

Have you got bad guts? Stuart Holmes

There are a number of signs of acidosis to watch out for in your herd. For dairy cattle, milk fat less than 3.3% can indicate that the rumen isn't functioning well and acidosis is a likely culprit. Finishing cattle, particularly bulls, will be agitated, which is not surprising for men with belly-ache! They will fight and mount each other, which you may think is normal, however, bulls that are in settled groups should spend their days either eating or lying down and not wasting energy in aggressive behaviour. Feed intakes can often be erratic with variation between animals and between days. The muck can be variable either loose with bubbling or firm and smelly and may contain casts. There may also be undigested food particles in the muck even when processing of the diet has been OK. Increased numbers of lame animals, particularly laminitis can also be an indicator of acidosis. Also, watch out for ridges on the hoof surface too.

Acidosis arises from starchy / sugary diets, or from silages which have low neutral detergent fibre (NDF) and high potential acid load (PAL). Acidosis can also be a problem when cattle are grazing lush grass or new leys that are high in sugar. Diets based on bakery waste, bread, potatoes or too finely ground cereals are a recipe for acidosis if they are not handled carefully.

This year, farmers may be considering using cereals to finish lambs; good levels of finish can be achieved by doing this, but it is likely to result in acidosis, so using a good yeast is essential.

Acidosis can result in long term damage to the gut which reduces their productive capacity. So, what can be done? We have seen tremendous results on farms that have used Actisaf yeast in their rations. For example, when I called in at one beef finishing unit,

rearing black & white bulls, animals were extremely restless, mounting and fighting each other. Also, feed particles were found in the muck indicating poor rumen function and costing the farmer money. I suggested including Actisaf yeast in the diet. On my next visit I was pleased to see cattle either lying down or feeding, with not one animal in the shed showing agitated behaviour. In fact, the farmer told me that he had seen an improvement after only one day of using the Actisaf yeast.

Ask your rep or ring the office to discuss inclusion of Actisaf yeast in diets for your cattle & sheep.

Farming funnies!

I'm struggling to find the best way to get my baby goats clean and ready for the village fete tomorrow. Does anyone know of any good internet sites where I can get tips on grooming kids?

The vet said to the dairy farmer "I'm sorry, it's bad news. All your cows have Blue Tongue. The farmer replies "Bejaysus....I didn't even know they had mobiles!"

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OCTOBER 2013 ISSUE

Jamesons scoop two awards at national event

WE Jameson & Son Ltd are delighted to announce its success at the National Dairy Industry Awards 2013, winning two awards. The event was held at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham with 450 people from across the UK dairy industry attending on the evening.

The company scooped the award for 'Regional Feed Merchant of the Year' with the judges praising Jamesons on its high level of customer service. The judges felt that the entry demonstrated clearly that the company was working hard to tackle serious on-farm issues, such as health and fertility, and working with its dairy customers to come up with practical and effective solutions.

Many of our customers were good enough to provide testimonials acknowledging the high level of service provided by us, and we would like to thank them for this.

The awards were split into two; a National Award for national scale businesses supplying feeds to customers throughout the UK and a Regional Award for companies who supply feeds on a regional basis.

When we heard we had been shortlisted with some much larger regional feed manufacturers we were delighted, but to come away with a win is beyond our expectations. The winning of this award is testament to Jamesons' core values, a high level of customer service and product quality.

The company nutritionist Ruth Lawson won the Dairy Nutritionist of the Year, a very hotly contested category entered by company nutritionists and independent consultants from across the UK.

The panel of judges said that "Ruth demonstrated several examples of delivering improved performance and profitability on farm. She has a sound, broad nutritional background and applies this knowledge successfully in the development of new products. She's also customer focused and she illustrated outstanding evidence of effective knowledge transfer in dairy nutrition."

The panel of judges included Séan Rickard, Meurig Raymond, Chris Bartram, Peter Darlington, Justin Beckett, Caroline Whibley and Nick Green presided over the entries. The day was chaired by editor of Cow Management Rachael Porter.



Monthly offers

Animal health

Buy a NETTEX nylon ram harness or pedigree total non-chafe ram harness and get a **NETTEX ram crayon free** (worth £1.99 + VAT).

Buy 4 NETTEX ram crayons and get a **5th crayon free** (worth £1.99 + VAT).

20% off all Agrimark raddles 1.5kg (was £4.75 + VAT, now only £3.96 + VAT).

Buy a Ritchey Donaghys ram harness and get a **Ritchey ram crayon free** (worth £2.35 + VAT).

Buy 4 Ritchey ram crayons and **get a 5th free** (worth £2.35 + VAT).

Countrystore



10% off all shooting gear (excludes cartridges).

Free fat ball feeder (worth £3.99) when you buy un-netted fat ball box (in 50's) for **£9.49**

Monday 14th - 18th October is welly week, extra discounts across the range, including:

• Derlington ladies neoprene lined wellingtons **only £38.95**

• Dunlop blizzard fleece lined wellingtons a **massive third off.**

A whopping 25% off all in stock horse rugs, e.g. Weatherbeeta freestyle 1200D with detachable neck was £149.99, now only **£112.49**. Shires Highlander combo medium weight was £79.99, now only **£59.99**.

While Stocks last!



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A better year...

