THE BENEFITS OF FEEDING BREWERS YEAST TO HORSES

Brewers Yeast is a one-celled fungus called Saccharomyces cerevisiae and is used to make beer. It is a non-active (dead) yeast, but is very nutritious and is known as nature’s wonder food.

The main benefits of Brewers yeast are down to its rich source of B-Vitamins including B1 (Thiamine) B2 (Riboflavin) B3 (Niacin) B5 (pantothenic acid) B6 (pyridoxine), B9 (folic acid), and B7 (biotin), Chromium and Selenium. (It does not contain Vitamin B12)

Research has shown that Brewers yeast improves population of fiber digesting bacteria. Horses do not produce the enzymes to digest fibre, but do provide the environment and harbour the micro-organisms that digest fibre.

Brewers yeast can be used as a daily supplement to improve your horses overall health including:

- **DIGESTION**
  - Helps with constipation, by aiding the digestion of fibre. Scouring and digestive imbalance, can relieve gastric ulcers, can help weight gain in underweight horses.

- **STRESS/NERVOUSNESS**
  - If a horse is deficient in Vitamin B1 (thiamin) used for metabolism of carbohydrate and fat it can become stressed and nervous, often thiamin is used in calming supplements.

- **SWEET ITCH/SKIN CONDITIONS**
  - Feeding Brewers yeast seems to deter the Biting midge In many horses and ponies therefore reducing, and in many cases eliminating itching.

- **HEALTHY HOOVES**
  - Brewers yeast contains Biotin, Methionine, zinc and copper which are all needed for healthy, strong, hoof growth and repair.
**Growing & performance horses**

Several studies have shown young horses fed a yeast culture were 5kg heavier and had a 10% faster growth rate than those not over a 6 month period, which may be the result of improved feed digestibility. *Ciro (1991)*

**ENERGY**

Vitamin B complex encourages good feed absorption/conversion, so can help to increase energy levels. Brewers yeast is another example of a natural product providing what is needed by having both the ability to calm and energize depending on your horses needs.

**LAMINITIS/CUSHINGS**

Chromium has been shown to help against insulin resistance and with the added benefit of brewers yeast improving horn quality, it is worth considering when managing laminitis/cushings.

**Breeding & Lactating Mares**

Studies have shown Pregnant mares fed yeast culture had greater digestibility of dietary dry matter, fibre, protein, calcium and phosphorus than those not. *(Glade, 1991 a)*

Mares supplemented with yeast during the first 2 weeks of lactation produced more milk than those not. *(Glade, 1991 b)*

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References:

