



## GROWING AND UTILISING GRASS THIS SPRING

**Growing and utilising grazing are major factors influencing profit on dairy farms. But they are two very different things. Time and again I see farms able to grow plenty of grass, but utilising good quality grass to produce good milk yields is a completely different skill.**

To maximise the contribution from grazing, cows need to have sufficient good quality grass available to drive dry matter intake. This means managing covers, ensuring good quality regrowths, doing all you can to reduce physical waste and anything else that will reduce grazing quality.

Sadly, grazed grass is not a perfectly balanced feed for milk production so you need to make sure that the supplementary feeds complement grazing, so the cow can utilise grass efficiently in the rumen. This is done by making up for any shortfalls in the nutritional balance of grass.

Ensuring good season long productivity has its foundations in early season grazing. On the first rotation, cows need to be out and grazing as soon as ground conditions are favourable. Getting that first round grass grazed off as soon as possible is key to getting the plant to wake up and grow. At this point of the year understanding grass growth versus demand for kilos of dry matter per day is key to staying on top of grass covers, controlling levels of supplementation.

Getting that early round grazed off and getting a few kilos of grass into the diet is both healthier for the cow and the grass.

Although 100% of grass in the first rotation is available to the cow (no dung pats etc), there may be paddocks where cows struggle to graze down to the target residual owing to dead material etc. Failure to graze out completely in the first rotation leads to a build-up of trash at the base of the sward, reducing light to the base and making it difficult for cows to graze out in subsequent rotations.

### Quality is key

It is important to keep grass young and leafy at the three leaf stage to maintain quality and this means grazing tightly. To help maintain quality, turn cows into paddocks when the grass cover is around 2700kgDM/ha, taking them out when they have grazed down to 1500kgDM/ha depending on your stocking rate.

If grass is allowed to become stemmy, this makes it more difficult for cows to graze out paddocks as the season progresses. Keeping grass quality at an optimum in every paddock will drive higher dry matter intakes, which in turn will drive better fertility and milk quality.

The biggest thing to remember when cows are grazing is that good quality grass is around 12.5MJME/kgDM and 24% protein. When supplementing grass we should be feeding compounds with higher energy levels than grass but lower protein, around 14-16%.

They also need to have high digestible fibre from ingredients like beet pulp and soya hulls to maintain good rumen health.

Our summer dairy ranges are formulated to complement grazing to help you get the best from grazing by ensuring the cow gets all she needs.

To help improve protein utilisation and reduce nitrogen waste our dairy ranges can contain Novatan, an essential oil which helps reduce the consequences of high milk urea when high protein grass is being grazed. If milk urea levels rise the cow must use energy to excrete it, costing energy that she could have used for milk production. Improving protein utilisation can also improve how well cows hold to service and increase the success with which embryos implant, together improving fertility at grass.

Grazed grass is widely known as an unreliable source of minerals so the summer dairy range can also contain our FiMLAC mineral premix, specifically formulated to contain balanced levels of trace minerals with high levels of bioavailability to help maintain fertility, health, and production at grass.

**For more information about our summer range, talk to your Feed Specialist.**



**Will McNeice**  
Sales Specialist NW  
07788 440 618

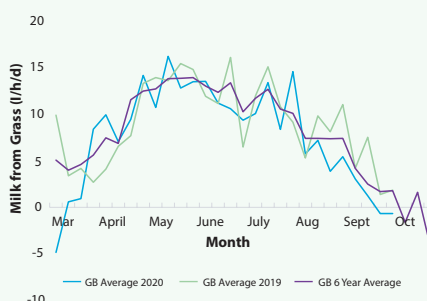


# FARMING THOUGHTS

**The Covid-19 pandemic has bought food and farming to the centre of the general public's thinking, with 86% of the public believing that the country should grow more of its own food.**

As mentioned previously, the biggest issue facing us as an industry is climate change. To complement our new Planet Dairy Range, we have started using NovaPro at both our mills. This is a high energy, treated rape seed that can be used as a soya alternative.

