



Changeover pencils

General feeding beef cattle

Rapid liveweight gain requires high energy cereals to be fed. However, transition onto these diets from grass and conserved forages can be difficult. Finishing rations contain less forage and more starchy feeds than growing rations which results in acid build up in the rumen with potential for acidosis. The rumen microbial population must change from one that is fibre digesting to starch digesting. Changeover pencils can help with a smooth and safe transition onto the finishing diet.

Suckler calves can be introduced to creep feeding to achieve target growth rates. Our Changeover pencils contain high levels of digestible fibre making them a safe top-up to milk and grass. Also, vitamins and minerals in our Changeover pencils will boost immune status prior to weaning and the specific challenges associated with housing.

Feeding rates & guides

Changeover pencils are designed to be fed to cattle moving from a growing diet to a finishing one. They can also be used as a creep feed for suckler calves to prepare them for weaning and later housing. Energy levels are high at 12 MJ/kg and protein levels are 16%. Although mineralized, copper is not present making it suitable for feeding to sheep. High quality ingredients are included with energy coming primarily from digestible fibre sources.

Key components and reasons for inclusion

Only high quality ingredients are included, such as wheatfeed, malt residuals, EU distillers, sugar beet pulp and molasses. Poorer quality ingredients such as bakery waste etc are not included.

Crude Protein level is 16% and metabolizable energy is at good levels at 12.0 MJ/kg DM resulting in high growth rates in both cattle.

Disclaimer

Rations should be carefully balanced in terms of nutrient content. They should contain sufficient forage to maintain rumen function and be fortified with an appropriate vitamin and mineral supplement on farms where this is needed. Animals must have constant access to clean water. Suggested feeding rates are produced as a guide only and many other factors may have an overriding effect on animal response; no performance guarantee can be given. Ingredients are generally as in the table, but are subject to change.





Ingredients

Typical Ingredients	Metabolizable Energy	Crude protein	Benefits / Reason for use
Wheatfeed	11.7	18.0	Useful source of starch. Balanced supply of readily digestible fibre, protein and starch.
Malt residuals	11.2	21.0	High digestible fibre and lower starch content. Allows high levels to be fed safely.
Rapeseed meal	12.1	38.5	A good source of high quality protein includes both rumen by-pass and high in rumen degraded protein.
Palm kernal	12.5	17.0	Very high oil. A rich source of digestible fibre. Good supply of non-starch digestible fibre energy. Allows energy intakes to be maximized without increasing the risk of acidosis associated with cereal feeding.
Molasses	11.3	5.4	High in sugar making it very palatable. Used to bind the blend or pencil together.
Sugarbeet	12.5	11.0	Can stimulate intakes of less palatable feeds, increasing intake and growth rate. Provides the building blocks for lean tissue growth. Allows energy intakes to be increased without increasing the risk of acidosis associated with cereal feeding. Assists in maintaining an optimum rumen pH, kind to the rumen.
Barley	13.2	12.3	High in energy, good energy source for live weight gain. High in starch of which 10% is digested after the rumen.
Calcium carbonate			A major source of supplementary calcium
Salt			Salt is included to promote saliva production which helps buffer acid in the rumen.
Fat spray			A good source of energy.
Vitamins & minerals			Well balanced mineral supplement, but without copper supplementation.
Element			Reason for inclusion
Vitamin A	Essential for eye function and beneficial to growth in cattle.		
Vitamin D ₃	Essential for bone formation and hence growth, involved with calcium and phosphorous absorption.		
Vitamin E	Antioxidant working closely with Selenium in supporting a healthy immune system.		
Selenium	An antioxidant plays a vital role in immunity. Benefits reproduction and growth. Protects muscles from degeneration.		
Magnesium	Essential for growth, repair of body tissue and bone development. Needed for enzymes, muscle and nerve function.		
Phosphorous	One of the most important elements being involved with energy production, bone and teeth formation, appetite and reproduction.		

