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Your NWF Newsletter – Spring/Summer 2017 Issue 31



AGRICULTURE



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feeds for a better future



www.nwfagriculture.co.uk

Andrew Downie, MD of
NWF Agriculture

This year has got off to a strong start for NWF Agriculture, and there are exciting developments ahead, is the message from Managing Director Andrew Downie.



“Our sales volumes exiting last year were significantly up on the previous year and there are signs that volumes will continue to push ahead of budget. This growth is based on a number of factors, including NWF’s continuing investment in our sales team, training and development – all of which is paying rewards and points to a hugely exciting time ahead.”

The opening of a new mill at Longtown, Cumbria, will continue to allow growth in the North of England and Scotland. This facility, which will replace the blends plant at Dumfries, will also relieve pressure on the main mill at Wardle, Cheshire.

“All the staff from Dumfries are transferring to Longtown, and there have also been new job opportunities created. The facility will give us a lower cost base and reduced transport costs, as well as featuring cutting-edge technology which is exceptionally efficient,” says Mr Downie, who adds that the plan nationally is to continue increasing capacity.

Investment in people

As part of NWF Agriculture’s on-going commitment to staffing, partnerships have been set up with Harper Adams University, Bishop Burton College and Reaseheath College. These will include collaborations and sponsorship opportunities on gap year placements and dissertations.

“NWF have been attending recruitment fairs and talking to the colleges about bringing the best students through to work in the industry. Part of the collaboration involves sponsoring dairy facilities as well as using college buildings for conferences and meetings,” says Mr Downie.

“It’s crucial not just for our business and for those of our customers, and the wider agricultural sector, that we act to secure a ‘talent pipeline’ for the next generation. Our Sales Director, Ian Simpson, and Head of Technical, Sue Bryan, are heading this up, and we already have one placement student with us, and another planned for the summer.”

New fleet

Look out for the new 10-vehicle fleet of NWF Agriculture branded lorries which will be delivering feed around the country this year.

“We have invested in eight rigids and two articulated lorries to replace some of the older vehicles. These will be carrying our new livery, helping to promote our brand and agriculture as well as ensuring timely delivery of product to our customers,” says Mr Downie.



New product to tackle coccidiosis

Exclusive to NWF Agriculture in the UK

A new, non-prescription product to tackle coccidiosis has been launched in the UK and will be available exclusively via NWF Agriculture. Aliphos CxP™ is based on plant extracts including thyme (active ingredient thymol), oregano (carvacrol), liquorice (anethole) and garlic (allicine), which are micro-encapsulated to ensure a slower release of the active ingredients along the intestine.

Coccidiosis is a parasitic disease of the intestinal tract of animals caused by coccidian protozoa. The disease spreads from one animal to another by contact with infected faeces or ingestion of infected tissue; diarrhoea, which may become bloody in severe cases, is the primary symptom.

Research in France using the plant extracts in Aliphos CxP™ treated calves suffering from diarrhoea in the first days of life (almost all farms used in the trial were infected with cryptosporidiosis). Oocysts in the faeces were counted for 30 days, and those receiving the plants extracts mixture decreased the number of oocysts excreted in the faeces compared to the control group; average daily liveweight gain was also improved. After five days of treatment, almost 80% of sick calves recovered.

“Following this trial data from the continent on beef calves, and with reference to due diligence on the use of medicated feed, particularly Deccoquinat, NWF have completed farm trials using Aliphos CxP™,” says NWF Technical Co-Ordinator, Erin Wray.

“Two units rearing dairy heifer replacements were used, The units had a historical coccidiosis problem, and have been feeding a starter (creep) pellet with preventative Deccoquinat treatment levels included. Faecal analysis of the cocci oocyte presence of both units were completed on a fortnightly basis to ensure there was no risk to the youngstock with the withdrawal

of feeding preventative level Deccoquinat, and replacing this with Aliphos CxP™. These tests and trials spanned a variety of weather challenges from September 16 to January 17, and under all circumstances the faecal analysis returned as zero.”

“We are not recommending that Aliphos CxP™ is a cure for coccidiosis, however for units running on preventative Deccoquinat prescriptions, there may be an opportunity to replace Deccoquinat, and the associated cost of prescriptive feed, with the inclusion (and support) of Aliphos CxP™,” says Miss Wray, who adds that increasing consumer and retailer pressure to reduce or eliminate the preventative use of medications in animal feeds means greater emphasis is now being placed in alternative nutritional approaches.

