



“One man’s meat is another man’s poison”

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Introduction

Feed Cost Comparison Spread Sheet

This may be of interest to most of you.

We currently have a spread sheet which has been developed over the last twenty years, to compare the relative value for money of different straight feeds proteins cereals, by-products, moist feeds, liquid feeds and fats.

You simply put in the current prices and the spread sheet does the rest.

With the rise in feed prices being underpinned by a relatively weak pound and a big increase in feed commodity sales to China and “un-declared destinations”, the need to check relative values is more important. The next dilemma is that with a dwindling choice of options the availability of certain feeds is difficult.

The soya crop is huge, and the world price was dropping but this trade with the Far East has removed the concerns about over supply.

If you would like to check feed cost values for energy, protein and in some cases DUP lysine and methionine. Just get in touch (details on back page).

Recently a farmer in South West Scotland said to me that he liked to read these “Newsletters”, but he also said that much of the content was commercial. I suppose that this is true, although it never really occurred to me that I was just constructing a sales pitch! No, it’s supposed to be useful!

Minerals

We have just tendered for the autumn mineral business.

Each year we go through this process. The idea is to be able to supply you with fixed formulated mineral supplements at the most competitive rate. We also look at administration, delivery lead times and quality, we also value technical support. The result is that we are very confident that you would be just about unable to buy better on a broad range of products from **F1 no compromise**, through to **Target lower cost**, and many **bespoke** supplements than through Lakeland-Scottish.

Organic Farmers Minerals

Firstly, just a little comment about organic minerals for organic farmers.

I think that it is probably time for the Soil Association and the OF & G to review their position on protected trace elements.

There is growing concern about farmland and environmental pollution of heavy metals like Copper, Manganese, Zinc, Selenium and Cobalt which mostly finish up in the soil, rivers and worse, the livestock and crops.

All of these minerals have a part to play in maintaining health of the ruminant.

The problem is that most of the inorganic mineral ores, from which our supplements are derived are not particularly soluble and are responsible for extra deposits in the soil. These will, in many cases, build up over time and interfere with the natural balance of soil status.

I guess it means that it is time to review the use of certain chelated minerals which have much greater solubility and a vastly lower environmental footprint.

The only thing that lets them down is that the production methods are not that environmentally friendly.

The result seems to be a stalemate unless the vet hands out a prescription for an inclusion to aid animal health and then you can get a derogation to feed some of the chelates and vitamins.

“One man’s meat is another man’s poison”!

A farmer out in Nova-Scotia recently posted on Twitter, that he felt that it was very important to recognise the genetic potential of the animals that we farm and try and focus on managing them to achieve this production capability.

If we follow this train of thought the only system to follow is a high input/high output system. I think that there are many farmers who would be wary of following this track when milk prices are so low.

The “New Zealand” grazers and most of the semi grazing models would struggle with this idea.

There are arguments about the right cows for the system and the influence of milk price and dairy policies to consider. The answer is to go with the system that works best for you.

The key, and some would say vital, question is “how should we find the best production cost compromise”? A good place to start is a ration review, and we can help with that.

To further develop this idea, I had a conversation today about calf rearing with a very well qualified and experienced calf rearer. She said that the first thing that we should look at is how successful the current calf rearing personnel are, because you can’t underestimate the value of great stockmanship and routine by people who are aware of the slightest change in any calf at any moment of time.

These people can be incredibly successful in less than ideal housing systems because they are on top of the job!

The best housing and feeding systems are no guarantee of great results. That would make me think twice before investing in new systems for livestock in general.

So, what’s your point Jerry?

I think that its important to hi-light the many different approaches to getting the best out of our animals with the science and products we have at our disposal.

I also believe that this proves that what is right for some farmers will not be right for others.

That means that it is so important to have the conversations and do the research before talking about any particular technique or product and implementing any changes.

The sales representative that arrives on your farm and makes a pitch without trying to find out if its appropriate first is not doing you any favours.

I have seen too much of this recently so I thought I would get it off my chest in this missive just to see if any of you feel that you are coming up against the selling for selling's sake approach.

