

August 2018

Issue 20



# Tarff Valley Ltd

Trading Together, Growing Together, Since 1903

## Newsletter

We were one of the sponsors for the NFU Scotland - Forth & Clyde Region charity stockjudging hosted by the MacArthur family at Muirhouse, Thankerton. The MacArthurs of Nunnerie Livestock are famed for their Blackies and Luings and the crowd of 120 were treated to classes of excellent stock. £2500 was raised for charity which is being split between RSABI and Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance – SCAA.

Congratulations to the new Mr & Mrs Mason! Trainee nutritionist, Katie Warburton, married David Mason on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July at New Galloway Church. From all at Tarff, we wish them every happiness!



Follow us,  
Join us,  
#teamtarff  
@tarffvalley

## Greater intake from copper antagonists likely this season

As we approach the sheep breeding season, are you confident that your ewes and rams have the adequate nutrition for successful results?

Trace elements are fundamental to fertility and need to be addressed especially at demanding times of years, such as breeding time. Dr Elizabeth Berry BVSc, PhD, MRCVS, Company Veterinary Director of Animax, comments: "Particularly this summer, when conditions have been so challenging, many ewes and rams have been on dry, short pastures and are more likely to have ingested dust/dry earth. This has significantly increased the likelihood of a greater intake from copper antagonists such as molybdenum and iron. If any extra protein has been fed, as in many cases, then this provides the antagonist sulphur. These interactions can reduce availability of vital trace elements for fertility.

"The results of deficiencies in sheep with regards to fertility are well known - swayback due to copper deficiency during pregnancy is a classic sign. In addition, there can be poor display of oestrous, reduced fertility and poor lambing percentages at scanning.

She adds, "Deficiencies in critical trace elements can result in poor sperm production and function in the ram. It is difficult,



## Meet our new Sales Representative, Jim Kennedy

Jim has recently joined Tarff as a Sales Representative in the Ayrshire area. Having been in the Livestock Procurement industry for several years, starting his career at FMC, Jim has a fantastic knowledge of the livestock sector and is widely known. He has previously been the Chairman of the Scottish Beef Cattle Association and is currently in his first year as Vice Chair of the Beltex Sheep Society. In his spare time, Jim enjoys shooting and socialising. Jim looks forward to meeting new faces over the coming months.

and can be expensive, to quantify the trace element status at any given time, and levels can fluctuate so a preventative approach is strongly recommended as access to minerals at grass can be very variable and sometimes completely ineffective. Mineral licks, for example, can attract other wildlife, leading to a possible increase in disease risks. Water supplementation can also make the water unpalatable. If adding to a ration you always run the risks of toxicity.

"Drenches can be applied but need to be repeated frequently, so the most effective and convenient way in which to eliminate any trace element concerns is to give all animals a slow releasing bolus, which will ensure every individual animal gets the required levels that can be deficient in a grazing system.

"With concerns over winter rations already at the forefront of farmers minds, ensuring trace element requirements are met at this critical time of year will not only prepare ewes and lambs for a fertile breeding season but also reduce the stress of unknowns for farmers at this critical time.

"If you have any doubts, particularly over copper, then speak to your vet. Your nutritionist and SQP can also help with advice.

## Winter Feed Stocks

The long-term issues of winter feeding and bedding need discussing now to produce a whole farm strategy.

- Measure clamps and monitor winter forage stocks regularly and assess how much you can afford to feed.
- Look closely to see how certain feed options stack up in terms of relative cost per unit of energy and protein. Some moist feed options and caustic treated grain can work out more expensive than blends/dry products.
- There are plentiful supplies of well-made hay about at the moment. Well worth considering as a top up for winter forage stocks or as part of a buffer feed now.

While moist feeds are a good option to make up forage shortages, availability and supply over this winter appears to be difficult. Straw, especially, is likely to be expensive again this year.

Carrs Billington and Tarff Valley have a wide range of compound and blend options available to balance diets and make up shortfalls. Using our nutrition programme, a variety of non-standard diets can be accurately formulated to satisfy livestock requirements and achieve farmer expectations and targets.

Contact us for information about our new Forage Extender Roll product. A high digestible fibre feed to help compensate for the shortfall in grass, the rolls can be fed direct to pasture. Balanced for fibre and energy, providing 14% crude protein, they are excellent value for money at the moment.

Suckled calves and breeding sheep also need extra feed supplements now to maintain growth rates before the autumn sales. Ask about our Taurus Beef and Maze Lamb products.