“The poultry industry has seen the conventional coccidiostat application approach challenged in the past decade, resulting in a demand for alternative methods to reduce, or completely replace, the use of coccidiostats in modern chicken production. Alternative products which do not have negative implications via residues for consumer health are increasingly in demand, especially in organic poultry farming.

“Inevitably, this demand for alternative approaches will not be restricted to poultry production. The opportunity to use supplement based on plant extracts, which has been proven to support the digestive tract, reduce oocyst excretion and aid animal performance is an exciting development for the ruminant market, and one exclusively available in the UK to NWF customers,” said Miss Wray.



NWF helping your herd or flock

- Getting nutrition right for your herd or flock
- Supplying diets that perform from compounds to blends to straights
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- Robots, what you should consider before investing
- Improving forage quality by understanding your soils
- Interpreting results for forage and mineral analysis

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Cubicles: getting it right for cow comfort

Getting cubicle bedding right is essential for cow health, welfare and productivity. NWF’s Technical Manager, Abbi England looks at the research from Kingshay.

Besides feed and water a cow also needs light, air, rest and space – these six elements make up the Cow Signals ‘diamond’ for cattle health. When it comes to rest, research shows cows need 14 hours of lying time in every 24 hours to ensure optimum health and production.

To achieve this cubicles need to be of the correct design so that cows can lie squarely in them, and adequately bedded with sand, sawdust or a good quality mat/mattress. It’s worth remembering that the difference between nine hours’ lying time and 14 hours is an extra litre of milk production for each extra hour, with 30% more blood circulating through the udder. Uncomfortable beds make cows reluctant to lie down, as well as potentially causing injuries such as skin abrasions, joint inflammation and infection. Longer standing times lead to increased lameness and lower production, plus additional treatment costs.



Concerned about Grass Staggers this spring?

Due to a mild winter, the risk of staggers may be increased this spring.

Magnesium is a key requirement for lactating cows at grass, as with every litre of milk produced, magnesium is lost from the system. If cows have a magnesium deficiency, they are at risk of staggers, also known as hypomagnesaemia.

High potash levels may cause further problems, as potassium (K) which is the main component, locks up magnesium availability and as magnesium is not easily mobilised from stores in cows’

Where mattresses are the bedding of choice, there are a number of considerations when selecting the right mattress:

- **Softness** – ideally a mattress should be soft enough to prevent abrasions and injuries
- **Surface** – this must be grippy but non-abrasive
- **Shape retention** – a good bed will stay flat and not bow where the cow lies, which can create a breeding ground for bacteria
- **Cleanliness** – a smooth surface is easier to keep clean than one with cracks and undulations
- **Durability** – mattresses should retain their softness, and the surface must not become abrasive over time
- **Cost** – while this is likely to play a major role in the choice of mattress, it’s worth remembering that an extra £10 spent now can mean another five years’ productive use. However, Kingshay research showed there isn’t always a correlation between cost and quality

Some units choose mats instead of mattresses; there are arguments both for and against this. On the plus side, mats are easier to install (and move) and easier to cut to fit, plus the thick rubber construction means they are easier to clean and hold their shape better.

However, as mats are individual pieces, there is the potential for them to become mishapen and joins between mats are not tight and bedding pushes up underneath. In terms of comfort, the thick rubber is not always as soft as good quality mattress, and this may discourage lying.

If you need further help with cow comfort and more insight on Cow Signals, members of the NWF sales team are Master CowSignal trainers and are available to provide additional advice and support.

bodies, coupled with a low level of magnesium in circulation, they rely on a constant supply in their diet.

The average potassium (K) levels in spring grass can vary, and as K levels increase, more magnesium is required. Data captured from over the last 10 years shows that average K levels in grass for April are around 3.21%, meaning 40g/day of magnesium is required.

In peak grass growing season, grass is likely to be of good enough quality to sustain most herd’s needs for energy (ME) and protein, making concentrate feeding unjustifiable. Therefore, in order to fill in micro nutritional gaps, it’s recommended to provide a free access nutritional supplement which supplies a full specification of minerals and vitamins such as NWF Hi Mag, containing 15% highly available, palatable magnesium.

8% sodium is included in the formulation to help ensure that some of the negative effects of potassium are offset, increasing magnesium uptake. By providing minerals in this way, you can ensure cows are able to utilise spring grazing, without suffering any imbalances.



