

ALL THINGS MOLASSES newsletter

Welcome to the September edition of our All Things Molasses newsletter where we look at the different forage challenges facing farms across England, Scotland and Wales this winter and which molasses liquids can help farms to get the best return from them, we also give an update on the current molasses market.

ON FARM FOCUS

Managing this winter's forage challenges with the help of Molasses liquids

By Mark Few UMGB Trading and Product Manager and Richard Colley Farm consultant at Colley Beef Agri

As farmers across Great Britain prepare for winter feeding, forage availability and quality are emerging as key concerns. However, the challenges are far from uniform. In some regions notably south of the Midlands the prolonged drought has limited grass growth and reduced forward forage stocks, leaving some farmers to be reliant on alternative forage sources this winter to bridge the gap. In other areas, forage volumes may be adequate, but the nutritional quality of home-produced silage is proving far more variable than desired.

For many dairy and beef producers with sufficient grass silage stocks, the primary challenge will be managing forage quality. Prolonged dry weather and variable growing conditions have resulted in silages higher in fibre and lower in rapidly fermentable energy than ideal, potentially limiting intakes and reducing animal performance if diets are not carefully balanced. Trouw Nutrition GB have reported in their latest silage watch report that this year's 2nd cut grass silage results are more fibrous, less rapidly fermentable and are lower in energy density than the average 1st cut results. "While the forage may be available in quantity, extracting optimum production from it will require nutritional supplementation" comments Richard Colley from Colley Beef Agri.

For farms facing forage shortages, alternative feeds such as maize silage are expected to play a larger role this winter particularly in the South west. However, the recent dry weather has accelerated the crop maturity of Maize in some areas, leading to earlier-than-ideal harvest dates and potentially creating further variability in this forage quality. As a result, nutrient supply and feeding value may differ considerably between farms and even between clamps.

Straw is also likely to feature more prominently in winter rations due to the plentiful supplies available following the recent dry weather. While straw can be an effective source of structural fibre, its low palatability often limits voluntary intake. "Without appropriate supplementation, diets containing high levels of straw will result in reduced feed intakes and compromised production" comments Richard.

Across all these forage scenarios, maintaining forage intakes and providing adequate levels of rapidly fermentable energy will be critical. Molasses-based liquid feeds can play an important role in combating this by improving palatability, encouraging consistent dry matter intake and supplying readily available energy to support rumen function and milk production. Additionally some farms may feed high levels of concentrates to support milk production which will increase the risk of acidosis and digestibility issues so adding a good source of rapidly fermentable carbohydrates through molasses will be critical to help prevent those issues in the rumen.



- **Negative effects of Middle East crisis include significant rises in sea freight and fuel bunker costs**
- **More ethanol is being produced from molasses in both Asia and India reducing global availability of molasses to export**
- **Smaller sugar crop in Central Americas this year**
- **Higher UK road freight costs**
- **Strength of £ to \$ will be important to forward Cane molasses pricing**



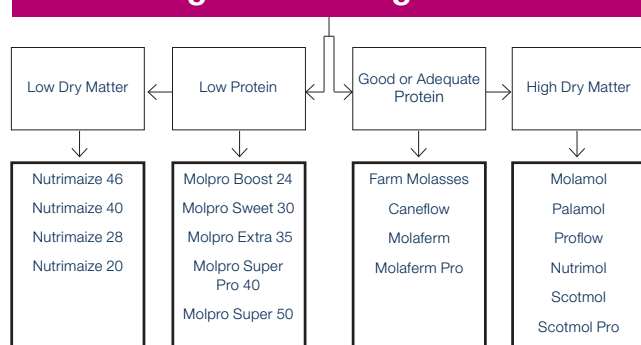
Managing this winter's forage challenges with the help of Molasses liquids continued...

To help farmers identify the most appropriate nutritional solution for their individual forage situation, United Molasses GB and Colley Beef Agri have developed a series of forage challenge flow charts.

These practical guides are designed to help navigate the different forage scenarios likely to be encountered this winter and direct producers towards the molasses product best suited to their feeding system and forage resources.

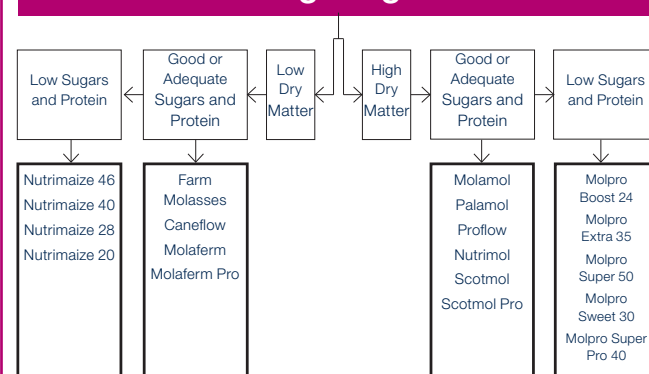
FORAGE CHALLENGE FLOWCHART 1

Grass Silage Low in Sugars and RFC's



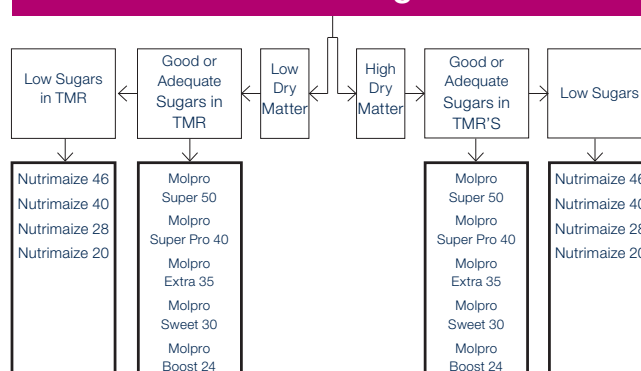
FORAGE CHALLENGE FLOWCHART 2

Grass Silage High in NDF



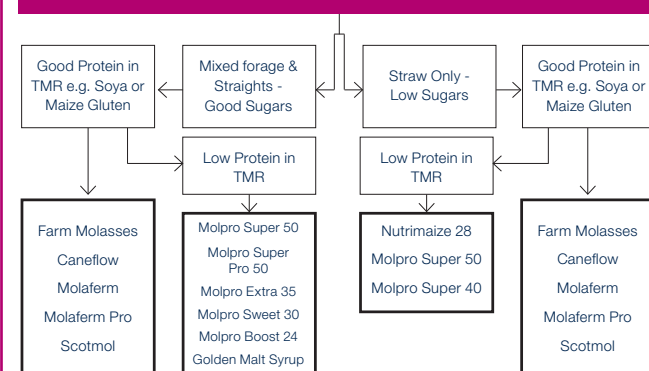
FORAGE CHALLENGE FLOWCHART 3

Maize Silage



FORAGE CHALLENGE FLOWCHART 4

Straw



Conclusion

Whatever forage challenge your farm faces this winter, understanding the strengths and limitations of your forage stocks and the right molasses product to add will be a big step towards maintaining performance, protecting animal health and achieving the best possible return from every tonne fed. Molasses liquid products are in particular renowned for helping to get the most efficient utilisation and output from home grown forage which will be a priority for most farms especially those effected by the recent drought like conditions in England & Wales.

For more information about any of UMGB's extensive range of molasses products please call us on 0151 955 4850 or visit unitedmolasses.com.