

Getting your horse to accept food from a Nosebag.

Most, if not all horses adapt quickly to eating their rations from a bag hung from the top of their head. For the first feed or two it is best if the horse is hungry, such as after being worked, even lightly, for an hour or two.

Water the horse and tie him up. Adjust the head strap of the nosebag to what you think will be a comfortable fit for the horse. Make up a small feed with a few extra oats, cut up carrots or apple, damp it down with molasses and water, tip it into the nosebag and offer it to the horse.

As he puts his head into the bag to get at the feed, quietly slip the head strap over his head and let him get on with eating the feed. When the horse's head is raised the top of the bag should be just below the level of his eyes. If not, quietly adjust the head strap. Remove the bag as soon as he is finished the feed.

If your horse will not put their head down to get the bottom of the bag on the ground so they can reach the feed. Place the bag on the ground or in the your usual feed bin to start with making sure that the top is open. If your horse is hungry he/she will put their head down and into the nosebag to get a mouthful. Let him/her do that until she is comfortable sticking her nose in. Take note how far up her nose the top of the bag reaches when him/she is getting a mouthful. When him/her is getting a mouthful quietly place the strap over her head and adjust it so the top of the bag is a couple of inches below where it reached when she was feeding. By now he/she will have worked out that to get the feed she needs to put her head down and the job is done.

Some horses, when eating from a nose bag will take a mouthful of feed and raise their head while they masticate the food. Others will keep the head lowered until all the feed is consumed.

DO NOT give a horse dry feed in a nosebag. Blowing into the feed to separate the chaff from those delightful oats causes the dry feed to blow up into his face, and in order to escape this he tosses his head in the air, resulting in a real shower of feed down his face, and then you will have real trouble.

PRECAUTION. Always damp down feeds or use a feed mixed with molasses when feeding in a nosebag .

DO NOT leave a horse loose when feeding from a nosebag, as horses have been drowned by wandering over to the water trough or dam to drink, filling the bag with water, and as he could not get rid of the bag of water from his head, the poor animal drowned.

PRECAUTION. Always tie up horses or hold your horse when given their feed in a nosebag.