Spring Grassland Advice

Now is the ideal time to walk grass fields and inspect the quality of pastures. Use a field indexing system such as the Barenbrug good grass guide to assess fields. This uses a 1-5 index similar to how farmer’s grade stock. Five being highly productive and a score of 1 for fields that need immediate action to get them back into productivity.

It is also an ideal time to assess the content of productive grasses in the swards and plan ahead to get field in top shape for grazing and silage. It all starts with the soil so for fields that haven’t been soil sampled in a while take samples for analysis and look at the results closely pH values need to be at 6 for grass fields and closer to 6.5 for leys with clover in them. Fields with a pH of 5-5.5 will lose up to 40% of yield. So this needs addressing as a priority.

Dig a soil pit to look for compaction and assess the rooting structure which should go 30cm deep in a perennial ryegrass sward. Take note of worm activity too as this is a good indicator of the overall health of the soil.

Compaction can be corrected using Sward lifters or subsoilers as needed and should be set to go below any pans or compaction layers. Aerators will alleviate surface compaction and also allow air to get into the soil around the rooting zone. Aerators also increase surface drainage allowing fields to dry out quicker after heavy rainfall.

For fields that have a weed grass content of 30% plus think about re introducing proactive species to the ley. This can be done by overseeding. The field will need to be grazed low and harrowed

to remove any thatch and weed grasses it will also create a tilth for the new seedlings. Use a specialist overseeding mixture that is designed to establish rapidly and boost production and one that is aggressive enough to establish alongside existing plants. If the sward as more than 70% weed grasses the field will need a complete reseed.

Choose a mix that is designed to meet the forage requirements of the field, so cutting, grazing or a dual purpose ley. A mix with heading dates that meet the needs of grazing system is key. All varieties in the NWF grass seed range have been rigorously tested under all conditions and only varieties that make it onto the recommended list are used in the NWF mixtures so you can be assured of using only the highest quality grass seed.

Roll after both overseeding and reseeding a firm seedbed is paramount to the successful establishment of new sown grass seed.

When the establishing grass has emerged and is at the 3 leaf stage (approx 10cm high) graze lightly to encourage tillering and growth. Continue light grazing at frequent intervals with your lightest stock class until the plants are well established.

The 2017 grass mixture range from NWF includes short, medium and long term leys along with the leading Champion mixture available with or without clover.

Your local NWF sales specialist will be able to provide a grass mixture leaflet or call 0800 756 2787.



The Blackcombe Herd

Michael Wilson & Family

The rainy west coast of Cumbria might be a far cry from their native France, but Montbeliarde cattle have proved a success for one dairy farming family partnership near Millom – so much so that Holstein Friesians are being phased out completely.

Of the 235 milking cows at Monk Foss Farm, Whitbeck, situated midway between Millom and Bootle and looking out to the Irish Sea, 220 are now purebred Montbeliardes. The rest are Holstein Friesians, with the exception of a sole Brown Swiss, and as these animals leave the herd their places will be taken by Montbeliardes.

Michael Wilson, who farms in a family partnership with his parents and brother, is passionate about the breed, which first arrived at the farm 15 years ago after Michael read about the Lordswood herd in the Farmers Guardian.

“We were struggling with fertility with the black and whites and then when cow beef was allowed back onto the market it made sense to look at a dual purpose breed. We were also doing bull beef at that time, so the Montbeliardes fit the bill,” says Michael.

From the original purchase of 14 cattle, the proportion of Montbeliardes in the herd steadily grew until there was an even split between them and the Holstein Friesians.

“We sat down and really looked at the figures – everything from pregnancy rates, milk yield and quality through to cow longevity – and it was a no brainer. Once the decision was made, we began working on improving the genetic base, including buying two herds of 26 and 68 animals direct from France – some of which had been yielding 11,000 litres,” says Michael.

The herd at Monk Foss is currently averaging around 8,400 litres at 4.1% butterfat and 3.48% protein, down from a peak of 9,000 litres.

“We altered the management slightly when the milk price dropped: last year we looked to make better use of forage and target the concentrate more closely. This meant splitting some of the grazing into paddocks and moving the cows on faster to keep good grass in front of them and help regrowth,” says Michael, adding that the plan worked well, with no drop in yield at grass. “It also meant we were able to use a smaller area of land for grazing and free up more for silage.”

