Lakeland-Scottish Feeds & Services
Newsletter

# What's your 2020 Vision?

**Issue No 112** **February 2020**

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## Introduction

As we start 2020 many livestock farmers are feeling unsure about the future. The December election has at least cleared up the first stage of the Brexit debate and that should allow for some progress.

With so many pressures on farming, it looks like agriculture policy will have to take into account the need for a lower carbon footprint where possible.
The future of upland farms with reduced or without subsidies will inevitably result in a new focus on conservation, natural forestry and environmental projects which may attract financial support instead of extensive sheep farming.

The recent SEMEX conference featured attempts to predict the future of farming in the UK. Certainly everyone would like a 2020 vision!

Some predictions did look a bit off the mark, an extra 2800 litres average UK dairy cow yield by 2030 looks a bit daft to me!
That prediction would deny the fact that so many Holstein cows are being crossbred to breeds that are easier to manage at lower inputs. Many farmers have concluded that the modern black and white super cow needs too many bells and whistles to keep on track and they are just buying the extra litres.
Frankly speaking, those bells and whistles also look after health, fertility and feet to some extent and generally, when they are applied, the gross margins for the super cows are much better than your average cow.
The argument that you are just buying the extra litres tends to fall a bit flat when we look at the reduced vet, fertility, foot trimming and cull costs.
This is why, when anyone in this industry looks at feed cost per litre as a way of judging efficiency and profit they are not in the real world!

( I do hope that our politicians and supermarkets are not using margin over concentrates as a KPI!) (**K**ey **P**erformance **I**ndicator).

Using gross margin per litre as a benchmark is a better measure and much closer to the real costs incurred but true profit per litre also reflects the fixed costs.
I wonder how many times success is judged on a meaningful set of KPI's?
None of these standards reflect the best model for lowest carbon milk production at the highest profit per litre. Now **that is a real aspiration**!

To support the efficiency drive for milk production Premier Nutrition are creating a **1000Kg club!**
"Simple, and easy to remember". (Captain Jack Sparrow)!
It will be founded by around 30 farmers who will benefit from sharing experiences and being coached by the trade and academic knowledge resource to optimise output of milk solids in the firm belief that this is the most feed and profit efficient way to achieve high outputs from healthy cows with relatively low carbon emissions at the same time.
It is a worthy objective.
I think it would be a great opportunity for the younger dairy farmers to get their teeth into a great project to lay a sound foundation for the future.
Kite meantime are talking about 900Kg, I don't think the figure is particularly important, it's more about the principle that a cow that is highly productive hits all the buttons including the really important profit and carbon emissions buttons!

I appreciate that striving to achieve this high output ambition is not for everyone, indeed for most farmers it is more about just keeping everything running smoothly and trying to figure out simple ways of cutting costs to a point where the milk cheque covers all the bills.
I sympathise with this quite a lot and it begs the question of what strategy should be used if we are not going down the housed high output route?

The land hungry low yielding spring calving herds that can survive on low inputs are not very carbon efficient per litre of milk produced, but if the cow numbers are high they are able to generate reasonable profits and they keep those members of the public who like to see cows in fields on nice sunny spring days very happy! It may well be a good choice for those with the right type of cow.

The compromise of doing a great job by housing close up dry cows and high yielding early lactation cows and turning the late lactation cows out to grass may be the best fit solution for many herds.

The truth is that every farm has its own way of working but all farms have to evolve to something better. It's a pretty reliable rule for all businesses that standing still is the same as going backwards and therefore not a sensible option.

For these farmers there are great opportunities to improve things but they have to be able to see the responses to any progress they make.
Gauging what's left after the bills are paid is one measurement but we can help by setting up simple monitoring systems, in order to see if we are making progress. Challenge feeding is one great technique to improve profits. Give me a call and we can talk about the options.

There is also an obvious requirement for a more balanced information flow to the uninformed public.
They really do seem to need educating with some truths about why they should buy our food, where it comes from and the care we take to produce it.
The change in communication formats from paper to smart media is a trick we need to master fast.

