

## Good air in the horse stable – what is important?

The horse's respiratory tract is sensitive. Excessive levels of dust particles and harmful gases in the stable air can damage the respiratory tract. The healing process is then often protracted. In addition, affected animals require special treatment with regard to feed and bedding in the long term. In order to prevent lung problems, bedding management in the loosebox is crucial.



### Bedding material produces dust

A critical dust concentration cannot be influenced solely by the choice of bedding. This is shown in a study on dust exposure with different bedding materials by Swiss Agricultural Research. Rather, management factors (ventilation, manure removal, ...) play a decisive role. Therefore, horses should not be in the loosebox especially in the first hour after fresh bedding has been spread out, as this is when dust exposure is the highest (Herholz et al., 2020).

### Remove wet bedding material daily

The remaining of wet bedding in the loosebox for several days causes the ammonia concentration to increase significantly (Herholz et al., 2020). Therefore, it is crucial that the wet bedding is completely removed during daily mucking out. The less bedding there is in the loosebox, the easier it is to implement the alternating bedding method. Measurements by Nürtingen-Geislingen University, Germany, also show that a reduced amount of bedding does not have a negative effect on the ammonia concentration in the air (Benz, 2013).

### Rubber mats facilitate implementation of the alternating bedding method

Bedding creates dust. The less bedding, the lower the dust load. Soft-elastic rubber mats take over the functions of thermal insulation and slip resistance, whereby the amount of bedding can be reduced. The bedding used should then have good absorbency. With less bedding, the daily manure volume also decreases. This makes it easier to remove wet bedding completely every day.

