

Slow Feed Netted Bag for Nepal Livestock Farmers

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### Section 1

#### Product Information

Slow feed netting is a netted bag with an open hole and a drawstring that holds hay and can be suspended above the ground reducing the waste of feed (Slow Feed Netting, n.d). Feeding without the netted bag can cause more wastage as when livestock, particularly horses, pull out hay from a bale, anything that falls to the ground gets trampled on and forgotten (Henschel 2014). As well as the advantage of cost savings and reducing the amount of hay wasted, the bag itself provides for more space and saves time for the farmer. There are also health benefits to the livestock. There are not many scholarly articles on the product itself but there are some magazine articles that discuss the benefits of the slow feed nets which are produced here in Canada by Slow Feed Netting in Welland, Ontario.

Within some of these articles, there are comments about feed waste and the author compares the slow feed bags to other traditional forms of feeding such as free feed or feeding by a large bale. The amount of hay waste with free feed was 57%, costing about \$91.20 per ton, whereas the slow feeder reported only 6% wastage which is only \$9.60 per ton, both based on 27 lbs of daily consumption at \$160/ton (Feeding Horses 2012). This demonstrates a striking cost savings in using the slow feeder.

The slow feeder saves space, time, and is easy to maintain, generally only having to fix simple holes in the net (Slow Feeding Netting, n.d.). The bag can be hung on a post or tied in some way to another object for the livestock to easily gain access to it and to keep it off the ground. The netted bags' webbing will not shrink with rain or snow and has an added UV inhibitor allowing it to withstand adverse weather conditions (Procter 2014). There is then, less

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concern for the farmer about the effects of wear and tear and the condition of the bag and reduced replacement costs.

In addition to reducing waste, the slow feed netting moderates the health factors; wasted hay left on the ground raises the concern of hoof health, forcing the farmer or owner to do extensive cleaning of the rotting hay, which takes time out of their day (Feeding Horses 2012). It also reduces respiratory problems by reducing inhalation of dust as the livestock cannot get their head fully into the bag (Procter 2014). Lastly, the netted bag can stimulate a more natural feeding method where there is more feed and forage over longer hours, breaking up the monotony of the day and slowing down the speed at which they eat (Feeding Horses 2012; Slow Feed Netting, n.d.).

The work and effort that goes into providing feed for livestock is not inexpensive, and hay wastage can often put households in a bind financially (Ricketts 2002). Reducing the amount of hay that is required to feed livestock can improve and may even increase the probability of profit on farms and for farmers (Ricketts 2002).

Slow Feed Netting produces many hay netted bags of various sizes and provides for various ways for hay to be stored. The one that will be the focus of this assessment will be a product called the Nibble Net as it is one of the least expensive products available but is still reasonable for the farmer to purchase for the added benefits the bag can give.

### Exporting Company Information

The exporting company called Slow Feed Netting in Welland, Ont., is a division of Turf Net Sports Supplies owned by Tim Procter (Slow Feed Netting, n.d.). To contact Slow Feed

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Netting, the toll free phone number is 1-877-617-8787, or by their email, info@slowfeednetting.com. Any further information can be accessed through their company website, www.slowfeednetting.com. Slow Feed Netting has additional distributors within Canada that can be contacted as well. There are distributors are in Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan and their contact info is on the Slow Feed Netting website (Slow Feed Netting n.d). The company of Turf Net Sports Supplies was not originally in the equine industry, and the making of slow feed netting bags for horses and livestock (Henschel 2014). The majority of what the company produces is for sports purposes, containment netting, artificial turf, putting greens and golf range supplies (Turf Net, n.d.). Procter started developing the slow feed netting bags after he was approached by a customer who had an unusual request to manufacture a netted bag for equine purposes (Henschel 2014). In addition to the netted bag, Procter has included a repair kit with every purchase because with livestock, holes in the bag can occur. The repair kit is simple to use and instructions are included which are easy to understand (Henschel 2014).

### Manufacturing

The Canadian company, Slow Feed Netting, a division of Turf Net Sports Supplies, is owned by Tim Procter and prides itself in the fact that it only uses Canadian companies. They fabricate the bags in Welland Ontario and source their webbing from Nova Scotia, (Henschel 2014). Through personal communication with Tim Procter, (T. Procter, personal communication Oct. 22, 2015), the webbing comes from a Nova Scotia company called Warp TECH Inc. Further research into Warp TECH Inc. revealed that it is located in Yarmouth, NS, and was established in 1997, now employing approximately 20 employees (Warp TECH 2011). Unfortunately, there

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was no further information on the company. Although contact with the director of the company, Alex Pressburger, may provide more information if required through his phone number, 902-742-6901 or the email provided on the website, [www.companylisting.ca/WARP\\_TECH\\_Inc](http://www.companylisting.ca/WARP_TECH_Inc) (Warp TECH 2011).

