



## NEW RANGE SETS THE PACE FOR SUSTAINABLE MILK PRODUCTION



**Kynan Massey**



**We are delighted to announce a first for the UK dairy industry with the launch of the Planet Range, the first dairy compounds which specifically exclude soya and palm products, the ingredients widely acknowledged as having the highest environmental impact.**

Dairy farmers face a huge challenge in meeting the target of being carbon net zero by 2040. Achieving net zero is going to require fundamental changes to how cows are managed. All aspects of dairy farming will need to be reviewed - how heifers are reared, how forage is made, how purchased inputs are sourced and how cows are rationed.

And the pressure is building. Sustainability is moving up the agenda of milk processors and buyers. We have seen the first real impact of this just recently with Marks & Spencer

removing soya from the production of milk from its 44 dedicated supplying farms. Arla are also pushing for carbon neutrality from its 2,000 farms in the UK. And we know many local milk buyers are exploring their options.

As a major supplier to dairy farmers we are committed to helping you meet these targets through efficient milk production.

We have always set out to minimise the carbon impact of all our operations as we manufacture and deliver feeds across the region.

Now our focus is on the formulations and with feed being the largest variable cost of dairy farming and contributing to 60% of a farm's net carbon, it is a good place to start. Reports suggest that eliminating soya on dairy farms could reduce CO<sub>2</sub> by over 6%!

### **A practical solution**

By launching the Planet range we are giving customers keen to move down this route a way to eliminate soya and palm products from their compounds and blends.

The new Planet Dairy Compounds and blends are available with a number of different protein levels to suit all production systems. The new range has similar energy and protein content to conventionally formulated dairy feeds. Cows on farms which have trialed the range have shown no impact on production, meaning that switching to more sustainable ingredients has not compromised the effectiveness of the diets. We have replaced soya bean meal, soya hulls, palm oil, palm kernel and C16 fats with equivalent established ingredients including

rapeseed, sugar beet pulp and wheatfeed. Fats have been replaced with non-palm alternatives. All ingredients are included on the NutriOpt Dairy diet formulation database and farm results show the new range performs as well as other compounds.

If a 200 cow herd feeding two tonnes of compounds and blends per cow per year were to switch to Planet Dairy 18% from a conventionally formulated compound, they could save over 110 tonnes of the ingredients most closely associated with negative environmental impact. This is a huge step in the move to net zero carbon.

### **Efficient production**

We are also committed to help improving feed efficiency. The Planet range also contains carefully selected high quality minerals and speciality ingredients to drive rumen function and overall feed efficiency to further help reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> impact of feeding dairy cows.

For example, we are including Novatan which is a blend of essential oils which has a direct effect on protein digestion in the rumen.

We are continuously reviewing all the ingredients we use to further improve the sustainability of the Planet Range and help customers improve not only the sustainability of their purchased feeds but also efficiency of production to help meet carbon footprint targets. And we will be adopting the principles of the Planet range in our sheep and beef feeds in the near future too.

**For more information talk to your feed specialist.**

# FARMING THOUGHTS

The UK Agricultural industry is facing great uncertainty over the coming months as we all look to navigate a range of key issues.

- a) The Brexit transition period ends 31/12/20 with the potential of tariffs coming into effect which will apply to all imported raw materials if a deal is not reached.
- b) Currency fluctuations are having a massive bearing on raw materials coming into the UK, with further price rises inevitable.
- c) While agriculture has weathered the Covid pandemic better than most, the supply chain is not immune which could mean knock-on effects for us all.

Regarding Covid 19, I would like to thank all our staff for their hard work and commitment in keeping the business going forward during these challenging times. We have implemented various measures to ensure the safety of our staff and customers and will continue to operate safe practices in line with lockdown and tiered system guidelines.

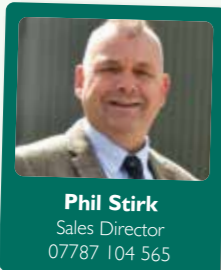
One positive of the pandemic is that consumers are eating more British produce which is good for livestock farmers with prices increasing.