To this end Lakeland-Scottish is having a major re-launch of a new format website, which is now live and constantly updating.
We are also entering the Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Linkedin worlds with some proactive news and comment updated almost daily.
We feel that we need to do this in order to present our view of our wonderful industry as conscientious and environmentally responsible, efficient food producers. People who are justly proud of the high standards of animal welfare that we strive to achieve every day as we supply our nation with great milk and meat products.
It sounds a bit like a manifesto doesn't it, but I believe it's true on 99% of farms that I visit

The industry is evolving constantly and the need to adapt using new tools is very apparent.
Some of you will know that I have been undertaking an off grid series of conversations with farmers trying to understand the reasons for not taking advantage of some of the new products and techniques that are becoming available.

I purposely stated that the exercise was not to sell any of the products or services; just to try and understand how farmers react to the deluge of exposure to all of this stuff.
The reactions that I have had to this are fascinating and frankly very re-assuring. I won't publish any of the replies I had, suffice to say that most farmers are uncertain of the future and this is the main reason for being perhaps a little over cautious.
There is one exception.
When a product is proven to be great value for money and gives a real profit response it still has to be easy to measure.
This kicks many great products into touch because if you can't see a rapid yield or milk quality response, all of the longer term benefits are ignored. Personally, I have no answer to this except to say that even in times when milk prices are low, the arguments are still valid!
It is very frustrating, and I will be making the point to some of our suppliers at Dairytech.
I think that so far my conclusion is that standing still is not a good option so it's always worth trying something new.

# Diary

Wednesday 5th February
Dairy-Tech
Stoneleigh Park
Warwickshire
CV8 2LG

Wednesday 26th February
Royal Northern Spring Show
Thainstone Agricultural Centre
Inverurie
Abredeenshire
AB51 5XZ

Saturday 14th March
UK Dairy Expo
Borderway Market
Montgomery Way
Rosehill
Carlisle
CA1 2RS

# ReaShure

## Proactively Manage Transition with Reashure

The UK Dairy Sector is increasingly recognising the importance and financial returns associated with proactively managing transition.

The implications of getting it wrong on the profitability and general wellbeing of your herd can be significant, and feeding Reashure (Rumen Protected Choline) at this time could result in a healthier herd, improved fertility and increased milk yields/components throughout the lactation.

**So, what is the problem?**

- All cows at calving will enter a period of 'negative energy balance' where the energy supply cannot meet demand

- During this 'transition' period, NEFA (free fatty acids) are mobilised from her back and taken up by the liver, and it is how she responds to this challenge that determines the success or otherwise of her transition into lactation.

- As lactation begins, choline requirements rapidly increase to ensure that these NEFA are processed and packaged in a positive way as VLDLs (Very Low Density Lipoproteins).

- However, the majority of dairy cows are deficient in choline at transition because most of dietary choline is degraded by the rumen microorganisms and her body can't make enough to meet requirements.

- This can, therefore, lead to fatty liver syndrome or even full blown ketosis, which, even at sub-acute levels, will have significant knock-on implications for the cow's health, milk yield and milk quality throughout her lactation. This will, therefore, have a significant impact on profitability.

**Why Protected Choline?**

Choline facilitates the export of fat from the liver to the mammary gland where it is used to make milk. It also supports the metabolism of NEFA to energy for use by the cow to maintain body condition.

Put simply, it enables the cow to process NEFA positively (for energy and milk), rather than negatively (ketone bodies and fat) which would result in ketosis and/or fatty liver.

Rumen protection is critical to ensure that the choline is not being degraded by the rumen and the cow receives the dose that she requires.

Reashure is a highly effective rumen protected choline. It's cutting edge rumen protection technology ensures that the cow gets exactly what she needs further down the digestive tract.

**So, how do I feed it?**

- Reashure is fed at 60g per head per day. We have made life easy by providing a simple measuring jug calibrated in single cow doses.

- Ideally 21 days pre-calving and 21 days post-calving

- If fresh calves aren't managed separately, choline should just be fed for 21 days pre-calving

- **Reashure** is backed by extensive science with **31 published trials**.

**But, it's expensive isn't it…?**

Well, no actually.

It is only fed for a very small proportion of the cow's lactation (maximum of 42 days) and recent research demonstrates that, not only does it generate a faster and more productive transition, the milk yield benefit (averaging an additional 2.2 litres/cow/day) can be sustained over the whole lactation.

