

BETA NOPS Code

To be read in conjunction with the BETA NOPS Terms and Conditions



British Equestrian Trade Association

NATURALLY OCCURRING PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES (NOPS®) CODE

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¹ “NOPS” is a registered word mark of BETA and the use of this “word” by third parties is subject to BETA’s permission. All mentions of NOPS assumes the presence of the registered trademark sign[®] whether present or not.

Scope

The British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA) through the work of the BETA Feed Committee has considered the issues surrounding the control of certain specific Naturally Occurring Prohibited Substances (NOPS) and developed the BETA NOPS Code as a result of this work.

Whilst recognising that it is impossible to be absolutely certain that a feed material is completely free from such substances, it has established that good purchasing and manufacturing practice together with adoption of suitable risk analysis and management throughout all stages of the supply chain from field to feeding can go a long way towards precluding such contaminants and substantially reduce the risk of their presence in the horse.

The BETA NOPS Code is a voluntary scheme for use by all those companies who wish to demonstrate and confirm that they conform to current best practice in minimising the risk of contamination by NOPS in equine feeds, raw materials, ingredients which they produce or NOPS products which they pack, in conformance with the requirements of the BETA NOPS Code.

The code applies across a company rather than being product related.

In order to be eligible to apply for BETA NOPS Accreditation, the company must evidence certification to a BETA recognised HACCP based accreditation scheme. The accreditation schemes that are recognised by BETA as a qualification for NOPS are detailed in the BETA NOPS Code Terms and Conditions Appendix A.

The code covers the following business groups:

- Manufacturers of compound and complementary equine feeds (M)
- Marketers of feed under their own brand when made by third party manufacturers, with or without a role in formulation or specification of raw materials, packed either by the marketing company or the manufacturer.(BH)
- Packer of product manufactured in a separate NOPS approved premises (P)(NOPS code compliance optional under the code)
- Producers and suppliers of feed ingredients (including additives and premixtures) used in the production of equine feed. (I) (NOPS Code compliance optional for all but premixtures)
- Producers and suppliers of straights fed alone or incorporated into equine feed eg. hay, haylage, oats. (S)(NOPS Code compliance optional)

All companies wishing to be certified to the NOPS Code must fulfil the necessary requirements as outlined below and agree to follow the Terms and Conditions of the Code as outlined in these documented separately.

Business Group	Type of business	Relevant clauses (in part or full as appropriate)
M	Manufacturers carrying out all functions, to include contract manufacturers	All clauses
BH 1	Brand holder sourcing raw material, formulating and packing finished product (no own manufacturing).	All clauses
BH 2	Brand holder sourcing raw	A,B,D,E,F

	material and formulating (no product handling)	
BH3	Brand holder delegating sourcing, formulation, manufacturing and packing.	A,B2,B3,D,E,F
P *	Packer of finished product and straights	A,C,D,F,G
I 1 *	Producers and suppliers of feed ingredients including additives	All clauses
I 2 *	Producers and suppliers of premixtures	All clauses
S *	Producers and suppliers of straights	All clauses

*NOPS certification is optional for these categories of business group.

Any company not able to identify into which business group it fits should consult the British Equestrian Trade Association before application.

In order to claim compliance with the BETA NOPS Code, companies must agree to the full conditions of the Code as outlined in the Terms and Conditions, available from BETA. In the case of both BETA and non-BETA members a license fee will be incurred.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Code, the following substances (and their sources) are defined as Naturally Occurring Prohibited Substances (NOPS): and are divided into 3 categories: High priority, low priority and herbal, which is further divided into high and low priority. This priority has been agreed after consultation with competition and racing Governing Bodies.

