

Issue 7 Monday 19th April 2004

T
A
L
K
T
O
S
O
M
E
O
N
E
W
H
O
C
A
R
E
S

Why a Liquid Feed?

A liquid feed has several advantages over block and dry licks. The ease of bulk handling and distribution saves on labour. The higher intake of Quicklick compared to these supplements adds considerably to the handling and freight costs but there are considerable benefits in this higher intake. Quicklick has much fewer shy feeders and a more even intake than other low intake supplements.

Low intake supplements have a much higher proportion of non-eaters than high intake supplements. Research conducted at the DPI at Swans Lagoon found that when supplement intake was below 50g per head per day up to 40% of the mob did not take any supplement on any given day. When intake was in the range of 50-200g per head per day (the usual intake range for most blocks and dry licks) there was often up to 20% non-eaters. The coefficient of variation is a measure of the variability of supplement intake. On low intake supplements the coefficient of variation was in the range of 50-90% while on higher intake supplements (500g plus per head per day) the variation dropped to 20-40% and the proportion of shy feeders was negligible.

When we consider that the rumen microbes only live for about 24 hours and we are aiming to stimulate them we can see the importance of a regular intake. Upon feeding urea the beast has elevated rumen ammonia levels for 3 to 4 hours. So if a beast takes in urea every day the rumen ammonia level is elevated for 21 to 28 hours in that week. However if they are only eating supplement every second or third day then the rumen will only be stimulated for 6 to 12 hours per week. This is the major reason that liquid feed consistently out perform dry licks and blocks of a similar nutritional value.

Bovatec and other rumen modifiers also need to be fed every day for best effect as they work on the population of rumen microbes. There are no low intake supplements where rumen modifiers can be fed safely due to the high variability of intake. Bovatec will give your cattle an extra 80 to 100g per head per day in weight gain and this extra gain will more than pay for your supplementation program.

Another advantage in liquid feed particularly Quicklick is that loads can be easily customised to your requirements. If you feel your cattle require some extra nutrients in their Quicklick please give us a call and we can discuss your needs.

Quicklick has consistently out performed dry licks and blocks due to the regular even intakes and addition of Bovatec. Lower storage and handling costs and the less labour required to distribute the product are also an advantage to you. We have the ability to customise your supplement to suit the requirements of your cattle. Quicklick is also rain safe and suitable to be fed in open troughs.

Rob Sands (Nutritionist)