Mould & Yeast levels in Stockfeed

It is important to note that high mould levels don't necessarily indicate a presence of mycotoxins. The mould level itself could be harmful to livestock production and health. In high rainfall years or where moisture has infiltrated your feed, mould and yeast levels will increase. Whilst there is little research on yeast, we do know that given the right conditions, yeast thrive by feeding on the nutrients of the feed, hence multiply and decrease the overall quality of your feed. Side effects of high yeast include *decreased* digestibility and energy, in conjunction with *increased* fibre levels. Musty odour and reduced palatability are also indicators. So whilst there is no table to compare results to, we know this is the case when compared to a nutritional analysis (NIR). This is why it is just as important to get a mould and yeast analysis completed on your feed.

Table 1. Safe feeding levels of mould in ruminant feeds

Mount count (CFU/G)	Recommendations for use in livestock (cattle/sheep)
Under 500,000	Relatively low count
500,000 to 1 million	Relatively safe
1 to 2 million	Discount energy (x 0.95). Feed with caution.
2 to 3 million	Closely observe animals and performance. Discount energy (x 0.95).
3 to 5 million	Dilute with other feeds. Discount energy (x 0.95). Observe closely.
Over 5 million	Discontinue feeding

Source: Mold and Mycotoxin Problems in Livestock Feeding (psu.edu)

Table 2. Safe feeding levels of mould in horse feed

Mount count (CFU/G)	Recommendations for use in livestock (horses)
Under 500,000	Relatively low risk
500,000 to 1 million	Relatively safe
1 to 2 million	Feed with caution
2 to 3 million	Closely observe animals and performance
3 to 5 million	Dilute with other feeds
Over 5 million	Discontinue feeding

Source: Mold and Mycotoxins in Horse Hay (psu.edu)

- CFU/G = colony forming unit per gram
- Mould spore count is tested on an 'as received' basis