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# the benefits of Rose hips

*Rose hips are the seedpods or fruit of the rose. We don't often see them anymore, because we tend to prune faded rose blossoms to encourage more flowers, or too readily cut the flowers to bring them inside. Once the flower stem is cut, no rose hip will be produced. However, if you leave the spent flowers on the bush towards the end of the growing/flowering season, which in most areas is late fall, you should see these small, berry-sized, reddish seed balls, which will be left on the tips/ends of the stems once the rose petals fall.*


Roses belong to the same family as the apple and crabapple, so it is no coincidence that rose hips look like tiny apples. Rose hips can be a bit tart, similar to crabapples, but horses do not seem to mind the flavor.

## HEALTH BENEFITS

Rose hips are one of the richest sources of vitamin C and also contain vitamin A, thiamine, niacin, riboflavin, and vitamin K. They can help any horse fight off infections and boost his immune health. By feeding your horse a tablespoon or two of rose hip powder, you're giving him his daily ration of vitamin C in a natural, more useable form.

Feeding rose hips on a regular basis will also help encourage hoof growth due to its naturally-occurring biotin content coupled with its flavonoid and copper content. In nursing foals, feeding rose hips to the mare and foal has also proven helpful in preventing scouring on the mare's cycle.

## FEEDING AND DOSAGE

Dried rose hips are readily available from commercial herbal companies and come in several forms, including the whole rose hip, cut and sifted rose hips, and ground rose hip powder. I feed my Miniatures a level tablespoon per day, and my horses receive two rounded tablespoons mixed in their bucket/supplement feed. I feed it not only for the vitamin C content, but also for the copper content, since my well water is deficient in copper. On occasion, for a treat, I give the horses a handful of cut and sifted rose hips sprinkled on top of their bucket feed, which they all seem to enjoy crunching on! 



Jessica Lynn is a writer, equine nutritionist, and the owner of Earth Song Ranch, an herbal blend, natural feed and supplement manufacturer based in Southern California. She has been involved in alternative health care, homeopathy and nutrition for almost five decades and uses it for her family, horses, border collies and cats. She personally formulates and tests all of the Earth Song Ranch nutritional products. [Jessica@earthsongranch.com](mailto:Jessica@earthsongranch.com); 1-951-514-9700; [earthsongranch.com](http://earthsongranch.com); [facebook.com/earthsongranch](https://facebook.com/earthsongranch).