The farm owns 280 acres and has another 130 acres on a rolling annual tenancy, with an additional 30 acres rented last season for silage. Four cuts are taken, starting as early in May as possible and finishing in mid September, and investment in an 8-row tedder and mowing equipment means the family is able to control cutting date and wilt as best the weather allows.

“We still have a contractor come in to pick up, but when you live in an area like this you might only have a few days’ window for silage and we needed to have more control of what was happening. There has been a conscious push for higher dry matter silages, which are fed in combination with spring barley wholecrop and soda grain, plus the NWF concentrates,” says Michael.

First cut last year analysed at 74 D value, 12.1 ME, 32% DM and 15.5% P, with second cut at 72, 11.6, 34 and 14.2 respectively.

Michael and Paul Brooke, NWF Dairy Specialist, have worked closely together over the last fourteen years to help build the herd to its current high standard.

The focus over the years has been on herd health, milk quality, and forage quality.

“The dairy herd is fed as one group with the base ration set at M+31L. Within this group there is a standalone heifer group to ensure continued growth and avoid hierarchical bullying activity. There is a small late lactation group with a base ration of M+22L. The herd is then target fed to yield with a maximum

of 6kg of high energy dairy cake fed through the parlour,” says Paul Brooke.

The current dairy ration comprises 38kg grass silage, 10kg wholecrop wheat, 6kg caustic wheat, 2kg 36% protein blend and 2kg of 20% high HDF blend.

The immediate focus is on soil quality, looking to enrich the soils, along with an intensive reseed programme. The next stage is to look at zero grazing options with a view to maximising the ability that Monk Foss has of extending the grazing season.

Cow comfort has also come under the spotlight: the Wilsons applied for grant funding under the FFIS farm welfare scheme two years ago and some of the money was used to install slat matting in the sheds, parlour and part of the collecting yard.

“The cows were struggling with white line disease on the slats, and putting the matting in has made a significant difference. You have to be really on top of the job with Montbeliardes, as they are a tough breed and won’t easily let you know they have a foot problem.”

Grant funding also helped with new mattresses in one of the sheds, plus the replacement of old Newton Rigg cubicles (“every year, something managed to get stuck in them!”), and Heitime neck sensor tags; the latter proving a useful “second set of eyes”, says Michael. “There are more mattresses we need to replace – some of the original ones have been rough and abrasive, so we will be changing all those to keep improving cow comfort.”



All this attention to detail is paying off, with calving index being pulled back to 385 days from 425 five years ago, and age at first calving gradually reducing from 30-32 months to 25-27 months.

“Last year was about really focussing on management and cost control, and that is something we want to keep doing. It’s too easy to allow spending to creep back up when the milk price eases.”

“There’s also work to be done on using genomics to keep improving the Montbeliardes without letting the cow size get too big. Our milk price from January to December last year averaged 21.26ppl, and the income from cull cows and calves added the equivalent of a further 4.8ppl, but we need to keep striking a balance between the dairy and beef aspects of the breed,” says Michael.

For further information on the Montbeliarde breed of dairy cattle visit www.montbeliardeuk.co.uk

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Farming Newcomer Applies Technology to Calf Rearing

Introduction of new Ultra Start Pellet from NWF is seeing fast uptake pre-weaning and exploiting the growth potential at an early age.

Chris Webb rears 160 beef-cross calves at Rowe Farm in Shropshire with his business partner Chris Roberts. Calves are purchased from farms across Shropshire and Cheshire at 2-3 weeks of age for resale as weanlings at around 3 months. The calves are raised on milk, ad lib starter, straw and water; a combination that Chris feels effectively primes metabolism for intake of solids and promotes early growth. On the same system, dairy heifer calves are contract reared for local dairy farmers. With five crops a year, Chris hopes to have 800 calves running through the shed at full capacity.

Chris Webb started his calf business from your "less than average" farming background! After over 20 years working in the computer technology industry, with a large majority of his time as Technical Director for several hosting companies he founded, Chris pursued a complete change in career and went into partnership with a local farmer in Shropshire, Chris Roberts. Whilst he admits it was a steep learning curve entering a new industry, one which is highly skilled and intricate, Chris thrived upon the challenge of calf rearing and has now established a hugely impressive automated rearing unit at Rowe Farm in Ellesmere, Shropshire.