1. High Priority

Substance	Typical Source
Caffeine	Cacao, tea, coffee
Theobromine	Cacao
Theophylline (metabolite of theobromine)	Tea products
Morphine and other derivatives from the source e.g. Oripavine, Codeine and Thebaine.	Opium Poppy (<i>Papaver somniferum</i>)
Atropine/ Hyoscyamine	Deadly Nightshade (<i>Atropa belladonna</i>) Jimson weed (<i>Datura spp.</i>)
Hyoscine / Scopolamine	Deadly Nightshade (<i>Atropa belladonna</i>) Jimsonweed (<i>Datura spp.</i>)

2. Low Priority

Substance	Typical Source
Lupanine/ Sparteine	Lupin, Scotch (common) broom
Bufotenine	Canary grass (<i>Phalaris sp.</i>), toads and toadstools

3. Herbal NOPS

These are substances either naturally present in certain herbs that could lead to a positive test in competition, or are substances that originate from weed seeds contaminating herbal supplies. This list has been introduced based on analytical results over the period of the NOPS code. Testing for these substances should be done on risk assessed basis and for many companies will be of little or no concern.

High Priority

Substance	Typical Source	FEI Prohibited Status
Cathinone / Cathine	Khat	Banned
Digitoxin	Foxglove (<i>Digitalis sp.</i>)	Banned
Ephedrine/Pseudoephedrine	<i>Ephedra sp.</i>	Banned
Reserpine	Indian snakeroot, Devil's pepper; (<i>Rauvolfia sp.</i>)	Banned
Synephrine	"Bitter" orange cultivars (<i>Citrus sp.</i>)	Banned

Low Priority

Substance	Typical Source	FEI Prohibited status
Harpagosides	Devil's Claw	Controlled
Salicylic Acid	Willow bark, Meadow Sweet	Controlled
Valerenic acid	Valerian (<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>)	Controlled
Yohimbine	Yohimbe tree (<i>Rauvolfia sp.</i>)	Controlled

There is no testing regime laid down within either the NOPS Code, NOPS Terms and Conditions nor in BETA guidance notes accompanying the scheme.

For a company to establish the presence or absence of the above substances a testing regime has to be considered based on a HACCP based risk assessment procedure.

For further detailed information please also refer to the separate BETA NOPS Guidance on risk assessment for NOPS registered members.

AT RISK MATERIALS

NOPS At Risk materials are divided into two categories – "Excluded" and "Sensitive".

1. Excluded at risk materials must be excluded from feed due to the material being at high risk of containing a high priority or high priority herbal NOPS contaminant
2. Sensitive at risk materials that may be used but with caution. This category is in turn divided into two groups.

Sensitive A: Material being at high risk of containing a low priority NOPS or low priority Herbal NOPS contaminant.

Sensitive B: Material being at low risk of containing a high priority NOPS contaminant

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These lists are not exhaustive and will be revised as necessary.

Excluded list:

Bakery and biscuit products and by-products, including biscuit meal.

Confectionery waste

Traded grain screenings [Grain screenings are a by-product of cleaning rice, wheat, barley or oats for seed. It may include light, broken kernels, weed seeds and chaff etc.]

Coffee and tea products and by-products

Chocolate products and by-products

Herbal raw materials appearing on the high priority herbal list and/or known to contain a banned analyte e.g. Indian Snakeroot or heads, and straw (which may be pelleted) from opium poppies (Papaver somniferum)

Sensitive A List:

Lupins

Canary reed grass

Herbs: Devil's Claw

Willow Bark

Meadow Sweet

Valerian

Where sensitive A list herbs are intentionally used in a feed, the company should ensure the requirements detailed in clause B 1.3.1 are followed.