Herbal Oils

Oregano is a herb that most of us are familiar with, but I did not know (until a few weeks ago) that the variety that is used to great benefit as an immunity boosting treatment, comes from a leaf that contains so much of the active oil that it would make your tongue go completely numb if you chewed just one leaf.

Anpario are building a compelling body of trial evidence to show how the natural oils extracted from their particular variety of oregano has multiple benefits for calves, pigs and poultry.

This work should not be overlooked.

The Reading university work in particular shows a highly significant Cryptosporidia spore reduction but there is much more to it than that!

Marine Fish Oil

“Essential” fatty acids.

That word “Essential” says it all really!

The richest source of the two essential Fatty Acids is marine fish oil, which might explain why we all thought that fish meal was unrivalled source of protein with a bit of the “X” factor before it was banned.

Well the oil is not banned, and it is still utterly brilliant at supplying EPA & DHA!

I have included a great graphic from Anpario which sums up the role of essential fatty acids quite clearly.

Maize silage.

Okay its an advert, **F1 Ice Gold** is a great additive and its very cost effective. There is lots of research and testimony on just how good this product is so if you haven't booked it yet now is a great time.

Liver function

I was going to include a big section on how important it is to use the transition period from the last three weeks before calving (or longer) to make sure that the liver is in tip top condition for the next lactation. We know that this is also highly effective for sheep!

It is now universally accepted that there is a great production and fertility dividend from this process. Ewes also are much less likely to suffer from severe twin lamb disease if the liver is working at peak efficiency.

The article is quite a large one, you can see it on our website. lakescot.co.uk/reashure it's also featured in the **F1 Dairy Blueprint** (lakescot.co.uk/f1-dairy-blueprint).

The conclusion is that it **is** a good idea to feed **Reashure** at 60 grams for the close-up period (30 grams for sheep) and up to 21 days after calving if you can, although that bit is not as vital.



“Britannia” Re-Launch

Why do we need to re-launch Britannia?

It's been two years since the original ECM trials were completed.

Lakeland-Scottish Feeds and Services ran 9 of the trials and we felt at the time that we had enabled a massive improvement in the way baby calves were able to thrive.

Two years on and we can look at the consequences of those early feeding trials since many of the heifer calves are only now joining the herd.

The original trial calves from Boxmere in the Netherlands have now completed their second lactations and are well into their third. There were two matched groups of calves, one fed ECM and the other a traditional Trouw 23% CP 18% Oil product.

The differences in performance are profound they will be published in mid-October so we will issue another newsletter shortly after that!

This is why we felt that we should highlight the value of Britannia and encourage everyone who is not using it to have another look at it. We also recognised that we needed a wider range of products because (like I said in the introduction) it may not be the choice for all farmers.

I felt that the calf rearers that were already achieving great results before they tried Britannia were telling me that they were seeing better more lively calves that were growing faster right from the start. That early growth is the best foundation that you can give to a calf!

The calf rearers that felt that they had some problems with their existing rearing systems also felt that the calves were better but sometimes the problems really were not down to the calf milk replacer (CMR) and would have probably been worse if a lesser product had been fed.

There are now four products in the range:-

Britannia ECM + Patriot performance pack	50% Skim	Blue Bag
Britannia 30 + Patriot performance pack	30% Skim	Red Bag
Britannia Whey + Patriot performance pack	0 % Skim	White Bag
Synchro Red + Patriot performance pack	40% Skim	Red Bag

We now also have an **organic** milk replacer “Lactorganic – 26 – 16”.

Lactorganic is a **60% skim milk powder** product and although the protein is much higher than the fat content, we are seeing good results.

We recommend that this product is best fed to calves that have had plenty of colostrum and are housed in good clean units with great ventilation and drainage and regular routines and inspections.

Like most systems, the success of the rearing program always relies on attention to detail.

It is essential in my view; that if a high protein CMR is to give good results, all of the right protocols must be in place.

Calf rearing starts with a good feed of colostrum. Colostrum quality is very important. Its specific gravity should be measured using a Brix Refractometer or a Colostrometer. (This tells us how rich the colostrum is). The target density should be 75mg per ml of IgG

Currently the recommendation is to feed 4 to 6 litres of Colostrum in the first 6 hours after birth. At least 3 litres in the first 2 hours!

