

## Reasons to feed molasses: Thriving Ewes and Lambs



### The challenges of feeding a balanced diet to Sheep

- Maintaining the body condition of ewes though targeted and balanced nutrition is critical around tugging time to optimise fertility rates and maintain body condition
- A ewe's daily dry matter intake is naturally limited by their size so it is critical to target feed and energy intake as a clear objective when feed budgeting
- The last 6-8 weeks of gestation are critical to the ewe pre-lambing in terms of the increased nutritional demands of pregnancy, whilst at the same time preparing the ewe for lactation
- Ewes ideally need to consume between 4 to 6% of their Dry Matter intake as sugars during the last 6-8 weeks before lambing to ensure they have sufficient energy to successfully transition into lactation

### Why molasses is a great feed in a balanced sheep diet

- Molasses improves the palatability and dry matter intakes of any forage based diet and as a liquid has a low substitution effect so ideal for diets with limited intakes
- Primary nutritional component of molasses are sugars meaning it is the best source of rapidly fermentable carbohydrates for ruminants providing a boost of energy and ensuring good rumen metabolism for better health and productivity
- Molasses is at least 3 times higher in Sugars than on farm straights and cereals
- Molasses is easy to handle and versatile to feed either through a TMR, a lick wheel feeder or as a pour on liquid

## The reasons why adding sugars to sheep diets is important to get them nutritionally balanced



The last 6-8 weeks before lambing are critical in terms of meeting the high nutritional demands of pregnant ewes in terms of maintaining their body condition and preparing them for lactation. For these reasons feeding energy, sugars and good quality protein in ewe diets is essential in order to maximise milk colostrum quantity and help maintain foetus growth and lamb survival rate.



Molasses is an ideal energy feed for pregnant and lactating ewes from a practical point of view as it is a natural de-duster and there are various ways you can feed it via a TMR, bucket poured onto hay or other forages, through lick wheel feeders or simply blended in home grown cereals.



The sugars in molasses help to promote the cellulolytic bacteria in the rumen, which helps to breakdown forage dry matter and in doing so this helps reduce the chances of rumen acidosis and avoid health issues at lambing.



As Molasses is a liquid a sheep can physically consume approx. 10% more Dry Matter intake per day over a forage based diet which is a significant increase when you consider a ewe's dry matter intake is around 1.5% of its body weight



The sugars in molasses add a natural sweetness to forage based rations that stimulates the taste receptors in the sheep's tongue to want to voluntarily eat more of the ration



In addition to our standard farm molasses products we can supply blends of molasses and glycerol, these are richer in gluconeogenic energy so promoting better health and growth in both lambs and ewes



A farmer in Leyland who is lambing 250 mules on a TMR system reports that adding molasses to his sheep diets has contributed to improvements in both Dry Matter intakes and successful lambing, he comments "Molasses has bought concentrated energy to my TMR which has helped my ewes to milk really well and prevented ration sorting at feeding".