

REDUCING THE RISK

Addressing three main areas of horsecare can help to keep the risk of feed contamination to a minimum.

1. Stable management

- Make sure everyone on the yard including visitors knows the possible sources of contamination and how to avoid them.
- Never eat or drink in the stable.
- Wash hands thoroughly after treating a horse – or wear a pair of disposable latex gloves.
- Stable staff should declare any medication they are taking in case extra precautions are necessary.
- Clean and disinfect the loose box, manger and water bowl before the arrival of a new horse. When using temporary stabling away from home try to follow the same procedure.
- Empty and decontaminate the horsebox/trailer after every journey.
- Give horses on treatment their own box – try not to share.
- Avoid sharing tack and equipment between horses.
- Do not give titbits of human food to your horse.
- At races and competitions be extra vigilant and restrict access where necessary to feeding stuffs whilst ensuring horses are under strict supervision.



2. Feed management

- Buy feed or supplements with the BETA NOPS logo on the packaging. This shows that the manufacturer is part of the BETA NOPS quality assurance scheme designed to help reduce the risk of contamination with naturally occurring substances.
- Beware of “guarantees” or similar claims made by companies that are not part of the BETA NOPS code.
- Only buy good-quality forage from a reputable supplier and keep an eye open for any weeds.
- When turning horses out to graze, check pasture for any unknown or risky plants.
- Keep labels and delivery notes which state the batch numbers of any feed bought (the retailer that sold you the feed can help you with this). This information will prove invaluable in tracing the source should a problem arise.
- Take samples of feed with the same batch number on delivery and keep it for two months after consumption – just in case of any investigation.
- Check the suitability of a feed or supplement for racing or competition with your supplier or the manufacturer.
- Only keep horse and pony feed in the feed store – do not share it with feed for other animals.
- Only buy feed that is in correctly labelled sealed bags.
- Lock the feed store when not in use.
- Do not keep first-aid and grooming kits in the feed room.
- Make sure old feed is used up before opening new bags.



3. Medication management

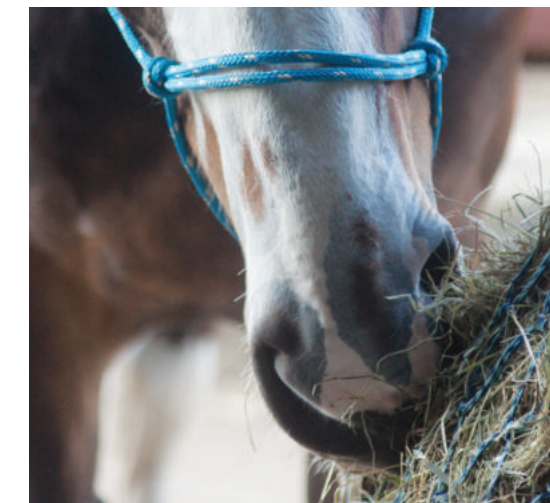
- If your horse or pony is being given medication or supplements requiring a period of withdrawal before competition, check the correct timing with your vet.
- Take care when using powder forms of medication during treatment because this may be more prone to spreading and contaminating the surrounding environment.
- Do not use home-made remedies or unknown substances or blends.
- Keep all medications locked in a secure first-aid box on the yard. Ideally, each horse should have its own kit.
- Keep a detailed record of any medication or treatment prescribed in a day book or diary.
- Clean any mangers or feed buckets used to administer medication thoroughly after use. Ideally, avoid using a fixed manger for this purpose.
- Avoid using the same stirrer to mix feeds, particularly when one horse is given medication in its feed.



For further information on avoiding prohibited substances, a poster highlighting how you can reduce the risk of feed contamination and/or a list of companies that have signed up to the BETA NOPS scheme, telephone the BETA office on telephone 01937 587062, email info@beta-uk.org or visit the BETA website, www.beta-uk.org.

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BETA GUIDE TO AVOIDING PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES



Stable Management – Feed Management
– Medication Management

Positive tests for prohibited substances continue to affect equestrian sport. This guide identifies the three key factors responsible for the occurrence of banned ingredients and provides a checklist of measures to help avoid them.

WHAT ARE PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES?

The exact definition of a prohibited substance depends on which rules are being competed under or followed.