**Costs**

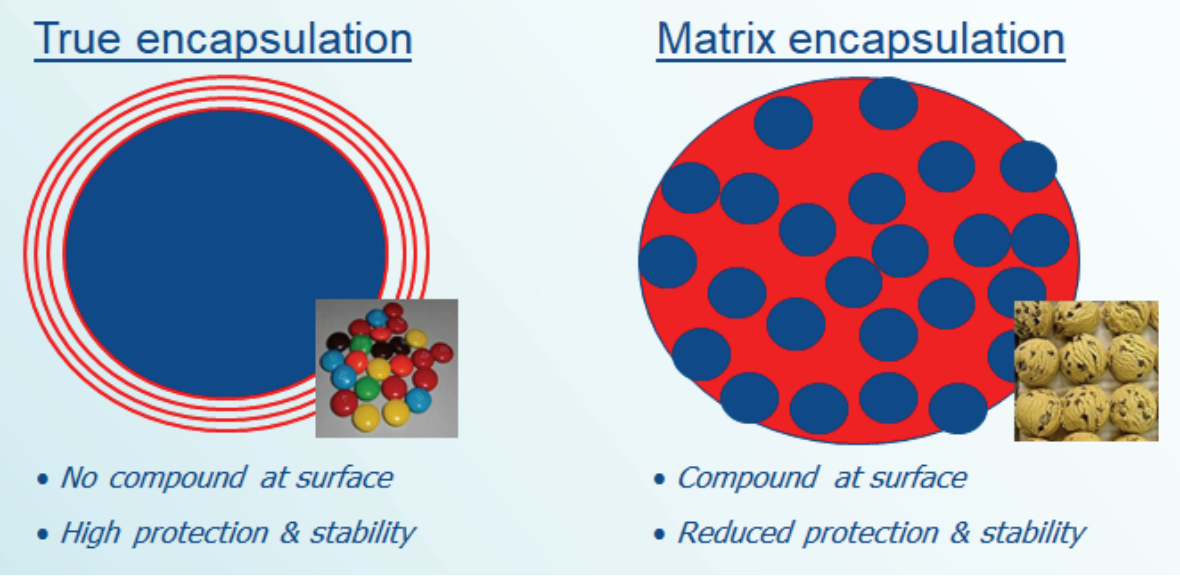
First 21 days (to calving) £9.00p

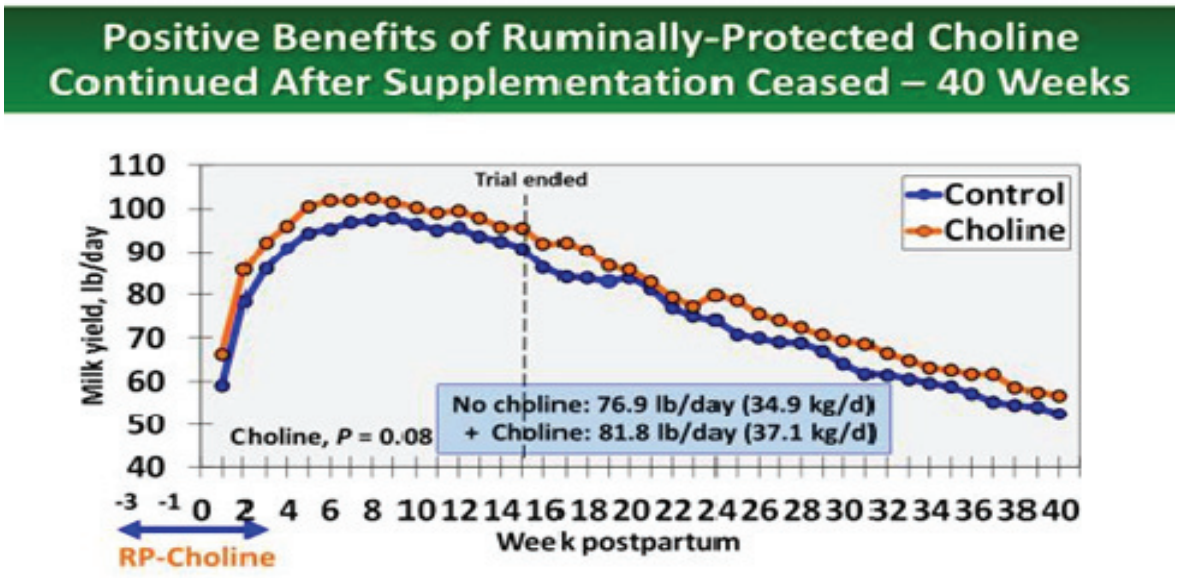
Return 60% 0f 2.2 litres for 305 days =402 litres @ 25.5p per litre = £102.66p

