
The truth about 'Lite' balancers | Spillers Feeds



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Published July 4, 2019

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When it comes to groceries, the term 'lite' is often used to describe foods that are lower in calories, fat or sugar than the 'regular' product but is the same true when shopping for horse feed?



Are 'lite' balancers really lower in calories?

On a kilo for kilo basis the calorie (or more correctly the energy) content of a 'lite' balancer is often lower than the 'non lite' alternative but, due to low feeding rate, this makes a negligible difference to the number calories your horse actually consumes. The calorie content of your feed or balancer may be listed on the bag or label as 'megajoules of digestible energy per kilogram' or 'MJ DE/ kg'. When you consider that most balancers are fed at a rate of just 500g per day for a 500kg horse, it really makes little difference whether the balancer you choose contains 9MJ DE/ kg or 12 MJ DE/ kg. Regardless of the manufacturer, balancers typically contribute just 4.5-6 MJ DE to the total diet vs. a daily requirement of approximately 84 MJ for a 500kg horse in light work.

Why choose a 'lite' balancer?

The additional benefits of choosing a 'lite' balancer will vary between manufacturers so if you're unsure, contact their helpline for advice. [SPILLERS Lite & Lean Balancer](#) is specifically designed for horses and ponies on restricted diets and in particular, contains a high level of lysine. It also contains added magnesium, FOS and cinnamon to help support a healthy metabolism.

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The importance of lysine

When it comes to protein, quality is just as important as quantity. Protein is made up of building blocks called amino acids and it is this profile of amino acids that determines its quality. Some amino acids are termed ‘essential’ because they can’t be produced by the horse and must be provided by the diet. Lysine is considered the most important essential amino acid and is also the one most likely to be deficient the horse’s diet. UK forage is typically low in lysine and may not meet requirements even when fed ad lib. If protein and in particular lysine requirements are not met, the body will need to break down lean tissue (muscle) to meet requirements. In addition to compromising your horse’s topline, burning muscle instead of fat eventually slows metabolism.

Finding the perfect SPILLERS balancer for your horse is easier than ever with our new interactive tool! This fun and straightforward tool takes the guesswork out of choosing the right option for your equine companion. For horses on restricted rations, the Lite & Lean Balancer offers optimal support with high-quality protein, vitamin E, and cinnamon. Older horses, however, may benefit more from the Supple & Senior Balancer, which provides additional joint support with glucosamine, MSM, and Omega 3. Use our tool to match your horse with their ideal balancer and ensure they receive the best nutritional support tailored to their needs- <https://www.spillers-feeds.com/which-balancer-should-i-choose>

For more advice on choosing a balancer contact the SPILLERS Care-Line

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Cutting calories is essential for weight loss but this shouldn't come at the expense of providing a balanced diet. Lysine is an essential amino acid and is one of several nutrients that may be deficient in a calorie restricted diet.

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Being able to spot the signs of laminitis early maximises your horse's chance of recovery. It pays to be vigilant, especially as subtle signs such as slight reluctance to turn or shortening of stride can be easily missed. While laminitis can strike in any season, a 'flush' of rapid grass growth makes spring a high-risk period, and so can turnout on a sunny frosty morning. Brush up your knowledge of the signs and what to do if you suspect your horse/pony may have laminitis in this blog.

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