We have just launched our 2021 sheep diets. Unfortunately, prices are up considerably from 12 months ago due to all raw material prices (cereal, fibre and proteins) increasing.

The green economy is making the headlines at the moment. We must all do our part to help reach zero CO2 by 2040, and we recently have seen that the Government wants to phase out new petrol and diesel cars by 2030.

Farming must also change. The supermarkets and food processors are looking closely at sustainability and reducing CO2 and methane emissions from food production. This is why we have just launched a new range of dairy feeds, the Planet Range, which contains no soya or palm products, the ingredients most closely linked to environmental impacts.

Finally, in the run up to Christmas can I urge you all to support the British turkey market as we hopefully look forward to getting together over the festive period.



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## SWEETSTART PREVENTS POST-WEANING GROWTH CHECKS



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Switching to Massey FiMLAC Sweetstart calf feeds is delivering high feed intakes and exceptional performance from dairy bull calves with no growth checks around weaning on a Derbyshire customer's farm.

New high-quality milk replacers mean dairy and dairy cross calves can achieve excellent growth rates pre-weaning. However, the momentum can be lost if management at weaning means energy intakes drop resulting in a growth rate check.

At Park Farm, Stanley, Andy and Sue Collins finish around 60-80 dairy bulls calves per year on an intensive system with finished cattle sold at 12-13 months. Calves, mainly Holsteins but with a few Montbeliardes and Brown Swiss, are usually purchased at 2-3 weeks old.

They use an Energized Calf Milk twice a day and feed six litres per calf, except in cold weather when this is increased to seven litres but at the same concentration. They are looking for calves to double their arrival weight by the time they are weaned. The target is intakes of around 0.5kg/day of concentrates at four weeks old, gradually increasing to close to 1kg/day at six weeks. Weaning starts at around seven weeks old when calves move onto once a day milk feeding. Milk is stopped when intakes of dry feed are 2kg/day.

### Maintaining growth rate

Calves face considerable challenges around weaning which can increase the risk of a growth check. The first is a change in the source of energy from milk to solid feeds.

A three-week old calf will be receiving almost 100% of the energy intake from milk but this proportion reduces as the intake of solid feed increases. At weaning, 100% of energy will come from solid feed and forage, making achieving high dry food intakes critical for high energy intakes.

At the same time, they have to change the source of energy from glucose in milk replacers to Volatile Fatty Acids (VFAs) from rumen fermentation. And at a time when the rumen is developing. So, ensuring high palatability is vital.

Our FiMLAC Sweetstart calf feeds all include the same palatiser as we include in our milk replacers. By making dry food smell the same as milk replacer calves are encouraged to eat dry food.

Feeding the best form of minerals in feeds also has a big impact on palatability. Commonly inorganic forms of minerals including sulphates are used but sulphates are unpalatable and can reduce dry feed intakes. Furthermore, sulphates can compromise the development of the rumen microflora at exactly the time we are trying to create a fully functioning rumen.

We have replaced all sulphates in our Sweetstart calf feeds with Intellibond Hydroxy minerals which overcome both these problems. To further stimulate rumen efficiency, Carneo Boost, a supplement which converts lactic acid to propionate in the rumen is included, increasing energy capture in the rumen.

Sue Collins's calves now have access to Sweetstart, fresh water and straw from the day they arrive on the farm. While intakes on the previous calf concentrate were adequate, intakes have risen more quickly since they moved to the sulphate-free pellet, leading to better growth rates.

Post-weaning, calf intakes quickly build to 3kg/day of concentrates as a result of the high palatability and the 3mm pellet size. Growth rates confirm calves are getting the energy they need.

By feeding FiMLAC Sweetstart pellets which promote higher intakes and supports rumen development you can reduce growth checks around weaning, whether rearing dairy heifers or dairy bulls and beef cross calves.



