

Using Diatomaceous Earth with Horses

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Diatomaceous Earth as Natural Pesticide for Horses

Diatomaceous earth can be used to care for your horses in several ways. Diatomaceous earth is exceptionally porous making it effective for drying wet places out. Spreading diatomaceous earth in areas of your barn where moisture collects can dry out breeding beds where many pests reproduce. Fly larvae is especially susceptible to diatomaceous earth. Diatomaceous earth can also be applied on your barn floors, in nooks and crannies, as a preventative measure. After mucking your barn, spread diatomaceous earth to keep your barn dry and pest free.



Additionally, spreading diatomaceous earth around your barn will cause pests to come into contact with diatomaceous earth's sharp edges. These sharp edges shred insect exoskeletons. Shredding an insect's exoskeleton causes it to lose moisture eventually dehydrating it to death. Many horse-keepers hang burlap sacks full of diatomaceous earth around their barns. Horses can rub against these sacks, coating themselves in diatomaceous earth, to fight against pests on their skin.

Currently, one of diatomaceous earth's most common uses is as what is called an anti-caking agent or flow aid in agricultural feed. When wet grain, corn, and other types of feed are stored, they often stick and clump together. Diatomaceous earth is added to the feed, in an amount known as food grade, to absorb moisture and prevent the feed from sticking, or caking together. Agricultural feed is often pressed into pellets and diatomaceous earth works as a good pelleting aid. Simply, it helps feed turned into pellets maintain its shape.

Food Grade Diatomaceous Earth and Deworming

Food grade diatomaceous earth may also be used for deworming horses. Food grade diatomaceous earth is the type recommended for feeding to your horse, or other animals. When eaten, very little of the diatomaceous earth is absorbed into the body and diatomaceous earth's sharp, fine microstructure acts as a scrubbing solution for horses' digestive tracts. As diatomaceous earth works through a horse's intestines it slices through intestinal worms - killing them, and shredding them so they may be passed out of the digestive system.

Recommended doses vary for each individual horse and is largely dependent on body weight. A minimum 60 day treatment plan is suggested and you should check fecal worm counts at least every 30 days. If fecal worm counts do not improve, consider increasing their diatomaceous earth dosage. Similarly, if fecal worm counts do improve, you can consider reducing the dosage. Many horse-keepers continue administering a small dose of diatomaceous earth to their horses diet even after deworming has been achieved.

Diatomaceous earth has no offensive odor or texture so mixing it directly into your horses' feed works fine. Horses will eat it without noticing its presence.