## Benefits of Feeding Crystalyx With Poor Grass Availability

We were delighted to sponsor the Annual Young Handlers Competition at Dumfries Market in July. Congratulations to Ayla Craig, Glenhowan who won Best Young Handler and to Sean Dunbar, Burnfoothill, who won 1st prize (over 12) with his Texel lamb.

Iain Mackie, our Nithsdale sales representative, went along to represent Tarff and had a great afternoon, meeting upcoming customers...!

Well done to everyone who took part and thanks to David Sloan for judging the competition.



Congratulations to Calum McCall, Machars Sales Rep, who has passed his BASIS exams and is now a fully qualified agronomist!

**BASIS**

With grass growth past its peak, heavy second or third cuts of silage are looking less likely. Spring Barley can be cut for whole crop silage. Although not as good as grass silage, this gives a consistent quality, good dry matter yield per acre and the option to sow a forage crop direct into the stubble for autumn grazing. Buying in straw or hay now to cover the period to housing would seem to be a better bet before everyone decides the same.

When grass availability is restricted, such as in the very dry conditions we have currently, there are 3 main options to try to maintain animal performance:

1. feed straw, hay or another conserved forage, as a forage supplement at grass
2. feed a little supplementary concentrate at grass
3. a mixture of the above

But how does offering Crystalyx assist during periods of restricted grass availability?

Crystalyx stimulates the rumen bugs to work harder and more efficiently to allow animals to perform better from a forage-based diet.

During extensive research studies, Crystalyx was offered in two trials, with great success, as outlined in the next column.

In a Newcastle University trial involving bulling heifers, with grass growth restricted by dry weather, straw was introduced to both control & Crystalyx groups. The Crystalyx group maintained their DLWG at 0.94Kg/hd/day, some 15.7% greater than the control group.

A methane trial involving growing heifers at Aberystwyth University suffered similar dry conditions. As grass growth declined, control & Crystalyx groups were offered 1.25Kg of sugar beet pulp nuts. The Crystalyx group grew 27.8% faster at 0.81Kg/hd/day than the control group eating a daily average of 108g Crystalyx per head.

In dry weather when grass availability is poor - and what grass is available is likely to be of low digestibility - offering Crystalyx alongside a supplementary forage or concentrate will significantly and economically improve animal performance.

For example, Barley straw plus Crystalyx Cattle Booster has the same feed value as average hay.

Feeding Crystalyx will ensure that the rumen bugs are able to improve the digestibility and nutrient release from all sources - forage, concentrate and what little grass is available, so the stock make best possible use of it and maintain performance.

## Join the march towards stamping out lameness

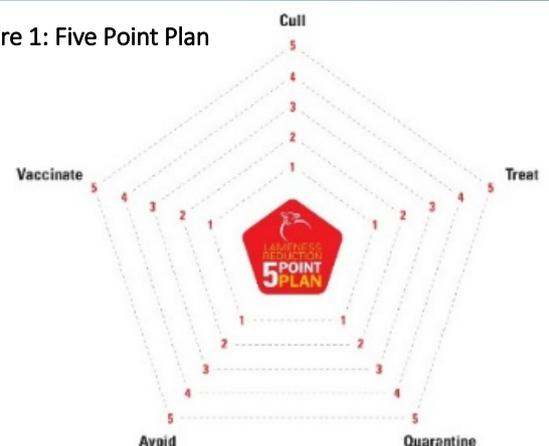
UK sheep producers are being encouraged to join the march towards stamping out lameness in the national flock when the industry highlights how to take the first step towards better control.

Independent experts point out that the later summer months are a great time to start implementing the proven Five-Point Plan for sheep lameness reduction, so there will be plenty of advice available throughout this period to help farmers kick-start their own disease management programme.

"The sheep industry has made real progress with lameness over the last five years but must maintain momentum if it is to hit the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) target of less than 2% disease incidence in the national flock by 2021," says Dr Ruth Clements, Head of Veterinary Programmes at farm-based research and development organisation FAI Farms, which developed the Five-Point Plan (See Figure 1).

Dr Clements says sheep farmers are generally keen to get on top of any flock lameness issues, but sometimes feel helpless and often find it difficult to know how and where to start.

Figure 1: Five Point Plan



"Implemented correctly and given long term commitment, the Five-Point Plan gives sheep farmers a clear framework for managing lameness effectively because it builds natural disease resilience within the flock, reduces the disease challenge and spread on the farm, and improves flock immunity through vaccination. More widespread adoption on farm will also help the sheep sector cut its use of antibiotics for foot infections and meet new industry targets; a sheep sector task force facilitated by RUMA has already signed up to a 10% reduction in antibiotic use by 2020," Dr Clements adds.