The British Horseracing Authority defines a prohibited substance as “any substance capable at any time of acting on one or more of the following mammalian body systems” and lists examples such as the musculo-skeletal system. Full details can be found on the BHA’s website <https://www.britishhorseracing.com/regulation/anti-doping-medication-control/prohibited-substances>

The FEI lists three main categories of prohibited substances:

- **Banned substances** These have been deemed by the FEI to have no legitimate use in equine medicine and/or have a high potential for abuse such as human anti-depressants, anti-psychotics and nervous system stimulants.
- **Controlled medication** An exhaustive list of medication that is prohibited in competition and made up of all known substances recognised as therapeutic and/or commonly used but with the potential to enhance performance at certain levels. Some examples are anti-inflammatories, local anaesthetics, cough suppressants and other commonly and uncommonly used medications. Clearly, substances on this list might also enhance performance, depending on the timing and size of the dose.
- **Specified Substances** This category was introduced in 2016. A controlled medication or a banned substance can be given Specified Substance status. Prohibited Substances that are identified as Specified Substances should not in any way be considered **less important or less dangerous** than other Prohibited Substances. Rather, they are simply substances which are **more likely** to have been ingested by Horses for a purpose other than the enhancement of sport performance, for example, through a **contaminated** food substance. For example, caffeine is a Controlled Medication (Specified Substance) whilst synephrine is a Banned Substance (Specified Substance)

The FEI publishes the Equine Prohibited Substances List (EPSL) annually following a revision process and can be found at <https://inside.fei.org/content/anti-doping-rules>.

Competition horses are expected to compete with no banned substances or controlled medication substances in their systems unless at a level defined and approved by FEI regulations.

These definitions should not be confused with that of naturally occurring prohibited substances (NOPS), which are defined as “either naturally present within certain feed ingredients or that occur as a result of inadvertent cross-contamination during processing, and that are listed in the BETA NOPS appendices”.

The NOPS currently listed are caffeine, theobromine, theophylline, morphine, hyoscine, hordenine, atropine and cannabinoids. In addition there is now a herbal list of substances that may occur in feed and feed materials. These are Cathinone/Cathine, Digitoxin, Ephedrine/Pseudoephedrine, Reserpine, Synephrine, Harpagosides, Salicylic Acid, Valerenic acid, Yohimbine.

The British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA) NOPS assurance scheme is designed to reduce the risk of naturally occurring prohibited substances (NOPS) in equine feeds. It is applicable to manufacturers of compound and complementary feeds (the latter often referred to as supplements) as well as producers of raw materials, straights, additives, hay, haylage and other fibre products.

Prohibited substances can therefore be present in a wide range of items, including:

- Human medicines.
- Veterinary medicines.
- Food such as cocoa, chocolate, bakery products, confectionery and biscuits.
- Drinks such as tea, coffee and soft drinks with caffeine.
- Feedstuffs such as feeds comprised of food by-products, germinating barley, canary reed grass and some herbs, including valerian.
- Recreational drugs.
- CBD and CBDA containing supplements.



KEY CONTAMINATION RISK FACTORS

1. Naturally occurring prohibited substances (NOPS)

Naturally occurring prohibited substances can occur in feed or supplements as a result of a natural presence or inadvertent cross-contamination during processing.

Examples include the contamination of dried lucerne with caffeine or morphine via the use of shared drying facilities at a manufacturing plant.

All substances classed as NOPS are included in a defined list and featured in the BETA NOPS quality assurance scheme. Companies audited under these schemes work to defined standards to help reduce the risk of feed contamination by NOPS.



2. Contamination of other prohibited substances

Contamination with BHA- and FEI-defined prohibited substances can also occur as a result of inadvertent administration on the yard itself through, for example, contaminated feed buckets.

It has also been known for feed and particularly supplements to be contaminated with BHA- and FEI-defined prohibited substances. In these cases, cross-contamination during manufacture is the likely source.

Owners and riders should understand the supply chain of the ingredients in their horses’ diets. Companies signed up to the BETA NOPS scheme can make horse feed only on a dedicated non-medicated production line in order to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

3. Follow guidance on withdrawal periods

Prohibited substances classed as controlled medication by the FEI are permitted during training but not allowed during competition. Some of these are added – intentionally – to supplements, so a period of withdrawal is required before competing.

Examples include salicylic acid (for which a threshold applies) extracted from willow bark, and valerenic acid (from the herb valerian).