Full 21 days + 21 Days Fresh £18.00p

Return 100% of 2.2 litres for 305 days = 671 litres @ 25.5p per litre = £171.10p

At this return on investment coupled with the associated benefits of managing the risks attributed to ketosis and fatty liver, can you afford the financial and 'herd management' cost of not feeding it?






# F1 Evo

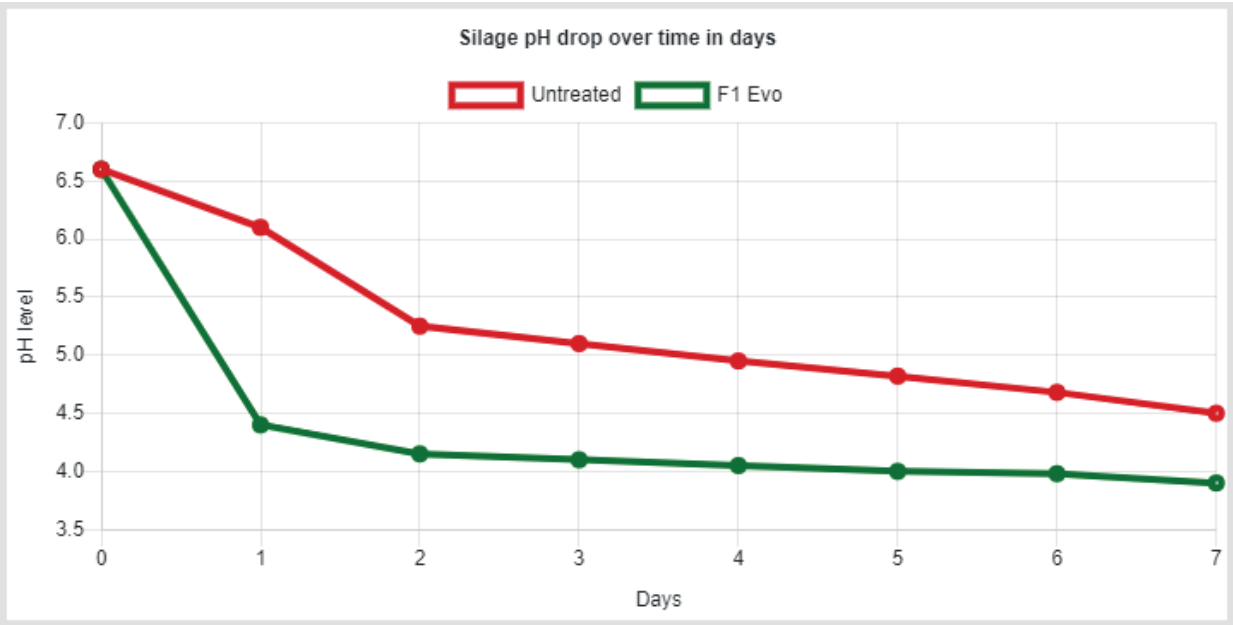
**F1 Evo** - Maximum preservation of protein quality and nutrients in your silage.

**What is F1 Evo?**

**F1 Evo** is a revolutionary biological forage conservation additive.

**"Quality home-grown forage is the key to performance and profitability".**

A fast, controlled fermentation using F1 Evo in silage leads to maximum preservation of protein quality and nutritional value. The combination of four homofermentative bacteria in F1 Evo will dominate the fermentation process in grass silage to drop the pH fast. Fast fermentation is the key to reduced competition for nutrients and inhibits spoilage organisms.



This is the fastest pH drop by any biological additive that we have ever used!