Sensitive B List:

Cereals

Cereal by-products

Forage products

Linseed (added April 2015)

A Introduction

Scope – covering both compound and raw material

Clause	Requirement	Guidance
A 1 Code Requirements		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any company wishing to enter the NOPS Code must be certified to a recognised HACCP based assurance scheme. - All equine feeds produced by a company audited to this appendix must comply with its requirements. 	<p>Refer to Appendix A of the BETA NOPS Code Terms & Conditions for a list of recognised assurance schemes.</p> <p>The NOPS® Code is a company not product scheme. Everything bearing a NOPS® registered company or brand name, whether made in or packed in its own or a contracted plant must be compliant with the NOPS® code. Absence of the NOPS logo does not mean that the product is not covered by the NOPS Code unless specifically stated- refer clauses A3.3 and B 3.</p>
A 2 Legislative and Other Requirements		
A 2.1	All relevant current feed and feed safety legislation must be complied with.	<p>Consideration must be given to legislation in country of manufacture as well as countries to which product may be exported.</p> <p>Attention should be paid to ensuring that only materials authorised for use in the countries being marketed into are used. Thus in Europe, only EU equine authorised feed materials and additives may be used.</p>
A 2.2	Companies should be aware of the rules applied by relevant sporting regulators in terms of prohibited substances.	Different rules apply to horses participating in racing and FEI competition. Refer to the BETA Guidance note “Keeping it Legal” for links to the governing bodies. Available to BETA members on request.
A 3 Information Claims, Labelling		
A 3.1	Labelling and claims must comply with EC No 767/2009 (Marketing and Use of Feed Regulation)	Refer to the BETA Guidance note “Keeping it Legal” for information on claims and labelling. Available to BETA members on request

A 3.2	No guarantees (implied or direct) shall be given nor declarations made as to the NOPS or prohibited substance free status of feeds nor shall any other such wording that implies similar be used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This also applies to the use of wording implying or stating that products are “tested” for prohibited substances. Testing of samples does not preclude positives occurring outside of the tested samples. - Ensure that if a product contains substances which are not on the NOPS list, but may yield a positive test in competition, no NOPS logo is shown and that there is appropriate advice on packaging.
A 3.3	Companies intentionally adding certain raw materials that may, if used in competition cause a positive test for banned substances need to differentiate these products from the rest of their range.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies who place product on the market that includes ingredients that may be viewed as either banned or suitable only for use in training i.e. “controlled” under FEI rules MUST NOT place the NOPS logo on packaging. Examples of such ingredients include devils claw. • On websites or company literature it must be made clear that these products are NOT suitable for use during competition • A withdrawal period must be clearly stated on product packaging. • Consideration must be given to the line the product is manufactured on if containing such raw materials.
A 3.4	Companies wishing to make a general statement of quality relating to their NOPS certified products are advised to use the “Quality Commitment” statement quoted in C 2.14 of the Code Terms and Conditions.	Should the quality statement as detailed 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.
A 3.5	If used, the correct version of the BETA NOPS Logo must be utilised.	The logo featuring UFAS and or FEMAS must not be used after 1 June 2016.
A 4 Hazard Analysis and Risk Assessment (HACCP)		
	The risk assessment, based on HACCP principles, must consider the presence of NOPS as a hazard.	Refer to the separate BETA NOPS Guidance on risk assessment for NOPS registered members

A 5 Maintenance of Supply		
A 5.1	Alternative supplies of finished equine feed products must be sourced from a manufacturer complying with this Code.	There should be a plan for supply of feed products to be sourced in the event of plant breakdown or emergency.
A 5.2	In the case of NOPS certified raw material suppliers (categories S, I1 and I2) experiencing an interruption in supply, alternative supplies of NOPS approved raw materials must be sourced from a supplier complying with this Code.	There should be a plan for supply of feed materials to be sourced in the event of plant breakdown, interruption of supply or emergency. Certification for raw material suppliers is optional. In the case where supply within a certified business is interrupted, replacement supplies must be sourced from another NOPS certified business.
A 6 NOPS Standard Terms and Conditions to limit liability		
	Companies must notify BETA should they wish to opt in to the NOPS Standard Terms and Conditions as shown in Annex C of the Scheme T&C's.	The NOPS Standard T&C's enable companies to limit their liability against racing cases. BETA must be aware so that the annual averages for prize money can be sent.

