

Leanne's Forage Tips



Question: How much land do I need to graze my horse 1 year?

Answer:

For starters, let's calculate how much I can expect my horse to eat.

- Horses are natural grazers: 75% of the day is spent grazing and 50% of the night.
- Horses will eat 1.5-2% of their body weight per day.
 - 1000 lb horse @ 2% = 20 lbs / day
 - 30 days X 20 lbs = 600 lbs / month
 - 12 mos X 600 lbs = 7200 lbs / year : this is total intake with no waste

Next, how much I can expect my pasture to produce?

- A top quality, highly fertilized, no weeds, brome pasture may produce 3 tons / year or 6000 lbs.
- An average pasture may produce 2 tons / year or 4000 lbs.
- Remember this is subject to Mother Nature's weather conditions.
 - To maintain the grass health you should take half and leave half. (3000 lbs)
 - The horses will walk, urinate and defecate on some. (1500 lbs)
 - This leaves 1500 lbs to eat (6000-3000-1500).

The bottom line is:

7200 lbs needed per year / 1500 lbs available =
4.8 acres / horse / year

** Note: This calculation needs to be adjusted for the weight of your horse and the production of your pasture.



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