Horses Under Intensive Work Need Extra Antioxidant Support

Horses enduring intense race training or for competition are subject to a range of metabolic and digestive stresses, which can lead to a range of complications, such as tying up, breathing problems or breaking down due to illness. Many of these issues tend to be associated with what is termed oxidative stress.

Oxidative stress has been implicated in the development of a wide range of pathological conditions in horses, such as recurrent airway obstruction (RAO), exercise induced pulmonary haemorrhage (EIPH), joint disease, dysfunctional host immune and inflammatory responses.

Secondary antioxidants, such as selenium, vitamins E and C, have been administered to horses to help combat oxidative stress for many years. A more recent development has been the use of primary antioxidant enzymes, such as those contained in Melofeed®.

We know that supplementing additional antioxidants works. A study in France trialled feeding horses under training a combination of organic selenium (Alkosel®), vitamin E and Melofeed® then tested for markers of muscle cell damage[1]. Levels of these markers were much lower with horses fed these antioxidants, showing they were effective in protecting the muscles from oxidative damage. The benefit to horses in work was shown in the study to be best achieved with at least 10 weeks of supplementation.

High concentrate feeding levels to competition horses may also lead to digestive upsets, such as acidosis and colic. Baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) is often fed to try and reduce hindgut acidosis, but live yeast cultures such as Levucell®SC and Levucell®SB may be more beneficial as they help stabilise the digestive system. Levucell® live yeast helps to improve feed digestibility, reduce acidosis and improve gut stability. These can also be used in conjunction with yeast cell wall components such as AgriMOS® to limit the development of pathogenic bacteria and stimulate immune function.

Melofeed® primary antioxidant, Levucell®SC, Levucell®SB and AgriMOS are now contained in SelaMin®X, the new and improved version of SelaMin®Gold. Upgrade now, for comprehensive nutrition support for active horses.

Fermaid Ease® can be fed in conjunction with SelaMin®X.

SelaMin®X is best fed by mixing through feed. Not to be used with any other copper or selenium containing supplements without prior consultation with a nutritionist or veterinarian. Do not exceed stated dose rate, frequency or volume.

1 *Barbé et al., 2014. Effect of antioxidant supplementation to horses on muscle integrity and resistance to training. 65th Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Animal Science (EAAP), Copenhagen (Denmark), August 25-29, 2014.*

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