David Lewis

Much to everyone's relief, the good weather eventually arrived this spring even if it was 3-4 weeks late. Although first cut grass silage was generally good quality, there wasn't much of it about.

Silage results are showing some encouraging trends, but as always, averages can be misleading. A 5% increase in DM from 30.8% to 32.4% in 2012 to 2013 (see table) respectively should support good forage intakes and help rumen stability. However, drier forages can encourage sorting, so be aware of silage chop length and ration uniformity. A healthy and active rumen will maximise forage digestibility, dry matter intake and hence milk yield. Compared with 2012, D value and ME are 2% higher this year; average ME is 11.0 this season, compared with 10.8 MJ/kg DM last year.

There are still large variations in silage quality, with the lowest energy forage resulting in 3.4l/h/d less milk than the average, and the lowest DM forage at 13.8% (actual forage ME of 9.8 MJ/kg DM) requiring an extra 41.6 kg FW to achieve the same 10 kg DMI as the average, or an unachievable 81.3 kg FW intake to deliver the same energy intake as the average.

The key points from the silage analyses are: -

- **First cuts are good quality with high intake potential**
- **This year's forages will be more digestible than last**
- **High dry matters will increase the possibility of sorting and therefore rumen health issues**

As individual silages vary in protein, energy, stability & intake potential, ask us to formulate a blend for you to match your silage.

		1st Cut 2012	1st Cut 2013	Min	Max
Dry Matter	%	30.8	32.4	13.8	65.2
Crude Protein	%	13.6	14	7	22.7
D Value	%	67.5	69	58	75.8
ME	MJ/kg	10.8	11	9.3	12.1
pH		4.1	4	3.5	5.3
NH ₃ N	%	2.9	2.6	1.2	30.1
Sugar	%	2.6	2.8	0.2	6.5
Ash	%	8.3	8.4	2.8	16.7
NDF	%	46.6	46.8	37.2	75.7
VFA	g/kg	24.0	16.2	0.1	72.8
Lactic Acid	g/kg	67.8	61.4	5.3	178.4

Intake Potential	g/kg _{0.75}	101.5	105.6	59	138.7
PAL	meq/kg	724.9	739.3	351.5	1152.4



Looking after the boys!

Kathryn Lawson

Although there's not much time left now to get tups ready for their ladies, there are still a few things that you can do to help fertility, particularly if you're going shopping for tups this autumn.

Foot care is essential to maintain ram soundness. Research from Warwick University has shown that routine foot paring is now not recommended for the treatment and control of foot rot. Antibiotic injection is proven to be more effective than foot paring. Regular footbathing can have an important role in prevention of footrot provided that the facilities are well maintained and that sheep have a dry stand after exiting the footbath. However, if sheep have to walk through mud immediately after footbathing there will be no benefit at all.

Supplementary feeding is critical during the mating period when many rams often lose considerable body condition. Weight loss will be worse the higher the ratio of ewes to the tup. Try to get tup lambs used to a bucket before they go in with the ewes, although this doesn't always work if you've got very greedy ewes!

Be very careful with tup harnesses, ill-fitting harnesses often cause brisket sores which heal very slowly and result in ewes not being marked.

For purchased rams, upon arrival on the farm, the risks posed by anthelmintic resistant worm species, scab and liver fluke must be recognized. All purchased sheep must be quarantined and wormed. Also remember to ask the vendor about vaccination status, it may be worth vaccinating for clostridial disease in any case.

Ask us about wormers and vaccinations for sheep.

How do minerals look this year?

Peter Harland

Trace elements are commonly responsible for nutritional problems that affect growth, milk production or fertility. Further complicating matters, some minerals interact with others, reducing supply. The table below shows the averages for grass silage for 2012 and 2013, there are a number of minerals worth discussing. It's also worth bearing in mind that these figures are simply year to year averages and will not reflect deficiencies on individual farms.

Selected mineral averages in grass silage

		2012	2013	% Difference
Magnesium	%	0.16	0.16	0.00
Potassium	%	2.24	2.47	10.27
Sulphur	%	0.18	0.20	11.11
Iron	mg/kg	361.5	290.01	-19.77
Cobalt	mg/kg	0.24	0.21	-12.5
Zinc	mg/kg	26.2	26.57	-1.41
Selenium	mg/kg	0.054	0.054	0.00
Molybdenum	mg/kg	1.5	1.66	10.67
Copper	mg/kg	6.3	7.6	20.63

Although copper levels are up for 2013, so too are molybdenum and sulphur which will tie up copper supply. Iron too will interact with copper which although down in 2013 is still at high levels on some farms.

Selenium levels show no improvement in 2013 from last year. Signs of selenium deficiency include reduced growth rate and high embryonic mortality between three and four weeks after conception. The incidence of retained cleansings in dairy cows is also linked to selenium deficiency.

Potassium averages are higher for 2013, however, high potassium interferes with magnesium absorption, so may contribute to grass staggers this autumn. As cattle and sheep will hopefully be out at grass for longer this season, this issue is worth tackling.

Improved sulphur levels this year will enable rumen microbes to efficiently utilize forages more effectively, so animals will make better use of home-grown forage.

Ask your rep or ring the office to find out more about our: -

- **Dalesman Tri-mag buckets**
- **Dalesman Cattle fertility plus**
- **Cattle general health minerals**

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