

If you are asking what horse feed is grain free, the quick answer is any horse feed made without cereal grains such as oats, barley, maize, or wheat. These options are usually designed to be **lower in starch**, **sugar low**, and **high fibre**, with a greater focus on **forage based** nutrition. That is why they are a popular choice for horses that need a calmer, more controlled diet, especially where **digestive wellbeing** or **laminitis concern** is a concern.

Grain-free feeding does not mean “no energy” or “all hay and nothing else”. A good grain-free **horse feed** can still be **properly balanced** and suitable for leisure horses, **performance rations**, and horses that need careful **energy intake** management. The key is learning about the different **types of horse feed**, reading the **feeding label** properly, and choosing the right **daily feed ration** for your horse’s **body condition** and workload.

What does grain-free horse feed mean?

Grain-free horse feed is food that avoids traditional cereal grains as the main component. Instead of using starch from oats or barley, it uses ingredients such as chopped fibre, grass nuts, alfalfa, beet pulp, oil, and added **vitamins and minerals**. In many cases, this leaves the feed more suitable for horses that do best on a **high fibre** diet.

Among the many **types of horse feed**, grain-free options sit alongside mixes, cubes, pellets, chaffs, balancers, and full ration feeds. Some are **complete horse feed**, meaning they are designed to supply the full nutritional package when fed as directed. Others are straights or supplements that must be paired with **forage** such as **hay** or **haylage**.

A grain-free diet is often selected because the horse’s **digestive system** is better suited to fibrous feeds than to large amounts of starch. That can support **hindgut health**, steadier behaviour, and improved **digestibility**. However, grain-free does not automatically mean suitable for every horse, and it does not replace the need for careful feeding management.

Which horse feeds are usually grain free?

Many **horse feed companies** now offer grain-free choices, from plain fibre blends to completely balanced products. Brands such as **spillers horse feed** include a range of feeds aimed at different needs, including low starch, low sugar, and fibre-first formulas. This also applies across other producers that focus on performance, leisure, and condition-building products.

Typical grain-free **types of horse feed** include:

- **Complete horse feed** created to replace or reduce the need for additional hard feed
- **Conditioning feed** for horses that need weight gain or improved topline
- Low starch balancers and ration builders
- Fibre pellets and pellets made from beet pulp, alfalfa, or grass
- Oil-rich feeds that boost energy without adding grain

Many these feeds are marketed as ideal for horses that need a calmer diet, better **digestive health**, or help maintaining a steady **body condition**. Some are specifically aimed at horses with metabolic sensitivity, while others are intended for active horses that need extra fuel without a heavy cereal load.

When comparing products, do not rely on the front of the bag alone. A feed may be grain free, but still contain quite a bit of **sugar** or enough **starch** to matter for a sensitive horse. Always check the analytical constituents and

ingredient list before deciding.

Is grain-free feed suitable for every horse?

Not necessarily. Good **horse feeding rules** start with the idea that the horse is a unique animal. A grain-free plan can be excellent for one horse and unsuitable for another. That is why **horse feed for beginners** advice usually begins with the basics: know the horse's weight, workload, temperament, forage access, and health history before selecting a feed.

Under standard **horse feed advice uk**, the first question is usually whether the horse really needs hard feed at all. Many horses do well on **forage** alone, especially if they are easy keepers. Others need a grain-free hard feed to supply extra nutrients, support condition, or help with training and work.

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Grain-free feed may be a good idea if your horse:

- Is a **good doer** and gains weight easily
- Has had **laminitis** or is considered at risk
- Needs a **low starch** diet for behavioural or digestive reasons
- Needs extra fibre rather than cereal energy
- Struggles with large amounts of traditional hard feed

It may be less suitable if the horse needs very high energy intake and cannot hold weight despite generous forage and an appropriate **complete horse feed**. In these cases, you may need a more concentrated solution, perhaps still grain free, but carefully chosen for energy density and nutrient profile.