B Approval of Feed Ingredients and Suppliers (including contract manufacturers and packagers)

B 1 Selection and Approval of Feed Ingredients		
B 1.1	The use of Excluded At Risk materials as shown in the Definitions is prohibited in equine feeds.	
B 1.2	All feed ingredients used in the factory must be assessed and documented to ascertain the risk of NOPS being present.	Possible contamination from feed ingredients or other materials at risk of containing NOPS must be considered and appropriately controlled. Knowingly supplying or using raw materials for compound feed ingredients (eg. concentrate pellet) that is contaminated with a high priority NOPS substance (at levels likely to result in disqualification) without informing the customer in writing will result in immediate suspension from the Code and may result in expulsion from the Code and from membership. Refer to the separate BETA NOPS Guidance on risk assessment for NOPS registered members
B 1.3	The ingredient specification must also include reference to the list of NOPS as defined at the beginning of this Code document.	See Definitions

B 1.3.1	Companies intentionally adding certain herbal feed materials that may, if used in competition cause a positive test for banned substances need to differentiate these products from the rest of their range.	Products formulated to contain herbs that are either listed in the Sensitive A List or contain substances defined as a Low Priority herbal NOPS must be differentiated as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NOPS logo MUST NOT be placed on packaging of such products. Examples of such herbal ingredients include devil's claw and valerian. • On websites or company literature it must be made clear that these products are NOT suitable for use during competition. • An indicative withdrawal period should be clearly stated on product packaging.
B 1.4	The person responsible for selection and approval of feed ingredients must have training regarding NOPS and their likely sources.	The training record should show that the person has knowledge of sources of NOPS, the At Risk materials and possible routes of contamination.
B 2 Customer requests for incorporation of own supplied ingredients or products		
	Incorporation of customers' own ingredients is not permitted in equine feeds, and must not enter the equine feed production line, unless the ingredient has been assessed for NOPS.	Where there are multiple production lines, the requirements for the production line used for equine feeds extend from intake via storage to packaging or outloading.
B 3 Contract manufacturing for NOPS members		
B 3.1	If a NOPS member is contract manufacturing for another Code member the manufacturer must confirm that they are a current, audited member to the Code.	The contractor can ascertain the status of their customer by asking for a current audit document and should also confirm with BETA that the registration is current and ongoing.
B 3.2	If a NOPS member is contracting the manufacturing of its products to a third party then it must confirm that the company being used is a current, audited member of the code.	The contractor can ascertain the status of their customer by asking for a current audit document and should also confirm with BETA that the registration is current and ongoing.

B 4 Supplier Approval		
B 4.1	Unless suppliers of ingredients used or supplied for the use in equine feeds are also NOPS certified, the company must carry out an additional supplier assurance programme for NOPS.	Current feed ingredient and compound feed assurance schemes do not cover NOPS specifically but do confirm traceability. A supplier assurance programme is a supplier audit at a defined frequency based on risk assessment. Raw materials that do not originate from a NOPS assured source must be risk assessed. Refer to the separate BETA NOPS Guidance on risk assessment for NOPS registered members.
B 4.1.1	Where ingredients are used on the same line as equine feeds but are not intended for equine diets then the requirement for NOPS sourcing remains the same	Non-equine diets may be made on a NOPS accredited equine line providing all ingredients have undergone appropriate risk assessments and are non-medicated.
B 4.2	All equine compound feeds, including those used as “concentrate” pellets in another product, manufactured by or on behalf of companies which conform to NOPS must be sourced from a NOPS certified manufacturer.	This applies to all equine compound feeds including those which are contract manufactured. <i>The only exceptions are blends of two or more feed materials (including liquids) bought from a single company as an ingredient blend and not intended for direct feeding or to be marketed as a branded compound in their own right</i> These should be considered and risk assessed under B4.1.
B 4.3	Where a feed material supplier packages straights for branded use by a Code member then the Code member must initially visit, audit and risk assess the plant with respect to NOPS and then risk assess as appropriate on an annual basis thereafter.	The feed material supplier should be audited to the same criteria as those that apply to companies conforming to NOPS.
B 4.4	Where a third party packages equine products in custom packaging for a Code member then, unless the packer is certified to NOPS, the member must visit, audit and risk assess the plant initially with respect to NOPS and then risk assess as appropriate on an annual basis thereafter.	Equine products in this context could include treats, promotional samples, sachets all of which must be manufactured by a NOPS approved manufacturer. The packaging company should be risk assessed to the same criteria as those that apply to companies conforming to NOPS.
B 4.5	When communicating assurance requirements to feed ingredient suppliers reference must be made to the additional requirements of NOPS.	A robust, supplier assurance program is required to help reduce the risk of contamination/NOPS being present within a feed/feedstuff. The aim of communication with suppliers should be to gain sufficient information to assess the risk of NOPS contamination, and encourage dialogue to identify solutions to any issues.

