

# ALL THINGS MOLASSES newsletter

Welcome to the latest edition of United Molasses GB's All Things Molasses newsletter where we look at how molasses can help farmers feed straw based diets to youngstock to extend their winter forage stocks and also provide an update on the current molasses market.

## ON FARM FOCUS

### Thinking of feeding straw to in calf heifers to better optimise forage stocks?

### Molasses can help get it right!

BY MARK FEW, UMGB PRODUCT MANAGER AND RICHARD COLLEY, FARM CONSULTANT AT COLLEY BEEF AGRICULTURE

**Silage stocks will be short over the next couple of months on many farms due to the exceptionally dry summer experienced in many parts of the UK last year most notably in the Southern regions which will lead to farmers looking at alternative forages such as Straw to help extend late winter/early spring feeding especially with their youngstock.**

However feeding straw has challenges, you will need to add crude protein to balance this forage nutritionally and also you need to consider straw's inherent lack of palatability which will be even more important with this winter's crop following the dry harvest conditions last year resulting in high Dry matter values. "When feeding youngstock on a dairy you are really investing in the farm's future plus it is your second highest input cost so you have to get it right, so if your considering Straw it has to be fed in the right way" states Richard Colley, farm consultant at Colley Beef Agri.

In calf heifers have a target weight gain of between 0.75 to 0.8 kg per day between the ages of 16 to 22 months, with the main feeding challenge being to keep them maintaining this desired growth rate without putting too much excess condition on.

"Feeding insufficient protein will result in small framed heifers carrying too much fat without the capacity to consume high quantities of dry matter so they will be unable to reach their full genetic potential" notes Richard. "Conversely if you underfeed these heifers it can lead to inadequate body size at calving which will limit 1st lactation milk production and can result in poor fertility so it is essential to get good intakes of the right nutrition into these animals to maximise your future returns" continues Richard. We believe the best way to feed straw to heifers is by adding a molasses liquid with added protein so your livestock gets the dual benefit of the right nutrients to balance their diet and the palatability improvement you get with molasses which leads to better Dry Matter intakes. In order to demonstrate this in a ration Richard looked at comparing 3 in calf heifer diets being fed a 92% Dry matter Wheat Straw based diet with a 20% protein Compound product, a 20% protein Blend and finally a combination of a 16% protein blend and United Molasses's Nutrimol Extra farm liquid (see Table 1).



Currently imported Cane Molasses in net £ terms is broadly neutral in overall costs

Main exporters in India now completing crush so FOB values slowly rising as per typical years

Bulk sea freights starting to ease, helping to offset rise in FOB values

Overall costs in \$ terms helped by ease in demand

Exchange rate £ to \$ will be key factor on forward pricing

Bonded urea products should benefit this summer from the Urea market easing back

Overall we expect to see the end of the recent dramatic price rises but it will take time for the market to soften



## continued...

**TABLE 1**  
**Comparison of Straw based diets for in calf heifers**  
**(Age 16 to 22 months)**

Feed	Diet 1 Straw + 20% Compound	Diet 2 Straw + 20% Straw +	Diet 3 Straw + 16% Blend + Nutrimol Extra
Wheat Straw 2.5/3 inch chopped (kg per day)	5.5	5.5	5.5
Compound 20% CP (kg per day)	6.5	-	-
Blend 20% CP (kg per day)	-	6.5	-
Blend 16% CP (kg per day)	-	-	5.5
Nutrimol Extra (kg per day)	-	-	1.5
Minerals youngstock (kg per day)	-	0.1	0.1
<b>Nutrients</b>			
Sugars (% DM)	2.06	2.06	6.52
NDF (% DM)	54.88	54.88	51.22
Crude Protein (% DM)	14.54	14.54	14.9
<b>Predicted performance</b>			
Predicted LWG kg per day	0.8	0.8	0.8
Cost per Day (£)	3.16	3.00	2.96
Cost per kg LWG (£)	3.90	3.70	3.65

\* All diet data produced using Ultramix by AGM systems \* Basis January 2023 feed prices

“Comparing these 3 diets, there is a clear positive saving in daily feeding costs with the ration including the Nutrimol Extra but the biggest benefit of incorporating molasses will be the significant improvement it will generate in Dry matter intakes which is essential when feeding straw to any cattle, young or old” notes Richard. Nutrimol Extra is a blend of sugar cane molasses and UM’s bonded urea so provides the benefits of a more regulated release of nitrogen and sugars to the rumen in addition to providing the required nutritional balancing for a straw based TMR. “It is vital to get quality sugars from a product like molasses into a straw based diet for optimal rumen function as too much fibre can lead to rumen issues which will negatively impact milk yield and fertility which is so important for first time calvers” adds Richard. In summary we believe Straw can be effectively fed to in calf heifers to help extend winter forage stocks but it is essential to get the protein and sugar levels right in these diets and also to boost overall palatability so a molasses protein liquid such as United Molasses GB’s Nutrimol Extra is a great feed material to help meet all these requirements and provide savings on feed.

**For more information about our extensive range of farm molasses liquids please visit [www.unitedmolasses.com](http://www.unitedmolasses.com) or give us a call on +44 (0) 151 955 4850.**

## GB TEAM UPDATE

### UM’s London Marathon team raises thousands for charity

**A team of six people from the United Molasses Group including Simon Markham and Mark Few from the GB business took on the challenge of the London Marathon on Sunday 2nd October last year and between them raised over £35,000 for the Starlight Children’s Foundation charity.**

In total, £18,729 was raised via the runners just giving page with a further £17,279 being donated in match-funding by our generous shareholders, W & R Barnett Ltd giving a final amount raised of £35,558. We would like to thank all of our incredible supporters for helping us to raise this amazing amount of money for a very deserving charity.

**Simon is taking on the challenge of the London Marathon again for Starlight this April!**

**If you would like to sponsor Simon please go to [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/simon-markham1](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/simon-markham1)**

