

If it’s possible, also provide the **DynaPro** but generally speaking, this needs to be fed by the owner during visits.

SPECIAL NEEDS

We have been assuming that your horse is eating the **PGR** for its grain ration. However, for horses who cannot eat grain, then **HES** may be in order. How do we know which horses should not have grain? Laminitic, Cushing’s, ponies, many Morgan’s, Paso’s, etc.. Since the **HES** is highly concentrated and only very small amounts are fed, it is wise in such instances to “baggie” up individual feedings.

This is also true if any other powder is being added such as **Hiscorbadyne**, **SuperStress** or **SOD** if your horse needs immune support; or **Breeder Pac** for potential breeding or just for better hormone balance; or **Herbal Tonic** on a quarterly basis; or **DynaHoof**, or whatever.

If you are on the road, either moving or campaigning, you can also utilize any of these options which seem most appropriate for your and your horse’s needs. One trick that many people use when their horse is going to have to drink strange water, is to have the horse used to drinking water with a touch of **Super ACV** in it. This disinfects as well as aids digestion, but mainly the **ACV** will cover the taste and smell of “different” water. Also, most **DYNAMITE**® Distributors who are used to traveling, never leave home without their basic travel kit of **DynaPro**, **Tranquil** and **DynaSpark** which is given to the horse at every rest stop! For more traveling hints, see HORSE FAQ: HAULING.

Hopefully these hints will help you figure out what *your* “Horse Basics” are and how to make sure your horse can partake of them. Remember that the more **DYNAMITE**® Free Choicers you can offer your horse, the better, but some is always better than none! ■