

New high-strength probiotic for Kiwi equine industry

A potent probiotic paste, which has changed conversations for Australia's equine industry, is now available in New Zealand.

BioRescue continues Probiotic Revolution's sharp focus on powerful probiotics at industry-leading strengths, and this oral paste (available in a convenient tube) joins daily infeed probiotic powder – "Healthy Horse".

BioRescue has been given the unequivocal thumbs up by Australian vet and horsewoman, Dr Robyn Plunkett. The Queenslander says anyone who knows and appreciates horses cannot ignore the field results, nor the logic.

She says BioRescue completes the picture as an effective treatment paste for pre and post travelling. It is also perfect for horses which suffer from stress or gut irritations.

Dr Plunkett talks to Mud Media's Dianna Malcolm about what her clients have experienced in Australia...

Dianna Malcolm: "Robyn, Thanks for joining us. You're a horsewoman, vet and former dairy farmer. If anyone understands a mammal's digestive tract, it's you. What are you seeing as people become accustomed to using modern probiotics at elevated strengths?"

Dr Plunkett: "Because horses are monogastric, they are hind-gut fermenters, and most horse owners don't fully understand the implications of that until their horse shows signs of a gut upset. The reality is that horses can struggle with ulcers from stress or grain feeding for example. Gastric ulcers are common in horses and can affect them at any age – particularly those performing athletic activities – with the highest frequency found in Thoroughbred racehorses (80-90%). Exercise increases gastric acid production and decreases blood flow to the GI tract (where immune function is driven from).

"The Saccharomyces yeast in the probiotic paste helps control excess acidity in the stomach – particularly because horses in work are most likely only fed twice daily – and exercise induces gastric acid production, so the stomach lining is often left exposed to the acidic gastric juices. The active live yeast contained in both the Healthy Horse and BioRescue can assist with buffering this excess acid."

Dianna Malcolm: "So, if we pause real quick and look at the science for a second. Because the caecum is essentially a large fermentation vat, isn't it? And, having the right pH (or measure of acidity) is important? I understand the normal pH of the Caecum is 6.6 (slightly acidic). The other parts of the stomach have a pH of 2.6 (very acidic). And that the microbial population in the Caecum is sensitive to

pH changes. Is this right? And, if so, there is there also a practical consideration if we want to deliver meaningful probiotics?

Dr Plunkett: “Yes, the bulk of the fibre-digesting happens after the acid stomach in a horse. And the fact that the bacteria that you’re using in the probiotic paste and Healthy Horse is microencapsulated is vital, because it means it is protected. So it makes it through that stomach, because it can resist that acid, and it gets down into the lower intestine where it really starts to work. And, it is the lower digestive tract which (as I’ve already mentioned) drives immune function.”

Dianna Malcolm: So, now we’ve covered the science, you’ve been using this probiotic paste for some time and recommending it to fellow equine associates and clients. What are you seeing in the field?

Dr Plunkett: “I’ve got a horse here on the farm that from the time I bought him as a two-year-old he would get a touch of colic every six months – like clockwork. That was regardless of my worming regime, or anything like that. He’s fed basically grass because we have plenty of area to put him on. It’s not like he’s in a restricted yard on hard feed.

“For this gelding, sometimes I’d have to treat him. Sometimes I’d walk it out of him. But, I started him on the probiotics after I went down one afternoon and his head and his ears were down again, and he didn’t want dinner.

“I gave him 40gms of BioRescue paste, and half an hour later he was out eating. After that I put him on the daily probiotics (Healthy Horse), and since then I’ve only had to use the treatment paste twice in six years.

“Other than that, a horse which regularly suffered from a sensitive gut, is now under control.”

Dianna Malcolm: “You say the probiotics impacts on a horse’s temperament?

“One comment we do regularly get is that they are much calmer to ride when they are on the probiotics. And, I think that is simply because if you’ve got a niggly gut, you don’t feel that good, and if someone slaps a saddle and a girth on you and hitches the girth up, and jumps on your back, how do you reckon you’d feel? If you can settle that underlying gut issue, the horse then wants to perform.

“I’ve routinely seen this. I had a lady who had bought a horse, knowing it had gut issues. He was always girthy and he never wanted to be touched on the belly. She started him on the probiotics, and he’s a different horse to ride today. He performs well and doesn’t play up. I’m sure it’s all because he’s not in pain.

“I have a friend with an endurance horse, and I don’t think she would have been able to keep him without the probiotics. She used to take him away on endurance rides and he would barely eat or drink for three days. You can’t run a horse for 80km if he doesn’t eat

and drink. It was soul destroying for the owner, she had tried so many remedies with no success. After starting on the probiotics we're discussing here, the gelding is now settled and a lot calmer to ride and eats while away from home. And, she's also a big advocate for probiotics because of it."

Dianna Malcolm: **"So, if you're travelling competition horses, I'm imagining it could be a big benefit – not only for the travel but perhaps also for their recovery?"**

Dr Plunkett: *"That's what we're seeing. One client gave the paste to her pony before she travelled it. She said the mare usually stresses and there is always a lot of manure in the float. She gave it the paste the day before, and on the morning she left. She said she had a completely different horse at the end of the trip. The float was much cleaner, and her horse was much calmer and she wasn't the usual finicky eater she is while she's away."*

Dianna Malcolm: **"Is there any other instance where it is having an impact?"**

Dr Plunkett: *"We are finding it is also of great benefit for a foal at the time of foal heat. When the mare's hormones change during that first heat one to two weeks after birth, the foal will often get the scours. Also, in many cases the mare travels to a stallion for that heat, and this adds to the stress for the foal."*

"If you give the paste to the foal during and after the trip, we're finding we stop a lot of the foal scouring and we're easing the stress of the whole event. On the bigger studs where they have some issues they give the foals a dose as needed."

"It's about coming back to basics with powerful and natural products to give protection to our animals against the unnatural environment we have created for them."

For more details about protecting your horse's digestive health, visit

<https://www.horsehealthproducts.com/horsemans-report/equine-health/the-cecum-key-to-your-horses-digestive-health>

For more details about how people contribute to ulcers in horses, visit

<https://thehorse.com/118592/diagnosing-and-treating-gastric-ulcers-in-horses/>