**Lowering pH levels**

Lowering pH levels quickly throughout the silage is essential - lowering the pH levels to 4.5 in under a day will prevent the growth of Listeria and Clostridia which can proliferate fast in untreated silage.

**The Key Benefits of treating silage with F1 Evo**

F1 Evo offers the following benefits for farmers who wish to increase the quality of their silage:

- Rapidly lowers silage pH level
- Maximise energy retention
- Maximise protein quality
- Inhibit spoilage organisms
- Safe and easy to use

F1 Evo contains selective strains which produce a powerful enzyme to release the potential of your grass.

- Increase sugar production as required
- Will only be triggered as required unlike conventional enzyme products
- This is highly efficient as the enzyme is only produced as required in the silage clamp.

**TPT® - True Protein Technology**

F1 Evo is formulated with TPT® to ensure that the maximum amount of natural protein is retained in the silage.

In trials 17% more true protein was preserved by F1 Evo. The increased level of true protein can reduce the cost of bought in feeds, especially high quality protein sources.

As true protein is broken down in the fermentation it becomes unbound amino acids and finally ammonia.

The increased level of ammonia reduces intakes and increases pH which in turn reduces sugar levels as energy is required to control the rumen acidity.
TPT® reduces the breakdown of true protein. This in turn, will help to maximise animal performance and reduce losses within the clamp.

The TPT® effect is to increase intakes of higher true protein silage whilst minimising losses.

F1 Evo contains variable volume application technology. This allows the product to be applied at a variable rate to suit all applicators.

Each sachet treats 50 tonnes of forage.
Add the powder to clean, cold water until completely dissolved.
Apply at a rate of 50ml to 2 litres per tonne depending on the applicator.
Use within 3 days of mixing.
Also available: F1 IceGold - Ideal for use on dry grass, wholecrop and maize.

# Minerals and Markets

At the start of 2020 most raw material costs have fallen in price, but mineral prices are highly dependent on the formulation of the specification requested and type of raw materials used within manufacture, so some products have seen price increases.
African-Swine-Fever outbreaks have had significant effects on the feed market across the globe and continue to have a major impact on feed costs for agriculture.
Some 40% of Chinese pigs (hundreds of millions of animals) have now been lost. The average Chinese citizen consumes circa 30kg of pork/year. Pork prices have risen in UK butchers and supermarkets.

The fallout from African-Swine-Fever has meant that some key mineral additives have fallen in price as demand has reduced across the Asian continent with less livestock to feed. There have also been reported outbreaks of African-Swine-Fever in South Korea, Philippines, South Africa, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Hungary, Zimbabwe, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Myanmar, Serbia, Moldova, Bulgaria, and Slovakia. The effects can be disastrous for producers.

Biotin has risen in price for the 1st time in many months since record lows in autumn 2019 but still remains very good value to use in high specification ruminant minerals to help support foot health. We have also seen the first movements upwards in price for vitamins such as A, D3 and vitamin E for the 1st time in many months. But some decreases in phosphorus and magnesium sources have helped to offset the increases.

**It will be well worth while stocking up on most hi spec minerals featuring biotin and decent levels of vitamin E at the end of March**

**Feed Phosphates**
Both dicalcium phosphate and monocalcium phosphate prices have been slowly falling throughout the last 3 months, due to a combination of currency exchange rates but the price for phosphoric acid (a key material for the manufacture of feed phosphates) has fallen just recently with supply being better than the last Qtr. across the EU.
Phosphorus remains relatively "good value" though when reviewing phosphorus requirements, be careful of shortage in late lactation cows and dry cows. High maize silage-based diets will contain a high level of background phosphorus when RMs such as soya and rape meal are included in the diet.

**Magnesium**
The prices of magnesium based raw materials have also fallen slightly slightly going into Qtr1 2020. Magnesium Chloride prices have increased at the same time. It will probably be better to use Magnesium Oxide (Calcined Magnesite) in most spring turn out diets as a precaution against Grass Staggers.
Magnesium Chloride will remain the best choice for close up dry cows due to its negative DCAD value
Beware of high potash/potassium (K) levels (slurry/fertiliser) within winter grass silage diets. This may impact primarily on dry cows in terms of lower magnesium absorption as the cow approaches calving. Excess potassium will cause milk fever if not addressed correctly.
Always remember to remove all magnesium from intensive bull beef and intensive lamb feeding systems.
Keynote – potassium levels are reporting at a 10 year high currently within this season grass silage samples.

