

# BENCHMARK NEWS



## GREETINGS

It is approaching 3 years since we introduced Benchmark Feeds to Australia and New Zealand, and I must say it has been an amazing ride since. I can proudly say that despite there being so many feed choices available, our feeds have been enthusiastically embraced by the equestrian community. You are all playing a part in this and together I feel we are building something very special.

We have made so many friends throughout the Benchmark journey. Our feeds have, in many instances, transformed the lives of much loved horses and ponies. (and in some cases their owners too).

Equitana Melbourne in November provided us with an opportunity to meet many of you face to face for the first time. It was just amazing to catch up and listen to your stories. More than once tears were shed as owners recounted how their much loved horses regained their health and vigour after they changed to Benchmark. It was very humbling I can tell you.

To cap off a fantastic Equitana, we won the Feed/Vet Innovation Award with Perfect Mash, which was a huge thrill for the whole team. In my career I have made many presentations, but I was caught out by how confronting it was to talk about something that we had created from scratch. It was incredibly personal, and I was delighted that our story resonated with the judges.

As I have said previously the Benchmark Community FB page is our most valuable resource. Not only does hosting an open Facebook forum set us apart from our corporate owned competitors, but it also moves our business forward together with you all. I don't often make comments on this page, but I do read every post and enjoy every shared story.

Changing feeds is a big step, not made without good reason and considerable thought. For many, reading the comments and posts on the page, and getting a real feeling of community among Benchmark users, has given them the confidence to make the move to our feeds.

**Thank you all for your participation and contributions.**

## In this issue

We feature Serena Ireland, a rising star in NSW dressage arenas. Serena has talent and maturity beyond her years and a truly admirable work ethic.

Our product focus in this newsletter is on Benchmark Invest, our steam extruded breeding and young horse feed that has much to offer all horses.

## Feed Insights

From day one, our plan was to make highly fermentable super fibres the hero ingredient in our feeds, replacing grains and grain by-products. I have been a big fan of using super fibres as a supplement in horse diets for many years and while this has been a popular and successful practice, making super fibres the main ingredient in our range of complete feeds was to some degree, a leap of faith. There is no doubt that your support and amazing feedback has been invaluable, enabling us to improve our knowledge and understanding along the way.

What has become obvious to me is that while the energy derived from fermentable fibre is sufficient to improve condition and support a significant level of work, it can also provide an express delivery service for valuable probiotics, directly to the hind gut. While this is purely a personal theory, I believe that the rapid change in coat condition and shine experienced by so many new Benchmarkers supports this.

The #benchmarkshine was created by users because of the results they were experiencing. We had little to do with it.

For the love of horses.  
with kind regards,  
Colin Price



# JOIN OUR BENCHMARK HORSE COMMUNITY on Facebook!

Our Benchmark group is for like-minded horse enthusiasts to share stories and ask each other for feedback and information about their Benchmark experience. We also love getting your before and after photos and just photographs in general!





# INVEST

THE SMART FEED  
INVESTMENT FOR  
YOUR HORSE'S  
FUTURE GROWTH  
AND DEVELOPMENT

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## BENCHMARK INVEST

Premium nutrition for growing horses without the starch burden.

Our faith in using highly fermentable fibres to provide digestible energy led us to develop our extruded feed range. Headlining this range is Benchmark Invest, a low starch and sugar steam extruded feed for growing horses and horses requiring protein and energy for growth and development.

Steam extrusion is a lovely way to improve the digestibility of starches in the small intestine. The extrusion process injects millions of pin holes in the starch molecule, thereby increasing the surface area and access for digestive enzymes to do their work. As a result feed digestibility is dramatically improved. It's simple physics. The extrusion process involves the gelatinisation of starches so if the ingredients in the formulation contain a high level of grains or mill run, this is a fairly straight-forward process.

The challenge we faced was producing a high quality extruded nugget with a relatively low starch content. Our extruded feeds Invest, Golden Oldies and CoolAZ have a base of 20% barley with a touch of mill run to bring the level of starchy material to about 25-30%.

To successfully produce an extruded product with this small percentage of grain was a credit to our feed millers and from a product performance perspective it has changed the game.

Much has been published about the inflammatory effect of high starch diets on the bone and joint health of young, growing horses. There is no doubt that carbohydrates play an important role, however there must be a balanced approach. We have made highly fermentable soy and lupin hulls the main ingredients and energy source in these feeds and the results we are seeing, tell us our decision was the correct one.