Getting the most from grazed grass has to be top of the agenda for dairy farmers this summer. With milk prices barely moving and feed prices and other costs spiralling upwards, maximising milk from grass has never been more important. For the 2021 season, we have introduced a new range of summer diets which are at the cutting edge of grazing supplementation.



Regular measurement of grazing quality and quantity is essential to make the most of grass. The graph shows how potential yield from grazing can vary year on year. We will again be working closely with Trouw Nutrition GB and their GrassWatch service to help customers get the most from grazing. Please start taking a grass sample from your farm and pass to your Feed Specialist when they visit.

As a business, we are just coming out of a successful sheep season and looking forward to supplying game feed to our customers in what has been a very difficult season for them. The good news is that nationally we are starting to come out of a difficult 12 months. As a country, we have had a positive start to the vaccination process and given the COVID-19 vaccine fallout in the EU perhaps Brexit has done us a favour and highlighted we are better off being in control of our own destiny.



**Phil Stirk**  
Sales Director  
07787 104 565

## RAW MATERIALS UPDATE

**The perfect storm has subsided on the spot market with some products coming off their highs, but the summer period still looks very strong compared to where the winter prices were.**

After China's hog restocking program, they now have cases of African Swine Flu again. As yet we don't know the true extent of these but they have cancelled some cargos. As always, what China buys and what it eventually takes delivery of can be two very different figures.

Rains have come to South America, helping Argentina but hindering Brazil and the harvesting of their large crop of soya. Delays have meant the world is still pulling soya out of America which means their end stocks will be at record lows. If we see any weather disruptions in America over the next two or three months, then the funds will have soya off to the races again.

Nearer to home, mid-protein prices are strong. Rape is holding its value due to the Lower Rhine having a buoyant market, while distillers are holding up due to the lack of

Ethanol storage and usage which should improve as lockdown is lifted.

For the summer, soya hulls look better value than sugar beet pulp, trading at £50/t less. Wheatfeed will be more sensible for the May – September period.

Barley has been the value product all year which has reduced the wheat requirements. We will be getting to the point soon where we should have enough to get through to harvest. With May wheat trading at £222 into the mills and November at £177, no grain farmer or merchant will want any old crops left in the shed. On a feed analysis basis, maize looks about £15/t too expensive against wheat for the summer. It won't feature in monogastric diets but ruminant diets will require it in certain circumstances.

Currency has been good since the turn of the year with the Pound trading at 1.40 against the Dollar and a 1.16 against the Euro which is a positive position for imported products.



**Neil Warburton**  
Raw Material Director  
07471 902538

## DON'T GET CAUGHT OUT BY ORPHAN LAMBS

**Every lamb lost is a tragedy and will reduce your returns. One thing for certain is that you will have some orphan lambs, so make sure you have all you need to help them thrive.**

To help get newborn lambs off to the best possible start, we supply Tri-Col lamb colostrum which is an easy to mix supplement scientifically designed to help provide health, viability and nutritional assistance to baby lambs. Then these lambs will need a high quality milk replacer.

Key to successful artificial rearing is choosing the best milk replacer for lamb performance and health. 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.

High digestibility of energy and protein sources are crucial and Milkivit Energized Lamb Milk, manufactured by Trouw Nutrition, is specially formulated to help lambs achieve their full potential.

**For more information, talk to your Feed Specialist.**



# TIME TO PLAN INOCULANTS



**In the next few weeks the forage harvesters will be out in force as first cut gets underway, so now is the time to start planning your silage inoculant needs.**

Silage inoculants play two important roles in forage production; by encouraging a fast and efficient fermentation to ensure a higher quality feed and by helping reduce waste.

It is usually quoted that around 20% of the harvested dry matter can be lost as a result of inefficient fermentation and by aerobic spoilage once the clamps are open, so the financial advantages of steering an effective fermentation and reducing spoilage can be considerable.

By applying large populations of beneficial bacteria, inoculants will promote the rapid drop in pH required to achieve an effective and stable lactic acid fermentation. The faster the pH drop is achieved, the higher feed value the silage will be.

