

The Brooks Hoofbeat



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BROOKS PERFORMANCE HORSE FEEDS
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Erynn Ballard recognized at the Angelstone Tournament

After four weeks of competition at the Angelstone Tournaments, Erynn Ballard was a close second to Peter Mulligan for the leading trainer award.

The Leading Trainer award was introduced in 2012 in order to bring recognition to the most successful trainers during the four week Angelstone circuit. Trainers were awarded 2 points for a championship in a division and 1 point for a reserve championship. Coming in a close second place with 23 points Erynn picked up \$2000 for her efforts.

The leading trainer award was developed to give added incentive to those trainers who support the entire series of Tournaments. Angelstone is looking to grow this award in 2013 with added incentives and bonus money to trainers who make Angelstone their destination of choice!

Brooks Feeds is proud to be the nutritional choice of Erynn Ballard's Looking Back Farm. www.lookingbackfarm.com



Ontario Barrel Racer and her horse is a union of two souls!



Martine Desjardins of Carlsbad Springs Ontario was practically born in the saddle. At the age of three her father Michel had her competing on a pony that he led in the show ring with a rope. Before long Martine was a regular competitor at gymkhanas and rodeos throughout eastern Ontario and Quebec.

In 2006 Martine and Michel discovered a dark bay mare named Ronas Rocking Cash with a barrel racing pedigree. For Martine it was like lightning struck. The two were an instant match. Soon Ronas was on her way to Ontario and both horse and rider have had one success after another. "It was like the union of two souls, Martine explains. We work really well together.

She's a very calm horse for a barrel racer. When she enters the arena she's all focus. I think having her on the right feed is a big part of that ability to focus."

The list of this pair's recent accomplishments is pretty impressive. In 2011 Martine was 2nd overall in the Cowboy Association of Eastern Canada standings and Wild Time Rodeo productions (Ladies barrel racing) They were finalists in the prestigious Festival Western de St-Tite and first in the north-west division of the International Professional Rodeo Association standings. Topping off the 2011 feats was a first place finish at the Royal Winter Fair and the \$10,000 winner of the Dash Eight & Liebherr at the Festival Western de Dolbeau-Mistassini.

Fuelling the intense burst of speed necessary for barrel racing success is tricky especially when you also need unwavering concentration and focus. To get advice and the best feed for Ronas, Martine depends on the Embrun Co-op. "The Co-op has been great to work with, says Martine. We have her on a ration that provides plenty of energy for Ronas but helps to maintain that focus which is a big part of our success."

This year Martine is adding more ribbons on the wall and cash in the bank. They are deservedly considered one of the top barrel racing pairs in North America. What are the ingredients for success? A talented horse, a skilled rider and good nutrition are certainly essential. I like the old saying about success in baseball. (Attributed to Casey Stengel) "You have to be a grownup that plays with the same excitement that a boy in little league has when he runs out on the field for the first time." Martine Desjardins is a grownup for sure. But inside that grownup heart is the same excitement that the three year old girl had when her father led her into the show ring for the first time. That's what makes a champion!



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Traveling is stressful for horses

Research has shown that when a horse's routine and diet are disrupted, he can develop gastric ulcers in a matter of days. The sensitive microbial population of your horse's hindgut can be thrown out of balance in a matter of hours. If the balance is disrupted enough it can cause colic, diarrhea or laminitis. Excessive sweating and poor water intake can lead to dehydration. Ohio State University conducted a research trial in which horses were transported in trailers. Blood samples collected during and after the shipping period revealed suppression of the immune system. Regardless of how careful you are, some change and stress is inevitable; therefore, horses on the go can benefit from added support through nutritional supplementation.

Plan ahead and make all diet changes slowly

While traveling, it is important to change your horse's diet and feeding schedule as little as possible. If you know you won't be able to stick to your normal feeding schedule, begin to acclimate your horse to the new schedule seven to ten days prior to your departure. If your horse is normally out on pasture all day, you will need to start slowly weaning him off grass and start adding hay to his diet so his digestive tract has time to adapt to the change. It is best to take enough hay and concentrate (grain or pellets) to last the entire trip, but that isn't always practical. If you can't take all of your hay and concentrate with you, be sure to take enough so that you can slowly introduce new feedstuffs (both hay and concentrates) over a five- to seven-day period. Begin by replacing some of the old feed with some of the new feed. Do this each day until the transition is complete. Plan for the same transition when you get home; to accomplish this you may need to bring some of the new feed back to your farm with you.

Feed free-choice hay or several hay meals throughout the day

One of the best ways to keep a horse healthy on the road is to keep hay in front of them at all times. While munching on hay, horses produce saliva that naturally buffers their stomachs and reduces irritation from excess acid. Eating hay stimulates the thirst response and keeps horses drinking. A full belly of hay acts like a water reservoir and helps maintain good hydration levels. A constant flow of fiber through the hindgut ensures your horse's microbial population stays balanced. Also, horses with a full belly are less likely to bolt their food, which can lead to choking.

