
The truth about 'Lite' balancers | Spillers Feeds
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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.

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.

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

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