

# FI'S FEED SCOOP

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I always think August is the toughest month of winter, it tends to be cold, usually wet and although the days are getting longer and the light of spring is just around the corner, I find it's the month both horses and riders/owners struggle with the most.

For horses struggling to maintain their condition a quick review of the diet will be necessary, your horse may require increased calories and nutrients added to their ration, there are simple ways to do this

- **Adding oil** – start slowly with 40-60mls and then build it up, you can add up to 200mls to help with weight gain.
- **Supplements** such as KER Equijewel which is stabilised rice bran and high in fat which is quickly utilised by the horse.
- Adding a **complete feed** such as McMillan Rapid Gain that is higher in carbohydrates, protein and calories.
- A **low starch** option is using McMillan Grain Free or NRM Low Gi sport, both provide added sources of fat and fibre essential for increased condition.

## WELCOME TO FI'S FEED SCOOP!

Each month, our Equine Nutrition Specialist, Fiona Gillies, will share practical, easy-to-understand nutrition tips to help you get the best out of your HERO horse. From seasonal feeding advice and common nutrition questions to helpful management tips, Fi's Feed Scoop is here to support you in keeping your horse happy, healthy and thriving in their Life After Racing.

Now is the time to get rugs off and have a close-up inspection of our horses, get your hands on them and do some body condition scoring (watch out for my video tip on this next month) and be objective.

I find taking a standing photo every 2 weeks is helpful to recognise if a horse is changing in condition as because we see them every day, we don't often notice those subtle changes until it's too late.

## ALL THE FIBRE WITHOUT THE FIZZ



As always, a fibre first diet is preferable, but August can be the pinch month, grass is running out, its cold and wet and the hay stack is diminishing rapidly!

To get more calorie/protein dense fibre into our horses - lucerne is at the top of the pile, this can be in many forms such as hay, chaff and ensiled products, NRM also now produce Lucerne nuts which are super convenient and you only need to feed a small volume compared to chaff for example 1kg of lucerne nuts is equal to ¾ of a 20 ltr bucket of Chaff

A great way to get that added fibre in without needing huge volumes. They are also a handy treat before riding to get a fibre layer into the stomach. My own horses have become addicted to them!