

# KER Readies for Olympic Effort



The idea is simple:

Supply only the best for the best.

Hay and straw from the United States.

Chaff and haylage from England.

Oats from Canada.

Wood shavings from Germany.

Feed and supplements from

Kentucky Equine Research (KER)!

# On Approach to Athens

Caretakers of Olympic-caliber horses demand their charges receive the best feed, forage, and bedding, and KER was selected by the Athens 2004 Organizing Committee (ATHOC) to be the official supplier of these items for this year's Olympic Games, to be held August 13-29, and the Paralympic Games, to be held September 18-28. The XXVIII Olympiad is returning to its birthplace; the first modern Olympics was contested in Athens in 1896, more than 100 years ago.

Involvement in Olympic endeavors is not foreign to KER. The company served in a similar capacity during the past two summer Olympic competitions in Atlanta (1996) and Sydney (2000). Because of its experience, KER has a deep understanding of the expectations that will be placed upon it. With this in mind, KER has secured the highest quality feeds, forages, and bedding available in the world.

The equine nutritionists at KER formulated three feeds specifically for the Olympics. Two of the feeds are sweet feeds, also called coarse mixes, and the other is a pelleted feed. Each of the feeds bears the prefix Markopoulo, which is the name of the village where all of the equestrian competitions will take place.

Markopoulo High Performance Mix and Markopoulo Cool Mix are the sweet feeds. Markopoulo High Performance Mix is a mixture of three steam-processed grains—oats, corn, and barley—combined with vegetable oil and molasses. A low-inclusion vitamin and mineral pellet provides the micronutrients required by the high-performance horse.

Markopoulo Cool Mix is designed for horses that do not require a highly concentrated source of energy. The feed does

not contain oats and supplies a majority of its calories from nonsugar energy sources such as fermentable fiber (beet pulp and soy hulls) and fat (vegetable oil). The same vitamin and mineral fortification included in Markopoulo High Performance Mix is used in Markopoulo Cool Mix. Because of the ingredients selected for this feed, it is ideal for horses that become excitable on traditional, cereal-based feeds.

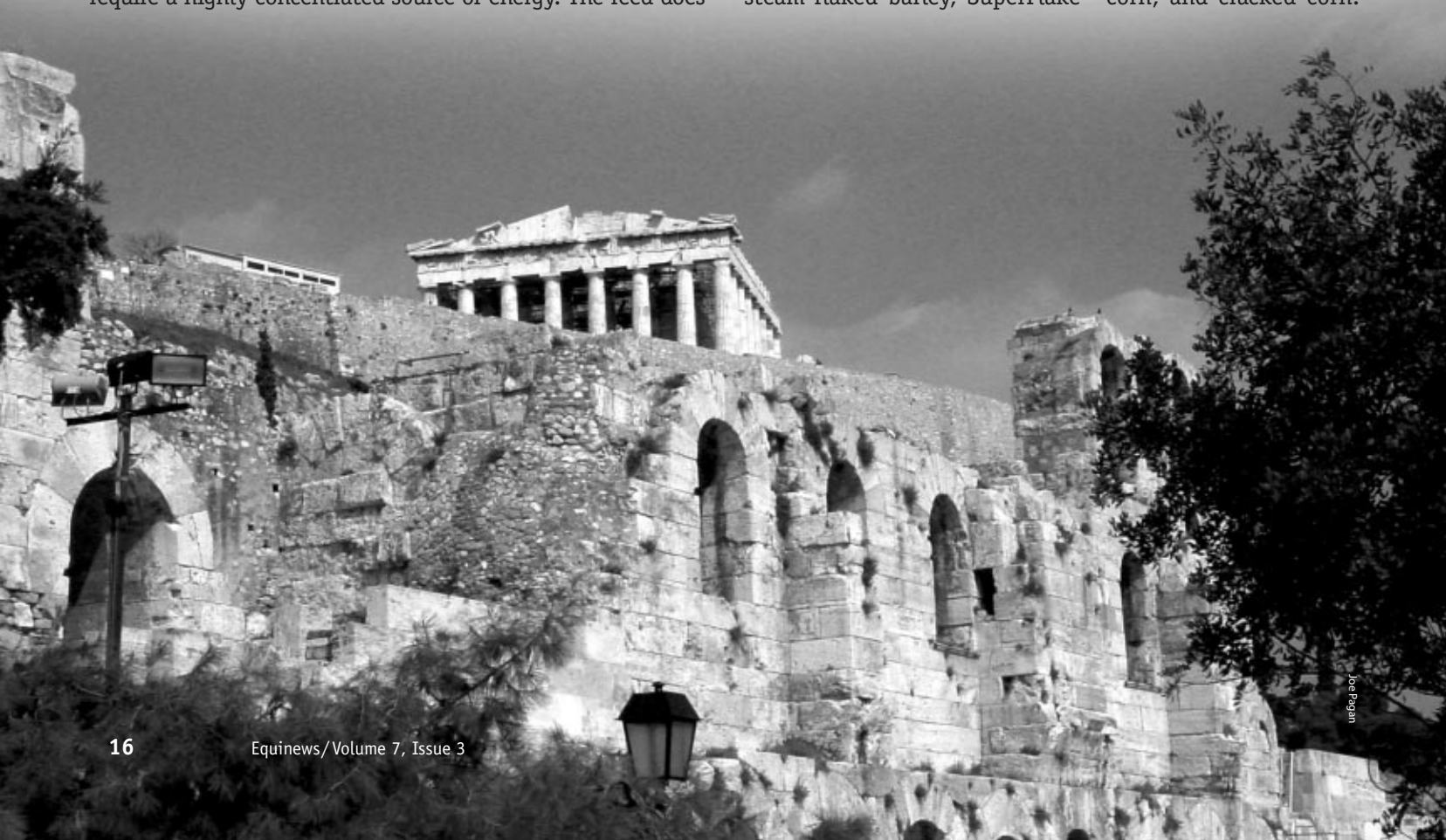
Markopoulo Performance Pellets are a blend of high-fiber ingredients that furnish the energy and micronutrients required by hardworking horses. The formulation includes alfalfa meal, soy hulls, wheat middlings, and ground corn.

