

# The Brooks Hoofbeat



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BROOKS PERFORMANCE HORSE FEEDS  
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## Meet Tania Laframboise

Brooks' Feeds is very pleased to announce addition of Tania Laframboise to our sales team.

Tania has been a valuable staff member at La Cooperative Agricole d'Embrun since 2004 where she earned the confidence of the Co-op's many equine clients. Tania is an enthusiastic supporter of Brook's products. "I wouldn't want to represent any other horse feed, Tania explains. I just wouldn't have the confidence that I have with Brooks rations."

Tania is fully bilingual and will represent Brooks in eastern Ontario and western Quebec.

Tania can be reached at 613-676-3059.

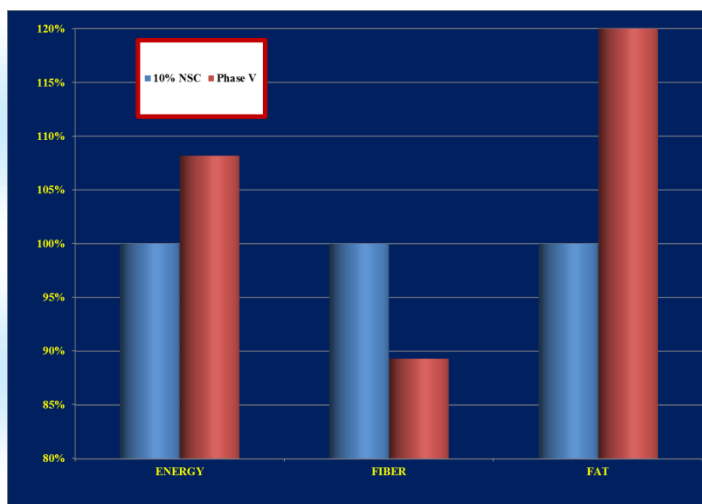


The Can Am show was held in Orangeville Ontario in March. It was by all accounts a huge success drawing large crowds who enjoyed many presentations including the Canadian Cowgirls and breed demonstrations. Thanks to all of our friends (new and old) who stopped at the Brooks booth at the Can Am and at the London All Equine Show.

“Recently, the use of cereals as a major component of horse feed has been questioned by a small but vocal group of zealots who have used the Internet to effectively voice their opinions. Their concern is based on the somewhat flawed premise that feeding even moderate quantities of NSC will lead to metabolic disturbances and disease in clinically normal horses. Nonetheless, this has led many feed manufacturers to drastically alter their horse feed formulation to cater to the *“low-carb” craze.*

With good feeding management, carbohydrates in grains are well tolerated by most horses. There is, however, a small but important population of horses that do not tolerate carbohydrates well. Knowing how much carbohydrate should be included in a particular horse's daily ration is key to successful feeding.”

Excerpted from an article by Dr. Joe Pagan <http://brooks.equinews.com/article/most-horses-tolerate-carbohydrates-well>



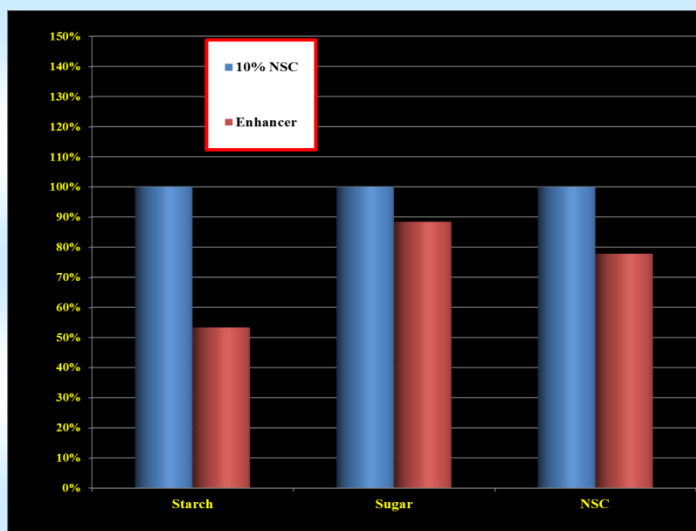
### Myth #1

A performance horse is better off with a feed as low as 10% NSC.

### Reality

A very low NSC feed, particularly one that has a low digestible energy level could actually be detrimental to a working horse. Inadequate digestible energy will lead to weight loss and insufficient carbohydrate intake could leave the horse unable to replace depleted muscle glycogen stores, leading to earlier fatigue and slower recovery from strenuous exercise..”

Chart at left compares Phase V to a low (10%) NSC feed. The low NSC feed has more fibre but inadequate energy including fat energy to do the job.



### Myth #2

An overweight horse with Metabolic Syndrome should be on a 10% NSC feed.

### Reality

In order to have a complete balance of nutrients including minerals your horse may require over 6 pounds of a typical low (10%) NSC feed per 1000 pounds of bodyweight.\*\* Not only would this likely provide excess calories, but it would also deliver a greater NSC intake (0.67 lb). Correctly feeding a balancer pellet like Enhancer or All Phase 20 results in as much as 30% less NSC intake (0.45 lb total) than the 10% NSC Feed. Concentration should always be considered along with intake.

