

Determination of Digestibility of Dried Alfalfa-Whole Plant Corn Cubes for Horses.

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The purpose of the study was to determine the digestibility of a new horse feed, Alfamaize®. Two lots were fed to two groups of four mares during a three week period. All mares were dewormed and had their teeth floated in order to ensure freedom from possibly associated with parasites or chewing. Daily intake of the cubes was calculated at 1.2 times maintenance as recommended by NRC (1989), using energy and protein values for alfalfa and whole corn plant.

There was no apparent loss in condition of any horses on the trial, and all of the horses gained an average of 2.1 kg during the trial. Judging from the way the mares were consuming the cubes, they would have consumed considerably more, had their intakes not been restricted.

The product tested appears to have potential to fill a very valuable market niche. It could quite successfully serve as the sole source of roughage for a horse. Alfamaize® provides an excellent source of macronutrients from a forage source, including energy, protein, calcium, phosphates, fibre, potassium and magnesium (see table below). This product makes excellent use of two of Ontario's late summer crops and would appear to be very well situated to find a ready and willing market in the horse industry.