How to check labels for grain-free ingredients

Reading labels is one of the most important skills in selecting grain-free **horse feed**. A feed can say "grain free" but still include ingredients that contribute considerable **sugar** or **starch**. Start with the ingredient panel, then move to the nutritional analysis, and finally compare that information with the feeding directions.

Check for:

- A direct claim that the feed is grain free
- Minimal listed **starch** and **sugar** levels
- A roughage-focused ingredient list
- Included **vitamins and minerals**
- Guidance for the total **daily ration**

Good ingredients often include alfalfa, beet pulp, grass, linseed, soya hulls, vegetable oil, and other fibrous sources. These help provide to a more **forage based** formula. If the feed is a **complete horse feed**, it should state that it can meet requirements when fed at the recommended amount. If not, it may need to be paired with a **balancer** or additional supplementation.

A **horse feeding chart** can help you compare the feed against your horse's size and workload, but it should be used alongside the label rather than instead of it. For horses with special needs, especially those prone to **laminitis**, a diet review is more important than marketing terms.

Do grain-free feeding plans still supply sufficient energy?

Yes, grain-free diets may deliver sufficient energy for numerous horses. The key is knowing the difference between energy from starch and energy from fibre and oil. A grain-free feed often uses fibre fermentation and fat as the main **energy source**, which can promote steady performance and better **digestive system** function.

For owners using a **horse feed calculator uk**, the goal is usually to match the feed to the horse's weight, workload, and condition without overfeeding calories. This helps avoid unnecessary weight gain while still supporting exercise, recovery, and overall health. The calculator can be a helpful starting point, but it cannot replace practical assessment of **body condition** and behaviour.

Grain-free diets may also affect **horse feed cost**. Some fibre-rich and specialised feeds are costlier per bag than basic mixes, but the true cost depends on how much is fed, how concentrated the product is, and whether it replaces other components in the ration. A more expensive bag may last longer if the feed is highly concentrated and fed in smaller amounts.

A well-formulated **complete horse feed** can still supply enough energy for work, provided it is fed according to the manufacturer's **feeding guide**. For horses with higher demands, energy may be increased through additional forage, oil, and a carefully selected conditioning product rather than cereal grains.

Cereal-free feeding choices by horse type

Different horses need varied feeding plans, and that is where practical **horse feed advice uk** is valuable. An easy **horse feeding chart** can guide owners align feed type to workload, but it should always be adapted for temperament, condition, and health history. For **horse feed for beginners**, the safest approach is to start with forage, then formulate the ration only if needed.

For easy keepers and overweight horses

Weighty horses usually respond well on controlled rations and plenty of low-calorie **forage**. For these horses, horse feeding rules often focus on keeping **calorie intake** down while maintaining chewing time and digestive comfort. A grain-free option can work very well here because it often supports a **high fibre**, low **starch** approach.

Rely on the **horse feed calculator uk** as a guide, then check bodyweight regularly and adjust. Steer clear of overfeeding conditioning products, even if they are grain free, because some still supply concentrated energy. For many good doers, a balancer with measured forage and a small amount of fibre feed is enough.

For horses that struggle to hold weight and working horses

Hard keepers and horses in heavier work may need a more generous ration. In these cases, a **complete horse feed** can be a useful option because it provides a nutrient-dense base without having to build a complicated mix from scratch. Some owners also use a home-made **horse feed mix recipe** to combine fibre, oil, and additional digestible calories.

For a **performance horse**, grain-free feeding can still support training if the ration is well planned. The most important factors are digestibility, fibre quality, and enough energy to maintain condition and recovery. A sensible mix may include a high-quality fibre feed, oil, and a balancer to cover **vitamins and minerals**.

How much does grain-free horse feed cost?

