



HORSE JOURNAL™

Fatty Acids

At times, we find a product that piques our interest enough to try it against our favorites.

ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS: HEALTHY COAT

In June 2000, we discussed essential fatty acids (EFAs), which help develop healthy skin, coats and hooves, and help with chronic conditions like arthritis. They also help fight inflammatory conditions.

However, improper oil processing will destroy some EFAs and affect their usefulness, which is why most store-bought oils contain mega calories but little more. Healthy Coat, a mechanically extracted, preservative-free, soy oil for horses, is processed properly and is a strong source of EFAs, vitamin E and lecithin.

We fed Healthy Coat at a rate of 2 oz./day to a healthy Standardbred mare. We noted an obvious improvement in the shine and manageability of her coat within about a week. We even cut back on her grain ration a bit as just this small amount of oil started to make her gain weight as well.

Healthy Coat is a good choice for calorie boosting or coat enhancement in young, healthy horses. However, the high (52%) omega-6 EFA profile and relatively low level of the naturally anti-inflammatory omega-3 EFAs (about 7%) means it may not be the best choice for horses with inflammatory tendencies or for older horses.

Of course, omega-6 can be converted within the body to an anti-inflammatory form. However, this ability decreases with age, and most horses already consume more omega-6s over the inherently anti-inflammatory omega-3s. For this reason, with older horses or horses with inflammatory problems like arthritis, we prefer stabilized whole ground flaxseed or flax oil, such as Enreco Horseshine (800/962-9536), Designing Health's The Missing Link (800/774-7387) and HorseTech products (800/831-3309). Contact: Soy Inc, 866/214-6773. **+**

