



## PRESS RELEASE

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When two longtime Kentucky animal feed makers combined their operations a year ago, they gave their company a new name and a new business direction.

Producer Feeds, based in Louisville, and Tapp's Feed, based in Shelbyville, became Excel Equine LLC, headquartered at Producer's mill on the edge of downtown Louisville. David Williams, of Producer Feeds, and Kent Thompson, of Tapp's, are co-owners of the new company.

Producer's and Tapp's made feeds for multiple species, but Excel Equine makes only premium feed blends for horses. It produces its feed blends in a mill that is completely medication-free, one of only three feed manufacturers in North America that is doing so, according to Thompson.

Other companies make feeds for many species, but given the danger of accidental cross-contamination—such as a recent case in South Florida in which medication for cattle ended up in horse feed and caused numerous health problems for a number of horses—Excel Equine decided to take a different, safer path.

"The worst thing, in our business, would be that a mistake was made and medication gets in the feed and impacts the health of the horses," said Thompson. "We have no risk of that ever happening here because we don't have any medications."

The design, versatility, and batching accuracy of the Producer plant, has allowed Excel Equine to develop a wider variety of feed blends—to date, about 30, tailored to different breeds and to horses at different stages in life. "The mill's design was very forward-thinking at the time it was built," said Thompson.

Excel Equine will also custom formulate feed blends to customers' specifications.

Given its home base in Kentucky, thoroughbreds are a major part of Excel Equine's business. In fact, two of the horses that ran in this year's Kentucky Derby are fed Excel Equine feed blends. Excel Equine is also growing its marketshare as a supplier to Central Kentucky saddlebred operations.

"We have feeds that will work for any type of horse—thoroughbreds, saddlebreds, quarter horses, ponies—no matter the breed, we have a product that will be a fit for them," said Thompson. "Our Performance Blend is our biggest seller, but our Show, Pleasure, Breeding and Special Needs blends are also popular."

Thompson and Williams both have doctorate degrees in animal nutrition, which is not typical of owners of feed manufacturing companies. Thompson's focus is equine nutrition. Before he and a partner bought Tapp's Feed in 2004, he developed feed formulas for Purina Mills and for an Ohio feed manufacturer. Williams' Ph.D. is in ruminant nutrition and he has been formulating equine diets for over 30 years and puts equine nutrition to extensive testing on his personal Thoroughbred breeding farm. Thompson also owns thoroughbreds and grew up working with and showing draft horses in upstate New York.

A year into the new business, Thompson said Excel Equine is expanding and is growing its distribution beyond Kentucky. This winter, Excel shipped feed to a number of thoroughbred trainers at their winter training quarters in New Orleans and Hot Springs, Arkansas. It plans to do the same for customers who take their horses to Florida and New York for training or racing. The company has also initiated international marketing by shipping feeds to thoroughbred farms in Trinidad.

Excel Equine's manufacturing plant and headquarters is at 165 North Clay Street in downtown Louisville, KY. Its feeds are sold there; at Tapp's Feed, Shelbyville, Ky.; Skylight Supply, Goshen; Feed and Seed Depot, Crestwood and through Burkmann Feeds throughout Kentucky. Excel Equine feeds are also available in Tennessee at the Barnyard Café, Goodlettsville; Shelbyville Farm Center, Shelbyville; and Putnam Farm Center, Cookeville; in Indiana at Blue River Farm Supply, Palmyra; in Arkansas at Rafter R Farm Supply, Hot Springs and in Louisiana at the Fairgrounds, New Orleans.

For photos of Thompson and Williams and the Louisville manufacturing plant as well as product photography and brochures visit <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/14pxrqtbfk2zo/AACV8KwzQFN3TC094mg9cW2Pa?dl=0> or request materials from [carin@bydesigned.com](mailto:carin@bydesigned.com).