

- SPRING 2026 ISSUE 12 -

BENCHMARK NEWS



GREETINGS Benchmarkers

I have noticed a bit of discussion lately around fibre in horse feeds, which prompted me to share some information I think is worth understanding.

The word “fibre” can cover a lot of different ingredients, but not all fibres perform the same role in the horse’s diet. The type of fibre used, how it is processed, and the way it contributes to the overall ration can make a significant difference to both nutritional value and feeding rates.

So, rather than getting caught up in what other feed companies are saying, I thought I’d take the opportunity to explain why we use highly fermentable “super fibres” such as soy and lupin hulls in Benchmark Feeds, and how they differ from long-stem fibres such as hay, chaff and straw.

The following is my honest appraisal, based on established nutritional principles and knowledge gained from more than 20 years working alongside some of the best people in the equine nutrition industry.

Understanding the differences between super fibres and long stem fibres.

Second only to clean water, long-stem fibre in the form of pasture, hay and chaff forms the basis of a horse’s ration and is essential for good health. In a natural setting, a horse

will eat for up to 20 hours each day to consume sufficient fibre. In a domestic setting the recommended daily intake of fibre is 1-1.5% of a horse’s body weight, which means a 500kg horse requires 5-7.5kgs of long stem fibre per day in its various forms to ensure digestive good health and to provide sufficient nutrients and energy to support bodily functions.

Long-stem fibre, after being broken down into smaller pieces by chewing and stomach acids, is digested in the hind gut (caecum) by fermentation. As can be deduced by the amount of fibre typically consumed over a 24-hour period, this process is both lengthy and inefficient, yielding relatively low levels of energy and nutrients for fibre indigested. A real benefit of feeding long stem fibre is the chewing motion required at the beginning of the digestive process. Unlike hungry humans who produce saliva at the very thought of a hot meal, horses need to physically chew to produce saliva. Saliva is alkaline which buffers the stomach acids that are produced constantly by a horse. Being slippery, it also helps food pass from the mouth to the stomach.

In short, the longer the fibre, the more chewing actions required, the more saliva produced, the better the passage of fibre and the less chance of stomach ulceration.

High energy Super Fibres have special powers for good.

Highly fermentable, highly soluble super fibres such as the lupin and soy hulls used in Benchmark Feeds ferment faster and produce more energy per kg than long stem fibre. This not only generates energy levels equivalent to most grains, but it does so via the natural fibre digestion pathway, stimulating volatile fatty acid production (VFAs). Being low in starch and sugar, super fibres are less likely to cause blood sugar spikes and digestive issues often associated with high-starch feeds.

This means that Benchmark feeds such as Perfect Mash and Super Fibre Mash, both packed with super fibres, provide a real alternative to high starch rations. Feeding as little as 1.5kgs per day to a 500kg horse can provide sufficient energy to support body condition and medium ridden work, providing a healthy alternative to grain-based feeds.

In my opinion, including long-stem fibres such as lucerne and oaten chaff and straw in pelleted feeds adds little or no value.

As discussed, for optimal digestive health benefits and nutritional value, long stem fibre must be fed at appropriate rates and in a form that requires chewing. Chaff and straw are just long stem fibre chopped up, so including these as ingredients in a pelleted feed provides only a fraction of the amount required each day and with the fibre compounded in a pellet it does little to stimulate saliva production.

If we do the numbers and estimate that a chaff or straw based feed contains say 20% lucerne and/or oaten chaff or straw and it is fed at 3 kgs per day, the fibre contribution to the ration works out at 600gms, which has little impact on overall fibre requirements.

I am not suggesting that feed companies who go down this path are promoting their feeds as a fibre replacement. I haven't seen this and I wouldn't expect to.

What this inclusion does however, is dilute the nutritional value of the concentrate. The obvious consequence is, that their feeding rates need to be considerably higher than you would expect to compensate for the fibre component. Even if the ticket price of this type of feed appears to be good value for money, when the high feeding rates are considered, this may not be the case.

I guess the main point I am trying to make is for you to make informed decisions regarding your horse's feed management and to consider the contribution each component makes to the overall ration.

