

Be careful when grazing...

For many the summer brings a welcome reduction in feeding and yard work and an opportunity to let the cows feed themselves to a greater or lesser degree.

Yet summer also brings with it the challenge of maintaining milk yields and butterfats and avoiding sub acute rumen acidosis when cows graze lush highly digestible pasture.

On average in the summer months butterfats fall from typical winter levels of around 4.1% to around 3.8%, and in some cases can fall much lower than this. The danger level is 3.5%, below which penalties on some milk contracts become severe, but even above this level low fat can be an indicator of problems with rumen health such as sub acute rumen acidosis, which will ultimately affect production, health and profitability.

Sub acute rumen acidosis (SARA) is when the pH of the rumen falls below 5.8 and is typically caused when cows consume a highly digestible diet with high levels of carbohydrates and low levels of structural fibre. This can occur when cows are grazing lush pasture, particularly in warm conditions as cows suffering heat stress tend to eat less and this can result in the forage: concentrate ration getting out of balance.

Whilst it is difficult to tell if cows are suffering from SARA, typical warning signs include low milk fat, poor rumen fill, loose and bubbly dung, tender feet and increased water intake.

The inclusion of rumen buffers and live yeasts in a TMR ration can help to reduce the impact of SARA and improve rumen health. Advance sources a range of buffers including **Acidbuf**, which is derived from calcified seaweed and has a honeycomb structure that removes acids from the rumen.



We also source **Actisaf Sc 47** live yeast which reduces acidosis and improves rumen function as well as **Advanced HealthyRumen**, a broad spectrum combination of live yeast and rumen buffers that tackles the acidosis problem in different ways.

Clinical and sub-clinical acidosis can cost you thousands of pounds each year from losses in milk yield and quality. But there are also losses from health and fertility issues, which are not always immediately obvious. Investing a small amount in a high quality rumen buffer can pay dividends in terms of herd health and productivity so for more information please contact us on **01823 491238**.



Silage additives...

With silage making now upon us it is worth considering whether to use a silage inoculant. Even when grass is cut at peak condition and wilted and clamped efficiently, problems can still occur with fermentation that ultimately reduce the feed value in the clamp and add to feed bills.

Silage inoculants are easily applied during forage harvesting and help to improve fermentation, reducing the chances of poor quality or spoilage.

There are many inoculants available on the market and we market the well-known **Ecosyl** brand as we believe it is the most effective at improving fermentation and ensuring reliable silage quality is achieved.



Ecosyl contains the bacteria *Lactobacillus plantarum* MTD/1 which brings about a rapid and efficient fermentation. It is available as a bottle or in dry form in bags and when used at the recommended rate it applies one million live bacteria per gram of forage. Research has proven it to be highly effective at improving silage quality and subsequent livestock performance and it is therefore a very cost effective option. For more information please contact us.

Minerals impact upon feed conversion efficiency...



Mineral supplementation is critically important to the health and performance of the dairy cow and therefore has a direct impact upon feed conversion efficiency - something that is increasingly important at the moment with feed prices at such a high level. Advance markets a range of high performance minerals including **Advanced Milking Cow performance minerals**.

These use a unique patented mineral-amino acid bonding technology to bond parts of the copper, zinc and manganese to single amino acids. This allows more than 90% rumen protection, ensuring that the mineral is effectively transported through the rumen and into the blood stream of the cow. Comprehensive, independent, peer-reviewed trials have shown that this has four key benefits - helping fertility, udder health, milk yield and feet. For more information or to order this product please contact Mark Perry at **Advance on 01823 491238**.

About us...

Advance Sourcing is a sister company to Kite Consulting. We secure the best deals on a broad range of specialist agricultural inputs for our farmer clients, using the technical expertise of Kite consultants to set the optimum specifications before tendering for our supplies.

We work with a large number of trusted suppliers and our aim is simple – to keep you ahead of the competition by sourcing technically sound products that will make or save you money. Our mission is to add value to your business, so why not give us a try?

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