This is generally well understood but the degree of bacterial proliferation in stored colostrum means that it should ideally be fed as fresh as possible.

Of course, feeding colostrum in the first 6 hours of life is vital, but for organic stock the attention to detail is vital to a successful rearing program (also true for non-organic calves)

See (lakescot.co.uk/F1-dairy-blueprint) and look for the **Birth to Calving Blueprint** for more information.

Standard milk has more fat than protein which is a great reason to use standard **Britannia** on conventional units. Because we can't produce this product organically (yet) we have to be super careful about how **Lactorganic** is used so it is essential to stick to the right protocols.

Lactorganic is fully fortified and contains a biological gut stability treatment.

A constant formulation will; unlike milk, (Which varies from day to day) give the calf a stable platform from which it can flourish.

I am keen to get involved with anyone who wants to try our conventional Britannia or any of the other standard products. Initially we should look at colostrum management since it is the first and fundamental drink that will determine how well the calf is set up to deal with the challenges that it will face.

I have a Brix refractometer in the car so we can see if the colostrum is up to the job and we can also evaluate whole milk variance for those farmers who want to feed "pasteurised milk". To this end we will be making available a new calf pack which (for a small charge contains a Brix refractometer, a jug, a whisk, a weigh-band and a few other bits and pieces! It's much better if you use your own refractometer because any delay is not really an option!

Britannia really is **very** different to the many look-alike products that were released after we brought it to the marketplace. Many of these product were of course cheaper and farmers have been tempted to use them but, like most things that difference in price will be more than made up for by both the long and short term benefits provided by the unique nature of Britannia and here is why:-

The Key Features of Britannia

Britannia Energized Milk Replacer features many innovations to separate it from other calf milk replacers:

- New formula is closer to natural whole milk
- High energy levels
- Low osmolality (salt concentration)
- Unique homogenised skim process for instant mixing and solubility
- Includes the exclusive 'Patriot' Performance Pack
- Patriot includes a live yeast culture
- Patriot includes a MOS (mannan oligosaccharide)
- Available in 25Kg bags as a dry powder
- Easily mixed with a bucket and whisk or milk mixer



The Benefits of Feeding Britannia

Feeding Britannia to calves in their very early life yields many benefits:

- Osmolality of 350 mOsm/Kg is close to natural milk's 330 mOsm/Kg
- Lower osmolality means better feed efficiency and less scour and abomasal bloat instances
- More metabolisable energy means calves have more energy and a healthier appearance
- The included MOS binds to pathogens in the gut, neutralising detrimental bacteria
- Live Yeast scavenges oxygen in the gut, allowing beneficial microflora to thrive
- More energy and healthier gut mean better early life development
- Early life gene sequencing upscaling to improve adult animal potential
- Higher ADG (average daily gain) rates and mammary tissue development means higher yields in later life

These features and benefits are no idle boast and have all been substantiated by customer experience and trial data.

No other companies have the exact technology used to produce this product included in their calf milk replacers. This means that the copy-cat products may have similar declarations, but they are most definitely not the same!!

Investment in the calf at this stage is to some extent an act of faith because the payback will not occur until the heifer calves or the bull is sold.

There is some short-term payback however; lower disease and less scour incidence will be more than enough recompense on many units to justify the investment.

I will qualify that statement by re-iterating the need for the management factors outside the realm of nutrition to be good in all respects.



Oregano vs Oregano

Herbal medicines were in use for millennia before antibiotics pushed the popularity of the herbalist approach back into the realms of relative obscurity as mainstream medicine.

The herbal approach to treating many conditions in animal husbandry has continued in the Far East, and now, the populations in the west are seeing reduced effectiveness in antibiotic use there is a resurgence of interest in the benefits of using certain plant extracts.

We know that plant oils have very specific profiles of many different types of individual oils and it is this that allows us to select plants for their individual extracts and the benefits that these can offer in improving both human and animal health,

I also believe that there is some instinctive reason why animals will search out certain plants. Have you ever wondered why dogs want to eat grass or steal berries from certain plants and not others?

