

### **What is rice bran oil?**

When rice is processed for human consumption, the hull surrounding the kernel is first removed, leaving brown rice. The brown color is due to the bran layers on the kernel. Brown rice is usually further processed to remove the bran layers to give white rice and rice bran. The rice bran is heated and formed into pellets. Oil is extracted, leaving rice bran oil and defatted rice bran.

### **How is rice bran oil traditionally used?**

Rice bran oil has been used for many years in Japanese cooking. Research in humans and laboratory animals has shown that rice bran oil may lower cholesterol, thus reducing the risk of heart attacks.

### **Why is rice bran oil useful for horses?**

Firstly, rice bran oil is useful for adding sheen to the hair coat. Secondly, it is very high in digestible energy and will add calories to the diet without bulk. Additionally, crude rice bran oil contains high levels of natural antioxidants, such as gamma-oryzanol and various forms of vitamin E. Vitamin E helps protect cell membranes, improves immune function and prevents muscle soreness, inflammation and "tying-up" in horses. Crude rice bran oil is the natural source of gamma-oryzanol. Besides having an antioxidative function, gamma-oryzanol may also reduce the incidence or severity of gastric ulcers and is claimed to have "body building" effects.

### **When should rice bran oil be fed?**

Rice bran oil should be fed to performance horses (endurance horses, 3-day eventers, racehorses, horses in training, etc.), when preparing horses for sale or to improve hair coat condition. Rice bran oil is also excellent for putting weight on horses, especially those that are unable or unwilling to consume more feed.

### **How much rice bran oil should be fed?**

Two to eight fluid ounces of rice bran oil should be top-dressed on feed daily for an average-size riding horse (1200 lb). With two fluid ounces of oil, improvements can be seen in the hair coat. Two fluid ounces of rice bran oil also provide about 1000 mg of gamma-oryzanol, an amount similar to many equine "body building" products. Four fluid ounces of oil can produce significant weight gain. Eight fluid ounces will provide maximum benefits to the hair coat and noticeable weight gain. More can be added for additional weight gain. As a general rule of good feeding practices, the oil should be introduced gradually.

### **Are there any side effects of feeding rice bran oil?**

Can I overfeed rice bran oil? Rice bran oil is safe to feed. No adverse effects have been found from feeding rice bran oil. If overfed however, the horse may become obese since the oil is rich in calories. As with any oil, feeding too much may result in loose stools.

### **What are the advantages of feeding rice bran oil versus rice bran to horses?**

1. **Less Bulk** - One of the biggest advantages of feeding rice bran oil is that 7 fluid ounces of oil is equal to the oil content of 2 pounds of rice bran. Thus, 1 gallon of rice bran oil is equivalent to nearly 40 pounds of rice bran.
2. **Avoids Nutrient Imbalances** - Rice bran oil contains no calcium or phosphorus that could upset the calcium to phosphorus balance. Thus, rice bran oil can be fed to add calories to the diet without interfering with the balance of other nutrients. Rice bran, however, naturally contains a high level of phosphorus and little calcium. The amount of phosphorus in rice bran has the potential to significantly affect the calcium/phosphorus balance in the total diet. Too much phosphorus in the diet can interfere with calcium utilization and result in bone problems. On the other hand, some rice bran products have added calcium to balance the high phosphorus content. This may result in too much calcium in the total diet. While having too little calcium relative to phosphorus is a serious problem, excessive calcium in the total diet is not desirable either.
3. **Safe for HYPP Horses** - Rice bran oil contains very little potassium; therefore, it provides an excellent source of additional calories for HYPP horse diets. On the other hand, rice bran contains high amounts of potassium and is not recommended for HYPP horses.

**What are the advantages of rice bran oil over other vegetable oils, such as corn oil?**

Rice bran oil offers an alternative for horses refusing to eat other vegetable oils. Like corn oil, rice bran oil is excellent for sales- prepping horses, improving hair coat condition and adding calories to the diet. Unlike other vegetable oils, rice bran oil naturally contains high levels of lecithins and vitamin E and provides the natural source of gamma-oryzanol.

**Why does crude rice bran oil need to be shaken while other vegetable oils do not?**

Crude rice bran oil naturally contains gums and waxes. Being heavier than oil, these gums and waxes will settle. Most of the lecithins and gamma-oryzanol are in this separated fraction. Simply shaking the oil will remix these compounds.

**Once the seal has been broken, how long will the rice bran oil stay fresh?**

We recommend the oil be used within 2 months of breaking the seal. At 4 fluid ounces per day for one horse, one gallon would last 32 days.