

## **The *Skinny* on Fat** ***Safely adding fat to your horse's diet***

The benefits of dietary fat in the equine diet are well documented. Horses on high-fat diets will perform longer without fatiguing, incur fewer injuries, and maintain body weight with less grain intake. Those that will benefit most from a high-fat diet are hard-working performance horses that are required to sustain higher levels of activity, pregnant or lactating broodmares, and horses with special needs, such as horses that need to avoid starch.

### **Why Fat?**

Adding fat to the diet is the preferred way of increasing energy or weight gain because it is a denser source of calories, which means you can feed less grain, but meet the same energy level requirements. As a comparison, fat contains 2.25 times more energy than either carbohydrates or protein, making it the easiest and safest way to increase the energy density of the diet.

The low-down on lipids...

**Liquid Fat** - One way to add supplemental fat to the diet is with liquid fat, such as vegetable, corn, or soybean oil. Liquid fats are a pure, highly concentrated source of fat, and are very palatable to horses. Quality oils are also rich in essential fatty acids, which promote healthy skin and coat.

**Manna Pro's Equine Fat Supplement** is a blend of refined soybean, corn, and wheat germ oils. It contains vitamin E, an important antioxidant, which protects against tissue damage. Equine Fat Supplement is a great way to put weight on your horse without having to overload him with grain. In addition it is high in linoleic acid, adding sheen and luster to his coat. Horses love the butterscotch flavor and it can be top-dressed right on top of their grain.

**Rice Bran**-Stabilized Rice Bran is another palatable and convenient way to add fat to your horses diet. **Max-E-Glo** stabilized rice bran is manufactured in the same facility as human rice bran, so it is human grade. Rancidity is a concern when feeding rice bran but **Max-E-Glo** has a guaranteed 1 year shelf life. Plus, it contains natural anti-oxidants, Vitamin E and Gamma Oryzanol.

**High-Fat Diets**— Feeding mixes that already have the fat added is a convenient and reliable way to ensure your horse is getting the proper nutrient to calorie ratio and their essential vitamins and minerals. If you prefer to feed a diet high in fat, look for commercial feeds that have between a 6% to 10% fat content. Manna Pro's **Super Horse** line of performance feeds offers several different high fat formulations, including our **Performance Feeds** with a 6% fat level and our **Elite Feeds** with a 10% fat level. **Super Horse** Feeds, which are made with Calf-Manna, are very energy-dense, so less grain is required.

by Dr. Rob McCoy and Carolyn Brady