



Hello and welcome to our March Newsletter, we have had a busy winter starting new trials and having many conversations about getting value for money from feed.

Keep reading to find out more about the calf trial following on from the December article and to find out about all things silage from our silage making meeting!



Considerations for spring feeding:

As March progresses, we are beginning to see more cows being turned out.

Some farms are committed to the spring block grazing practice and have the infrastructure in place (tracks, paddocks, water) to really exploit milk from grazing. Other farmers are turning out at a slower pace with many cows out by day and in at night in the first instance.

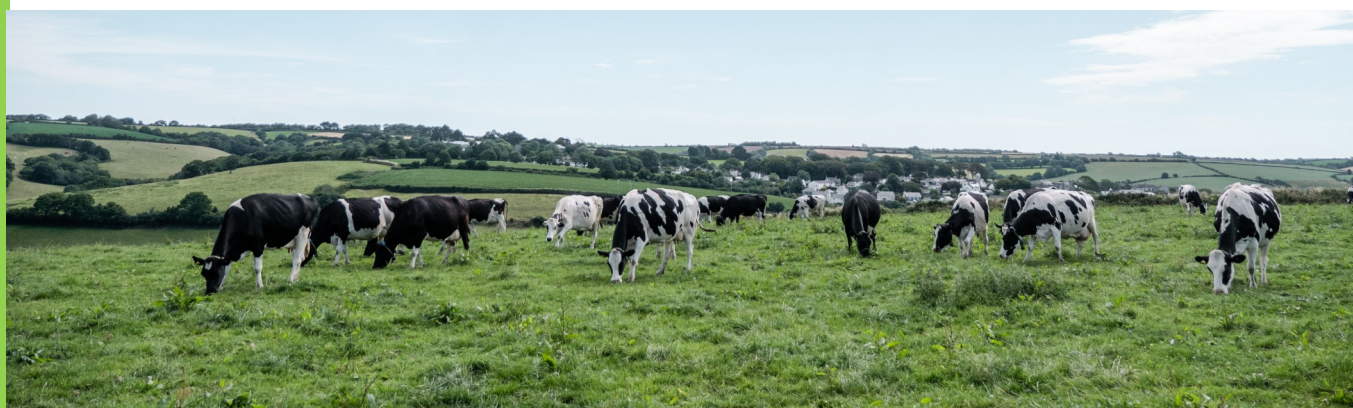
In all circumstances cows are undergoing some significant changes to their diet, their environment and their feeding routine.

The main dietary changes are associated with the type and amount of forage eaten by the cow, the form it is in and the nutritional characteristics of this forage. This will inevitably lead to re-assessing the concentrate components of the diet and selecting the best fit complementary feed. Balancing and complementing forage is therefore the primary consideration in all cow rationing, this doesn't change at grazing.

The balanced diet should therefore be aimed at:

- Achieving the desired cow performance regarding milk yields and milk quality
- Achieving good rumen health to support production and general well being
- Attention to both macro and micronutrient requirements of the cow

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In its production the diet needs to consider:

- Assessing how much of each forage type is available to the cow
- How is this presented to the cow during the day
- Evaluating what sort of concentrate is needed and in what quantities to fulfil the cows needs and maintain the required level of production.

Understanding the nutrient profile of grass below is important in producing balanced diets:

High In
Crude Protein
Rumen Degradable Protein
Water Soluble Sugar
Energy
Lipids



Low in
Dry Matter
Neutral Detergent Fibre
Starch
Minerals
Rumen Buffering Effect

What are we doing to formulate the Specialist grazing diet?

In formulating our grazing diets, we consider the nutritional profile of grass (together with a small element of buffer feed normally fed). We formulate to the following nutritional parameters:

- 15-16% protein with a spread of protein sources delivering high levels of DUP
- High energy to recognise the reduced feeding level of concentrates in the grazing period
- High levels of utilisable fibre in the form of NDF
- Fatty acids from saturated sources that are known to promote milk fat
- High levels of minerals and trace elements to meet cows needs at reduced feed rates
- Specific considerations of magnesium and calcium required for health (staggers) and milk production

Raw material inclusion:

In formulating our diets, the specification is always the overriding priority. The raw materials used are selected for key nutritional reasons and are varied to always ensure there is not the over reliance on a few ingredients.

Starch sources come from cereals and beans, fibre sources from palm kernel, wheat feed and rice bran with proteins coming from rape, sunflower, beans, and palm kernel. Palm kernel is particularly useful in supporting good yields and milk fat as its energy sources are derived from fibre and saturated oils. It also is a mid-protein feed that has slow protein degradability.

Ask one of our team about grazing rations and helpful grazing advice

The Future Herd

With Spring Calving 2022 commencing it's time to start thinking about getting ready to rear the future members of your dairy herd. As well as good management, hygiene and prevention of disease, high starter pellet intakes are essential for achieving the target growth rates before calving in a couple of years time. SC Nutrition's premix added into a high-quality calf pellet by Crediton Milling has been on trial on farms across Cornwall since September 2021. From this we have gained useful data on the enhanced growth rates of calves, as well as valuable feedback from our farmers and their opinions of the new feed.

Here's what customers have to say about SC Nutrition's Calf weaner pellets;

Paul James, Mid Cornwall Farmer – "Doing like Trout's"



Joel Jelbert, West Cornwall Farmer- "The calves took really well to the SCN calf pellets, quickly getting 2kg per calf per day"



Did someone say tea and biscuits...

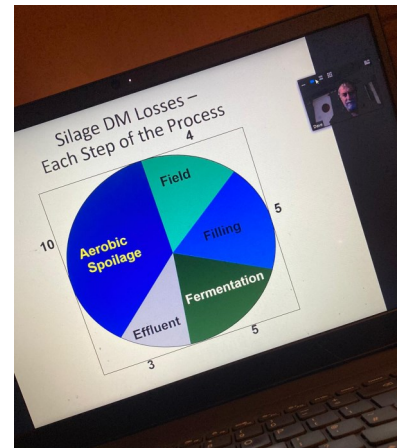
Thank you to all those who attended our online silage meeting with the added refreshments. I think everyone who attended can agree there were some very good practical take home points. Dr Dave Davis, from Aberystwyth University, focused on the practical on farm methods of making silage, backing his talk up with research papers and farming experience.

Some key ideas were:

- looking at cutting to improve sugars, potentially cutting in the morning and picking up in the afternoon
- Tedding within 2 hours of cutting, this is when the plant can lose the most moisture
- Using a multi species homofermentive silage additive
- Having enough nitrogen in the plant to ensure good protein levels in the silage

Our own Ruminant Nutritionist, Emma Tristram, spoke about how the team can help with some of this via pre and post silage making testing. Our final speaker was Andrew Linscott from Alltech, Andrew spoke about crop improving strategies as we continually look for improved efficiencies on farm.

Don't forget we have the multi species homofermentive silage additive on offer during March!



Grass in Cornwall



18.8	Dry Matter %
27.3	Crude Protein %
11.0	ME
40.5	NDF %
4.5	Sugar %

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