B 5 Transport		
	Hauliers/couriers used to deliver or collect equine feeds and feed materials must be made aware of the requirements of the BETA NOPS Code.	All transporters used to deliver or collect equine feeds and feed materials should be informed of the list of At Risk materials.
B 6 Contracted Stores Approval		
B 6.1	Assessments of offsite stores used by the company must ascertain whether Excluded or Sensitive List A "At Risk" materials have been handled or stored within the past three years, and ensure appropriate control measures are implemented.	Stores should be informed of the list of At Risk materials. Site visits by audit staff should be carried out as indicated by a risk assessment of the store. Audit staff should have relevant NOPS knowledge. If Excluded or Sensitive List A "At Risk" materials have been stored in the previous three years, there must be evidence that cleaning has taken place subsequently.
B 6.2	A risk assessment must be carried out with respect to NOPS for all third party stores used. Any stores where a significant risk is identified must be inspected.	Initial assessment may be carried out by a questionnaire, the results of which are then assessed by the NOPS Code certified member.

C Operations

C 1 Intake		
C 1.1	Acceptance procedures must include reference to NOPS.	Training of intake operatives should include visual recognition of At Risk Materials and of weed seeds.
C 2 Transport of bulk raw materials		
	Vehicles that have previously (in the last three loads) carried NOPS Excluded materials as listed in this document must be rejected. Vehicles that have carried NOPS Sensitive A list materials must show evidence of appropriate cleaning.	This additional requirement should be communicated to all suppliers and hauliers as part of purchaser terms and conditions or contract.
C 3 Storage Operations		
	All returned or rejected feed or feed ingredients identified as a potential NOPS risk following unsatisfactory ELISA or other NOPS screening tests or for any other reason must be identified and must be quarantined until release/ disposal is approved by the Quality Controller.	Returned bags that are damaged or been opened should be considered a high risk in terms of NOPS and quarantined and disposed of appropriately.
C 4 Contract Simple Processing of Cereals		
	Mobile contractors must not be used for equine feeds.	

C 5 Operating Procedures		
	Excluded At Risk materials as listed in the Definitions are prohibited from equine feed production lines.	Where there are multiple production lines, the requirements for the production line used for equine feeds extend from intake via storage to packaging or outloading.
C 6 Rework Rules		
C 6.1	Rules for reworking non-conforming materials must consider the risk of NOPS and/or medicinal product contamination. Reworks or non-conforming material may only be used after risk assessment and after approval by the Quality Controller.	Broken bags originating in-plant must be segregated and assessed for contamination risk before reworking is permitted.
C 6.2	Reworks originating from feeds for species other than equines must not be used in equine feeds, unless it is manufactured on a NOPS line within the same mill.	

