

Do NOT feed your donkey!

Feed intended for other animals; bread, cake, wheat, meat. Plants poisonous to donkeys: Acorns, sycamore seeds, avocado, azalea, cow parsnip or Queen Anne's lace, daphne, delphinium, foxglove, grass clippings, ngaio, oleander, oleria, green potatoes, ragwort, rhododendron, rhubarb leaves, wisteria and yew.

Note: **Clippings** from any hedge plant should never be left where donkeys have access to them unless it is absolutely certain they are not poisonous. Azalea and macrocarpa will abort an in foal jenny.



These donkeys are on the verge of becoming overweight. They are just starting to get fat lumps on their sides. With careful control of their feed they will gradually lose the weight and return to normal.

When dieting donkeys never leave them without anything to eat. If dieting your donkey make sure it always has access to straw so it has high fibre/low protein food to chew on. This will keep fibre moving through its gut and its stomach will not be empty.

Donkeys are prone to hyperlipaemia if starved.

Donkeys enjoy eating barley straw which provides necessary roughage. Donkeys should also be provided with shelter such as a shed or with a waterproof cover to protect it from rain as donkeys lack the oils, its cousin the horse, has in it's coat.

Information flyers available from the Secretary at this time include pamphlets:

> Looking After Your Donkey's Feet

> Improving The Lives of Donkeys & Mules in NZ

The booklet > **Differences, Anatomy & Care—Donkeys, Mules & Horses** is available for \$2.20 plus a self addressed, stamped C5 envelope from the Secretary.



- Check on the **Donkey and Mule Protection Trust NZ web site** for a list of local contacts. They are happy to talk to you if you need further advice.

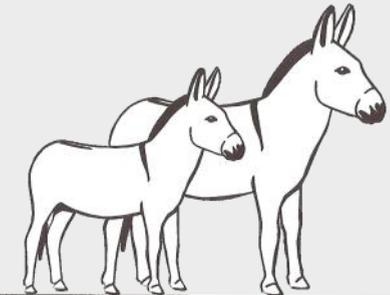
For further information Contact:

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What To Feed Your Donkey



Donkey and Mule Protection Trust NZ

NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANISATION INCORPORATED #1638328

Non-Profit Charitable Organisation
Incorporated #1638328
www.donkey-mule.trust.org.nz

Donkeys are herbivores and eat small amounts slowly and continuously browse and graze.

Donkeys' natural food is coarse grass, roughage, leaves, bark, branches, thistles, blackberry and herbs. Donkeys are not in their natural environment in New Zealand. Our rich lush grass is the opposite of what they need and too much rich feed can soon founder a donkey. Our donkeys rely on us to ensure that they are given feed that will keep them healthy.

If your pasture is lush it is essential to feed your donkey a slab of **barley straw** daily. Ideally it should have free access to straw all the time. The donkeys craving for roughage is greatest in spring and autumn when the grass is rich and lush.

Donkeys should not be fed high protein, high energy feed.

If you over feed your donkey or give it access to too much rich grass it will become obese and may founder.



Obese donkey. This donkey is grossly overweight. Her neck has a fat roll along it and the neck is in danger of dropping over to one side. Once a neck drops it cannot usually be reversed. This donkey also has large fat lumps along her body and over her rump. When a donkey is allowed to eat large amounts of unsuitable feed it will get too fat. It is cruel to allow a donkey to become overweight. Rehabilitation

Hay: A slab of hay should be fed in addition to straw when there is not enough grass and also during the winter when there is little goodness in the grass. The hay should be meadow hay that is sweet smelling. The best hay for donkeys is that made from native grasses without clover or rye grass content. Do not feed Lucerne hay as it is too rich for donkeys

Always make a **salt/mineral block** freely available.

Donkeys need to be fed a **vitamin/mineral supplement** several times a week to keep them healthy as well as calcium. An example of a suitable small hard feed is a double handful of oaten or meadow hay chaff (or both mixed together); a teaspoon of vitamin/mineral supplement; a teaspoon of calcium, and if you choose a handful of non grain pellets (NRM make a **non grain pellet** called Lite Brew which is suitable for donkeys.) dampened with a splash of 50/50 cider vinegar and water or just water.

Donkeys should not normally be fed grain. However, elderly or very thin donkeys can be fed a cup of well boiled barley daily to help them regain condition.



Thin donkey. This donkey's back slopes down sharply from his backbone instead of being slightly convex, and his hind quarters are also concave instead of being convex. The donkey's ribs are visible but should be covered by a layer of muscle and fat.

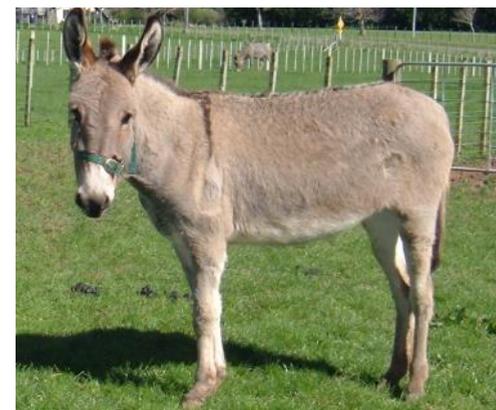
Treats: carrot or small apple, or half a large one. Apples are high in carbohydrates. Always cut carrots lengthwise and cut small apples in half to avoid choking.

Make any **changes of feed** gradually to avoid colic or digestive upsets.

Water: make sure your donkey always has access to clean water.

Teeth: Your donkeys' teeth should be checked by a vet or equine dentist every two years. Dropping feed, or not eating can be due to teeth problems. Often you may not be aware of painful sharp points that have grown on your donkey's teeth which can cut his mouth or cause ulcers. Bad teeth are one of the two major causes of colic.

Worming: You should worm your donkey regularly to ensure it receives the benefit of the food provided and stays healthy. Muck out your paddock daily to reduce the worm burden and maximize the grass that it can eat. Donkeys will not eat fouled grass. You increase the grass available by 40% if you pick up manure daily. Worms are the second major cause of colic. Donkey manure is excellent for the garden or used as mulch around trees.



A donkey in good condition. This donkey is neither too thin nor fat. Her frame is nicely covered and her hind quarters are rounded. She has been properly fed.