

Introduction to the BETA UFAS Compound Feeds Code for the Control of Naturally Occurring Prohibited Substances.

BETA, through the work of the Feed Committee has been considering the issues surrounding the occurrence of naturally occurring prohibited substances (NOPS) in feed over the last four years. Whilst equestrian regulatory bodies such as the British Horseracing Authority have a no threshold policy for naturally occurring substances that could affect performance (with the exception of theobromine), manufacturers are being faced with increasing challenges in keeping the risk of contamination by these substance to a minimum.

However diligent feed manufacturers are, due to the fact that many of these substances are naturally occurring in plants that are increasingly being grown in the UK and wider EU, there will always be a risk of their presence in ingredients destined for horse feed manufacture. The need for a code has arisen due to the increasing frequency of positives.

Whilst recognizing that analytical screening for prohibited substances should form an integral part of the process it should not be the sole methodology for the preclusion of such substances in feed. The occurrence of naturally occurring prohibited substances tends not to be homogenous but rather in random and discrete pockets such as occurs with the presence of mycotoxins and salmonella. By their sporadic presence therefore such substances are less likely to be detected through routine sampling methods. Prevention by good practice from raw material sourcing through to final feed preparation is needed.

BETA's new NOPS code is a voluntary measure to enable those companies who undertake extra precautions to reduce the risk of NOPS appearing in their feeds, to reinforce this to customers. An integral part of this code is the BETA UFAS NOPS Appendix, which has been developed together with the AIC to ensure that high levels of QA/QC are maintained in order to reduce the risk of positives in the future.

This will be a standard to which trainers can refer and have some confidence that the manufacture is taking all possible steps to ensure the risk of NOPS being present in feed is minimised.

To be able to claim compliance with the BETA NOPS Code the following steps must be followed:

1. Current membership of BETA. In the case of non membership of BETA a license fee of £1000 + VAT must be paid on an annual basis. This fee is reviewed annually.

2. An application form should be completed by all companies wishing to join the BETA NOPS Code which will also be an agreement to comply with the terms and conditions outlined in this document. There is an initial registration fee of £100 + VAT that is due from all BETA members participating in the scheme followed by an annual fee of the same amount every year thereafter. This should be paid at the time of making application and SAI Global will be informed once the form has been received so that auditing to the NOPS appendix can be arranged.

2. Voluntary use of the BETA standard terms of conditions relating to NOPS on relevant documents. In the case of existing customers, these Terms & Conditions should be sent to all customers advising them of your adoption of these conditions.

3. Auditing to the UFAS Code of Practice with the addition of the BETA NOPS Appendix.

4. Participating companies will agree to participate in the early warning system for NOPS. This early warning system will ensure that all members of the Code are advised of potential contamination risks. In the case of a positive arising from a company's own QA procedures or advice of detections from the BHA, or other regulatory bodies whether in the UK or abroad, members of the code must notify BETA for them then to transmit details further to other members. If required, the identity of the company testing positive will remain confidential.

It is in the spirit of the code that information received through the early warning system is not misused to the detriment of any individual company but treated in the strictest confidence.

5. BETA will promote the membership of companies to the NOPS code to relevant professionals, professional bodies and consumers.

6. Membership to the code is available to producers of all forms of compound equine feed (including supplements) providing they fulfil the conditions as above.

7. Members to the code are advised to use the following statement on packaging and or literature which will identify them as a member of the BETA NOPS code.

QUALITY COMMITMENT

XXXCompanyXXXX manufactures to a strict code of feed safety. This product has been manufactured in our licensed premises using quality assured ingredients under strictly controlled production conditions and conforms to the requirements of EU and UK legislation governing the manufacture of animal feeding stuffs. XXXXXXXXXX monitors for the presence of specified naturally occurring prohibited substances (NOPS) as required under the rules of racing and other affiliated competitions which are in line with BETA/ UFAS NOPS guidelines. Adherence to these guidelines ensures that the risk of occurrence of such substances is minimised.

No guarantees will be given nor declarations made as to the NOPS free status of feeds nor shall any other such wording that implies similar be used. Companies are to agree that should the quality statement as detailed above be used on bag or literature in part, the extract thereof and the surrounding text will be sent to BETA for approval to ensure the spirit of the Code is being adhered to.

8. A BETA UFAS NOPS code logo will be available to members to use as wished, on bag, packaging or literature on completion of a successful audit that must take place within one sign of signing up to the code. If a successful audit is not completed within the year, all mention of the code must be removed from literature, packaging or labels.