Horse feed cost differs greatly depending on presentation, nutritional concentration, and brand. When people ask **how much does horse feed cost**, the simple answer is that it depends on the feed's density and how much your horse actually needs each day. Grain-free products often cost more per bag than basic cereal mixes, but they may be fed in smaller quantities.

Several factors influence cost:

- Whether the product is a **complete horse feed** or a supplement
- The level of fibre and fat sources
- Added nutrients and targeted health support
- Brand positioning from **horse feed companies**
- How much is needed in the **daily ration**

It is useful to evaluate daily cost rather than cost per bag. A more dense feed may look expensive, but if it substitutes for several other items in the diet, the overall **horse feed cost** may be reasonable. Make sure to calculate feeding by the recommended amount, not by the front-label claim.

Can you prepare a grain free horse feed mix at home?

Yes, but it should be done carefully. A home **horse feed mix recipe** can be useful for people who want a say over ingredients, but it is simple to create an off-balance ration if you do not account for **vitamins and minerals**, fuel, and protein. Not every **types of horse feed** are appropriate for DIY formulating, especially if the horse has medical problems or special nutritional needs.

Numerous horse owners mix chopped fibre, beet pulp, linseed, oil, and a feed balancer. However, this is worth doing if the full ration remains **nutritionally balanced**. If you make your own mix, check it with reputable feeds from **horse feed companies** and ensure you are not lacking key nutrients.

The main risk with home-mixed feeds is assuming grain free automatically means secure or balanced. Without careful balancing, a feed can be too low in protein, too rich in **sugar**, or lacking in crucial essential nutrients. If you are unsure, choose a store-bought grain-free feed or obtain professional **horse feed advice uk**.

10 rules of feeding horses when choosing grain-free feed

These **10 rules of feeding horses** help ensure grain-free diets reasonable, safe, and practical:

- Base the diet on **forage** first.
- Select **grain free** feeds that are also **low sugar** and **low starch** if necessary.
- Tailor feed to the horse's **body condition** and workload.
- Review the **feed label** rather than relying on marketing claims.
- Rely on a **horse feeding chart** as a guide, not a fixed formula.
- Add any new feed gradually to support **digestive health**.
- Never assume all grain-free feeds are equal in energy or nutrition.
- Consider whether the ration needs a **balancer** or a **complete horse feed**.
- Keep an eye on **laminitis** risk and overall **hindgut health**.
- Review the diet regularly and adjust as work, season, or condition changes.

Sticking to these rules will help you develop a practical feeding plan rather than simply choosing a trendy product. Grain-free feeding works best when it is part of a careful, forage-led approach.

FAQ: grain-free horse feed questions answered

What horse feed is grain free?

Grain-free horse feed is any feed produced without cereal grains such as oats, barley, wheat, or maize. It usually relies on fibre, oil, and other non-cereal ingredients to deliver energy and nutrients. Many grain-free products are also low starch, low sugar, and high fibre.

Is grain-free horse feed always better?

No, it is not. It is better for some horses, but not automatically for all. The right feed depends on workload, body condition, digestive health, and individual sensitivity. Some horses do very well on a grain-free diet, while others may need a different approach that still meets their needs.

Can a horse get enough energy without grain?

Absolutely. Horses can get enough energy from forage, fibre, oil, and well-formulated complete horse feed. A grain-free diet can still support a performance horse or poor doer if it is carefully balanced and fed in the right quantity.

What should I look for on a grain-free feed label?

Focus on ingredient lists that emphasise fibre sources, plus analytical values for starch and sugar. See if the feed is a complete horse feed, and includes vitamins and minerals, and how much should be fed each day. The feeding guide is just as important as the ingredients.

How do I choose the right grain-free horse feed for my horse?

Begin with your horse's condition, workload, [fast delivery horse feed online](#) and any health concerns such as laminitis risk. Refer to horse feed advice uk sources, compare feed labels, and decide whether you need a balancer, conditioning feed, or complete horse feed. For horse feed for beginners, a forage-first plan is usually the best starting point.