



## Feed Bags: Best Practices and Precautions

*Start slowly:* Introduce feeding with feed bags gradually. Let your horse get used to putting their heads into the bag with feed in it on the ground before you attach the headstall.

*Be patient:* Not every horse adapts to using a feed bag on the first day. That's okay! If your horse is struggling try again tomorrow.

*Let the herd tell you:* When the pasture bursts into feed time chaos there is a potential for injuries to both you and the horses. Wait to see who sorts themselves out in the pecking order before you jump in. Be aware of your surroundings at all times and make sure you've

done enough groundwork beforehand that everyone knows when you're in the pasture you are the boss.

*After awhile:* Rather quickly you will discover that using feed bags helps eliminate some common problems when feeding in the pasture. Because everyone has their meals to themselves there are less instances of bolting grain, kicking, biting or having to constantly chase the more dominant horses away from the less dominant.

*Not a babysitter:* Feed bags are a wonderful tool to save grain and lessen stress

at feed time. But use common sense, they are not meant to keep the bully horse muzzled while everyone else eats. The feed bag should be removed as soon as a horse finishes eating. Leaving them on too long can encourage destruction of your bag or worse yet, be downright dangerous.

*A word on supplements:* When using feed bags keep in mind that both your horses nostrils and their feed are in a confined space. If your horse gets a large quantity of powdered supplements consider adding a small amount of water to keep them from having to inhale a lot of powder.

*Good judgment:* Practice good judgment when deciding if feed bags are right for you.

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