The Rearing System

Chris has been able to apply his technical literacy to his farming by implementing a computerised feeder system which individually recognises each of the 160 young calves on-site from special



electronic collars. Calves are penned in 8 groups of 20 calves – as the calf goes into the feeding area, its tag is electronically identified, and allocates the exact quantity of feed required. This allows Chris to control the ration to individual calves, and it encourages progressive weaning to minimise stress on the animal. The intelligent system will immediately signify and send a live alert to Chris's phone if a calf is not feeding correctly, enabling him to monitor performance, health, and well-being of that calf.

In December 2016, Chris worked closely with Angus Little, NWF Technical Sales Specialist, to analyse calf nutrition and feed regimes on the farm and began to trial the new NWF Ultra Start Pellet. With lactose included within the pellet formulation, it seeks to attract calves through smell association to milk sugar (lactose). It also utilises the excess lactase enzyme circulating the calf's blood stream that is a precursor of lactose digestion when the calf is on milk – leading to improved feed conversion efficiency. The pellet also supplies carbohydrate to the rumen environment, encouraging rumen development.

Chris Webb says; *"I am always excited by new products on the market and after discussing Ultra Start with Angus, I was very inquisitive and keen to trial it. The first batch of calves that are on it have shown a positive growth rate, they're alert and healthy – but my greatest observation is that the calves are eating far quicker pre-weaning, having an accelerated impact on weight gain. I'm so far very impressed with the pellet; it's really driving intake, it is easy to work with and I'd happily take more."*

Questions from the calf shed

With NWF Head of Technical, Sue Bryan

Post weaning of calves

For this issue, the question being answered by NWF Head of Technical Sue Bryan is on post weaning of calves

Q "I've listened to all the weaning advice for taking my calves off milk; they are growing well, there was no growth rate check at weaning. They've now been off milk for two weeks – so what do I feed them and what is the best transition? When are they ready for silage, and should I introduce hay - what is most cost effective? I don't want to undo all the good I did whilst feeding milk, and during weaning, and I also need to maintain growth rates, energy intake and calf health."

A There are a couple of questions there about feeding calves post-weaning. Let's start with introducing forage, as that is something which is key to rumen development.

Weaned calves are not fully functioning ruminants; it's often thought that forage is required to develop the rumen in calves, but actually it is largely driven by the fermentation of calf starter concentrate by rumen bacteria. Research has shown a sufficient level of concentrate intake must be achieved before high levels of forage in the form of hay/straw are fed, but as the calf is prepared for weaning, both concentrates and forage are increased, with both playing a role in rumen development.

Post weaning, the type of forage calves should receive, and how much of that forage they should be given is still the subject of debate. Research* has found that heifer calves fed high concentrate levels can be negatively impacted by abrupt changes to higher forage diets.

In terms of the choice between silage and hay, studies have shown dry matter intake decreased for heifers fed silage, and there was an overall tendency for improved feed efficiency for heifers fed hay. The results indicated that feeding silage to post-weaned dairy heifers may result in reduced growth and decreased feed efficiency; the heifers fed hay were apparently able to better utilize the forage in their diet.

This may have been because the rumen of the calves was still undergoing development and so they could not use the silage fully at that point.

When it comes to avoiding a knock-back post weaning, it's important to remember that the nutrient requirement of newly-weaned calves differs to those of older heifers. The goal is to ensure the feed strategy continues to promote rumen development, which in turn will allow optimum growth and development of the growing heifer as she moves towards bulling and ultimately joining the herd post-calving. The ration also needs to encourage growth while optimising feed efficiency.



Sue Bryan

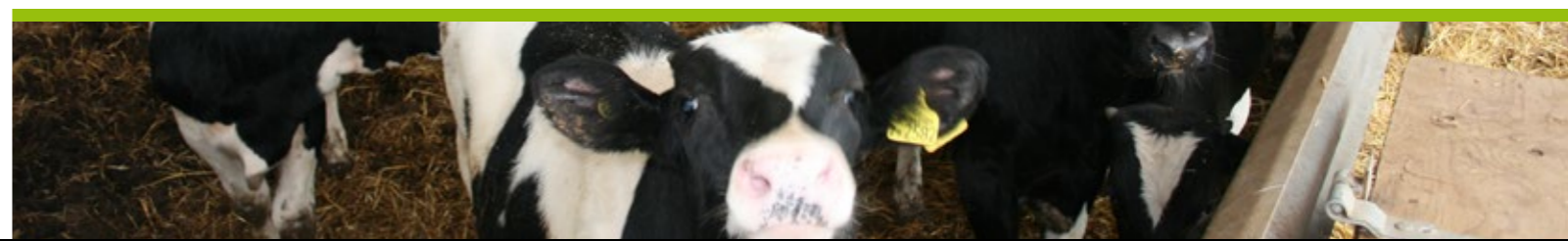
Any changes to the ration need to be made slowly to avoid scouring, and protein and fat levels must be balanced to avoid growing heifers becoming fat, rather than developing their frame. DairyCo extension officer Chris Coxon advises ensuring adequate diet density, as intakes in calves are relatively low, beginning at nearly 12MJ/kg of energy and 17% crude protein, before gradually dropping to an energy density of 11MJ/kg with 16% crude protein for a seven-month-old heifer at about 200kg liveweight eating about 5kg dry matter feed a day.