While Benchmark Invest is a breeding and young horse feed, it can be used successfully to build condition and topline in spelling racehorses or older horses if they are not grain tolerant.





#feedforthefuture

**WINNERS OF THE  
BUSINESS INNOVATION AWARD  
'VETERINARY/FEED CATEGORY'  
AT EQUITANA AUSTRALIA 2022**



# PERFECT MASH

LOW-CARB COMPLETE  
COOL FEED RICH IN  
HIGHLY FERMENTABLE  
SUPER FIBRES





## SERENA IRELAND *Dressage*

### WE ASKED ONE OF OUR CUSTOMERS - Serena Ireland why she uses Benchmark Horse Feeds.

Colin Price and Serena Ireland have a chat. You can find the live recording on our [YouTube page @benchmarkhorsefeeds5524](#)

Serena's journey started over five years ago with a \$400 pony that she rode from prelim to grand prix and she did her first grand prix when she was 17 years old. Serena trained the pony herself, he was the first love of her life - "He's a Rock Star" and affectionately known as Rocky.

Rocky taught Serena everything she knew up until that point and he was her stepping stone to get an opportunity to go to Germany when she finished school.

Straight out of school Serena arrived in Germany as a working student at the age of 17 with no knowledge of the language or the country she found herself in. Serena arrived at Hof Boernsen and was trained by Judy Almelling who Serena credits with shaping her into the rider she is today. Originally Serena had planned to stay for 6-months but after 3.5 years she decided to return home at age 21 to set up her business, Serena Ireland Dressage.

Serenas business is made up of training horses and campaigning them on behalf of owners, producing young horses and also producing young horses in to safe suitable conveyancers for their owners to then move on to riding themselves and coaching riders and also the occasional sales horse.



Angie Richard Photography



Serena has an incredibly loyal team around her and there is a really good culture with the local trainers where they have 'the dressage hotline' and they all reach out to one another for advice.

Serena has a dedicated team of three girls that work for her that treat and love every one of the horses in their care as their own.

There is a crew of support vets, farrier, bio-mechanical work and everything internally including sponsors.

**That's what makes us what we are. It's not a one man job, it takes a village.**

At Serena Ireland Dressage they have a big science focus behind what they do. From the three year olds that have been bred or purchased, it's important to set up the foundations now - their feet are correct and they are fed well, that they are produced as perfectly in balance as we possibly can for longevity of peak performance.

**Every horse we produce is better than the last one.**

**Serena contacted Colin for feed advice early on as she needed a feed that would work for her horse Rusty.**

Rusty was a real struggle to feed, he was of an incredibly athletic build and a very sensitive hot horse. So it was always that balance to find that cool energy but also keep enough weight and muscle on him.

The philosophy behind the Benchmark products stood out for Serena, the approach of not cutting corners and keeping the starch and sugar levels low were key components and important for the young horses but also as they age.

Serena dove in head first to all of the products and has found them easy and straight forward to use for each of the horses in her care.

 **Serena Ireland Dressage**  
 **instagram.com/serena\_ireland**

# Vitamin E level increased in Benchmark Achieve -Sport

Achieve -Sport was formulated to support hard working, high performance sport horses, and it has performed exceptionally well in this regard across all equestrian disciplines. The Super Fibre Mash/Achieve -Sport combo is becoming extremely popular.

What has taken us a little by surprise is the demand for Achieve -Sport from racing and pre-training stables, particularly in the harness racing code.

The combination of micronised grains, protein meals and our hero ingredient highly fermentable super fibre has literally been a winner, and as a result the feed is developing a strong following.

Harness horses are among the hardest working and fittest in equestrian sport and so to support this we have increased the level of Vitamin E in the feed to 536 IU per kg to ensure requirements are covered. Vitamin E is one of several powerful antioxidants that among other things, support muscle function and recovery.

All stock in the distribution network manufactured after April 1st contains the increased levels. The nutrient analysis has been updated on our website and downloadable data sheet.



Driver Nathan Turvey and ALTA RHETT  
Wall Pacing Stables

## ACHIEVE -SPORT

NUTRITIONAL MUSCLE  
WHEN PERFORMANCE  
IS PARAMOUNT



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