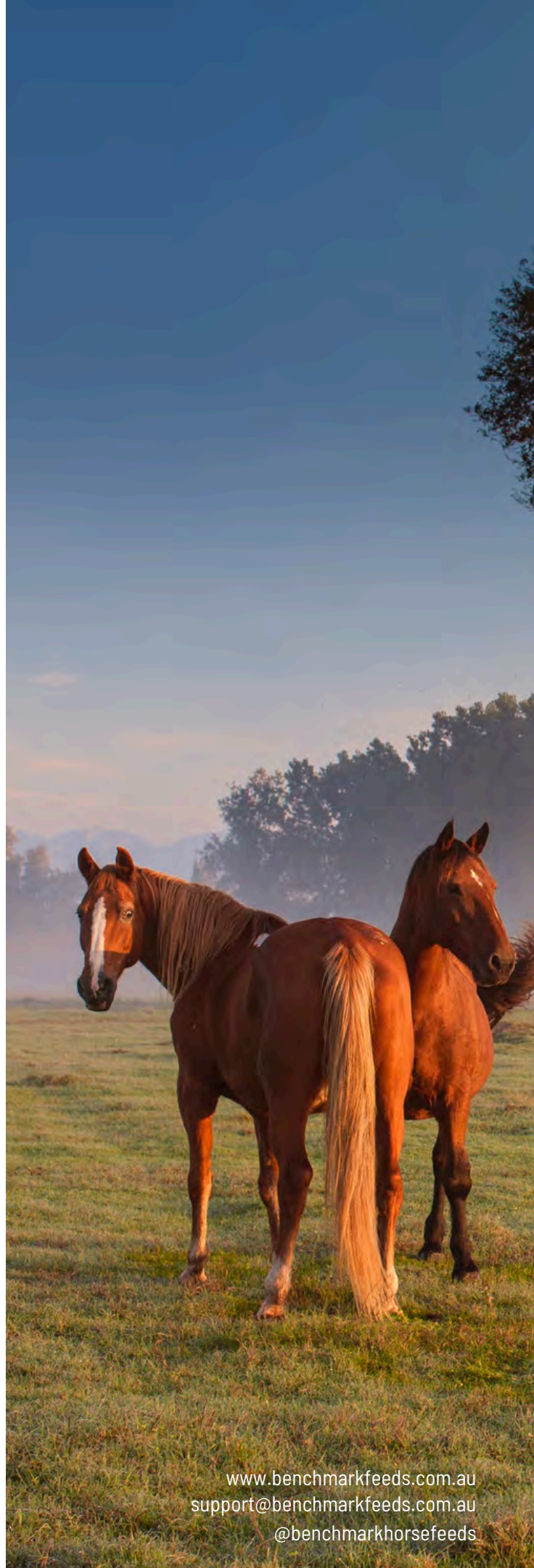
I also encourage you to calculate the true cost of feed. The bag price alone does not reflect the true cost of feeding your horse each day.

Kind regards,

Colin Price

Managing Director

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[@benchmarkhorsefeeds](https://www.instagram.com/benchmarkhorsefeeds)



FEATURED PRODUCT

Benchmark Cool AZ[®]



The Unsung Hero of the Benchmark Range

If you feed Cool AZ[®] to your horses, you'll know that it is easy to use, cost-effective and, most importantly, Cool AZ[®] delivers excellent results.

In many situations, 2 kgs per day, fed dry without chaff*, is all that's needed – making feeding time quick and easy.

Popular Uses

- Sport horses and ponies in work across all disciplines
- Great conditioning feed for spelling racehorses and horses on paddock rest
- Horses while travelling

Easy to digest and feed

Cool AZ[®] is fully steam-extruded to maximise digestibility and feed conversion. This complete, highly palatable feed is packed with nutrients that support essential bodily functions. Feed it dry to encourage chewing and saliva production or soften the nuggets with cold or warm water if your horse has dental issues.

Ideal for travel

When travelling with your horses, all you need is a bag of Cool AZ[®] and a good supply of hay to meet their fibre needs. No mixing is required. Because Cool AZ[®] is steam-extruded, it contains no viable seeds, helping you avoid national park and interstate border-crossing restrictions.

