

ALL THINGS MOLASSES newsletter

Welcome to the latest edition of United Molasses GB's All Things Molasses newsletter where we look at the feeding challenges of late spring turnout and how Molasses can help to combat them. We also give a molasses market update and launch our 2024 fundraiser The Great Molasses Challenge!

ON FARM FOCUS

Looking like late spring turnout? Extended winter feeding?

Molasses can help with these feeding challenges

By Mark Few UMGB Product Manager and Richard Colley, Farm Consultant at Colley Beef Agri

So far in 2024 we have seen exceptionally high levels of rainfall through February and March which despite reasonable grass growth has left many fields across the UK too wet for any thoughts of an early turnout so many cattle will have to be fed on winter diets longer.

This will result in feeding challenges on farm as it will mean either utilising later cut silage from the back of the clamp or substituting an alternative forage such as straw into diets for both milkers and youngstock. "With the high NDF and lignin levels of this past winter's grass silage the quality of what will be left in clamps will likely be poor and present a palatability challenge on intakes" comments Richard Colley, farm consultant at Colley Beef Agri. Looking at Trouw Nutrition's average grass silage data for 2023 the 3rd cut results were all down on d value, energy, sugars from the 1st and 2nd cut results (see Table A). The quality of the 2023 Grass silage was already low compared to previous years in terms of energy and sugars with a notable variation in rapidly fermentable carbohydrates (RFC) between 1st, 2nd and 3rd cut results.

"Late turnout means farms will soon be down to low levels of their later cut silages and having to look at alternatives such as straw, maize and wholecrop that are good forage substitutes but are currently expensive and can be lacking in nutrition and palatability" continues Richard.

TABLE A - Trouw Nutrition Grass Silage Results 2023

Nutri Opt value	Unit	1st Cut Av.	2nd Cut Av.	3rd Cut Av.
D Value	%	69.68	68.18	66.2
ME	MJ/kg DM	11.15	10.91	10.59
Sugars	% DM	1.48	1.76	1.42
RFC	g/kg DM	194.77	193.25	182.56
DyNE	MJ/kg DM	5.77	5.78	5.69

Ref: Trouw Nutrition Laboratory GB 2023



- Cane Molasses pricing firming on the back of governments supporting domestic ethanol in export countries
- Pricing also under pressure from reduced global supply as most main exporters in off crop period
- Asian demand being slowed by higher F.O.B. prices which should help supply to Europe
- Bulk sea freight rates under pressure from disruption in red sea meaning longer voyages and higher insurance costs
- Sterling – Dollar exchange rate will have big impact due to all imported molasses costs being Dollar denominated.



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A great feeding strategy for a delayed turnout scenario is to add a molasses product to help extend winter feeding rations by improving dry matter intakes of lower quality/less palatable forages whilst also adding energy and sugars to the diet. “Molasses is well established as the best feed additive to improve forage intake on farm as it promotes a more even distribution of feed ingredients whilst reducing ration sorting and waste through its sticky properties helping to achieve good clear up in the feed passage” states Richard. To demonstrate the effect of adding molasses to a typical maintenance + 20 dairy diet, Richard compared diets formulated on Trouw’s 1st , 2nd and 3rd cut average grass silage results, one with straights only and one incorporating 1.3kg per head per day of United Molasses GB’s **Caneflow** product (see Table B).

TABLE B:
M +20 Litre Diet Comparison using Trouw Av. Grass Silage Analysis

Diet Data	Non Molasses Diet	1.3kg Caneflow Diet
1st Cut Grass Silage diet - Sugars (% DM) Min Target 5%	1.62	5.18
2nd Cut Grass Silage diet - Sugars (% DM) Min Target 5%	1.57	5.33
3rd Cut Grass Silage diet - Sugars (% DM) Min Target 5%	1.57	5.01

“These results show the clear nutritional benefit of adding **Caneflow** to the 3 silage cut qualities in raising the sugars to the target level of minimum 5% that you need for good rumen production and remember you will also have the dry matter

intake effect of feeding molasses and all the extra energy that will bring” concludes Richard. The benefits of adding rumen fermentable energy in the form of the RFC’s from the sugars is also very important in helping to ferment older conserved forage in the cows rumen by driving the production of propionic acid and promoting better overall function and health.

Another factor to consider when farms need to extend winter forage is that they will often prioritise conserving their remaining silage for the milking herd and may switch youngstock over to a straw only diet so adding a molasses product to improve the latter’s palatability and intakes is critical for maintaining growth and development. “I would recommend a molasses blend containing regulated release protein such as **Nutrimaize 46** as an ideal option to feed with straw as it will supplement the protein level which is critical when feeding a straw based diet” adds Richard.

It is also important to recognise the versatility of molasses based liquid feeds when it comes to spring feeding as it will work at both helping to stretch out winter rations with less palatable forage while also supporting buffer feeding when cows are finally turned out and their intakes need boosting due to the inevitable drop off you get when spring grazing starts. So in summary by incorporating a molasses liquid into diets this spring it will help to mitigate the potential negative impacts on production, milk quality, health and fertility from feeding lower quality forages by maintaining good dry matter intakes and adding the energy and sugars needed to balance the lower quality of later cut silage. For more information about **Caneflow**, **Nutrimaize 46** or other liquids from our extensive range of molasses products please visit www.unitedmolasses.com or give us a call on **+44 (0) 151 955 4850**.

* All diet data produced using Ultramix by AGM systems

GB TEAM UPDATE

The Great Molasses Challenge!

This year **UM GB’s Simon, Mark, Clare, David, Felicity, Jessica, Emma, Judie, Linda and Sarah** are all taking part in the **UM Great Molasses Challenge** which involves walking, swimming, running & cycling in aid of **Farm Africa** with the aim of completing the challenge in Hull on the 9th June.

We will be taking part in various organised events with Simon running in both the London and Edinburgh Marathons and also with Mark running the Bristol Half Marathon.

We’re on a mission to make farming matter and promote physical and mental well-being within the UM Group. Your donation goes directly to Farm Africa, a charity empowering farmers to grow more, sell more, and protect the environment. Covering 4820 miles (7712 km), symbolising the distance of the first UM molasses shipment in 1912, we are pedalling, swimming, running and hiking to help people and the planet thrive. **Find out how your donation can make a difference at www.farmafrica.org.** Molasses GB is fundraising for Farm Africa www.justgiving.com/page/molasses-gb

