

# The Brooks Hoofbeat



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BROOKS PERFORMANCE HORSE FEEDS  
1580 HIGHWAY 7A  
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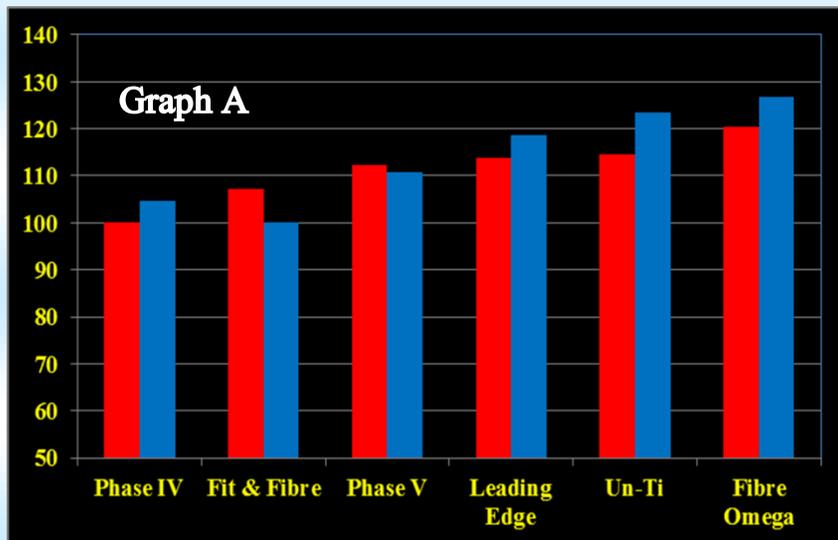


Two long-time loyal and successful Brooks' dealers have joined forces to better serve the southern Ontario region. Troy Vlaar (2<sup>nd</sup> from the left) has brought his extensive knowledge and experience to the team of Post Time Services. Troy is joined in the group by (L to R) Peter Martin (Post Time) Troy, Vernon Avery, (Brooks Feeds) James Lafontaine, and Kevin van der Wier of Post Time.

# Brooks Performance Horse Feeds

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Choosing the correct feed to maximize performance also makes the best use of feed \$\$\$. In graph A several performance feeds are listed from the lowest in digestible energy to the highest (red lines). Not surprisingly the cost (blue lines) increases as the digestible energy increases.

This doesn't mean the lowest cost feed is always the best choice nor does it mean the highest digestible energy feed is always the best choice. *The key is to match the feed to the horse's condition and activity while maintaining a proper balance of nutrients.*

Grass Hay	16.35
Fit & Fibre Tex	5.00
Flax Appeal	0.25
<b>Dry matter intake 19.5 lbs.</b>	
Cost per day	\$1.99
Calorie intake/day	19.34
Predicted weight gain	0.08

Grass Hay	17.34
Fibre Omega	3.75
All Phase 20	0.25
Flax Appeal	0.25
<b>Dry matter intake 19.5 lbs.</b>	
Cost per day	\$2.02
Calorie intake/day	19.34
Predicted weight gain	0.08

Example 1  
Light exercise  
Fibre Omega Plus/Fit & Fibre

In these two example rations for a lightly exercised horse, a Fibre Omega Plus ration requires some All Phase 20 to completely balance for all nutrients at the lower feeding level. This makes Fit & Fibre a better choice at this level of activity.

Grass Hay	14.13
Fit & Fibre Tex	14.00
Flax Appeal	0.75
<b>Dry matter intake 26 lbs.</b>	
Cost per day	\$5.62
Predicted weight gain	-0.02

Grass Hay	16.84
Fibre Omega	11.25
Flax Appeal	0.75
<b>Dry matter intake 26 lbs.</b>	
Cost per day	\$5.67
Predicted weight gain	0.01

Example 2  
Intense exercise  
Fibre Omega Plus/Fit & Fibre

In these two example rations for a more intensely exercised horse, the daily calorie requirement is met with less Fibre Omega Plus. While the cost is minimally different, Fibre Omega Plus is a better choice for more intense activities with a higher calorie demand.

**Summary:** *Choosing the correct feed involves meeting the horse's calorie requirement while ensuring a complete balance of nutrients. A properly balanced ration combines convenience and performance with an efficient use of feed \$\$\$.*

## Providing Dietary Protein to Horses

Owners of dogs and cats know that their pets are carnivores—meat eaters—and commercially available food for these animals contains high protein levels similar to what would be found in the diets of wild felines and canines. Horses, on the other hand, are herbivores—plant eaters—and at first glance, it would not seem that grass, the most natural equine diet, would contain a great deal of protein.