\*\*Manufacturer's directions

### *The pros and cons of lush spring grass*

Horse owners and farm managers frequently use the word “lush” to describe the state of pasture forage as it begins to grow rapidly in the spring. Just exactly what does “lush” mean? Is this new grass good for horses, or dangerous for them to graze?

#### *Spring grass grows very rapidly, containing a large proportion of water.*

In defining “lush,” the dictionary uses words like “growing vigorously; lavishly productive; thriving; plentiful; delicious; savory.” Lush pasture, then, is a grazing area with plenty of abundant green forage that tempts horses to graze enthusiastically for hours on end.

Lush new spring grass, mature summer grass, and dried autumn grass contain the same basic ingredients--water, vitamins, minerals, protein, starch, and structural fiber among other things—but the proportions of these ingredients are far different depending on season. Spring grass grows very rapidly, containing a large proportion (up to 80% or more) of water. This grass is generally soft and easy to chew because the amount of indigestible fiber is less than in mature grass.

Because there is so much liquid in new spring grass, all the other components are found in lower proportions compared to mature grass, so the horse gets less starch per mouthful of grass than when grazing in the summer. However, because this soft grass is so palatable, horses tend to ingest a larger overall volume of forage, so their intake of all nutrients may actually be fairly similar in spring, summer, and early fall.

**Fructans** are specially adapted sugars that are found in cool-season forages. Fructans are produced by photosynthesis that occurs in the leaves during daylight hours. During the dark (overnight) phase of photosynthesis, plants use the sugars to grow more leaves and stems. Extra sugars that are not used for growth are stored within the plant tissues. Many cool-season grasses store fructans in the lower two inches of the stem just above the soil line.

Temperatures at night are critical in determining sugar content of the grass blades. If the temperature is not above 40° F (4° C) at night, the plant will not grow, and sugars remain in the leaves in high concentrations. Research has shown that under certain climate conditions and at some growth stages, fructans may reach very high concentrations (as much as 50% of dry matter). Pastured horses relish the sweet taste and will search out and preferentially graze plants with higher sugar content.

The unique chemical structure of fructans prevents breakdown in the stomach and small intestine. For this reason, these easily fermented sugars pass into the hindgut, a situation that leads to rapid production of lactic acid and an accumulation in the hindgut. This accumulation of lactic acid is a direct cause of colic and laminitis in pastured horses.

Virtually all horses are subject to some digestive upsets associated with lush spring pasture. The content of highly fermentable carbohydrates in lush pasture can be overwhelming to the digestive system. Horses and ponies that are overweight with insulin resistance and associated high levels of circulating pro-inflammatory agents produced by fat (equine metabolic syndrome) are particularly susceptible to pastures with high fructan content. However, many horses are able to handle some amount of pasture turnout if their digestive tracts are allowed time to adapt gradually to the dietary change and if a **hindgut buffer** is used to help neutralize lactic acid.

How can horse owners minimize the health challenges associated with lush pasture?

- Continue to offer hay even though the grass is growing well. New grass contains a lot of water and little fiber, and horses may crave the fiber found in hay.
- Monitor horses as grass begins to grow in the spring. To allow the digestive system to adapt to lush grass, begin with short periods of grazing and gradually increase time on pasture.
- Check frequently (several times a day) for signs such as warm hooves or horses walking as though their feet may be painful. Horses that have been grazing through the winter and early spring are at somewhat less risk than horses that have been stalled and are suddenly turned out into lush fields.
- Use a grazing muzzle to restrict intake, and consider the use of a [hindgut buffer](#) to neutralize lactic acid.
- Overweight horses, horses with known metabolic problems such as Cushing's disease, and pony breeds may be at increased risk, but any horse may develop problems after grazing lush pasture.
- Spring grass is a known danger, but stressed grasses may store large quantities of fructans during other seasons due to drought, overgrazing, temperature fluctuations, and other conditions. For susceptible horses, there is no safe time to allow unlimited pasture access.
- If grazing horses show signs of problems (colic, warm hooves, reluctance to move because of hoof pain), remove them from the pasture and call a veterinarian.

Article courtesy of Kentucky Equine Research.

### Jaimey and Lindor's Finest to compete at the World Cup!

Huge congratulations to Jaimey Irwin and Lindor's Finest who have earned one of two spots in North America to compete at the World Cup in Gothenburg, Sweden!

The World Cup is taking place April 24-28th!



The Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario Inc. is pleased to announce that a tentative deal has been reached to continue Quarter Horse racing at Ajax Downs in 2013. Earlier today the Ontario Racing Commission board approved the deal and is now tasked with developing what the racing and breeding program will look like in 2013. The OMAFRA Transitional Panel has been instrumental in getting this agreement done and we look forward to working with them as they implement the balance of their recommendations.

I would like to thank the Picov Family for their continued support for Quarter Horse racing. Both Nick Coukos and Emilio Trotta have worked tirelessly to ensure the future of the sport. 'said Bob Broadstock, President of the Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario Inc. (April 5<sup>th</sup> 2013)

**Full story [www.grooi.com](http://www.grooi.com)**

Right: Bye Me One Kool Bud  
2012 Fort Erie Futurity Champion  
Trained by Don Reid  
Bred by Belinda Taggart