### Benefits to Canada

Canada could benefit greatly from exporting to Nepal, and in turn the benefits provided to farmers in Nepal and the country of Nepal with the potential cost savings, could aid in getting the country out of poverty. The major advantage of the increase of exporting more products is the increase in jobs it will create in the manufacturing sector. The manufacturing sector has seen a dramatic decline in jobs and businesses throughout the years, and has had a major impact in Ontario and Nova Scotia, as well as other provinces and Canada as a whole. In addition, the rise in production and the increase of jobs for manufacturing businesses will diversify employment in Nova Scotia. Because of the province's proximity to the ocean, a large proportion of the population are in the fishing industry and dependent on fish related industries. Creating more jobs in the manufacturing industry will strengthen the workforce and will help to stabilize the economy of the province.

Lastly, exporting to Nepal will open up more trading opportunities for other products and aid in creating a better relationship with Nepal. It would also facilitate in exploring opportunities for export of similar products to other countries that are in a similar situation. There are other benefits but these are the most obvious and advantageous to Canada.

Over the past couple of years the manufacturing sector has had a period of drive slow down, and finally a significant decline (Bernard 2010). In most cases, declines in the

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manufacturing jobs can have considerable negative effects, especially in regions that are not as diversified (Bernard 2010). When a plant closes down in of these undiversified regions, it can result in a weakened economy (Bernard 2010). Textile is defined as any cloth or goods produced by weaving, knitting, or felting (Dictionary 2015). Manufacturing of textiles and clothing had long been the one the largest in terms of employment but it was also the one that was hit the hardest in job decline from 2004 to 2008 (Bernard 2010). Clothing and textiles saw a loss of almost all of their jobs (Bernard 2010). Slow Feed Netting, which is made of nylon, may not be a normal product of the textile industry. However, it may use the same processes commonly found in a textile industry such as nylon webbing.

In continuation of the theme of increase of jobs, the majority of the manufacturing jobs are based in both Québec and Ontario, making up the industrial core of Canada (Bernard 2010). In 2008, manufacturing jobs represented 14% in Québec and 13.5% in Ontario, and together amount for more than 1.4 million of the manufacturing jobs nation-wide (Bernard 2010). The largest drop of jobs from 2004 to 2008 was in Ontario, where almost one in five jobs disappeared or 18.1% (Bernard 2010). Another province that saw a major decline was in Nova Scotia where about 10.3% of the jobs have disappeared ((Bernard 2010). The two companies outlined in this analysis are located in Ontario and Nova Scotia; if there was an increase of production in these companies within the provinces that had the most devastating declines, it will help reverse the effects and increase the jobs available.

Nova Scotia is known to employ many Canadians in the fish industry as they are close to the ocean and therefore there are many companies that are also in this industry. As of June 1917, nearly thirteen thousand workers were employed in the canning and preserving of fish nation-

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wide (Jackson 1920). Nova Scotia contributes greatly to this statistic, which creates a narrow variation of the employment within the province. The other disadvantage is the seasonality of the industry, having to take time off in the winter months, or an exponential diminishing of work, leading to many workers taking time off and not receiving any income (Jackson 1920). However, if manufacturing jobs were to open up, there would be more people that would have jobs all year long, as there is no seasonality when working in a factory. This would widen the job variation in Nova Scotia for local residents as well as for those planning on residing in Nova Scotia without a fishing background and it would encourage more people to move to Nova Scotia seeking jobs in the manufacturing field.

Finally, exporting to Nepal will develop a better and advantageous relationship between Canada and Nepal. Nepal may be able to offer Canada imports that will provide significant advantages and gains in the future. Since there will be an existing relationship, it will ease the exporting of goods from Nepal to Canada.

## Section 2

### Background on Nepal

Nepal is a very small and poor country with the majority of its twenty-seven million people, 35% of this population, living under the national poverty line (Shrestha 2008). If the poverty line was determined by earning \$2 US per day, then this figure would increase to 69% of the population (Shrestha 2008). The land area of Nepal is about 140 640 square kilometers, bordered by India and China (Background on Nepal 1984). The country can be separated into three zones, the mountain region, the hills and the terai (Background on Nepal 1984). The mountain region is sparsely settled and the majority of farms are for livestock as the land is very

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difficult to cultivate (Background on Nepal 1984). The hills are in the middle belt of the country with a denser population than the mountains, about 52% of the population, 30% of the total land is cultivated here (Background on Nepal 1984). Lastly, the terai is the lower lying plains and produces about 55% of Nepal's agricultural output (Background on Nepal 1984). As a whole, nearly 85% of the population live in rural areas of which 76% are in the agriculture sector, with farming as their number one source of income (Shrestha 2008).

