
Feeding oil to horses: Everything you need to know



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Whether it comes from feed or out of a bottle, oil is a valuable addition to many horses' diets. Here we explain the benefits of feeding oil and share our top tips on how to include it in your horse's diet safely...

Oil for weight gain

Oil certainly packs a punch when it comes to calories. In fact, 300ml of oil provides approximately the same amount of energy (calories) as 1kg of oats. However unlike cereal grains, oil is starch free making it a sympathetic source of energy for excitable horses as well as those prone to laminitis, colic, gastric ulcers and tying-up (high oil diets may not be suitable for horses with MFM).



Did you know?

- All oils contain a similar amount of energy (calories) – approximately 3.5MJ DE per 100mls
- It can take up to 12 weeks for horses to adapt to utilising a high oil diet

Oil for coat shine

Whilst there's no substitute for a balanced diet and plenty of grooming, oil can be the icing on the cake when it comes to a gleaming coat. As little as 30-50mls per day may be all that you need and at this quantity, won't compromise the good doers waistline!

Feeding rate

As a general rule of thumb, oil 'from a bottle' can be fed on top of the horse/ pony's current feed at a rate of up to 100mls per 100kg of bodyweight per day (500mls per day for a 500kg horse).



Oil and vitamin E

Did you know high oil diets should be balanced with additional vitamin E? The total diet should provide an additional 100iu of vitamin E for every 100ml of oil fed - this includes oil from a bottle and any oil in feed above 4%. Speak to a nutrition advisor before adding oil on top of your current feed or introducing high oil feeds without added vitamin E.

High oil feed vs oil from a bottle

Adding oil on top of your horse's current feed may be an easy and cost effective solution, particularly if feeding small amounts. In larger quantities, oil from a bottle can be a useful way of providing additional calories without increasing meal size. On the flip side, switching to a high oil feed such as [SPILLERS Conditioning Fibre](#) may be a palatable option and a more convenient way of providing a balanced diet - the difference in cost may also be negligible.



Tips for feeding oil safely

- Introduce any additional oil gradually – approximately 100mls per week as a guide.
- Make sure it's fresh. Oil can easily go rancid, particularly in hot weather.
- Speak to a nutrition advisor for advice before feeding oil 'from a bottle' or using high oil feeds without vitamin E.
- If you are competing, make sure the oil (and any other feeds/ supplements) you use is [BETA® NOPS](#) approved.

For more advice on feeding oil [contact](#) the SPILLERS Care-Line.

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