



THE BIG TWO FORAGE GRASSES: TIMOTHY AND ORCHARD

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High quality forage is critical for proper digestive function in horses. Forage (hay/pasture) makes up 60-100% of the diet for horses, depending on their function and activity. For horses that are stalled, or for horses that do not have abundant pasture, stored forage in the form of hay is the primary source of forage. The most popular choices for grasses to be utilized as horse hay are Timothy Grass and Orchard Grass making them the big two forage grasses.

Timothy Grass

Timothy Grass is the traditional favorite among horse owners. Much of this tradition is due to the fact that Timothy was one of the first grasses cultivated for horse hay. Therefore, feeding Timothy Grass has a well-established comfort level with horse people. High quality Timothy Grass contains a moderate amount of protein, usually testing at approximately 8% protein. It has a consistent and balanced ratio of calcium to phosphorus and Timothy Grass has a low to moderate calorie content. Timothy Grass is also a rich source of fiber. Seemingly, the only potential draw-back with Timothy Grass is availability. Timothy grass usually yields just two cuttings per year and requires a significant amount of water to grow. These two factors along with its

traditional popularity limit the supply of Timothy Grass hay.

Orchard Grass

Orchard Grass is the emerging super star of the horse hay world. Orchard Grass is a highly palatable grass with a high nutrient content. Orchard Grass is higher in protein (10-12%), higher in calorie content and contains the same balanced levels of calcium and phosphorus as Timothy grass. The higher calorie content of Orchard Grass is a result of higher fiber digestibility compared to Timothy Grass. The high nutrient intake delivered by Orchard Grass hay translates into potentially less grain the horse would need to eat to satisfy energy and protein requirements. Compared to Timothy Grass, Orchard Grass grows better in moderate drought conditions and provides a solid three hay cuttings per year. With three cuttings instead of two cuttings, Orchard Grass produces consistent soft texture hay that horses readily consume with minimal or no waste.

Standlee Premium Western Forage produces both Timothy Grass and Orchard Grass forage products. This helps ensure your horses always have a high quality grass forage option to utilize.



Timothy Grass



Orchard Grass