**Feed Grade Urea**
Prices remain weak currently.

Feed grade urea is commonly used in many mineralised protein concentrate products, and as a cost-effective source of RDP protein in TMR diets containing maize silage and straw.
Grass silage is generally a good source of RDP so low demand on grass silage-based feeding systems, but demand will remain high in maize silage/whole crop fed systems.
There is also a good demand for Feed grade urea within housed intensive beef systems.
Feed grade urea is a cost-effective source of RDP in diets. Currently well priced per % of protein compared to other protein sources offering good value to livestock producers.

**Limestone Flour**
A good source of calcium for lactating dairy cows. Do not feed to close up dry cows. Helps promote skeletal development in youngstock feeding systems. Helps promote DLWG on intensive bull beef systems.
Most maize silage/straw/cereal based diets are short of calcium.
Prices are currently stable.

**Ammonium Chloride**
Used primarily in intensive lamb and intensive beef minerals to help prevent urinary calculi. Also, commonly used in anionic salt based DCAB dry cow mineral supplements where a partial DCAB approach is required to optimise performance post calving.
Prices can vary but the current market is slowly dropping in price.

**Trace Elements and Vitamins**
The trace element market remains quiet with very little volatility apart from iodine sources which have risen considerably in price.
We have seen some slight price weakening on copper sources in recent weeks.
Other trace elements show very little change.

Vitamin RM Report
**Vitamin A**
Vitamin A has just experienced a rise in price in recent weeks. Unplanned shutdowns and less output from Chinese producers allowing a controlled release into the market of vitamin A has enabled manufacturers/traders to somewhat control price and prevent a fall in prices to 3rd tier manufacturers.

**Vitamin D3**
The current shut down in China will only serve to increase the prices of certain vtamins.
The fact that they are very important to animal health means that we need to be very careful to ensure that saving a few pence by cutting back is not costing a great deal through reduced health. Like most things short to medium term deficiencies are not apparent until it is too late.
Look to review D3 levels in housed dairy cow and dry cow products. Many diets are still too low in D3 levels and only just meet NRC requirements when checked.

**Vitamin E**
Vitamin E prices are rising due to the Chinese Corona virus effects on exports.
The truth is that prices have been below the cost of production for months.
There is a marked upward trend in price going into the next Qtr. Maize silage, straw, cereals and whole crop forages have a very poor supply of chlorophyll and vitamin E.
Keynote - Maize/whole crop/straw/ treated cereal based diets will require additional vitamin E supplementation over and above grass-based feeding systems. Look to review vitamin E levels in housed winter-feeding systems.

**Biotin**
Biotin prices have risen very fast recently so we would repeat that it is worth stocking up before the market gets even stronger.
Dairy & dry cow minerals that are fortified with biotin as part of a nutritional approach to support cows' feet during housing. It is well documented
that biotin is an effective vitamin nutrient in helping cows' feet remain fit and strong when housed on concrete all winter. This is a good, solid and proven science.
Keynote – The full technical requirement for adult dairy cows fed biotin is 20mgs/cow/day supplied from the feed rate of the mineral fed.

At the TMS conference in Manchester on November10th 2016, **Prof John Huxley** (Nottingham University) said **"A white line lesion or a sole ulcer is a cull cow"!** Concrete and poor condition, (thin cows) are the key factors which bring about the initial damage which is based on excessive wear and tear and unforgiving hard surfaces.

**F 1 Foot bath.**
This product has some great reports after quietly launching an American style formulation based on Copper Sulphate Zinc Sulphate and Citric Acid.
Citric acid is just as effective as formalin at killing surface bacteria, indeed lemon juice (rich in citric acid), is used in many countries as a quick way of cleaning around wounds and areas of skin infection.
The product includes other antibacterial agents as well as a small amount of salt to reduce the initial stinging effect of the acid salts on foot wounds.
F 1 Foot bath comes in 20Kg bags and should be mixed in to 200 litres of water to provide the right concentrations of copper and acid.