As I said in the introduction, Oregano is an herb that most of us are familiar with but there is more than just one variety.

The one that Anpario are using has been carefully selected for its concentration of oils. We are familiar with the aroma and taste properties of Oregano but this variety is super concentrated and has to be used in much smaller amounts.

The 4 paragraphs below are based on an excerpt from a DSM publication by [Dr. Jiri Broz](#), [Dr. Christophe Paulus](#) published on September 04 2018
(Sorry, if it's a bit long winded)!

Eubiotics: Alternative products for replacement of AGP (Antibiotic Growth Promotors)

Currently several approved feed additives might be used as effective alternatives for replacement of AGP. It would be helpful to approach this topic from a scientific point of view, taking into account their principal mode of action.

There is currently no doubt that the efficacy of Eubiotics is mainly based on antimicrobial effects and their ability to influence and partly modify the composition and overall concentration of intestinal microflora.

Taking this into consideration, we can see how various new and some traditional feed additives claim to affect the composition or activity of intestinal microbiota. These include **organic acids, probiotics, prebiotics, essential oil compounds, and Zn and Cu compounds.**

In recent years, some of those have been described by the general term 'Eubiotics', which is related to the Greek term 'Eubiosis', referring to an optimal balance of microflora in the gastrointestinal tract.

The main purpose of using such eubiotics is to maintain the intestinal eubiosis, which will result in an improved health status and performance in farm animals.

Research has shown that oregano can be used to great benefit as an immunity boosting treatment but there is evidence to show that it will reduce Cryptosporidia spore shedding by around 60%!
(See Reading University Trial results below)

This would indicate that over a series of batches of calves followed by routine cleaning of pens and equipment, the use of "Orego-Stim" will reduce viable spores to a minimum effectively eliminating any significant challenge provided cleaning routines are maintained.

The monogastric nature of the baby calf also means that it is suitable to use whilst its rumen has not developed. There are other benefits to using **Orego-Stim**, one is improvement of appetite and *that* property has multiple benefits. (see below).

THE EFFECT OF OREGO-STIM® ON CRYPTOSPORIDIA IN CALVES

SUMMARY

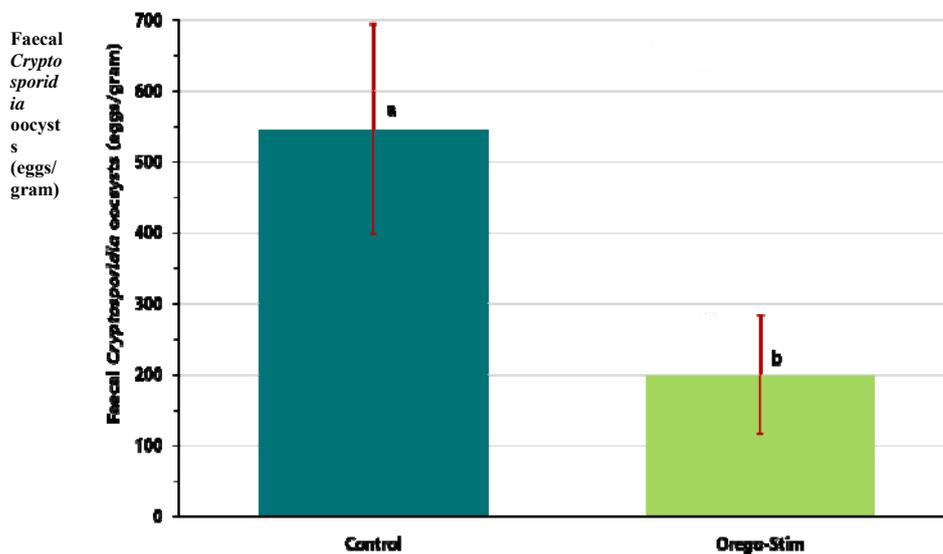
- ✓ *Cryptosporidia* is the major cause of calf scour (57% of cases) in early life with significant cost to the dairy industry (£32-£154/calf (Gunn, 1997)).
- ✓ Orego-Stim® Liquid, when included in milk at 10ml per calf per day for 10 days, significantly reduced *Cryptosporidia* shedding in dairy calves.

