

Yeast Culture: Improving The Way We Feed Horses

Manna Pro is proud to include Diamond V XP Yeast Culture in all of our Super Horse® feeds and our Equine Health supplements, Sho-Glo®, Sho-Flex™, and Opti-Zyme®.

Mmmm, yeast. It brings to mind images of bread baking in the kitchen, or maybe thoughts of microbreweries and wineries. But what about horse feed? Through the years, research has clearly demonstrated that adding Yeast Culture to equine feeds corresponds directly with improved digestibility, a decrease in plasma lactic acid concentrations after exercise, better utilization of protein in the diet, enhanced overall fitness levels, and improved tissue and muscle accretion and repair. Consequently, diarrhea, colic, laminitis and a variety of other equine health and performance problems are frequently prevented, while simultaneously improving performance and well being of the horse.

The Equine Digestive Tract: Understanding the Hindgut

Horses are grazers. They were designed to consume a forage-based diet in small, frequent meals throughout the day. The hindgut, which consists of the cecum and large colon, is the largest and arguably the most important part of the horse's digestive tract. Billions and billions of microbial organisms, commonly referred to as microbes, reside there. It is these microbes that give the horse the ability to make use of forages.

In the hindgut, microbes produce volatile fatty acids (VFA) by fermenting the fibrous portion of the diet. These VFA are short-chain compounds that are absorbed and transported to the liver to be utilized as a source of energy. VFA are nutritionally significant because they can contribute 30 to 70 percent of the horse's total energy requirement. Microbes in the hindgut also have the ability to digest those starches that were not digested in the small intestine. Feeding excessive amounts of grain and poor feeding management can put extra stress on the hindgut. Yeast Culture can help maintain a healthy environment in the hindgut under such stresses.

In summary, the microbes break down the fibrous portions of the diet that the horse's own digestive enzymes cannot. Given that the majority of a horse's diet is comprised of forage, microbes are essential to the nutritional well being of the horse. Yeast Culture stimulates the growth of these microbes, resulting in improved overall digestibility of the feedstuffs, making more nutrients available for growth and performance.

Horse owners have the ability to improve feed digestibility and their horse's overall health by choosing nutrition products that are not only high in quality but also incorporate added-value ingredients such as Yeast Culture. Remember to look for products that contain Yeast Culture in their formulation and are properly balanced to meet the specific needs of your horse(s). The bottom line is that all horses can benefit from improved digestibility and gut health. Regardless if the horses are racers or pasture pets, proper digestion and utilization of feedstuffs is a crucial aspect in maintaining a healthy horse.

By Paul Kropp, Diamond V