Andy and Sue Collins

## DRIVING FEED EFFICIENCY CRUCIAL TO NET ZERO



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Efficient milk production is crucial if dairy farmers are to achieve net zero carbon targets. Our Planet range contains a number of ingredients proven to improve how well cows use the diet to achieve high levels of milk yield, milk quality and fertility.

Having removed soya and palm products from our Planet range in response to environmental and industry pressures it is important that cow performance is not compromised.

Our feeds have been carefully formulated to the same energy density as our Superlac diets. Starch and protein, both MPN, MPE, are also included at similar levels. Key parameters for efficient milk production such as glucogenic energy, acid load and fibre index are balanced. All Planet compounds are available as 16%, 18% and 20% protein.



To improve efficiency of protein use and minimise nitrogen excretion, all Planet compounds contain Novatan, a blend of essential oils which has a direct effect on protein degradation in the rumen.

### Efficient protein utilisation

It reduces the rate of protein breakdown which means less ammonia is produced in the rumen and that more protein (MPB) bypasses the rumen altogether. Secondly, it stimulates protein syntheses by the rumen micro-organisms which then use up more ammonia. This means there is less surplus ammonia and consequently lower blood and milk urea levels and reduced energy wastage. By including Novatan, we can increase efficiency of protein utilisation across the whole diet and have the benefits in fertility that low blood urea levels bring.

Trace elements are used in every process in the cow and the diets needs to provide an adequate supply in the most bioavailable form to support production, fertility and health. Our Fimlac mineral premix, included in all our Planet products, combines chelated copper, manganese, zinc and selenium with highly available Intellibonds. Significantly, we minimise the use of less effective inorganic minerals sources and the premix is sulphate free to support overall health and immunity, particularly in times of stress.

### Rumin efficiency

For higher performing herds we have a higher specification Planet product. Maintaining rumen health and efficiency is fundamental to these profitable cows. Following successful trials we have included a very effective rumen buffer. pHix-Up contains three different grades of calcined magnesite which degrade at different rates and help maintain a more favourable rumen pH for longer than other products.

To get fresh cows off to a good start we also include a non-palm, rumen-inert fatty acid supplement to boost energy density and help reduce body condition loss. Long chain Omega 3's help strengthen the overall immune response and play a crucial role in fertility, while rumen protected choline helps keep the liver healthy and efficient to reduce the risk of ketosis. It also includes rumen protected methionine to ensure sufficient supply of this key amino acid to maintain yields and milk protein.

We understand that diets need careful planning and balancing to make full use of the forages available and that all farms face different challenges. So we are able to tailor the Planet range to add additional ingredients such as yeasts to help keep your cows, productive and efficient while helping work towards carbon net zero.

**The Planet range represents a big step forward in the drive to reducing dairy farm carbon footprint. To find out more, talk to your feed specialist.**



## MARKET UPDATE

Many producers who have come off an annual feed price contract will have seen their feed price increase. This is principally a consequence of raw material market factors.

### Wheat

Poor planting conditions last Autumn and a dry spring which affected some crops especially on light land, resulted in a reduced harvest, leaving the UK short of wheat. In addition to the poor harvest there is a reluctance by UK wheat producers to sell wheat which is inflating prices further.

Globally there are decent amounts of wheat. However dry weather in Eastern Europe and Russia has been causing concerns over plantings affecting next year's potential yield.

In September 2019 wheat stood at £137/t while in November 2020 it was £190/t, with futures market suggesting no fall in these prices until November 2021.

### Soya

Two years ago the Chinese pig herd was decimated by African Swine Flu. This significantly reduced their demand for cereals and soya. There is now a massive pig stock rebuild programme which is fuelling their demand for feed materials, which has resulted in the USDA dramatically cutting their carryover stocks which has caused some panic buying.

Added to this, dry weather in South America is affecting soya which they are planting now. In the big soya bean growing area in Brazil, rainfall over the past two months has been 15-35% of normal. Which has delayed soybean planting in many areas and is stressing germination and early crop growth.

Argentina is also suffering from a very low value of the Peso resulting in their reluctance to sell; again shorting the market of supply.

