Taking a cut of silage or hay from a field removes a large amount of potash from the soil. This needs to be replenished to maintain good yields and keep the sward in good heart. Aftercut fertilizer with the 24-0-15 analysis is a balance of nitrogen and potash designed to give good yields and maintain the soil balance.

In addition to this specification we can also supply 24-0-14-7.5 which is an aftercut fertilizer with added sulphur. Sulphur deficiency can be found on multi-cut silage situations and is more likely on light land. A crop deficient of sulphur looks similar to one short of nitrogen. It will be a bit pale in colour and the yield will suffer.

Alternatively, the potash requirement can be made up with the application of slurry leaving only a nitrogen requirement from bagged fertilizer. 1000 gallons of undiluted slurry will supply 27 units of potash. Whilst this can be a good money saver for some farms there are two issues to consider. Firstly the slurry must be applied quickly after the silage is removed on to the stubble before the regrowth starts to prevent slurry drying on the leaf. Secondly whilst the aim is to apply slurry for the potash in practice, it does not actually get done, especially on the fields furthest from the farmstead due to pressure on workloads, therefore the field only ends up getting nitrogen applied.

For a competitive price for both aftercut and nitrogen fertilizer, please call Jonathan or Neil in the office.
Buttering you up

David Lewis

Dairy farmers supplying Arla will no doubt be considering how they can increase butter fat levels. However, this can be a challenge for cows on spring grass. Anything you can do to improve the rumen environment for the fibre digesting bugs will support butter fat.

Fibre digesting bacteria in the rumen take 10-14 days to adjust to changes in forage. For those farmers with groups of cows still inside, turnout needs to be gradual so that cows aren’t suddenly changed onto fresh spring grazing. Including some hay or straw in the diet will provide long fibre in the diet which will help with milk fat levels. Also, it’s not just about forage and type, but also chop length. Silages should be chopped to muzzle length and then care taken not to mash them up in the feeder wagon. Simple changes can often benefit butter fat without extra cost. In fact, feeding hay, straw or high dry matter baled silage can often produce significant benefits in terms of milk fat.

Cows will often benefit from including yeast in the keymix or dairy cake. This will create the correct environment in the rumen and promote fibre digesting bugs. Sometimes feeding the wrong dairy cake can depress milk fat, so a butter fat boosting cake needs to be selected, with energy coming from digestible fibre and protected fat.

What must be borne in mind is that increases in butter fat must not be at the expense of yield. We have examined some scenarios for producers on Arla manufacturing contracts:

**For a herd producing 30 litres if the butter fat increased but litreage dropped to 29.2 litres, then the total milk cheque would be unchanged.**

**For a herd averaging 20 litres it is even more important to maintain yield as the equivalent drop in litreage would be to 19.47 litres for the milk cheque to be the same.**

Pentoguard silage additive

Having good silage is essential for animal performance. It needs to be well fermented without being too acidic and needs to be stable when fed out. Silages that warm up lose both energy and palatability. We have consistently found that silages where Pentoguard has been applied are well fermented and very stable. Pentoguard is highly recommended for use on grass, whole crop and maize silages.

A 1 million litre producer sending milk at 4.0% butter fat and 3.2% protein every other day will currently get a net price of 32.240p. If the butter fat levels were to increase to 4.2% and everything else remained the same, the net price would increase to 33.114p.

**Join us at NBA Beef Expo 2014 at Hexham on Thursday, 22 May for an event focussed on the theme, “British Beef Feeding our Nation”. This year’s Beef Expo will be held at Hexham Mart. Farmers will be able to access the latest information and advice on production techniques. The overarching theme will be efficient and profitable beef farming. There will be numerous trade stands (including our own), demonstrations and competitions. So why not join us for a day out.**

**Congratulations to Jameson customers Andrew & Sally Hargrave for champion pen of lambs at Wharfedale Farmers Spring Primestock Show & Sale. Andrew & Sally won the Keith & Audrey Hardcastle trophy with a topping pair of texels weighing 43.5kg which sold for £180 per head. These winning lambs have been fed on hogg blend. First prize in the down spring lambs was Richard Winn from Whixley, these lambs have been fed on a keymix specially designed for Mr Winn. Third place with his single Spring lamb was KJ Marston from Askwith, these lambs have been fed on intensive lamb creep pellets. Showing yet again that Jameson feeds get the results!**

USEFUL NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Store 01765 680215</th>
<th>Nick Bowkett 07715 994178 (Product Sales)</th>
<th>David Lewis 07710 600848 (Dairy Specialist)</th>
<th>John England 07703 559246 (Sales)</th>
<th>Stuart Holmes 07894 595194 (Sales)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graham Jameson 07802 253060 (Sales)</td>
<td>Jonathan Stansfield 07732 396078 (Grain Buyer / Fertiliser Sales)</td>
<td>Richard Harker 07732 396079 (Accounts)</td>
<td>Neil Edminson 07889 538373 (Seed Sales)</td>
<td>Peter Harland 07803 116410 (Sales)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
At this time of year sheep farmers will be reflecting on lambing and thinking about what went right and what could be improved. This month we look at work from Warwick University which is funded by EBLEX. The work is producing some interesting and useful results, increasing our knowledge about the importance of feeding for younger ewes in terms of susceptibility to mastitis. The results show test lesions are significantly higher in shearlings compared with six year old ewes. Lambs on first-time mothers have been found to spend more time suckling, which increases the risk of damage to the teat. It is likely that this is due to the lower milk yield in younger ewes, as udder development is still ongoing. Importantly, incidence of test lesions and the risk of mastitis increases when shearlings have a body condition of less than three. This is because the ewe can't satisfy the lambs’ demand for milk. Good nutritional management is crucial for optimum condition score and to reduce mastitis risks, particularly for younger ewes. If possible, manage thin and younger ewes in a separate group, so supplementary feed can be strategically used.

For farmers lambing ewe lambs, these should rear only one lamb to reduce the risk of udder damage. Lactating ewe lambs require 20% more feed than mature ewes, which is important to remember when planning where they will be grazed. Lambs should be creep fed and weaned early to allow the ewe lamb sufficient time to continue to grow.

Nematodirus parasites live in the intestine of sheep and infection can lead to profuse watery yellow-green scouring and ill thrift. The concern is that the performance of young lambs that receive an early season check in growth due to nematodiosis may be compromised for the rest of the grazing season and lambs will take longer to reach market weight as a result. Most losses in the UK occur in the spring when lambs start to graze pastures contaminated with parasite larvae. Once temperatures begin to rise, Nematodirus eggs deposited on the pasture from last year’s lambs will hatch into infectious larvae en masse, posing a significant risk to this season’s lambs. The concern is that the performance of young lambs that receive an early season check in growth due to nematodiosis may be compromised for the rest of the grazing season and lambs will take longer to reach market weight as a result. Most losses in the UK occur in the spring when lambs start to graze pastures contaminated with parasite larvae. Once temperatures begin to rise, Nematodirus eggs deposited on the pasture from last year’s lambs will hatch into infectious larvae en masse, posing a significant risk to this season’s lambs.

This disease is commonly diagnosed on the basis of large numbers of Nematodirus eggs in faeces – these faecal sample tests are relatively inexpensive and can be carried out either by your own vet or by us. Research from the Moredun, suggest that, in high risk seasons, a total of three treatments with an effective anthelmintic given three weeks apart should be enough to control disease. The timing of the first dose depends on the prevailing temperatures and will vary seasonally but would generally be given sometime in early to mid-May. On farms with a reduced risk of nematodiosis, only two treatments may be necessary.

Please ask Kathryn Lawson at the trade desk for advice.