Ensure a healthy digestive tract through supplementation

When you are traveling, it is more important than ever for your horse to remain in top condition. While keeping your horse on schedule and making feed changes slowly will help ensure digestive health, it may not be enough to ward off stress-related digestive problems. Adding supplements such as **Neigh-Lox** (for healthy stomach) or **Neigh-Lox Advanced** (complete digestive tract support) help maintain proper pH levels, support good microbial populations, and sustain healthy tissues. This will greatly reduce the risk of colonic/gastric ulcers, colic and laminitis that can be caused by travel-related digestive tract challenges. It is recommended that you begin adding the digestive supplements to your horse's diet a couple of weeks before you plan on departing. Continue to feed it throughout the trip and for several weeks after returning home. As with any feedstuffs, introduce the new supplement slowly.

Protect your horse from dehydration

When horses sweat they lose precious fluids and electrolytes. There are many reasons that traveling horses sweat. It can be from anxiety, excitement, or just because they are enclosed in a warm trailer. Some horses sweat a little and others become ringing wet. In certain cases, stressed horses relieve themselves of excessive manure that has a cow flop consistency. Such behavior will also contribute to fluid and electrolyte losses.

Regardless of how much your horse sweats or defecates, the lost fluids and electrolytes will need to be replaced if your horse is to remain healthy. Supplementing with electrolytes is highly recommended for horses on the go. A well-balanced electrolyte supplement such as **Summer Games** will encourage drinking and replace lost electrolytes. Horses should be offered water frequently throughout their trip. We don't recommend dissolving electrolytes in your horse's drinking water as this may reduce his or her water intake. It is best to dose electrolytes with an oral dosing syringe or mix them in the feed so you know exactly how much you are providing and how much your horse is consuming! **Summer Games Plus** is an electrolyte paste: a combination of electrolytes and Neigh-Lox in a dosing syringe. It is easy to use and convenient. If you have a picky horse that isn't fond of strange water, bring water from home or acclimate your horse to flavored water before you leave on your trip so he will continue to drink on the road. Remember, eating hay encourages drinking and a belly full of hay acts like a water reservoir. When taking short trips or when you have a layover, make sure to feed your horses a full hay meal and give them time to eat and drink before loading up.

Add some helpful vitamins

While your trailer is traveling down the road you are sitting comfortably in your seat, but your horse is getting a workout. He is expending muscle energy to keep himself upright in the trailer. During the process of producing energy (muscle metabolism), byproducts called reactive oxygen species (ROS) are released. The body calls on antioxidants to neutralize the ROS's damaging effects. If your horse's antioxidant reserves become exhausted, the ROS begin to accumulate and cause damage to cell membranes. This damage can lead to muscle soreness and other muscle-related problems. Providing extra antioxidants such as the natural vitamin E found in **Elevate** will bolster your horse's antioxidant reserves and reduce the risk of muscle damage.

Protect the immune system

Your horse's immune status is also greatly impacted by stressful situations. Whether traveling to a remote ride in the mountains with friends or participating in a local show, your horse will undoubtedly be coming into contact with germs he's not encountered before. Traveling with a compromised immune system is not an ideal situation, so supporting the immune system with natural vitamin E is always a good plan of action. Natural vitamin E supplementation should be started 30 days prior to traveling, especially for horses that are not grazing full-time on fresh pasture (the best source of natural vitamin E). Horses should remain on natural vitamin E as long as they are traveling or anytime they are not grazing on fresh green pasture for the majority of the day.

Keep high-strung horses calm

Some horses are just more excitable than others. Whether they are young and green or just high-strung, they see you getting ready for a trip and they start to pace their stalls. Nervous horses are harder to handle and more likely to become injured or develop stress-related illnesses. Tranquilizing your horse for purposes of shipping is never a good idea. Horses need all their senses to stabilize their shifting weight as they bump down the road (or in the air). Therefore, providing calming aids with researched nutrients such as thiamine (vitamin B1), magnesium, and alpha-lactalbumin is a great alternative. A calming paste such as **Trouble Free** should be fed a few hours prior to travel. Some horses react sooner than others to calming substances, so it is a good idea to set up a trial run before you hit the road. That way you will know just how long the supplement will take to impact your horse.

When the need arises to haul our horses to shows, clinics, vet offices or distant trails, it is our job to ensure that they stay as healthy and stress-free as possible. A combination of proper management and the right nutritional support can ensure your horses' travels are stress-free. And when your horse is happy, you are happy

Oats and Supplement Why Not?

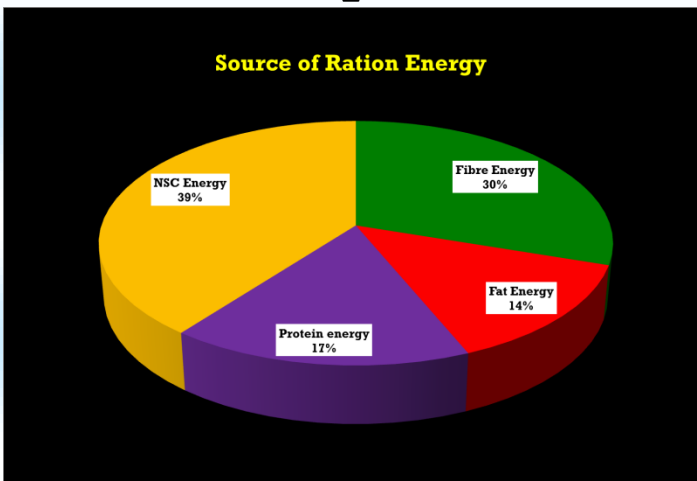
Horses have eaten oats as part of their basic diet for centuries. So even with the confusing maze of products on the market to-day why not keep life simple and stick with the old proven reliable system of oats and hay?