Studies* have also shown that delivery method of the ration has an effect can also have an impact. In a comparison of weaned heifers fed a TMR, or hay with either grain or concentrate offered separately, found those offered grain and hay were heaviest at the end of the trial, as well as having a higher DMI during the grower period.

However, heifers fed using a TMR consumed more feed daily from day 63 to the conclusion of the study. The results of this study suggest that there may be a certain point during the growth of a heifer when it is ideal to be able to switch over to feeding a TMR.

Finally, it is also essential to consider management of weaned calves. Chris Coxon advises ensuring calves are settled on their post-weaning ration before mixing calves into bigger groups, to avoid health impacts and growth checks. Feed and water must always be freely available, along with adequate bedding to avoid calves becoming cold.

*Studies as reported in Progressive Dairy and Farmers Weekly



Feeding The Ewe

by Rosie Miller, Ruminant Specialist at Trouw Nutrition

Good nutrition is fundamental to ewe performance through all stages of the production cycle, with nutrient requirements changing through the year. It has an impact on all stages of the production cycle, from conception rate and embryo survival, to lamb numbers and survival rate, the quality and quantity of colostrum and milk, and lamb growth rate and the weight of lamb weaned per ewe.

Getting ewe nutrition right ensure ewes are healthy and losses are minimised, which in turn reduces flock replacement costs, and all of the above improve flock profitability. A new, updated guide, called Feeding The Ewe and produced by the AHDB, will be published shortly; this article gives a brief insight into the new guide.

There are a number of common problems which occur with the feeding of ewes, including too great a variation in body condition score, a lack of feeding space, poor quality forage and insufficient supplementation to balance forage. It is important to assess body condition at each stage of production, so that BCS can be targeted for stage of production which improves fertility, increases lamb performance and reduces the incidence of metabolic disease.

The importance of forage

Forage quality in particular is critical to ewe performance, and it is very important to have silage analysed so that over/under-feeding can be avoided.

Forage quality also has a direct impact on dry matter intake (DMI). SAC figures show a variation in DMI according to stage of production, from 1.5% of bodyweight in a dry ewe, to 2-25% in late pregnancy and 3-3.5% during lactation.

In practice, this means intake rates in the region of:

- 1.2kg for an 80kg dry ewe, or 60kg ewe in late pregnancy
- 2.25kg for a 75kg ewe in early lactation

DMI is 10-15% higher in shorn ewes (and lambs are 0.4-0.5kg heavier at birth, with increased survival rates). Shearing should

be carried out eight weeks prior to lambing to avoid ewes becoming cold and the increased risk of mastitis.

TMR feeding will boost forage intake by up to 10%, but it is important to ensure the ration is well mixed to avoid sorting. Access should be 24/7 with adequate feeding space (at least 15cm per head) – constant supply helps to avoid variation in rumen pH.

It is possible to feed ewes on grass alone right up to lambing, but this is reliant on a well-managed ley which will need shutting off in early October to ensure adequate sward height of 4-6cm. Where grass is unlikely to supply enough, supplementary energy (ME) and protein (both as rumen degradable protein RDP and bypass protein DUP) will be required.

Keeping a stable rumen

The aim is to keep the rumen at pH 6-6.5, as a stable pH gives optimal rates of digestion. Large feeds of concentrates (more than 0.5kg) reduce rumen pH and forage intake and can cause acidosis.

When feeding more than 0.5kg per head per day, this should be divided into two feeds, or included in a TMR, to help maintain a stable rumen pH. Erratic feeding times, particularly with concentrates, can destabilise rumen microflora and function by interfering with saliva production - ewes anticipate feeding times and adjust their grazing or forage intake and accompanying saliva flow, so should be fed at the same times every day.