We suggest that if there is a good regular foot inspection, trimming and foot bathing routine F 1 Foot Bath will prove to be a valuable cog in the wheel of the foot management system.

If Digital Dermatitis is a particular problem the use of the F 1 Super Hoof mineral supplement will boost the animal's immune defence and greatly help the reduction in symptoms. Ask us at **AgriScot**

# Feed Market Review

The markets are currently very mixed in the UK

- **Cereals.** Prices for home grown feed cereals have firmed since the autumn and futures are slowly firming due to the poor autumn weather and the reduced acreage of winter cerals sown.
  The wet harvest conditions resulted in a large quantity of cereals being rejected for the human food market. This extra volume has added helped to keep spot prices low but it is only the extra volumes in store due to reduced exports that is helping to keep the price where it is.
  We are advising all of our clients to take the maximum advantage of this and feature maximum amounts of home-grown cereal in all winter rations for livestock, even if it means having to use a toxin binder.
- **Soya and other proteins.** The world soya crops are all very good this year which means that there is not so much pressure on stocks. This is a complex market influenced significantly by what the Chinese do. They are growing more of their own soya and now have much fewer pigs to feed so they need to import less.
  Donald Trump's export tariffs are having some effect on Chinese imports too. The Brazilan harvest and export is off to a slow start this year but they have a huge crop so it is a fair bet that world prices are not likely to get much stronger.
  As usual it's down to brokers, weather reports, currency exchange rates, and that is a real box of frogs!

UK rape supply is good this year on the back of a great crop, The price will follow imported rape seed meal which is primarily affected by the exchange rates and the soya price.

- **Fats and Fat supplements**. Prices are now rising fast and are already typically over £100 per tonne more than they were in September.
  More palm oil is being used as biofuel in the far eastern countries that grow the crop. This is controversial and whilst we only use ethically sourced palm from long established plantations, that is not going to stop companies like Arla from advising that we should start to think about not using palm based fat supplements

- **F1 Superfat**
- We have some very well bought tonnage to offer for delivery in the next two months.
  **1st come 1st served**

- **Molasses. ED & F Man**. Prices increased on Monday October 1st. Cane molasses price went up by £25 per tonne last year and whilst E D & F Man only put the price up by a token amount in May 2019 they were hoping that the world prices would come back in time for the autumn, instead the prices went up carried by a weaker £pound sterling and a higher demand for molasses within the producing countries. All existing molasses blends increased in price significantly as a result of this.

- **F 1 Viking** is our response to this development in the molasses market (see back page)

- **Sugar Beet Pulp.** They have a large crop but they also have two large Anaerobic digesters, so they can shift all of the pressed pulp into these if they need to. This means that their prices are unlikely to drop because the crop is worth more money as a raw material in the AD market than it is in the animal feed market. Also harvest has been set back by the weather. The crop has continued to grow but it is still hard to harvest when you are working in fields that would be better growing rice!
- **First offer** Trident have now closed their first offer which was launched at £45 per tonne lower than last year.
- **Soya hulls** are around £169 ex-port trade which is hovering around £184 on farm.
- **Pea / Bean Meal**
  Harvest has seen a good crop the price released by Glasson Grain is currently the best value of any straight feed on the market. Rest assured it is excellent value for money.

**PS**

We have just been offered a new and unique probiotic additive designed for calves that has a direct effect against Clostridia, Salmonella, Staphlycoccus and Streptococcus.
The clinical trials show very significant exclusion of these pathogens.

We are currently in discussion to see if we can arrange for this product to be added to calf creeps. It is also approved and licensed for organic use.
The early indications are that Lakeland-Scottish and TBA will have exclusivity for this product, so please watch this space and we will keep you informed.

For more information on any of the items mentioned in this newsletter please get in touch with Jerry or Richard.
Our phone numbers are always available during normal working hours.
You can also email Jerry or visit the Lakeland-Scottish website.
**Telephone 01768 899513 Fax 01768 892744 Mobile 07711 034141**
**Email jerry@lakelandscottish.co.uk website www.lakelandscottish.co.uk**

# VIKING MOLASSES

Lean, efficient & reliable
Built for purpose

Lakeland-Scottish
Feeds & Services