



COUNTERPOINT
Stockfeeds

Autumn Newsletter

Autumn Calving Cows and Calves

Welcome to the Autumn of the 2024 Counterpoint Stockfeeds Nutritional Newsletter

Topics discussed within this newsletter are:

- What is Lead Feeding?
- Why it is Important?
- Common Reservations of Feeding Lead Feed
- Value of Calf Feeding

A successful transition program, from 21 days prior to calving, is a critical period for the cow's lactation. Successful management is essential for beginning a profitable lactation by supporting the cow's Dry Matter Intake (DMI) and minimizing calving difficulties.

What is Lead Feeding?

Lead feeding is a management strategy that helps to avoid metabolic issues during the transition from late pregnancy through to lactation. This is when cows and heifers go through major changes and need a diet that prepares the body for the huge demand in calcium post calving as well as preparing the rumen for the milking diet.

Why is Lead Feeding Important?

Post calving there is a huge demand for calcium. For example, a freshly calved cow exports milk containing 10 times its blood calcium pool every day. A balanced lead feed supplement will contain a negative DCAD. DCAD is the 'dietary cation anion difference' which is expressed as (sodium + potassium) - (chloride + sulfur).

A negative DCAD diet effectively lowers the cow's blood pH. As the pH is lowered, sodium bicarbonate is released from their bones to stabilize the pH. During this process, calcium is also released. The calcium mobilized into the bloodstream increases the amount of readily available calcium, particularly in the most crucial 48-hour period post calving to decrease the risk of milk fever and related hypocalcaemia complications. Therefore, it is integral to get the transition period right to reduce the risks of any complications and this can be done by feeding a negative DCAD diet.

Ideally the feeding rate should be half the cow's daily grain intake after calving (eg. If feeding rate after calving is 6kgs/head/day in the bail, feed 3kgs of lead feed, the same as what will be fed in a single milking). A higher 4kg feed rate is recommended where DMI of the fibre source may be limited or of poor quality or the fibre source is at risk of having a high DCAD.

Newsletter Outline

- What is Lead Feeding
- Why is Lead Feeding Important
- Common Reservations of Feeding Lead Feed
- Recommended Counterpoint Stockfeed Products
 - Dairy Performa Lead Feed
 - Dairy Performa Transition
- Value of Calf Feeding
- Recommended Counterpoint Stockfeed Products
 - Dairy Performa Calf Muesli
 - Dairy Performa Calf Starter



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Common Reservations of Feeding Lead Feed

‘My cows don’t eat lead feed’ we hear this statement often as the anionic salts can be highly acidic and unpalatable. However, in our products the anionic salts are selected to carefully mask the bitterness. We also include flavorings which enhances the aroma and palatability to encourage intake.

‘My cows don’t get milk fever’ this is another reason a lot of people don’t feed a lead feed product. However, milk fever isn’t the only problem that arises around the time of calving. There are many metabolic complications that can arise during the transition period that we can address by lead feeding. This time is also integral for transitioning the cow onto a high starch, high protein lactation diet to reduce other metabolic issues that can arise at calving. The rumen needs adequate time to develop the microbial population in the rumen and to increase surface area for nutrient absorption.

Recommended Counterpoint Stockfeed Products

Counterpoint Stockfeeds has the following products to assist during the transition period. These products are carefully formulated for feeding during the transition period. These products are available in bulk, bulka bags and 20kg bags.



Dairy Performa
LEAD FEED



Dairy Performa Lead Feed Pellet contains 18% crude protein and the DCAD of the pellet is negative 750mEq/kg DM. This low DCAD is achieved through the careful selection of anionic salts that are effective but also palatable.



Dairy Performa
TRANSITION

Dairy Performa Transition is available as a pellet or a grain blend. It contains 19% crude protein and a DCAD of negative 1020mEq/kg DM. Due to the low DCAD of these products it helps to meet the requirements of high-performance herds and help to get maximum performance from the herd during lactation.





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Value of Calf Feeding

Rumen development is driven by the chemical breakdown of grain, and grain-based concentrates which is why feeding these products to calves is so important. Calves with more developed rumens will grow more efficiently, partitioning energy and protein into skeletal frame and lean muscle tissue. Heifers that reach their target joining and calving weights will generally have the ability to produce significantly greater milk volumes than those that have a slower growth trajectory and limited rumen capacity.



It is important to introduce small quantities of grain or grain-based concentrates from day one to drive rumen development, and physically effective fibre to promote rumen motility. The addition of grain to the diet also assists with the development of papillae on the rumen wall. Papillae are small projections that grow on the rumen wall and absorb nutrients. The more prolific the papillae are, the greater the surface area for nutrient absorption is.

Recommended Counterpoint Stockfeed Products

Counterpoint Stockfeeds has many different calf feed options to meet your farms requirements. We have feeds to get your calf from birth through to first calving.



Dairy Performa Calf Muesli can be offered to calves from birth to 3 months of age. It is a highly palatable blend that contains 21% crude protein that has been formulated to promote feed intake and therefore leading to rapid rumen development. This product contains a concentrate pellet within the muesli, this pellet contains the required protein meals, vitamins, minerals, and additives essential for the calf's growth and development. Being in a pellet form ensures the calf cannot pick and choose what it eats, and all requirements are met.



Dairy Performa Calf Starter is available as either a pellet or a grain blend. The grain blend contains a concentrate pellet prevent separation of the protein meals, vitamins, and minerals. This product is formulated to promote healthy growth and development of young calves, including yeasts, amino acids, starch, high quality proteins. A high levels of molasses and other flavourings are also included to increase palatability. This product does not contain antibiotics such as Bovatec®, for the control of coccidiosis Regano® is added in replacement.

Don't forget – all bulka bags of lead feed and calf feed can be delivered on our Gate to Gate service!

If you have any questions regarding the products and services offered by Counterpoint Stockfeeds, please don't hesitate to give our **Nutrition Team** a call on **03 5453 2107**.

Counterpoint Stockfeeds (CPS) believes the information contained in this document to be true and correct for the applications as described. Updates may be made to product specifications, usage guidelines, and/or ingredients used in these products.

Customers must seek advice from CPS if there is any doubt regarding the usage of products described. Subject to those terms implied by statute which cannot be excluded restricted or modified, no warranty of accuracy or reliability is given and no responsibility to the customer or any other person is accepted for errors or omissions howsoever arising, including matters arising through negligence by CPS, it's Directors, employees or agents.