

## **Fruits & Veggies for your Horse-What's safe and what's not...**



Horses are herbivores, meaning they are physiologically & anatomically designed to eat plants & grasses. In the wild, they are unlikely to encounter many fruits or vegetables. However, carefully chosen fruits & vegetables fed in moderation is a welcome treat for any horse. In my search for a complete & trustworthy list of safe & unsafe fruits/vegetables for horses, I was shocked to read that people were feeding their horses things like chocolate, sardines, potato chips, bread, potatoes and other unhealthy & potentially dangerous foods.

If in my research there was any controversy as to the safety of a food I listed it as unsafe. My motto is "When in doubt...throw it out" or "Better safe... than sorry".

First, a few safety tips.

- Be sure & cut the fruit/veggie in safe pieces (strips rather than chunks) to avoid choking.
- I personally recommend avoiding any seeds or pits.
- Again I want to stress that these foods should be fed sparingly, more as a treat than a meal.
- According to my research, the following foods are safe in small amounts (just the fruit/vegetables-the safety of all the leaves/stems is not addressed here-so don't assume because the fruit is safe that the leaves are too)
- For IR horses check out the Nutrition Data link below-I did look up some of the more common ones

- Apples, cut into pieces; red delicious and not the sour types (a small apple has 15g of sugar)
- Apricots (pitted)\*\*\*
- Bananas (high in sugar-less than 6" long banana-about 81g-has10g of sugar)
- Beets, cut up (high in sugar-1 cup 9g of sugar)
- Blueberries (1 cup 15g of sugar)
- Cantaloupe including rinds (1 cup diced 12 g of sugar)
- Carrots, cut into pieces (small 5 ½"long 2 g of sugar)
- Celery
- Cherries (pitted) \*\*\*
- Cranberries
- Dates, pitted-1 pitted date( 7g) contains 4g of sugar
- Grapes-seedless, red or green-10 grapes has 8g of sugar
- Green beans
- Guava
- Iceberg lettuce
- Oranges and orange & lemon rinds
- Parsnips (careful-foliage causes skin photosensitivity and a rash)
- Peaches (pitted) \*\*\*
- Pears (pitted)
- Plums- prunes also okay but will be higher in sugar (both need to be pitted) \*\*\*
- Raisins, seedless-1 oz (60 raisins) 17 g of sugar
- Split peas-good source of protein-60 grams supplies 15g of protein
- Strawberries (can include the tops)
- Sweet potato-high in starch-1 cup of cubes has16.8g of starch

- Squashes (pumpkins, butternut, acorn, zucchini)
- Watermelon including rinds (1 cup diced 9g of sugar)

\*\*\*Even though this fruit is safely consumed by humans, the leaves, shoots, bark and pits of the fruit contain cyanogenic glycosides that can cause poisonings in livestock.

### **AVOID-considered poisonous to horses:**

**Avocados, onions, rhubarb & persimmons.**

**Vegetables and fruits of the nightshade family – Potatoes, tomatoes, all sweet and hot peppers, eggplant, tomatillos, tamarios, pepinos, pimentos, paprika, and cayenne peppers.**

**Cruciferous vegetables-broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, brussels sprouts, mustard family, horseradish, winter cress, turnips. Some sources warn that these can cause gas in some horses & may cause gas colic, while other sources list poisoning of livestock, including horses.**

**Chocolate is dangerous to horses as they are unable to metabolize the theobromine in chocolate. Can cause severe colic, seizures & metabolic derangements.**

#### References:

- <http://nutritiondata.self.com/>
- <http://avocadopoisoninghorses.com/>
- <http://horses.about.com/od/basiccare/a/feedingtreats.htm>
- <http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/avocado>
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**If you have reliable updates/information on the safety or danger of any fruits/vegetables please contact me.**

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<http://www.shotgunranch.me/>