BACKGROUND

- ✓ *Cryptosporidia* is a major cause of calf diarrhoea (scour) causing long term damage to the gut lining, depressed nutrient absorption, poor growth performance and can ultimately prove fatal, (Thomson, 2017).
- ✓ Peak shedding of oocysts is in the first 2-3 weeks of life, so early intervention to prevent this significant protozoan from multiplying is essential.
- ✓ Orego-Stim® is a high quality phytogetic eubiotic containing 100% natural oregano oil.

TRIAL DESIGN

A pilot study was carried out at the University of Reading in the UK. 10 male Holstein dairy calves were assigned to one of two treatments at 2 days of age; Control with no supplements in the milk, Orego-Stim with 10ml/calf/day of Orego-Stim® Liquid added to the milk. The milk used was unsaleable, waste milk from the University dairy herd. Orego-Stim® was included in both the morning and evening feeding (5ml in 2.5 litres milk) for the first 10 days only. All calves then received the same milk and concentrates until weaning at day 60. Calves were individually housed until 21 days of age then housed together in a straw pen until the end of the trial at day 78. Faecal samples were taken on days 0, 3, 7, 10, 14, 21, 56 and 70 for analysis of *Cryptosporidia* shedding.



(a,b superscripts denote differences ($p < 0.02$)).

Fig 1. Effect of Orego-Stim® on *Cryptosporidia* shedding in dairy calves. (Adapted from Ray *et al.*, 2019, unpublished).

RESULTS

- ✓ *Cryptosporidia* was only detected in faeces between days 3 – 21.
- ✓ Calves offered 10ml Orego-Stim® Liquid had lower counts of *Cryptosporidia* in faeces ($p = 0.02$).
- ✓ Calves offered 10ml Orego-Stim® Liquid numerically gained more weight in the first 10 days (597g/d vs 411g/d; $p = 0.11$).
- ✓ Orego-Stim® Liquid was shown to have a significant benefit in reducing *Cryptosporidia* shedding in dairy calves offered waste milk.

ENHANCED GROWTH OF CALVES FED OREGO-STIM®

SUMMARY

- ✓ Orego-Stim® Liquid, when provided at a dose of 2ml/calf/day, improved growth performance of dairy calves by 2kg at day 56 (weaning) and 2.9kg by 70 days of age.
- ✓ This could result in an additional 21-31kg of milk in the first lactation, giving a ROI of 3:1.

BACKGROUND

- ✓ Orego-Stim® is a high quality phytogetic eubiotic containing 100% natural oregano oil.
- ✓ Heavier calves at weaning, and those with a higher average daily gain (ADG) from birth to weaning, have demonstrated a higher milk production during their first lactations (Chester-Jones *et al.*, 2017).
- ✓ Greater ADG and bodyweight are associated with better fertility in heifers. (Brickell *et al.*, 2009).

TRIAL DESIGN

An independent trial was carried out at the AgriFood and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) in Northern Ireland, to assess the efficacy of Orego-Stim[®] Liquid on calf growth and health. 70 Holstein-Friesian dairy calves were assigned to one of two treatments from birth until 70 days of age. Treatments were; Control- no additives; Orego-Stim[®] - 2ml/calf/day of Orego-Stim[®] Liquid. Groups were balanced for gender and birth weight. All calves were provided sufficient colostrum to ensure adequate transfer of immunity (IgG) from dam to calf. From 5 days of age, calves were housed in straw pens and offered reconstituted milk replacer at 150g/litre and fed up to 6 litres per day via automatic milk feeders until day 35. Allocation was then stepped down until weaning at 56 days of age. Calf starter feed was available *ad libitum* throughout, with automatic weigh scales at these feeders, allowing multiple daily weights for each calf to be measured. Any incidence of scour or pneumonia was recorded daily.