In addition to these three feeds, KER has arranged with several of its Team Members to provide KER-formulated mixes for equine athletes, if requested. Team Members engaged in this include Pennfield Feeds of Pennsylvania, USA; Saracen Horse Feeds of Kent, England; and Bluegrass Horse Feeds of Co. Tyrone, Ireland.

While the majority of horses competing will fuel their performances with a fortified feed such as a sweet feed or pellet, there are those riders that prefer to feed straight grains. The steam-crimped oats available in Athens will be provided by Champion Oats Processors, a company that purchases oats grown throughout Canada, and then processes, markets and ships oats of all kinds—racehorse oats, double- and triple-cleaned oats, and oat groats—under the Northern Elite brand.

Champion Oat Processors' new state-of-the-art processing plant was built in 1995. Modern cleaning and bagging equipment allows the company to consistently supply a high-quality, nutritionally superior product.

Several other processed grains will be available, including steam-flaked barley, SuperFlake® corn, and cracked corn.



Joe Fagan

## Markopoulo Olympic Equestrian Centre

KER's work begins and ends at Greece's Markopoulo Olympic Equestrian Center. Located on Kefalonia, the largest island of Ionian Greece, Markopoulo is situated in the east Attica region.

The equestrian complex, built specifically for the 2004 Games, will play host to all of the equestrian disciplines—dressage, three-day eventing, and show jumping. The venue is enormous, covering more than 940,000 square meters, and includes practice and show arenas, stabling for 300 horses, expansive parking areas, permanent and temporary viewing stands, and an internal road system.

Teams of KER employees will be in Athens to make sure the distribution of products is accomplished smoothly. Officials from the various countries are responsible for ordering all feed, forage and bedding. Once the order has been received, KER will process it and deliver the merchandise to the desired location.

Special consideration has been given to storage of the products once they arrive in Greece. Grain will be stored in a refrigerated enclosure to ensure its freshness, and hay, straw, and chaff will be placed in clean, dry areas. All of the products will remain under the surveillance of KER employees, as they will have been previously tested by an independent laboratory in Paris, France for substances prohibited in international equestrian competition, as outlined by the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). The FEI ensures that all horses and riders compete on a level playing ground.



*The Markopoulo Olympic Equestrian Centre features 300 permanent stalls.*

Wheat bran, shredded beet pulp, and linseed meal (flax) will also be on hand.