*Always feed adequate hay or pasture



**\$4 per bag
CASH BACK**
for the rest
of 2026!

If you are currently a Cool AZ® user or want to give it a shot for the first time, we are putting our money where our mouth is.

We will pay you \$4 for every bag you purchase regardless of where you are or where you buy your feed.

It's easy to claim:

Just hold on to your receipts, or better still each time you purchase Cool AZ®, take a photo of your receipt with your phone and then at the end of the week or each month or at the end of December, simply email or text the receipt pics to Benchmark and include your bank account details and we will send you the cash back funds.

There is no minimum or maximum purchase and every bag you buy qualifies.

Some things to note:

1. To be eligible for the Cash Back claim, purchases must take place between October 1st, 2026 and December 31st, 2026
2. The receipt must clearly show the retailers details, the product, the number of bags purchased and the date of purchase.
3. If you hold an account with a retailer, please provide a copy of your tax invoice showing these details.
4. Receipts may only be submitted once.
5. All Cash Back claims must be submitted to and will be paid by Equibrands Pty Ltd T/A Benchmark Horse Feeds.
6. Please note - your Benchmark stockist cannot process the cash back claim.

Email your receipts and bank details (BSB and Account number) to:

admin@equibrands.com.au
or text them to 0407 080 628



Here's a bright idea...

Great fundraiser for Equestrian Clubs

If you encourage your members to purchase Cool AZ® and hand in their receipts to the club, there is a real opportunity to raise much needed club funds or even help with event sponsorship.



**\$4 per bag
CASH BACK**
for the rest
of 2026!



SPRING FEEDING

The onset of spring presents a number of challenges for horse and pony owners, particularly those whose charges have metabolic issues or are reactive to high sugar pastures. There is a plethora of information available on how to manage spring conditions.

From a feed perspective keeping the starch and sugar levels as low as possible in the ration will go some way to countering the effects of pastures that are seasonally high in sugar.

Benchmark Mashes are a great nutritional tool in these circumstances, offering high quality nutrition, pre and probiotic support and extremely low levels of sugar and starch.

- All of our mashes have Agrimos® pre-biotic and Yea-Sacc® pro-biotic.
- Low starch and sugar
- No added molasses
- Grain free and genuinely non heating
- Contain natural antioxidants

PICK A MASH TO SUIT YOUR HORSE'S REQUIREMENTS

- Perfect Mash is a low carb complete cool feed
- Balancer Mash is a concentrated, low carb nutritional supplement
- Super Fibre Mash is an excellent fibre addition to any of our complete feeds and pairs exceptionally well with Balancer Mash.

You can find meal plans on our website along with the full nutritional and product information. Or you can contact us via messenger or email support@benchmarkfeeds.com.au



Southern NSW Territory Management Role

As our business grows, we are seeking an experienced consultant to deliver a high level of support to Benchmark retailers and horse owners across Southern NSW.

The territory extends from Bega in the south to Griffith in the west and the Southern Highlands in the north. Most of the consultant's time will be spent in and around Canberra and the Southern Highlands.

Ideal Candidate

- Is self-employed or owns a business servicing the equestrian community
- Has the capacity to add Benchmark to their existing business portfolio
- Is passionate about equine nutrition and health
- Can provide services throughout the designated region

If this sounds like you and you would like more information, please email **colin@benchmarkfeeds.com.au**



REQUEST A STABLE VISIT

A priority for the Benchmark Team in 2026 is to meet with as many horse owners as possible and provide no obligation advice and support. We can meet you at your property or wherever you keep your horses, whatever works for you.

You may like to get a group of horsey friends together at your property or agistment to make it worthwhile for everyone.

We also love talking to Pony Clubs or Adult Riding groups.

There is no charge for this service, in fact if you facilitate a group meeting we will have a small gift for you to say thankyou.

We have an amazing team of Territory Managers throughout Australia who can help you work through the best feed management plans for your horses, without any pressure or obligation of course. They are all experienced, hands-on horse people who love what they do.

The first step is simple, just complete the form on our website and submit it online. We will contact you promptly to have an initial discussion and arrange a visit.