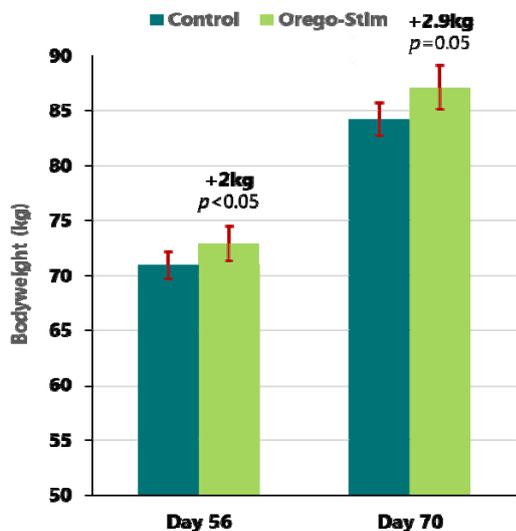


Fig.1 Effect of Orego-Stim on the weight of dairy calves (adapted from Craig *et al.*, 2019, unpublished).

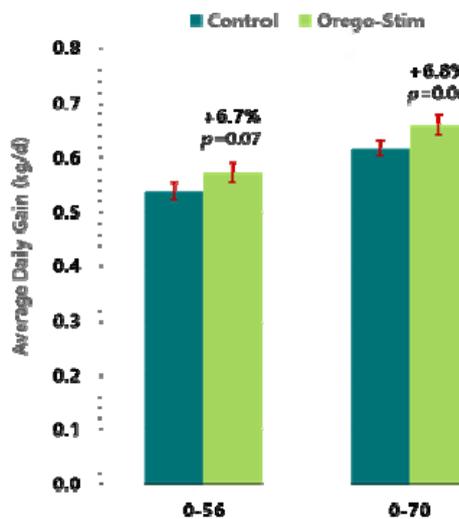


Fig. 2 Effect of Orego-Stim on the ADG of dairy calves (adapted from Craig *et al.*, 2019, unpublished).

RESULTS

- ✓ Calves offered Orego-Stim[®] Liquid were 2kg heavier at weaning (56 days of age; $p<0.05$) and 2.9kg heavier at 70 days of age ($p=0.05$) (Fig 1).
- ✓ Calves offered Orego-Stim[®] Liquid had a 6.8% greater ADG than control calves ($p=0.06$) (Fig 2).
- ✓ There was no scour in any calf and 4 calves exhibiting signs of pneumonia, (in the Control group only).
- ✓ Orego-Stim[®] Liquid is an effective phyto-genic eubiotic to help support growth rates in dairy calves both pre and post-weaning. This may lead to increased milk yields in the first lactation, offering a potential ROI of 3:1.



“Essential” fatty acids

Just so we are clear.

Oils and fats are made up of a collection of fatty acids.

They are just different amounts of different fatty acids collected together in one oil or fat.

It's why palm oil is different to say olive oil.

All of these fatty acids can be assimilated by the animal apart from just two.

EPA and DHA are “essential” because the only way the animal can get them is by consuming them!

I guess that over the years the different suppliers to the ruminant sector have waxed lyrical about how wonderful their formulations of blended oils can be when it comes to supplying the ruminant with omega threes, sixes, and nines and CLA, EPA, DHA, DPA, etc etc with bells and whistles added for good measure.

The truth is that fat metabolism is a complex biochemical process and the requirement of oils and fats depends on what you are trying to achieve.

EPA and DHA are both important because they effectively put a base in the extent to which an animal can perform because once the supply is used up something will start to suffer.

DPA is an intermediary fatty acid between EPA & DHA which has been linked to heart attacks in humans, it also has similar benefits to EPA & DHA although the evidence is currently very limited.

Initially the deficit will hardly be noticed in terms of performance but gradually factors like fertility, production, immune responses etc will all start to niggle.

The good news is that it only takes small amounts of rich sources of essential fatty acids like fish oil (not banned) to make a big difference.

We have been working with marine fish oil (the richest source) for many years and we understand just how great this source is at getting results.

Of course, there are lots of fertility trials, health and production trials to support this product (we sell **Optomega Plus** (because it's a marine fish oil-based product) and we know that it is up to the job.

