



Does hand feeding treats promote biting?	1
Understanding Beet Pulp as an Equine Feed	1
Safe 'n Lite Testimonials	3

Does hand feeding treats promote Biting?

Question:

I am a novice horse handler/rider. I've been told that hand-feeding treats to horses promotes biting. What is the "industry" stance on this issue? In my limited experience they seem to enjoy it and almost all horses I've hand-fed take it gently with their lips. A few are a bit aggressive, but no bites.



Answer:

(by Bonnie V. Beaver, BS, DVM, MS, Dipl. ACVB)

Feeding treats to horses is not necessarily a bad thing if done in moderation. There are some horses that become overly eager to get a treat, and it is best not to continue the practice for them. Some people get their hands bitten because they do not keep them flat. Generally, however, a food treat can be used as a reward for a job well done. The Lipizzan stallions at the Spanish Riding School in Vienna, Austria, receive one small hand-fed treat after each training session. The treat is kept in one coattail of the rider, who removes it after he has dismounted and is standing in front of the horse. It is obvious that the horses quickly learn to look forward to their reward. .

In our Next Issue

Help with Hard Keepers

facebook

Equus now on Facebook.

Visit Equus on Facebook for the latest news and keep us up to date with the achievements of all Equus fed horses

[CLICK HERE](#)

Understanding Beet Pulp as an Equine Feed

Beet pulp is a byproduct of the sugar beet industry. In the USA it is predominant in the upper Midwest and in the UK it is an important rotation crop throughout the major growing regions. In South Africa sugarcane is the preferred crop from which to produce sugar and therefore locally produced beet pulp is not as yet readily available.

Sugar beets are tall plants which look a lot like very large turnips. The pulp is the by-product resulting from the extraction of simple sugars in the manufacture of table sugar.

Up to 90% of the beet pulp produced is sold to the export market in a pelleted form. The product can be more economically transported when pelleted and bagged and unfortunately therefore has to be finely milled in order to be pelleted. The shredded beet pulp market is primarily domestic and is available in bulk to Feed Millers. In the shredded form the beet pulp provides additional fibre length and this explains why shredded beet pulp is preferred over pelleted beet pulp in equine diets. Because beet pulp cannot be economically exported in the less processed shredded form, it is unfortunately only available in SA in the pelleted form.

Beet pulp is often referred to as a "super fibre" due to its high digestibility and ease of fermentation

[\(read more about superfibres \)](#)

How to compare Beet Pulp to other ingredients?

Imported Beet pulp products are normally available in small beautifully packed 20kg paper bags, and although pelleted and sometimes micronised, it has no additions of any vitamins, minerals, oils, amino acids, yeast culture etc. It therefore has to be evaluated as, and compared to, other basic raw materials.



Raw materials are most commonly categorized as either forage, energy feed or a protein supplement. Raw materials with a fibre content higher than 18% are considered forages and include all types of hay. Those containing less than 18% crude fibre and less than 20% crude protein are categorized as energy feeds and include all cereal grains, wheat bran, oils and molasses. Those which contain less than 18% crude fibre and more than 20% crude protein like soya, sunflower and fish meal are categorized as protein supplements.

Familiarity with these simple definitions is very helpful when comparing different materials and feed mixes. Beet pulp doesn't quite fit neatly into either the forage or the energy feed categories however. With 10% crude protein and 18% crude fibre, beet pulp lies somewhere between being a forage and an energy feed. Most nutritionists will refer to and utilize beet pulp as a forage, and therein lies much of the advantage.

The following table will help to shed some light on where Beet Pulp fits into the local South African market of available raw materials in terms of energy, protein and price:

Raw Materials	Energy (Mcal/kg)	Energy Relative to beet pulp	% Crude Protein	Price Rand/ton *
Vegetable Oils	8.98	385%	0	R 15 000
Maize	3.38	145%	8	R 1 300
Wheat Bran	2.94	126%	14	R 1 200
Oat Grain	2.85	122%	11	R 1 300
Beet Pulp	2.33	100%	10	R 12 000
Lucerne	2.24	96%	16	R 1 400
Teff Hay	1.77	76%	10	R 1 100

* Estimated current prices - Gauteng

What are the advantages of Beet Pulp as an Equine feed?

The energy is lower than that of cereals but it is higher than that of forages. The important point however is that Beet pulp has a low NCS (*read more about NSC*) and therefore has a lower glycemic index than any of the cereal grains.

The glycemic index is a comparative indication of the simple sugar content of a food source. Feeds with a high glycemic index, such as maize (which is high in starch), break down enzymatically to glucose very rapidly in the small intestine, quickly elevate the blood glucose levels, and in some horses may contribute to "hot" behavior. More importantly, however, under some circumstances, high glycemic index feeds may lead to colic and laminitis.

