Review of feeding conserved forage to horses: Recent advances and recommendations

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LOTS OF NEW RESEARCH INTO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORAGE FEEDING AND EQUINE WELFARE

- Passage rates need to be kept moving
- Lack of forage intake increases risk of stomach ulcers
- High energy supply for performance can be derived from high quality forage
- Inadequate need to chew, chewing produces saliva
- Lack of foraging ability leads to abnormal intake rates and behaviour
- Microbiota health
- Gut health
- Understanding forage nutrient composition & digestibility
- Defining conservation methods and conserved forages

**Recommendations**

I. Haylage for forages stored airtight and with DM content ≥ 50%
II. Silage for forages stored airtight with DM contents below 50%
III. Hay for forage preserved at a DM content ideally above 85%

Send forage for Analysis to understand Nutrient Supply for rationing
Hygienic Quality of Forage should be assessed regularly

Gut Health: Volume INTAKE for healthy horses should be minimum FORAGE DM Intake as % of BW = 1.5% / Day

Horses should be provided with enough forage to FACILITATE FORAGING BEHAVIOUR FOR A MINIMUM OF 8 HOURS/24 HOURS, ideally 10-12 hours. THIS SHOULD BE SPREAD EVENLY OVER 24 HOURS. Fasting periods should be LESS THAN 4 HOURS.