While soya was trading at £302/t in June 2019, the price in November 2020 has risen to £384/t.

While we do all we can to limit the impact of price fluctuations, inevitably finished feed prices have had to rise.



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# DON'T LET COLD WEATHER KNOCK CALF PERFORMANCE

**Cold weather can have a devastating effect on calves, reducing growth rates and increasing the risk of disease and mortality. Here are four things you can do to reduce the impact.**

## **Make sure they get colostrum**

Colostrum has high levels of digestible fat and protein, as well as crucial antibodies. Make sure calves get colostrum within two hours of birth and feed it at body temperature to support passive transfer.

## **Energy is key**

Cold calves use energy trying to keep warm. So calves need more energy in cold weather. The safe way to do this is to feed more litres, either by increasing litres per feed or feeding more often. Do not increase the concentration of milk replacer, mixing more powder per litre of water as

this will just increase the risk of digestive upsets. Feed Milkvit Energized Calf Milk as it has 10% more energy than other milk replacers.

Feed a palatable calf starter such as FIMLAC Sweetstart adlib to help increase energy intakes.

## **Keep them dry**

Deep bedding helps reduce heat loss. Use straw and ensure a minimum 15-30cm of bedding for effective insulation. Ensure adequate ventilation with sufficient air flow. Housing and hutches should be warmer inside than the outside environment.

## **Have calf jackets at the ready**

High quality, breathable jackets can help keep calves warm and dry, especially calves under three weeks old. Wash jackets between calves to reduce risk of cross-contamination.

Adjust the fit weekly and look underneath the jacket daily to check the calf's body condition and look for signs of sweating.

If calves are sweating underneath them during the day, the wet hair can quickly chill calves when temperatures drop at night.

We can supply high quality milk replacers, calf starter and jackets to help ensure your calves remain healthy and keep growing this winter.



## ARE YOU READY TO ARTIFICIALLY REAR LAMBS?

**Every year a high proportion of lambs will need hand or artificially rearing. Make sure you have a high-quality milk replacer on farm so these lambs get off to a good start.**

A recent farmer survey showed that 55% of sheep producers expect to artificially rear up to 5% of lambs born, with another 14% of farmers expecting this number to increase to up to 10% of all lambs... Major contributors to the number of these lambs are orphans and lambs from ewes with poor milk supply.

One thing is certain. Some lambs will need hand rearing on every farm. If these lambs can be successfully reared it will make a huge contribution to the bottom line and profitability of the flock.

Key to successful artificial rearing is choosing the best milk replacer for lamb performance and health. High digestibility of energy and protein sources are crucial and Milkvit Energized Lamb Milk, manufactured by Trouw Nutrition, is specially formulated to help lambs achieve their full potential.

Newborn lambs have limited energy reserves so a milk replacer must provide sufficient energy in a highly digestible form to support survivability and body temperature maintenance. This will in turn help to support a robust immune system and promote high liveweight gains.

Protein digestibility is also important and Milkvit Energized Lamb Milk is the only lamb milk containing 100% of protein from dairy sources to maximise digestibility. A lower percentage of dairy protein will reduce performance.

By using a milk replacer formulated for high digestibility you can ensure lambs get the nutrients they require for good health and performance.



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## CHRISTMAS DELIVERY SCHEDULE

**We are only closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Monday 28th December and New Year's Day but our normal delivery days may be subject to change.**

The last order date before Christmas is **Friday 11th December** and the last order date before New Year is **Friday 17th December**.

We will be making essential deliveries only on **Monday 28th December**.

Please help us help you by providing as much spread as possible during the holiday season. This is especially important with COVID-19 restrictions in place. Thank you for your co-operation.

Everyone at Massey Feeds wishes all our customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## NEW WEAPON IN FIGHT AGAINST RED MITE

We are investigating the use of D-Mite, a natural, complementary in-feed product that is reported to reduce (not eliminate) red mite levels in poultry houses when used in conjunction with current red mite management programmes.

If you would like more information on this product or be involved in trials, please contact the office.



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