



## NEW FEED RANGE TO MAKE BEST USE OF GRASS SILAGE

**Getting the most from forages will be essential this winter. And this is why we have launched a totally reformulated range of compound feeds to help balance silage for optimum production and margins.**

2021 was a challenging grass silage season with an unusual combination of weather and grass growth. Last winter was particularly wet which caused leaching of nitrates and sulphur and delayed fertiliser applications in the spring in many parts of the country. We then saw frosts in April and a dry start to May which, in many cases, resulted in poor nutrient uptake of any applied fertiliser. This, coupled with the extended and largely inconsistent harvesting of first cuts, had repercussions for second cut silages.

As crops are analysed we can start to understand what this means for feed values and diet formulation. Looking at the results of over 2100 first cut silages and 1170 second cuts analysed by Trouw Nutrition, combined with crops analysed ourselves, we now have a picture of the forages we will be working with this winter.

### VARIABILITY

The results highlight considerable variability, so all forages will need consistent monitoring to maximise performance. While there are some very high qualities first cuts with low NDF levels, the majority of silages are showing reduced crude protein contents combined with very high NDF levels (see table).

The averages suggest there will be consequences for the supply of rumen energy, the choice of protein supplementation and on rumen flow and intakes. The rumen will need careful balancing with fermentable carbohydrates and protein. Rumen fermentable protein will be needed, but bypass protein will also be important. We will also need to keep a close check on acid load and fibre index to maintain good rumen health.

While averages are useful for highlighting trends, regular individual analysis will be essential to understand what is in your clamps and allow us to develop the most effective diet.

Dairy rations will need to be fine-tuned and adjusted regularly as required to help ensure that rumen balance is maintained and that any forage variability is managed to maximise margin over purchased feed.



### NEW RANGE

Our new range of winter compounds and mixes has been specially formulated to complement this year's silages and help you make the best of your forages. Depending on the silage analysis, your cows will need a different balance of energy sources to drive rumen efficiency. At the same time, they will need a careful balance of proteins to satisfy the rumen bugs and drive yields. Our winter 2021 range contains different combinations of energy and protein sources to help keep the rumen in your cows healthy and effective to get the most from the silage.

Using the NutriOpt Dairy system, our Feed Specialist will be able to select the compound or mix which is the best complement for your forages.

### FORAGE DIGESTIBILITY

High NDF content can present issues for rumen throughput and intakes, so anything that improves silage digestibility could play a big role this year. This is why we are pleased to be able to supply the Vista Pre T treatment. Added directly to the forage, Vista Pre T helps break down the NDF fraction of the diet.

By creating pitting of the cellulose and hemicellulose, it helps create a much larger surface area of the NDF. This means the rumen microbe populations can digest the NDF in the diet more efficiently so it can be used more efficiently by the cow. Vista Pre T is not available in compounds or mixes but is available direct to farm.

**For more information about our winter feed range and Vista Pre T and to get your silages analysed, speak to your Feed Specialist.**



|                        |          | 1st Cut 2021 | 2nd Cut 2021 |
|------------------------|----------|--------------|--------------|
| Nutrients              | Units    | Average      | Average      |
| <b>Dry Matter</b>      | %        | 33.49        | 33.72        |
| <b>Crude Protein</b>   | % DM     | 13.20        | 13.48        |
| <b>D Value</b>         | %        | 71.50        | 69.44        |
| <b>ME</b>              | Mj/kg DM | 11.44        | 11.11        |
| <b>NDF</b>             | % DM     | 43.37        | 44.70        |
| <b>Lignin</b>          | g/kg DM  | 36.60        | 37.38        |
| Fermentation Quality   |          |              |              |
| <b>pH</b>              |          | 4.24         | 4.23         |
| <b>Sugars</b>          | % DM     | 3.05         | 1.88         |
| <b>Lactic acid</b>     | g/kg DM  | 74.40        | 71.23        |
| <b>VFA</b>             | g/kg DM  | 17.37        | 20.02        |
| <b>NH-3 of total N</b> | % DM     | 2.93         | 2.98         |



# FARMING THOUGHTS

## MASSEY FEEDS TURKEY EXCHANGE

**We're back! That was the message as Covid lockdown rules were lifted and we were able to get back at a number of agricultural shows.**

Notable successes were at Staffordshire County Show and Westmorland County Show in Cumbria, followed by the UK Dairy Day in September. It was good to see so many of you at these events and I know they were well received. We have one final show left in Derbyshire on 6th October at Brailsford Ploughing Match. Please come and visit us.

Worryingly, as of August all major suppliers have raised energy prices, with prices from October set to rise again by 12% which will have a knock-on effect on costs for all farms.

High gas prices forced CF Fertiliser to close its UK plants, resulting in a steep rise in fertiliser prices. The Government has now offered financial support to help CF restart fertiliser production to help ease the carbon dioxide shortage, which is threatening businesses in the food industry which uses the gas widely. For example, in the pig and poultry industry 80% of animals are slaughtered using CO<sub>2</sub>.