Agriculture is very important to the Nepalese and Nepal as a whole as it accounts for 40% of the gross national income (Shrestha 2008). However, most of the families in Nepal are living on less than an acre of land to provide for the family, produce an income and provide for any livestock the household may or may not have (Shrestha 2008). Livestock are key components of the livelihoods of Nepalese and make a substantial contribution to households (Maltsoğlu, Taniguchi 2004). Ownership of livestock provides income and security and helps every member of the household, for both men and women (Waithanji, Njuk, Bagalwa, n.d.). Men own the livestock and the women sell the livestock products, such as milk (Waithanji, Njuk, Bagalwa, n.d.). Livestock are an asset to the daily income and provisions provided to the household (Waithanji, Njuk, Bagalwa, n.d.).

Ownership of livestock is also important to the farmers and provides a source of income for the farmers from the products. The labour provided by larger animals allows for more productivity and less time requirement in the field. Most families in Nepal that own livestock tend to raise a variety of livestock as the contribution of each animal is necessary (R.P., 1982). The most predominate livestock depends on the location of the owner (R.P., 1982). For example, buffalo are more prominent in places closer to markets as there is more milk production



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in buffalo and it is easier to be closer to the market (R.P., 1982). Almost all households, though, own goats and beef for two main reasons, one being for religious reasons and the other, pertaining to beef mainly, for draft purposes (R.P., 1982). Another important product from the livestock is the manure as there are no chemical fertilizers for their crops (R.P., 1982). Manure is viewed as the most important reason to own livestock for fertilizing the field, with an average family spreading 2744 kg of manure each year (Shrestha & Evans, 1984). Livestock add to the farm and to the families by giving products to use or sell, shorten the amount of time for labour on the crops and the free, essential organic fertilizer for the crops as well.

### Benefits of Export Potential to Nepal

The slow feed netted bag would be accommodating to the Nepalese farmers as it reduces the amount of waste of hay and has low maintenance, cutting costs to the Nepalese. Nepal holds rank as being the country with lowest per capita income, the second highest poverty rate and is highly dependent on agriculture as a source of income (Bishwambher, Y.B., & Devesh 2005). Therefore, in order to help Nepalese, it is necessary to provide a product that is fairly cheap and it is important that it be very productive and useful in the agriculture sector. The Nibble Net would be useful as it fairly inexpensive, and it provides a simple way to reduce the amount of feed required for the livestock by reducing the amount of waste.

The costs of agriculture and livestock in particular, can be astronomical in terms of labour hours for management of livestock and time as well as costs for the feed (Shrestha & Evans, 1984). The amount of hours put into the livestock are dependent on the age and gender of each family member; a male will put in an average of 1.54 hours of labour per day, a female 3.99 hour of labour per day and a child will put in an average of 2.04 hours of labour into the

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livestock (Shrestha & Evans, 1984). In a year the average numbers of hours of livestock input are 562.1, 1456.0 and 746.1 for a male, female, and child, respectively (Shrestha & Evans, 1984). Shrestha and Evans further their analysis by converting the amount of hours devoted to the amount of pay that may have accumulated if they were paid and the average wage of a worker taking into account the difference of wages between males, females, and an assumed wage for children (1984). With all this considered, that amount of time a family allocates to the livestock could result in an income of Rs 1053-50 per year, which averages around \$79.77 US (Shrestha & Evans, 1984).

Other costs associated with livestock is for the feed; out of all the farmers in the hills region from Shrestha and Evans' sample, none of them had land allocated for grazing, which led to most of the livestock being tethered or grazed on communal land fed on crop residues (1984). However, the products, labour and manure that is provided when raising livestock, cover the cost it takes to raise the livestock (Shrestha & Evans, 1984).

This is where the Nibble Net could be of further assistance; the crop residues could be filled in the bag, reducing the amount of waste feed and allowing the farmer to lengthen the amount of time the livestock eat through the residues. The idea behind this is to further increase the difference between the cost of raising livestock and the savings from the products, income, and fertilizer. If the gap between can widen there may be a possibility of the farmer being able to slowly accumulate money to go towards other everyday living standards that could not be addressed before, such as health care.