Your choice of inoculant will be largely determined by the dry matter of the silage being made.

With lower dry matter grass the focus is on a rapid fermentation, but drier crops are more prone to heating and waste, so need a different combination of bacteria to ensure a good fermentation and high levels of stability. This is why we recommend the Magniva range of inoculants, the only crop and condition range available.

For low dry matter grass, especially if conditions at harvest are a bit variable, Magniva Platinum Grass Wet delivers a rapid fermentation.

While for drier grass and crops harvested in good conditions, Magniva Platinum Grass Dry, which contains a unique combination of bacteria, will ensure the well fermented silage will not heat up at feed out.

**Talk to your Feed Specialist about choosing the right inoculant to ensure you have a top quality feed for next winter.**



# ECOMMERCE SITE NEARING COMPLETION



**Customers will soon be able to order a wide range of high-quality products from Massey Harper Country Supplies using our [farmersdirect.co.uk](http://farmersdirect.co.uk) ecommerce website.**

In 2017 we opened our Harpers Farm Supplies country store in Devon and have seen considerable demand from customers for farm inputs from electric fencing to troughs and gates, to animal health products to general consumables.

Following the success of the store, and building on the experience we have gained over the last four years we have made the decision to offer a national services so all Massey Feeds customers can benefit.

We are in the final stages of testing [www.farmersdirect.co.uk](http://www.farmersdirect.co.uk) and are excited about the opportunities it will bring our customers across the country as we become an even more important partner for your business.

# GET AHEAD WITH RESEEDING

**Ensuring all grass swards are as productive as possible is a proven way to improve profitability. By increasing production from forage, purchased feed inputs can be controlled.**

In all ruminant systems, forage is a major component of the ration and improving the quality and quantity of forage produced can result in significant financial savings. An increased proportion of weeds and less productive grass species will reduce the production potential of your grassland by restricting yields and reducing feed values compared to a new reseed. It is important to assess all grassland and identify the poorer producing fields and plan to reseed them.

In the first year alone following a reseed, grass yield can be increased up to 60%. This can add up to over 12,500litres/ha more milk, over 1000kg/ha more lamb or 1200kg/ha of beef.

In addition, advances in breeding technologies and the focus on specific traits including digestibility, yield and persistency makes for not only better grazing swards but also higher quality silage.

If a cow eats 10kgDM of forage per day, by increasing the energy in silage by just 1MJ/kgDM, the extra energy supplied will support an additional two litres per cow per day from forage.

Over a 200 day winter, this adds up to a 400 litre increase per cow which at 27ppl will increase income by £108/cow over the

winter; £21,600 for a 200 cow herd.

Improving grassland productivity through reseeding is a key way to take control of costs to lessen the financial impact of raw material price volatility.

We supply a wide range of quality seed mixes for grazing, silage and mixed use swards to help you increase the productivity of your grassland.

**Talk to your Feed Specialist about assessing your grassland and devising a reseeding plan.**



# NEW SUMMER DAIRY RANGE

To help you get the most from grazing, whatever your system, we have updated our dairy range.

**FiMLAC 16 and 18** - Very high energy and formulated using only quality ingredients. Contains our FiMLAC mineral premix to ensure optimal supplementation of chelated copper, zinc, selenium and manganese.

**Planet 16%** - Lower the carbon footprint without lowering performance. Formulated with no soya products or palm kernel. Contains Novapro rumen protected rape, Novatan to ensure nitrogen efficiency and our FiMLAC mineral pack

**ButterBoost Extra** - Specifically designed to protect butterfats through the grazing season. A sugar beet led product with high levels of digestible fibre. Also contains the rumen buffer pHix-up and Novatan.

**Opti Graze 14 and 16** - High energy feed with by-pass protein to compliment the high RDP levels in grazed grass. High maize inclusion for excellent by-pass starch levels. Contains our sulphate free mineral pack

**Early Graze 12 and 14%** - Formulated for the early grazing season when grass is at its highest nutritional quality.

**Mid Graze 16%** - Formulated for use after Early Graze to maintain cow performance when grass energy content begins to decline.