KER found the world's best hay in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. This area of the country is famous for its high-quality forages. The supplier for the Games, Anderson Hay & Grain Company, located in Washington, is the region's leading supplier of premium hay to horsemen around the globe.

Anderson Hay & Grain began marketing forages to livestock producers in the 1940s. As the reputation of its products spread, Anderson Hay & Grain found itself with an international clientele. For the Athens Games, the company will provide timothy and alfalfa hay. By nature, timothy hay is typically low in protein, but Anderson Hay & Grain's timothy is top-drawer forage—a clean, completely dust- and mold-free source of fiber. Unlike grass hays produced in most areas of the world, this timothy is bright green and quite aromatic.

The alfalfa hay stocked by Anderson Hay & Grain, on the other hand, is rich in protein, containing more than 20%. In comparison with the timothy hay, the alfalfa is low in fiber. The hay is extremely palatable.

Though its use is not widespread in North America, haylage is a common feedstuff in other areas of the world. Haylage is similar to hay, but instead of being allowed to dry completely prior to baling, it is preserved when the plant life has wilted and dry matter content is approximately 55%. In optimal drying conditions, this takes approximately 24 hours. Traditional hay would require more extensive drying time.

Once taken from the field, the bales are compressed to half their original size and packed in double-skinned or two-ply plastic bags. The heat-sealed bags encourage fer-



Athens visitors will see many ancient architectural sites such as the Erechtheion, built to honor the founder of Athens.



Dressage is one of the disciplines that will be showcased at the Olympic Games.

mentation, thus preserving the forage. This specialized preservation method allows the haylage to retain approximately 90% of the feed value of fresh grass without the use of preservatives.

The haylage offered in Athens will be made from premium ryegrasses that have been cut at an early growth stage to ensure optimum protein and energy levels. A high-fiber haylage will also be on site, should horsemen prefer to feed it. The high-fiber haylage is made from plants that are allowed to mature slightly before harvesting, thus upping the fiber content and lowering the protein and energy composition.

Mark Westaway & Son will provide haylage to the horses competing in Athens. Sold under the brand name HorseHage, the haylage product is the world's leading dust-free bagged forage.

HorseHage products have been particularly beneficial to horses with respiratory problems. In fact, special recognition, called a Royal Warrant, was bestowed upon Mark Westaway & Son following the successful use of HorseHage on one of Queen Elizabeth's horses.

Like KER, Mark Westaway & Son has ties to past Olympic Games. The company provided HorseHage to members of the British Equestrian Team that competed in Los Angeles, Seoul, Atlanta, and Sydney.

Another form of forage popular in Europe and Australia is chaff or chopped forage mixed with molasses. For the 2004 Olympics, chaff will be provided by Dengie Crops Limited, a company based in the United Kingdom. Dengie is the United Kingdom's leading producer of alfalfa, and this alfalfa is the primary ingredient used in the production of their popular range of fiber-rich feeds. Dengie will provide two standard products, Dengie Alfa-A and Dengie Hi-Fi Lite. Several other Dengie products will be available to delegates by special order.

Also available to riders will be several of KER's supplements, including Elevate, Summer Games, Endura-Max Plus, Equi-Jewel, Ker-A-Form, and Neigh-Lox. For more information on these products, go to [kentuckyperformanceproducts.com](http://kentuckyperformanceproducts.com).

Once KER found the best forages and feeds for the horses, the staff turned its attention to locating superior bedding materials. Again, KER called on Anderson Hay & Grain to supply bright, clean straw for the Olympic Games. Horses may also be bedded down on wood shavings furnished by Allspan, Europe's leading manufacturer of wood shavings. Allspan shavings are made from untreated whitewood, primarily pine and fir. The wood undergoes a special drying process, which makes the shavings incredibly absorbent and free of dust.

Providing high-quality products to horses is old hat to KER, but it is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that KER was selected to arrange the feed, forage, and bedding for a handful of the world's greatest equine athletes. ☺☺



## **Reprint Courtesy of Kentucky Equine Research, Inc.**

3910 Delaney Ferry Road  
Versailles, KY 40383  
Phone: 859-873-1988  
Fax: 859-873-3781  
Order Department: 888-873-1988  
[www.ker.com](http://www.ker.com)  
[info@ker.com](mailto:info@ker.com)