Oats are easily the safest and most desirable of the major grains used in horse feeds. Although quite high in starch oats are very digestible and the amount of fibre in oats somewhat reduces the possibility of colic or laminitis compared to corn or barley. However on their own oats do not properly balance a ration for minerals and vitamins consequently there is an array of mineral/vitamin supplements to complement oats and provide the total balance required. Problem solved? Well maybe not.

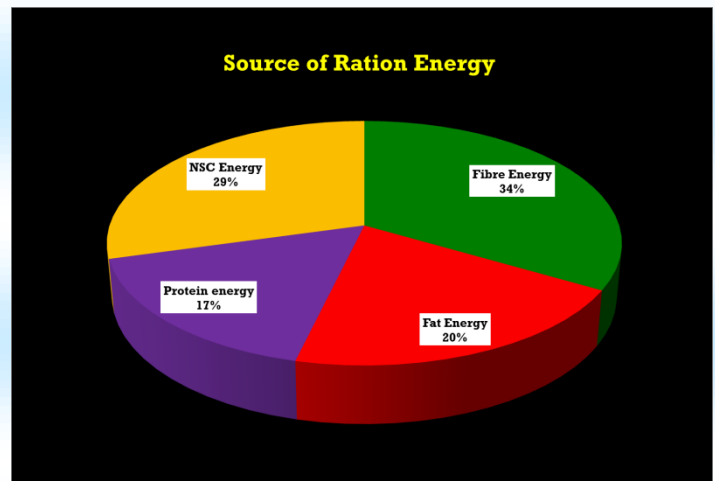
To-days horses are used in a wide variety of activities. Some require a lot of calories, as much as 30 plus megacalories per day. Oats just doesn't have enough energy to fuel such a horse without the possible side effects that a ration high in starch might cause such as colic, laminitis, and excitability. Fortunately nutritionists have come up with formulas that are high energy but with reduced starch levels. The energy is supplied with higher fat formulas from soy or flax oil combined with highly digestible sources of fibre. This is the basis of popular feeds like Brooks Fit & Fibre, Phase V and Fibre Omega Plus and supplements like Flax Appeal and Equi-Jewel.

Graph A shows the mix of dietary energy sources using oats and a common supplement to provide 29 Mcals/day. This ration supplies well over ½ of its energy from starches, sugars and protein. This could be a recipe for an excitable difficult horse to ride. In situations where a lot more energy is needed the risks of high grain feeding from the sugar/starch factor is even more of a concern.

Graph A



Graph B



Graph B shows the energy mix using Fibre Omega Plus as the sole concentrate for the same horse. In this ration well over ½ of the energy is coming from fibre and fat. This is what is referred to as a quiet ration because fibre and fat energy usually affect a horse's temperament less than starch and sugar based rations.

Better formulations using good quality fats and fibres have made horses requiring moderate and higher levels of energy much more controllable and less prone to digestive disturbances than older style starch based feeds and provide targeted fuel for the muscles used in many equine disciplines such as hunter/jumpers, pleasure riding, endurance and many others.

Well what about horses that don't require much grain. Certainly a handful of oats isn't going to set them off in spasms of cantankerous fits. True enough. But a handful of a fully balanced feed like Fit & Fibre along with a mineral/vitamin supplement has far more overall nutritional value than straight oats. For example properly formulated feeds like **Brooks Fit & Fibre, Phase V or Fibre Omega Plus** have features such as special yeasts for enhanced digestion, organic minerals for better absorption and added oils, minerals and amino acids for healthy hair coats and hooves. While some supplements have similar attributes most don't have the benefits of Omega 3 fatty acids from **Brooks Flax Appeal**.

While the simplicity of a supplement plus oats feeding system appeals to some stables a similar approach can be used with a complete feed. Feeding 1 pound of **Brooks Enhancer**/1000 pounds of bodyweight along with a complete feed and hay will maintain weight and provide all of the nutritional value outlined above. A horse requiring more than 5 pounds/1000 pounds of bodyweight per day of complete feed along with hay no longer needs the supplement since at that rate the complete feed provides all the horses nutritional needs. As well even horses requiring little concentrate will show improved hair and hoof quality when fed a cup of Flax Appeal daily.

Oats are still a valuable ingredient in many horse feeds particularly ones requiring energy from starch and sugar such as those for race horses. However advances in equine nutrition in recent years have resulted in better formulations for many equine disciplines.

Brooks Performance Horse Feeds are formulated to provide the correct mix of energy sources for your specific equine discipline. We have confidence that you will see that "there is a difference"



Dan Irwin
Brooks Horse Feeds
Update 2012

You can ride on our energy!