Even in times like these when the milk price is low, we know that there is a great economic return on the investment.

There are many trials showing improvements in fertility, immunity and yield. But I thought that the one showing how it also improves milk quality was interesting and just adds to the appeal of **Optomega Plus**.

The graphic on page 12 was too large to print portrait style so we have put it in a landscape format.

ENHANCED MILK QUALITY IN HIGH YIELDING DAIRY COWS USING OPTOMEGA PLUS

SUMMARY

- ✓ High levels of saturated fats in human diets are considered unhealthy.
- ✓ Increasing the amount of unsaturated fats, especially omega-3 and CLA fats, has been shown to improve health outcomes in humans.
- ✓ Optomega Plus, included in dairy cow rations, can increase the proportion of omega-3 and CLA fats in milk.

BACKGROUND

- ✓ Dairy products have been widely criticised for being a source of “unhealthy” saturated fats in human diets, leading to increases in health problems, such as cardiovascular disease.
- ✓ Healthy fats, such as conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) and omega-3 fats such as linolenic acid (ALA), eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosaheptaenoic acid (DHA) have been shown to improve health outcomes in humans.
- ✓ Optomega Plus is a source of EPA & DHA. Feeding Optomega Plus to dairy cows may help to increase the levels of these good fats in milk and thus the human diet.

TRIAL DESIGN

Anpario conducted a trial with the university of California Davis to assess the efficacy of Optomega Plus, a source of EPA & DHA, on dairy cow fertility and milk production on a commercial dairy herd in California. 300 multiparous lactating dairy cows were assigned to one of two treatments: the basal TMR (Control) and the same diet including 0.5% Optomega Plus on a dry matter basis. Milk yields and quality were measured monthly over 5 months with milk fatty acids measured in months 2 and 4. The trial lasted until 150 days in milk. Dry matter intake was unaffected by treatment at 30kg/day and milk yields were >50kg/cow/day.

Table 1. The effect of Optomega Plus on Key Components of the Milk Fatty Acid Profile

Component	Unit	Control	Optomega Plus	Significance
CLA	g/100g	0.39	0.62	<0.01
EPA	g/100g	0.029	0.037	<0.01
DHA	g/100g	0.000	0.031	<0.001
n6:n3		8.60	7.77	<0.01
saturated:unsaturated		2.04	1.79	<0.01
HPI*		0.45	0.49	<0.05

*HPI – Health-Promoting Index adapted from Chen *et al.*, 2004

RESULTS

- ✓ Including Optomega Plus in dairy rations increased the beneficial fatty acids in the milk.
- ✓ Optomega Plus also reduced the n6:n3 and the saturated:unsaturated fats ratios.
- ✓ Overall, the “Health-Promoting Index” of the milk was improved.

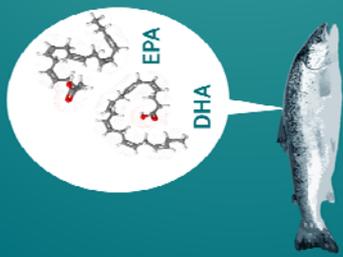
The Effect of Optomega PLUS™ on Dairy Cows

Legend:

- Altered Fatty Acid Composition
- Physiological Change

- ↑ DHA
- ↑ DPA
- ↑ EPA

- ↑ Sperm Motility
- ↑ Sperm Survival



Omega-3 (n-3) taken from sustainable fish oils



- ↑ Plasma DHA

- ↑ Health and Performance



- ↑ Health Benefits

- ↑ DHA
- ↑ EPA

- ↑ Conception Rate
- ↓ Uterine Prostaglandins (PG)
- ↓ Pregnancy loss

- ↑ Unsaturated Fats
- ↓ Saturated Fats



Mineral Markets

As I said in the introduction, I have just tendered for the autumn mineral business.

What jolly good fun I have had with this year's mineral quote.

Well it wasn't actually *that* much fun really.

The usual battle is going on at the moment, for market share.

The big nationals are continuing to grow by acquisition and their unshakable belief that only their own products should be used on farm and all competitor products are useless because they couldn't possibly be able to perform as well as their own.