So, with the increased gas and electricity prices this winter and labour shortages out there affecting drivers in all sectors, tough times could lie ahead.

The pig industry has over 100,000 animals that should have gone to slaughter and are stranded on farms amid severe labour shortages. This has caused the bottom to fall out of the market, with all time low prices.

We launched our new range of dairy diets this month, designed to complement this winter's challenging silages. The new range also develops the Planet Range, the first dairy diet in the UK containing no palm kernel or soya. The range now includes beef, youngstock and sheep feeds.

Looks like we are all facing a challenging winter, but we are ready to help customers formulate the most cost-effective diets.



**Phil Stirk**  
Sales Director  
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**The Massey Feeds Christmas Turkey Exchange is a simple and effective system run through Facebook.**

It has been developed to allow turkey producers to easily let fellow producers know if they have spare turkeys available or if they need more birds. It allows producers to sell, swap or buy turkeys from fellow producers.

Joining the Massey Feeds Christmas Turkey Exchange Facebook group is easy. Just let us know the email address used to log into your Facebook account. We will send you an invitation by email to join the group. Accept the invitation and you will be added to the group and will be able to view and advertise birds for sale.

To advertise exchanges within the group you will need to post the following information:



- The number of birds available/required and your location
- Whether they are white or bronze
- Free Range or Barn
- Wet or dry plucked
- Whether they are needed dead or alive
- The average weight required – and whether this is live, long-legged or dressed weight

You can then correspond via the Facebook page with your fellow producers and arrange a deal.

**For more information contact Stuart Hinchly on 07435 554891 or by email at [stuart.hinchly@masseyfeeds.co.uk](mailto:stuart.hinchly@masseyfeeds.co.uk)**



**Stuart Hinchly**  
Monogastric Sales Manager  
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## RAW MATERIALS UPDATE

**Raw materials continue to remain firm as we go into the winter period.**

The UK cereal harvest has now been completed. Barley is shut away in the store and as a lot is suitable for the premium malting market, any feed barley which comes out is trading at £8 -10 below wheat. The wheat crop is larger than last year although harvest pressure hasn't really materialised, as sellers are cautious as to how much volume they can physically deliver because of the lack of haulage capacity. Wheat is around the £208 mark for the winter run into the mill.

Maize is extremely tight for old crop and is expensive for new crop for November onwards trading at £20 above wheat. Depending on what the US harvest does, this may have some pressure on it going forward.

Fibres are very strong. Palm kernel production has been affected by covid as there aren't the workers to harvest the crop at source.

Soya hulls are all stacked on the quay side in central South America, waiting for the Parana River's water level to rise which will allow full cargos to be transported. Wheatfeed is doing its own thing as the millers are bringing few offers forward due to tight stocks of top-quality milling wheat both at home and on the continent. £190/t is the offer for the winter.

Distillers could have pressure in the new year as the Vivergo ethanol plant is due to come on-stream leading to more product but will obviously draw as much wheat out of Yorkshire as possible. Soya is about to be harvested in the US and plantings are going well in Brazil. Winter soya is trading at £370/t and rape at £253/t.

We will have a better idea of where we will be for the winter during November when everything is in store and we know what stocks there actually are.



**Neil Warburton**  
Raw Material Director  
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## FINISHING LAMBS FOR THE BEST RETURNS

**Now is the time to re-assess your finishing plans to get the best returns from lambs this autumn and winter and make the most of the current strong prices we have seen in the sheep industry.**

This means focusing on growth rates to make sure lambs keep growing and that growth rates aren't allowed to tail off as grass growth declines in the late autumn. A failure to maintain growth rates affects the value of the current crop as lambs may miss the top of the market. It also affects next year's returns as any over-wintered lambs will be eating grass that should be destined for breeding ewes.

With high deadweight prices, there is an added incentive to manage lambs now to make sure they finish well. So, this means feeding them correctly to meet their requirements and ensure they do not stand still. Butchers are paying more for heavier lambs so it will pay to keep growth on track.

The expected daily liveweight gain from good quality, late autumn grass alone will range from 70-115g/day. If there is insufficient grass in terms of quality, quantity or both, then it will pay to start feeding concentrates as a supplement to grass or even consider finishing lambs on a high concentrate diet indoors to ensure they grow well.

A good quality lamb concentrate like Masseys Pro-grow or Hi-Gain, fed at 250g/head/day can be expected to increase average daily liveweight gain to 180-200g/day compared to grass alone. Supplementing grass with 500g of concentrate head/day can achieve gains of 220-240g/head/day.

In addition to ensuring lambs for market are on track, it is also important to make sure that ewe lambs (gimmers) destined for breeding are hitting growth targets. Masseys Hi-Gain lamb is an ideal supplement for gimmers as it contains a specially designed mineral pack containing chelated zinc and selplex as well as the Trouw AO-mix to ensure good feet and overall health.

Assessing grass and feed availability heading into the winter will allow you to make decisions that will not only get the best returns from the lambs you have left, but also make sure your breeding flock is not compromised in terms of grazing.