A constant supply of energy and protein to balance the ration and meet requirements also optimises rumen function. It is important to avoid sudden changes in food type, as well as minimise stress.

Advice on ration management

Achieving the correct supplementation of energy and protein, as well as minerals, required to meet maintenance and production demands is critical to ewe and lamb performance. The new guide from the AHDB can be used in conjunction with the feeding calculator available from the NWF sales team to optimise ewe nutrition.



Getting the feeding right makes lambing easier

The Galbraith family lamb 250 commercial mule and mule x ewes inside in February. This year their big bale silage analysis was disappointing with an ME of 9.3MJ/kg DM and CP of 10%.

'As soon as I saw the analysis, I knew getting enough protein into the ewes for late pregnancy and early lactation was going to be a challenge' said Judith Galbraith who is a veterinary surgeon. Realising that standard 18 or 19% sheep cakes were not going to provide enough protein to get to the 16-20% CP diet the ewes required, she started asking feed companies about high protein products for sheep. NWF's Ultra Soy rolls seemed the ideal solution with 34% protein and 13.5 MJME/kgDM.

'We fed 100g/ewe/ day of the NWF Ultra Soy rolls in addition to a high quality 18% protein ewe cake for 3 weeks pre lambing until 2-3 weeks after.' explained Judith. 'We were really impressed with the results; the ewes lambed down with lots of milk so we have managed the whole lambing season with only a couple of doses of artificial lamb colostrum. It has been quick and easy to strip decent volumes of colostrum from the ewes themselves which is better for lambs anyway. Having full lambs has also meant we have had no cases of watery mouth and only 1 or 2 lambs in the warming box. When you are trying to lamb ewes alongside the day to day work of a dairy farm, making life easy is a priority and this year has been great. Even though I knew

how important DUP was to the ewe in late pregnancy and early lactation, I have been surprised about the difference adding extra DUP made on a practical level. At about £1.50/ewe, it was a worthwhile investment in improving flock performance. My advice would be to get your silage analysed: if there is a protein deficit use a high protein roll with more traditional concentrates or home mixes to help to balance it, if you are lucky enough to make good quality silage small amounts of a high protein roll maybe all you need'

NWF Ultra Soy Rolls offer a high DUP Roll specially formulated in conjunction with SACs sheep specialist Dr John Vipond. The Ultra Soy Rolls have been designed to be fed three to four weeks prior to lambing at a feed rate of between 100g-150g/day. The rolls should be supplemented with 15g/day of UltraMin Sheep GP to ensure all vitamin and mineral requirements are being met. Feed quantities are saved because of the higher level of protein which bypasses the rumen for absorption in the small intestine, silage quality and good ewe condition pre-lambing are essential if farmers choose to feed this roll.

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AGRICULTURE



2017 Shows

NWF will be attending a number of shows in 2017. Visit the NWF trade stand for information on the comprehensive range of products, seek advice from our experienced team and enjoy complimentary refreshments.

- **Staffordshire County Show** on Wed 31st May & Thurs 1st June at The Showground, Stafford
- **Royal Cornwall Show** on Thurs 8th, Fri 9th and Sat 10th June at Wadebridge, Cornwall
- **Nantwich Show** on Wed 26th July at Nantwich, Cheshire
- **North Devon Show** on Wed 2nd August at Umberleigh, Devon
- **Dumfries Show** on Sat 5th August at Dumfries
- **The UK Dairy Day** on Wed 13th Sept at The International Centre, Telford, Shropshire
- **Westmorland Show** on Thurs 14th Sept at Crooklands, Cumbria
- **Cheshire Ploughing Match** on Wed 27th Sept at Ashley Hall Farm, Hale
- **Dairy Show** on Wed 4th Oct at Shepton Mallet, Somerset
- **Brailsford Ploughing Match** on Wed 4th Oct at Ashbourne
- **Borderway Agri Expo** on Fri 3rd Nov at Carlisle
- **AgriScot** on Wed 15th Nov at Edinburgh

Useful Contacts

General Enquiries	0800 756 2787
Feed Orders	0800 262397
Blends	01829 262251
Straights & Liquids	01829 262270
Milk Powders, Minerals	01829 262346
Seed, Fertiliser, Additives	01829 262382
Technical Team	01829 797417
Transport	01829 262338
Customer Accounts	01829 262980

JPA Agriculture	01768 881881
SC Feeds	01785 817876

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