The net result is a bit of a price war.

Now that *can* be a good thing, but if product specifications and formulas suffer as a result, it is a bad thing because most farmers don't know how any of the manoeuvring affects them.

This is usually the case in the compound feed and blend world but it is especially true in the world of mineral supplements.

The only way I can get a true quote is to supply formulas ingredient by ingredient. Only then am I comparing like for like!

So this year the competition was very fierce and I am very satisfied that my customers will get a genuine mineral formula at the best price.

Promotion

After a bit of thinking about the Covid 19 situation we decided to try and run a promotion campaign on-line and via this newsletter just to see if it works! We have had support from our suppliers, and we can now run a good promotion during October.

There has never been a better time to buy minerals from us. We can supply bespoke or standard formulas, or we can start from scratch and we are using powerful mineral buyers who have sourced their raw materials at the best prices.

The special offer is £200 off a half tonne F1 yeast order for October only

To qualify just order a minimum of two tonnes of mineral supplements from us for October delivery!

The mineral raw material market is pretty volatile at the moment, which makes it hard to predict pricing much more than three months ahead.

- **Di-calcium Phosphate.** Currency sensitive
Late lactation cows and dry cows would benefit from good levels in the dry cow supplements this year especially those that have had to rely on grass and not much else!
- **Magnesium** Small increases
High Potassium grass and silage this autumn will increase the need for extra magnesium.
- **Limestone Flour** Steady
Late lactation cows will almost always be under fed. You can feed dry cows until 3 weeks before calving! Growing and finishing beef have been shown to increase liveweight gain when deficiencies are corrected. Great supplement and pretty cheap really!

Most bespoke minerals can now have the extra limestone, magnesium, mycotoxin absorbent and even sodium bi-carbonate added, meaning less bags to handle, let us know if you would like us to do this, it doesn't cost any more to do and sometimes can save money.

- **Sodium Bi-carbonate** Flat prices
- **Salt** Quiet. Himalayan Red rock salt is a still a very good buy
- **Zinc** Volatile Zinc Oxide mainly due to exchange rates.
- **Manganese** Currency sensitive
- **Cobalt** Demand for electric car batteries and currency sensitive.
- **Chelates** Pretty firm after some price increases. Beware the cheap substitutes.
- **Vitamin E** Relatively stable at the moment!
- **Iodine** Currency sensitive
- **Copper Sulphate** Firm due to high demand especially in China.
- **Biotin** Volatile, dropping after huge increase in the spring.

Raw Material Markets

China and other “unknown destinations” have recently gone into the soya market and purchased some huge tonnages of soya meal. In the two weeks ending September 25th China had booked 75.4 million bushels of soya beans.

British bushel definition: a measure of capacity equal to 8 gallons (equivalent to 36.4 litres), used for corn, fruit, liquids, etc. US definition is a measure of capacity equal to 64 US pints (equivalent to 35.2 litres), used for dry goods

A bushel of soya beans weighs 60 pounds (27.14 KG) so that's about 2.05 million tonnes of beans! Wheat is also 60 pounds Barley 48 Pounds and Maize is 56 pounds per bushel.

This has taken pressure off the surplus production for now but it should be borne in mind that the Brazilian crop alone is estimates at 131 million tonnes!

China has also been buying maize from the USA and that has firmed prices slightly (again the crop is huge, and the European crop is looking like a record breaker. Really it's UK wheat, barley, oats, rapeseed and sugar beet crops that have firmed our prices.

The ban on use of Nicotinoid pesticides in Europe has allowed aphid borne virus yellows to decimate the sugar beet crop for the first time in 30 years.

Farmers growing oilseed rape have had to contend with difficult growing patterns and an inability to spray for Flea Beetle which will result in a drop in yield. Some of these growers are considering not growing these crops next year unless they can deal with the challenges.

In summary prices are very firm and with China looking like a player again a volatile pound and uncertainty over trade deals for Brexit, the feed markets are very hard to predict. This must surely strengthen the case for milk and meat price increases, but that is a tough nut to crack!

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.

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