**Paul Drake**  
Beef and Sheep Commercial Manager  
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## SUSTAINABLE FEEDS FOR DAIRY HEIFERS AND BEEF

**Following the successful launch of our Planet Dairy range, the first feeds in the UK formulated to help farmers move to net zero carbon, we are continuing to lead the way with the UK's first sustainable beef and dairy heifer compounds.**

The requirement for all farms to reduce carbon footprint and move to net zero production will require changes to every aspect of how farms are managed. Feeding is no exception.

Last year we became the first UK feed compounder to launch a sustainable range, eliminating the ingredients most closely linked to environmental damage. This was a first step, but we knew the industry needed more.

Dairy heifers are a significant element of a dairy farm's carbon output and we are already seeing meat and dairy processors demanding changes to production systems. So this is why we have launched Planet feeds for beef and dairy heifers.

In the Planet feeds we have used proven alternatives with a lesser impact on the environment such as protected rapeseed, sugar beet pulp and cereals to replace ingredients with the most damaging impact such as soya meal, soya hulls, soya oil and palm kernel. We also include a specially formulated mineral pack and are sulphate-free to improve palatability and rumen function.

The range currently includes:

### PLANET GROWER

a pelleted feed for young calves with high starch levels to encourage early rumen development.

### PLANET REARING

A ration devise for growing animals, available as 16% or 18% protein. It is suitable for all breeds and can compliment a wide range of forages including grazing.

### PLANET BEEF

A high level of cereals promotes fast growth and a high quality finish. A 16% protein product, it can be fed adlib from weaning to slaughter.

The Planet Heifer and Beef range is the next step in our commitment to sustainable beef and dairy production.

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



**Richard Ford**  
Ruminant Sales Specialist  
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# KEEP HEIFERS ON TARGET THIS WINTER

**Maintaining growth rates from weaning to bulling will be essential if heifers are to calve in at around 24 months, reduce overall rearing costs and build on the investment in high growth rates in pre-weaned calves.**

A calf should triple its birthweight by 12 weeks old, so a 40kg calf needs to weigh 120kg by three months old. At 14-15 months old, when ready to serve, it should weigh 60% of cow mature bodyweight. Assuming mature cows are 750kg, the heifer needs to weigh 450kg at bulling. To achieve this it needs to grow at around 0.9kg/day. A failure to achieve this will delay service, increasing age at first calving and total rearing costs.

The objective must be to achieve this growth rate as cost effectively as possible, while also ensuring the heifer has a strong immune system. Forage plays an important role but effective supplementation will be needed to keep them on track.

Initial 2021 grass silage averages show dry matters around 35%. These silages can be fed to heifers earlier than if you have wetter, more acidic silages.

Feeding a six-month old heifer on a grass silage-based diet could save around £10/heifer/month on concentrate costs alone compared to a straw-based diet. However, it will be important to monitor intakes and growth as this year's grass silages are tending to be higher fibre which may reduce intakes.

Whatever forage is fed, a degree of concentrate supplementation will be needed to keep calves on track and ensure they receive the minerals they need. We have a large range of youngstock concentrates to complement forages and provide the best nutritional solution this winter.

## COMPLIMENTING FORAGE

Heifer rearing concentrates are traditionally higher fibre formulations. However, with this year's grass silages being relatively high fibre, the rumen will require a certain amount of 'fizz' to best utilise them and improve fibre digestion. FiMLAC Heifer 18 is the ideal concentrate for feeding alongside grass silage, as the relatively high starch and sugars will help improve fibre digestion and rumen fermentation. At 18% crude protein it will balance the protein in grass silages to ensure optimum frame growth.

While we have increased the level of starch and sugar in the formulation, we also have the option to include Carneo Boost. This is an additive including yeasts and a specific blend of essential oils, which work to increase fibre utilisation and improve the digestibility of the overall diet, improving feed conversion and weight gain.

FiMLAC Heifer also contains our FiMLAC mineral pack which supplies essential minerals in a highly available form to support health and the immune system.

With the heifers being potentially your best genetic material, the objective must be to get them in the herd as soon as possible. Feeding a diet to provide the target growth rate between weaning and bulling and monitoring growth regularly will be key to getting heifers served at the target age.

**Talk to your Feed Specialist about devising the optimum diet for your youngstock.**



**Rachael Kenneley**  
Calf and Raw Materials  
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## NEW QUALIFICATION FOR RUTH



**Congratulations to Ruth Howard, our Ruminant Feed Specialist based at Holmes Chapel who has just completed a Diploma in Ruminant nutrition at Harper Adams University College.**

The diploma covers a wide range of subjects including ruminant production, rationing and feeding systems and developments in feeds and feeding and

means Ruth is excellently placed to help customers improve efficiency of production. "As farmers face up to a range of challenges, it is essential that our team can give the technical support and nutritional advice needed to help deliver profitable and sustainable businesses," comments Managing Director Kynan Massey. "As a business we are committed to developing our team so they are best placed to help their customers."



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