D Feed Quality Controls

D 1.1	The quality controller must be familiar with NOPS.	The training record should show that the person has knowledge of sources of NOPS, the At Risk materials and their implications for equines.
D 1.2	The quality system must incorporate the measures necessary to implement the requirements of this Code	Evidence must be given that any changes to the NOPS [®] code have been noted and implemented if appropriate.
D 2 Incident Reporting		
	The detection of all NOPS whether in raw material or finished product, should be reported to BETA for monitoring purposes. In the case of a NOPS positive being notified to a company by a regulatory body or customer, the company must inform BETA immediately, who will in turn inform the relevant bodies.	BETA will be operating an early warning system to alert other companies signed up to the NOPS appendix of any possible contamination issues. Participation in this system is compulsory for all NOPS members.
D 3 Analytical Schedule		
D 3.1	The hazards associated with NOPS must be considered in arriving at the analytical schedule	
D 3.2	The analytical schedule must include sampling and analytical procedures based upon a NOPS risk assessment, along with methodology and details as to frequency of internal and external analysis carried out on both incoming feed ingredients and finished feed.	The degree of sampling and analysis of feed ingredients and finished feed should be derived from the companies own individual risk assessment for NOPS.

D 4 Samples		
	Sampling methods must be appropriate for NOPS and arrived at by applying the HACCP technique.	<p>Where NOPS distribution within a feed is general/ homogeneous in nature, an appropriate robust, practical, cost effective, sampling program can be devised which will help identify its presence.</p> <p>Where NOPS distribution within a feed is pocket or non-homogeneous in nature there is no practical, robust, sampling program that can be devised to effectively identify its presence.</p> <p>For both types of NOPS distribution, a robust, supplier assurance program is required to help reduce the risk of contamination/ NOPS being present within a feed.</p> <p>The schedule of assurance activity may therefore differ depending on the individual NOPS and/ or the feed concerned.</p>
D 5 Testing Facilities		
	When selecting a laboratory, their competence with regards to testing for NOPS must be considered.	An accredited laboratory or a validated analytical method for the substance being tested should be used.
D 6 Assessment		
D 6.1	Failures against NOPS criteria must be investigated and appropriate action taken.	<p>Risk assessment will form the basis of the action taken.</p> <p>Knowingly supplying finished products that are contaminated with a high priority NOPS substance at levels likely to result in disqualification or disciplinary actions, without informing the customer in writing will result in immediate suspension from the Code and may result in expulsion from the Code and ultimately BETA membership.</p> <p>Product containing low priority or herbal NOPS should be fully risk assessed and documented before disposal.</p> <p>Dispose of feed to an alternative species or a risk assessed non-sensitive non-competition/racing equine customer.</p>

E Market Recall and incident management of NOPS Positives

E 1 Market Recall as a result of NOPS contamination		
E 1.1	There must be a written recall procedure, which is capable of being put into operation at any time, inside or outside normal working hours	The decision to recall product should be based on a company's own risk assessment and should be communicated to BETA. Any procedures should include contact details of relevant bodies such as BETA and the auditing body.
E 1.2	In the event of a recall regarding NOPS, a person must be designated to inform BETA and the auditing body	It is recommended that a deputy also be appointed.
E 1.3	Recalled or returned products	If not destroyed, ensure the product is disposed of to a non-NOPS critical customer, with full traceability maintained.

F Personnel

F 1 Training & Competency		
	Staff training must include an understanding of NOPS ingredients as listed in this appendix and of their significance and potential risk to the finished feed.	Training records should confirm training relevant to the responsibilities of the individual.

G Medicated Feeds and Feeds containing Specified Feed Additives

G 1	Companies conforming to this Code must not produce or handle medicated feeds or specified additives on the same production line as equine feeds.	Where there are multiple production lines, the requirements for the production line used for equine feeds extend from intake via storage to packaging or outloading.
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References:

BETA NOPS Terms and Conditions: Appendix A – List of recognised pre-requisite assurance schemes

The following documents are available to BETA or BETA NOPS Members:

BETA NOPS Guidance - Risk Assessment v4

Keeping it Legal- BETA Guide to the regulations governing equine feed manufacturing in the UK (2015)

List of BETA NOPS substances and their status within racing and the FEI - Jan16

Review of naturally occurring prohibited substances in horse feed – BETA co-commissioned report with Red Mills and Dr T Morris.