However, the Nibble Net may not but the best option. The best way to determine if the Nibble Net is appropriate for Nepalese would to implement the bag as an experiment, being

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tested with a few farmers to obtain feedback about the product, any benefits, any changes that could be made, or if the product is not of any use to the farmers. Through this experiment, more knowledge can be obtained about the product and how to improve the product to fit their needs and lifestyle.

### Transportation

Transportation is a huge issue for the Nepalese who want to import this product, particularly the distance and price. Since the distance between Canada and Nepal is so great it forces the price to rise once the cost of shipping is factored in. There was little information on the size of the product and therefore an approximation was made as to how many Nibble Nets can fit into a box of certain size. It can be shipped by Canada Post in a box 60cm by 30cm by 30cm, weighing about 5 lbs, estimating it can hold about 15 packages of Nibble Nets for \$151.48, by surface freight from Welland to Kathmandu Nepal (Canada Post 2015). However, this may not be the best option, as it would involve shipping little product over a far distance and would take longer. However, it is unclear as to how much the receiver company, Ratna Feed Industries, or any other company in the livestock business in Nepal could afford to import and store. The other limitation is the fact that many farmers in the hills, where the livestock is often seen tethered, are in remote locations and without road access. Therefore, a method for these farmers to get the product must be solved in order to get access to the product.

### Importing Nepalese Company

The company that will receive the goods will be Ratna Feed Industries (P) Ltd. in Kathmandu, Nepal, a company working in animal feed for all types of livestock, making it more accessible to farmers (Livestock 2014). Unfortunately, there was very limited information on this

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company. The benefit of the company being situated in the capital is the fact that the product is also situated in a place where there is a lot of traffic and it is more developed to be able to ship out to other locations on the country. However the disadvantage, as outlined before, would be that the ones that would gain the most benefits, may be unable to attain access to the product because of their remote location.

### Export Documents

Since there is a product that is being shipped internationally, there must be exporting documents acquired in order for the products to leave Canada legally. However, finding documentation on the Nibble Net was very limited and therefore the information provided is for a broader variance in the goods. The first thing that the exporters most do is obtain an export business number from the Canada Revenue Agency (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). The next thing to do is to identify the type of goods being exported and whether or not the goods are admissible in the importing country (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). The next decision to make will be whether or not the exporter will use a customs broker (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). Next, verify if the goods are controlled, regulated, or prohibited to be exported by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and obtain a permit if required (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). The exporter then has to determine if an export declaration is needed (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). If one is not needed, the exporter must advise the carrier and indicate no declaration was required, NDR, with the proper explanation or the numerical code for that specific transport (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). But if one is needed, a few extra steps must be taken; the exporter has to obtain the appropriate export code from Statistics Canada's Canadian Export Classification, and an export declaration must be filled out

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and submitted (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). Then the method of shipping is chosen and the export reporting time frame is determined for this method, if required (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). If the export needs a declaration form, most forms can be submitted online through the Canadian Automated Export Declaration (CAED) or G7 Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), or if necessary, submit a paper in B13A Export Declaration (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). However, if the electronic permits are for some reason not working a paper copy must be presented at the CBSA office closest to the exit point (Canada Border Services Agency 2014). The CBSA website also advises to keep the records of exports for six years after the date of exporting (2014). After all of these steps are taken, the goods can then be exported to the intended country.

In addition to export documentations, there are opportunities to have taxable supplies be zero-rated, and therefore GST/HST is not charged if made available to purchasers outside of Canada (Canada Revenue Agency 2013). However there are certain conditions that must be met (Canada Revenue Agency 2013). The ones that are related or that can be applied to this product outlined in this paper are that the purchaser will not buy the goods to be consumed, used or supplied in Canada before exporting. (Canada Revenue Agency 2013) Another is that the purchaser does not do any further processing, transformations, or altering of the goods in Canada after purchase, unless there is a reasonable necessity in order to transport them (Canada Revenue Agency 2013). The last condition that could be applied is that the exporter keeps satisfactory evidence that the purchaser had the goods exported (Canada Revenue Agency 2013). The zero-rating of the taxes could be used to help reduce the cost of the Nibble Nets for the Nepalese consumers.

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### Costs

Slow Feed Netting would manufacture a Nibble Net that can hold about two flakes of hay and cost only \$30 CAD (Slow Feed Netting, n.d.). Then Canada Post will be able to send a package that holds approximately 15 packages for \$151.48. The cost of taxes or any other unforeseen costs were not included on this estimate. However, this may not be the best option as very little product is being shipped and the price is also fairly high to ship. Other options could be implemented to reduce the cost as much as possible to make the Nibble Net suitable for Nepalese farmers.

