



FARMGATE STOCKFEEDS



The Farmgate Fodder | Winter 2016

Proprietors: Mathew & Tammi Logan, 514 Timboon-Terang Road, Ecklin 3265. Phone: 5591 0344
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MAXIMISING WINTER PASTURE PRODUCTION

Written by Daniel Meade, Agronomist, Grass Growers

As we head into the colder, wetter months of the season the importance of maximising winter pasture utilisation is paramount to a cost effective feed ration.

There can be many barriers to grass growing in winter, including the ambient temperature, soil temperature, water logging, over grazing and pressure from pest and weeds. Spraying out broadleaf weeds in their early stages of growth will help reduce their competition to the pasture as will adding an insecticide to control such pests as Red Legged Earth Mite and Lucerne Flea.

Winter Growth can be aided by the effective application of several Agronomics products including;

Granular Nitrogen Fertilisers - The timely use of products such as Urea can add from 5-10 kgs/ha of dry matter per unit of nitrogen (N). This means that 90 kg/ha of urea will provide 41 units of N adding anywhere from 200-400 kg/ha of extra dry matter to the normal growth. Most effective use of Nitrogen is when applying 3-4 days pre or post grazing. Then resting the paddock for at least 21 days for the N to take effect and also to bypass the "danger" period for Nitrate poisoning which is between 5-20 days post application. This year, Urea is the most affordable as it has been for some years, making it a highly cost effective option for growing extra quality home grown feed.

Liquid Fertilisers - Easy N is the main liquid alternative to applying granular nitrogen products. Easy N can add convenience to the system by the ability to add some broadleaf sprays and the growth stimulant Gibberalic Acid to the mix therefore saving on a "pass". Easy N application is less flexible due the occasional occurrence of burning of the leaf when applied to heavy foliar cover or on sunny days.

Gibberalic Acid (GA) - Is a Growth Regulant that applies a naturally occurring hormone which assists the plant in the colder months. GA accelerates growth for 3-4 weeks post spraying. Numerous Trials have been conducted in the area showing results from 300kg-600kg of extra dry matter grown per hectare, this extra quality home grown feed comes at a very affordable cost per kg. GA is more effective when used in conjunction with Nitrogen, and like nitrogen resting the paddock for at least 21 days post application results in higher gains. GA is now regularly used by farmers when the winter cleaning of pastures occurs as GA is compatible with most broadleaf chemicals.

The extra home grown winter feed is only cost effective if it is utilised effectively. Grazing management practices are critical all year round including winter. Depending on circumstances, like the break or bug damage, it is best practice to head into winter with a pasture "wedge". This allows a grazing rotation that gives the plant adequate time to regrow post grazing to the 2 + to 3 leaf stage before grazing again. This time of year that could be around 40 days.

Appropriate Pasture allocation is ok in dry conditions, but if it gets wet, that can create difficulty. Pugging damage can be avoided by tactics like on - off grazing and opening up the pastures if it gets to that point.

Using the products and management practices listed above will help in maximising winter pasture production and to utilise the cost efficient resource that is home grown quality feed. With favourable conditions these methods will also assist in setting up for a spring that provides healthy tonnages of conserved fodder.

If you have any further queries on any of the above please contact the Grass Growers office on 03 5592 2550

CALL US NOW @ FARMGATE STOCKFEEDS 5591 0344



Upcoming Field Day

Improving home grown stored fodder quality

Date: 12th August 2016 **Venue:** Ecklin Hall, 250 Timboon-Terang Road, Ecklin South **Time:** 10am start with lunch provided

Speakers: Peter Vinelli from International Stock Foods (USA), has worldwide experience on best-practice forage conservation. Peter will be visiting Australia during early August and has tremendous knowledge on how to get the best fermentation ending in good silage, as well as harvesting and treatment options for both hay and silage.

Ian Sawyer from Feedworks, is widely known through the dairy industry for his nutritional knowledge but he also has a strong understanding of business and economic principles which underpin all good ruminant enterprises. Ian will give us an inside into what effect improving silage and hay quality has on our herd's production and farm profitability.

RSVP by the 8th of August to Farmgate Stockfeeds on (03) 5591 0344



Calf Starter Meal

- A high protein quality blend of cereal grains and legumes suitable for calves still on milk. The ration has a full vitamin and minerals spec, including rumen modifiers (Monensin), to increase early growth & development of your calves. With the inclusion of lucerne chaff to promote early consumption of feed.
- Contains Orego-Stim®, a 100% natural essential oil based feed additive that maximizes intestinal health which aids in suppression of coccidiosis in dairy calves.
- 20% CP, 12 ME, available in bulka bags or bulk loads.
- 800kg bulka bag \$409 + GST including FREE delivery to the local area Tuesday's & Thursday's

What to look for in Winter

Dry Cows

- Monitor body condition
- May need to separate lighter cows and feed a better quality hay to help them catch up
- Dry cows require a diet that is 12-14% CP and approximately 80MJ/cow/day

Close up cows

- Aim to start lead feeding 21 days before calving
- Ensure hay is tested for DCAD levels
- Limit 'green feed' to 2kg DM/cow/day

Lactating Cows

- Even with a low milk price, it is important to maximise dry matter intakes to ensure cows are fully fed. Aim for 16-20kg DM/cow/day
- Keep an eye on cows for signs of nitrate poisoning, especially during overcast conditions and with high urea usage
- Watch for signs of grass tetany eg. irritated cows, uncontrollable muscle twitching & aggressive downer cows

- Monitor hoof health, you may like to consider spreading bark chips onto rough laneways

Young Stock

- The only true way to monitor progress of your young stock is to weigh them
- Separate lighter calves to a separate group and increase/improve feed offered

Around the farm

- Monitor pasture growth rates to ensure the rotation is not getting too short
- Don't over graze; you may need to look at on-off grazing to leave residuals of 1300-1500kg DM or tennis ball height
- Utilise stand off areas to minimise pugging and damage to pastures
- Speak with your agronomist about nitrogen applications and other ways to maximise pasture growth during the colder months.

www.farmgatestockfeeds.com

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