Feeds with a low glycemic index are those that cause little or no sharp rise to blood glucose levels and generally provide most of their energy in the form of volatile fatty acids, the energy by-product of fermentation in the equine cecum and large colon. Low glycemic feeds (like Sugar Beet products Speedi Beet or Kwik Beet and **Equus Safe 'n Lite**) are therefore not only ideal for horses suffering from laminitis, ulcers and tying up, but are also useful feeds for horses with behavioural problems where a spike in blood glucose levels is particularly undesirable.

It must be kept in mind, however, that the desired effects of a low glycemic diet will only be evident if a substantial percentage of this diet is of low glycemic origin. Feeding small quantities (+/- one cup) as a supplement to the hard feed will be of very little value. The energy component of sugar beet is not much higher than that of Lucerne which means that minimal quantities will not boost the energy value. Likewise, small amounts will not assist in bringing down the glycemic index of the total hard feed portion at all.

Is Beet Pulp cost effective in South Africa?

There is no doubt that Beet pulp has great advantages as an equine feed, especially in the shredded and non pelleted form with a good and effective long fibre component present. At roughly R12 000 / ton (R280.00/ 20 kg bag), however, it is simply not feasible to include in locally produced feeds either to replace a portion of the cereals or a portion of the forage component. When formulating feeds with the same properties and advantages as Beet pulp the relative value of the raw material is approximately R1500/ton at present.

Are there any cost effective alternatives available in South Africa?

There are few readily available raw materials available in SA to the end consumer with the same properties which qualify Beet Pulp as a "super fibre". **Equus Horse Feeds** has, however, produced the only available product in South Africa with a registered low NSC value.

Equus Safe 'n Lite sells for about R4400/ton (R99.00/22.5 kg bag VAT excl) and is very successfully used countrywide as a low glycemic feed. The product is also often prescribed by Vets for horses prone to laminitis or which display signs of gastric ulcers.

Safe 'n Lite is a specialized product for horses and ponies prone to laminitis or those which display an intolerance to sugars and starches and all related syndromes (Cushing's Syndrome, Insulin Resistance and Tying Up). It is also high in antioxidants, vitamin E and selenium, is enriched with omega-3 oils and contains a live yeast culture. The product is specifically formulated with high levels of biotin, manganese, zinc and magnesium, all essential for healthy hooves and also for increasing growth of the hoof horn to assist in recovery from laminitic conditions.

Safe 'n Lite is the only readily available product with similar nutritional properties (low NCS, low glycemic index, low starch, super fibres, non heating, slow energy release). It is available, however, at a third of the price of imported Beet pulp and features all of the additions above (see www.equusfeeds.co.za for further detail and testimonials).

Safe 'n Lite Testimonials

Helen & Stripes

Our pony Stripes is a wonderful addition to our family but she has always been difficult to feed as she is prone to laminitis. I was therefore delighted when I heard about **Equus Safe 'n Lite** being registered as a safe feed for laminitic horses.

I was immediately impressed by the look of the product, especially the abundance of quality fibre, just as nature intended, as well as the added biotin for hoof conditioning.

From the start Stripes was as impressed as I was and absolutely loves the product. I can now be confident that I really am feeding her the best product I can in order to keep her laminitis free.

Stripes is happy and healthy and enjoying life as any pony should.

Thank you Equus.



20 year old Welsh Pony

I want to tell you about the GREAT success I have had with your **Safe 'n Lite** feed. I have a 20 year old Welsh Section A pony. For the two years I have had him he has struggled with laminitis and has been a sore and uncomfortable pony.

My daughter was instructed not to ride him at all as he was in pain the whole time. We tried every feed there was to help this condition.

I was pulling my hair out at a stage because it felt like a battle I couldn't win.

Then I came across an Equus pamphlet. Two/ three months after I switched over to **Safe 'n Lite** I have a bouncy, pain free pony who is full of life. You would swear he is 10 and not 20.

I really want to thank Equus feed for their great feed they supply. I would recommend it to anyone.

Regards,
Yvette De Oliveira



The Story of Quay West

When our JB horse Quay West was diagnosed with biliarywe gave him about 8 weeks off. When he came back into work he appeared sore, so we got the vet to look at him again. He is fairly old, so when the vet felt that his back was causing him pain and making him unable to engage his hindquarters we weren't surprised.

He was started on a course of cortisone injections to fix the problem. After a week, however, he seemed to be in so much pain we decided to retire him and just get him strong again.

However, his condition continued to deteriorate; he was shockingly thin and so crippled he could barely walk out of his stable. We seriously thought about ending his pain twice during this time but a second opinion from another vet diagnosed really bad laminitis caused by liver failure and an overdose of cortisone - we were devastated!

As a last resort, we spoke to Hannah from Equus and she advised feeding him **Equus Safe 'n Lite** and giving more time. After about 3 months and he started looking 100 times better! He became perfectly sound and by far the happiest he has ever been!

This food literally saved his life!
The Crisp Family