### Competition

There were many Canadian and American companies that produce a netted hay bag similar to the one produced by Slow Feed Netting. To give a better visual and organization, the company name, the product name, the benefits, price, and their retailers of the product can be shown through table 1 in the Appendix. The products from each company were chosen based on similar size and features of the Nibble Net by Slow Feed Netting. These other products may be suitable for a Nepalese farmer yet one must look at the price, features and it should be tested with a small group to determine if the product is useful and beneficial. The use of retailers closer to Nepal may be able to reduce the cost to the consumer. A slight variation of the size of the bag may also provide the consumer with better benefits; if the consumer uses a bigger bag, they would have to refill the bag less than with the Nibble Net, although this cannot be determined until a study is done to determine which would be the best fit for Nepal consumers.

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### Recommendations

This product, the Nibble Net, could prove to be very useful and beneficial for Nepalese farmers. Although there may be complications, these can be solved. For example, the cost issue; the cost can be reduced through different ways such as finding an organization that would aide in distribution and by finding ways to reduce costs possibly through discounts such as the zero-rating taxes. Another possibility would be to ship from the other distributors of the Slow Feed Netting, such as one in British Columbia as there it is a much closer distance to Nepal than from Ontario. The other recommendation, which is probably the most important, would be to test the product with a few Nepalese farmers residing in different regions of the country, the terai, hills, and mountain regions, and with farmers that have different livestock and uses for their livestock. This way it can be better determined where the Nibble Net can be used effectively and who would benefit the most from the product. In addition to finding a suitable consumer, the farmers testing the Nibble Net would be able to give feedback to make possible changes, or to state if the product will not be useful in any circumstances. However, it is only through testing that the product can be deemed ineffective; it sounds good in theory but will it work in real life situations.

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## Appendix

**Table 1**

Companies that produce a similar product as the Nibble Net

Company Name (location)	Product Name	Benefits/Features	Price	Retailers
Hay Chix (USA)	Cinch Net Mini Heavy Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holds up to two flakes</li> <li>• attaches easily to fence or post</li> <li>• UV-treated DuPont fiber netting</li> <li>• 1 and 1/4" opening size</li> <li>• Comes with instruction card pack, strap, repair twine, and safety snap</li> </ul>	\$40.00US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USA</li> <li>• QB</li> <li>• SK</li> <li>• AB</li> <li>• MB</li> </ul>
Bale Buddy (Bancroft,	Small Slow Bale Buddy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fits round bales up to 4' 5" in</li> </ul>	\$199.95CAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada</li> <li>• USA</li> </ul>

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ON)		<p>diameter and 4' high</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holds 6 to 8 small square bales</li> <li>• Fastened with special safety fastener</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK</li> <li>• AUS</li> <li>• Continental Europe</li> </ul>
Purely Ponies (Merritt, BC)	Heavy Duty Day Slow Feed Hay Net	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holds 5-6 flakes (approx. 20-25 lbs)</li> <li>• Simple cord and toggle system (cord to hang and toggle to close bag)</li> <li>• Use thicker gauge to stand daily use</li> <li>• Knotted Nylon that can withstand</li> </ul>	\$40.00 CAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC</li> </ul>

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		adverse weather conditions.		
Eco Nets (Millet, AB)	Mini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holds 3-4 flakes</li> <li>• 1.5 inch openings</li> <li>• Heavy Duty Dee rings for hanging</li> <li>• Adjustable elastic strap at top of the mesh</li> </ul>	\$95.00 CAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AB</li> <li>• BC</li> <li>• SK</li> <li>• MB</li> <li>• ON</li> <li>• USA</li> </ul>
Haysmart (Almonte, ON)	1.5" Trailer Size Hay Net	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holds 2+ flakes</li> <li>• Knotless nylon mesh</li> <li>• Hand sewn by Canadian workers in Canada</li> <li>• No dye and no metal</li> </ul>	\$30.00 CAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No other listed retailers</li> </ul>
Natural Alternative	Day Bag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holds 6-8 flakes</li> <li>• 1", 1.5", 2"</li> </ul>	\$56.95 CAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC</li> <li>• AB</li> </ul>

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Grazer (NAG) Bags (Armstrong, BC)		mesh hole sizes  • UV protected  • Knotless netting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SK</li> <li>• MB</li> <li>• ON</li> <li>• USA</li> </ul>
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*Note:* Data for other companies producing hay net from Day Bag. (n.d.), Products. (n.d.), Purely

Ponies. (n.d.), Round Bale Hay Feeders, Small Mesh Slow Feeders. (n.d.), Slow Feeder

Products - Haysmart.ca. (n.d.).