***Supplementing a forage-based diet by feeding a concentrate according to the bag's directions will usually provide sufficient protein.***

However, grasses and legumes, either fresh or dried, usually do contain enough protein for maintenance of idle or lightly worked horses. Grass has a low to medium level of protein and does not contain a large amount of lysine, an essential amino acid. Alfalfa or lucerne, a legume, is an excellent source of protein, with levels that can approach 18 to 20 percent in the best-quality hay. Since horses need only about 10 or 11 percent crude protein as adults, and about 12 to 14 percent during growth, alfalfa could easily supply most or all protein requirements, though a straight alfalfa diet is not balanced for other nutrients.

In general, a mature horse doing little work needs only enough protein to maintain body tissues. Requirements for protein go up as horses are put into an exercise program. Breeding stallions and late-pregnant mares need protein levels similar to those of horses in moderate to heavy exercise. Lactating mares have the highest protein requirement, up to twice as much as a mature horse in moderate exercise. Finally, growing horses need high-quality protein as they increase in size and weight.

The National Research Council's *Nutrient Requirements of Horses* contains guidelines for the amount of crude protein needed by horses of every size, age, stage of growth, reproductive status, and exercise level. Horse owners don't need to pick up a copy of this publication, however, if they purchase horse feed that has been formulated and produced by a reputable manufacturer. Feed bags and labels indicate the type and amount of feed necessary to meet the needs of many classes of horses, from mature/idle to growing, lightly worked, heavily exercised, breeding, or retired equines.

Supplementing a forage-based diet by feeding a concentrate according to the bag's directions will usually provide sufficient protein. Knowing that their equines need more protein than idle animals, owners of hard-working sport horses or lactating mares may wonder whether they should boost dietary protein levels through the use of special protein or amino acid supplements. ***Studies in both horses and human athletes have shown that this type of supplementation has little or no positive effect.***

However, the intensity of the actual training program in that study is somewhat difficult to interpret. Several research experiments have examined the effects of dietary protein on metabolic responses to exercise. At this point, there are no solid research data to support the theory that protein supplementation may be beneficial to equine athletes. Even in human athletes, benefits have only been sporadically reported. Because the branched-chain amino acids are the primary amino acids catabolized during exercise, researchers have also evaluated supplementation of these amino acids (especially leucine). Horses receiving a branched-chain amino acid supplement had lower lactate levels than unsupplemented horses in one study, but this study involved only mild exercise, so results might not apply to heavily worked horses. Further research in this area may turn up some positive benefits of protein supplementation, but at present, there is no recommendation for this practice.

Article courtesy of Kentucky Equine Research

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**Zoomin After Six** trained by Steve Hunter and fueled by Brooks Feeds is shown winning the 2012 Ontario Bred Derby.

**Zoomin After Six** went on to be honoured as the Ontario and Canadian “Quarter Horse of the Year”



Zoomin After Six wasn't the only Quarter Horse burning up the track in 2012 on Brooks' fuel. **Not Looking to Shake** owned by Christine Tavares won the Ontario Bred Maturity and **Corderoy Road** (below) owned by Michelle Woodley and Marlene McNichol galloped home ahead of the pack in the Alex Picov Memorial Futurity.



**TORONTO, Jan. 23, 2013 /CNW/ -** After seven months of struggling to help save Ontario's racing industry in the wake of the McGuinty's government decision to withdraw slot machines from the province's racetracks, Racing Future is pleased to see the announcement of a new agreement between the province and Woodbine and other racetracks that holds the promise of restoring some financial stability to this important industry.

“We applaud this important step that the government has taken with Woodbine and Mohawk racetracks, which represent some 60% of the revenue received by Ontario Lottery and Gaming” said Dennis Mills, the President and CEO of Racing Future.

“We are also pleased to note Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food & Rural Affairs' mention of deals in principle with additional tracks. We anxiously await specifics as pertains to all race tracks as well as purses, and breeder's incentives,” Mr. Mills said.

For more information go to [www.racingfuture.com](http://www.racingfuture.com) or [www.valueformoney.ca](http://www.valueformoney.ca)