Of course, with the vast distances involved in this great country, there may be some areas that we just can't get to, or at least not quickly. In this situation, we may arrange a virtual visit.

BOOK A STABLE VISIT TODAY - head to our website and fill out the form
<https://www.benchmarkfeeds.com.au/stable-visit>

FEEL GOOD DOGGO®

GOOD HEALTH COMES FROM WITHIN

A Feel Good Doggo® Update

We are having a lot of fun rolling out the Feel Good Doggo® range of meal toppers. It is all fresh territory for a horse feed business launching a dog range, but we are learning fast and interestingly both markets have much in common.

While a visit to any pet shop can be overwhelming, with the vast array of dog treats and supplements on offer, there is nothing that sits in the same space as Feel Good Doggo®.

As a fibre based, probiotic rich, vegetarian meal topper Feel Good Doggo® sits apart from the rest. While this can be a positive, it can also be a negative, as store owners struggle to give it a category and dog owners have to look at a new type of supplement.

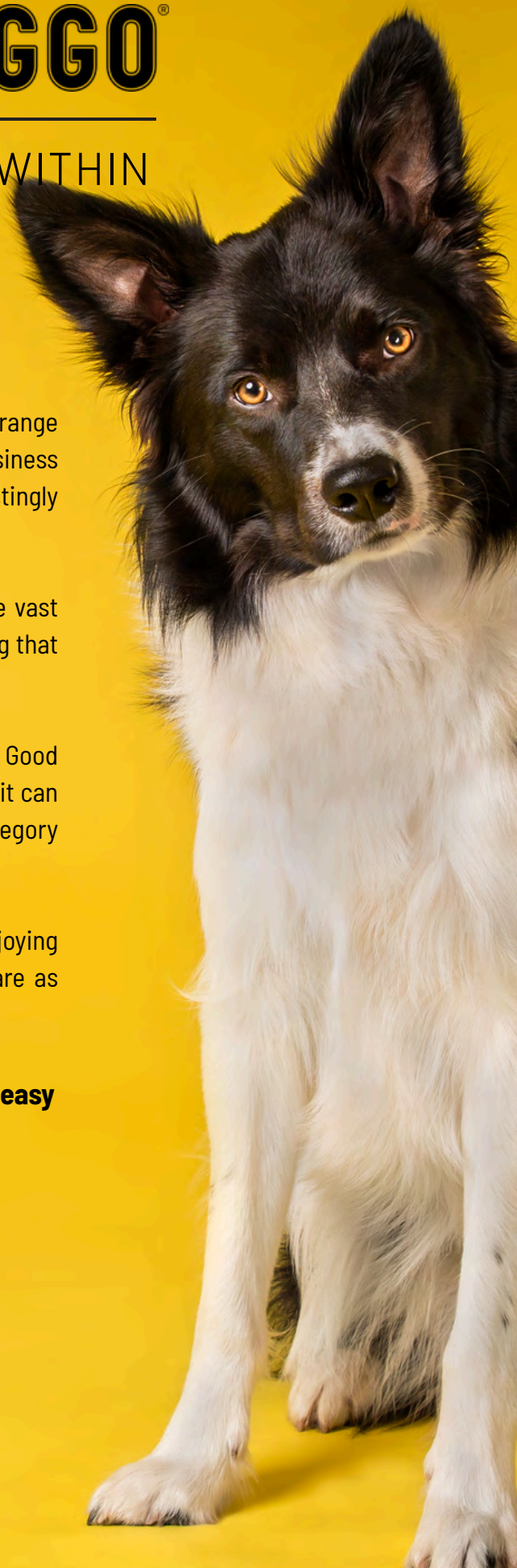
Overall, the response has been fantastic with dog owners enjoying the benefits that the range can offer. Digestive problems are as common in dogs as in horses.

We've just added an online store to our website so it's easy to order!

www.feelgooddoggo.com/shop



@feelgooddoggo



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JOIN OUR BENCHMARK HORSE COMMUNITY on Facebook!

Our Benchmark group is for like-minded horse enthusiasts to share stories and ask each other for feedback and information about their Benchmark experience.

We also love getting your before and after photos and just pics and updates in general!



CONTACT US

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