**Grazing 18%** - Formulated for use throughout the grazing season to meet energy, fibre and protein requirements.

**For more information, speak to your Feed Specialist.**



## QUALITY IS THE KEY

**If your plan is to market your lambs early to take advantage of usually better prices and preserve mid-season grazing, then creep feeding might be the right option for you.**

When feeding young lambs, quality must be the first criterion when choosing a creep feed as you need to meet their high nutritional demands within a small dry matter intake. A higher quality creep feed will be formulated from more digestible and higher specification ingredients to meet the requirements of lambs and exploit their growth potential.

A quality lamb feed costing £250/t and giving a 5:1 Feed Conversion Efficiency (FCE) will cost £1.25/kg liveweight gain compared to a cheaper feed costing £200/t but with an 8:1 FCE, which will cost £1.60/kg liveweight gain. In addition, lambs on the poorer quality creep will not finish as quickly, potentially increasing costs without realising a higher market price.

Because young lambs convert feed more efficiently, an early introduction will be more cost effective. If offered an ad-lib quality creep with good grass a lamb should be expected to eat 35 - 40kg by the time of sale.

A note of caution, however, if creep is fed to older lambs it must be introduced gradually to avoid gorging and dietary upset.

Massey Feeds Creep Feeds are formulated with quality ingredients to help lambs grow quickly, achieving a high feed conversion to hit early markets.

**Lamb Creep Pellets** - Designed to encourage early intakes of dry feed with adequate starch to help promote rumen development. Includes Bio-Mos to maintain a healthy digestive tract and lower the incidence of nutritional disorders.

**Hi Gain Lamb Pellets** - The perfect follow-on ration to Massey Lamb Creep Pellets for fast finishing lambs. Can also be offered from birth to finish as a 'one-ration-fits-all'.

**Harvest Lamb Mix** - A mix of quality raw materials to promote fast lamb finishing.

On receipt of a veterinary prescription we can supply Lamb creep pellets medicated with Deccox to help prevent coccidiosis.

**For more information, speak to your Feed Specialist.**



**Paul Drake**  
Beef and Sheep  
Commercial Manager  
07900 270 233

## POSITIVE RESPONSE TO RUMEN SMART

At the end of 2020, David Coulthurst of Edenfield Farm, Goosnargh was struggling with milk quality from his 750 cow herd currently averaging 12,000 litres. Butterfat was down at 3.45% and protein at 3.16%, with cows yielding 35-37 litres/day.

When we were asked to come in and review the diet, on paper it looked to contain sufficient energy, protein and fibre for the target level of production. Diets high in starch and unsaturated fats can disrupt rumen function resulting in diet induced milk fat depression due to the presence of compounds which suppress milk fat syntheses.

It was agreed to add Rumen Start to the diet. This is a supplement which helps increase milk fat production and reduce diet-induced milk fat depression. It acts in the rumen where it reduces the impact of dietary risk factors that lead to diet-induced milk fat depression and improves microbial protein synthesis.

After three weeks on Rumen Smart, yields had risen to 38 litres, butterfat lifted to 4.05% and protein lifted to 3.35%. C16 has since been removed from the diet but they have continued with Rumen Smart. Milk yields have stabilised around 39 litres and the butterfat has continued to rise to 4.30% and protein to 3.36%.

**For more information, speak to your Feed Specialist.**



**Michael Parkinson**  
Sales Specialist  
07917 845862



www.masseyfeeds.co.uk

### MASSEY FEEDS

**Cranage Mills,**  
Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, CW4 8EE, 01477 536300

**Walton-le-Dale,**  
Preston, Lancashire, PR5 4JJ, 01772 206200

@masseyfeeds  
 masseyfeeds  
 massey\_feeds

**Sheffield House,**  
Longnor, Staffordshire, SK17 0PA, 01298 83234