



## Market Update

The molasses market has remained relatively stable over the last few months, meaning that summer prices remain competitive compared to other feed ingredients. While prices have firmed this has been offset by improvements in currency (see graph). We have seen urea prices firm which has impacted our high protein liquid options however, even with this factored in, ED&F Man's high protein products represent excellent value.

Currency changes in £ v \$ over the last 12 months



## Sustainability

As we highlighted in our previous updates, sustainability is a topic everyone is talking about! Sustainability is without doubt going to be the major driver and influencer of policy and decision making in UK agriculture going forward. It is therefore vital that we create an industry wide approach that can help livestock producers work towards the UK target of Net Zero by 2050. It is important to look at a sustainable supply chain with sustainable feed inputs, but also sustainable livestock feeding programs. To this end, ED&F Man has an ongoing R&D program and has engaged with other key stakeholders to help develop a sustainable livestock production system. For more information, contact your ED&F Man Commercial Manager.



## BSAS Supporting UK Research

As part of ED&F Man's commitment to research at the recent BSAS (British Society of Animal Science) online Conference, Georgina Chapman, our Technical Support Manager, chaired two of the dairy health and welfare sessions. We feel it is vital to maintain the connection between scientific research and on farm nutrition. BSAS leads the way in animal nutrition with a strong focus and efficiency, and sustainability – something ED&F Man feels strongly about and an area where our products can help.



## Buffer Feeding



The key to effective grazing is accepting that at some stage buffer feeding will be required and to begin considering the impacts this may have on silage stocks and to plan for the coming winter. Grazed grass is inherently an unbalanced feed with an excess of protein and lack of carbohydrates. The low fibre levels in grass can also increase the risk of butterfat losses due to inadequate fibre digestion and low rumen pH. The inclusion of a molasses based liquid feed within a buffer feed can help to maximise production at grazing and support butterfats by maintaining an optimum rumen environment and driving fibre digestion. New research has also highlighted how replacing a proportion of grass silage in the buffer feed with straw and a molasses based liquid feed can be a cost-effective option this summer and help retain grass silage stocks for the coming winter.

ED&F Man have carried out research in collaboration with Agri-Epi Centre at their South West Dairy Development Centre, alongside Kingshay Dairy consultants, to demonstrate that including a proportion of straw and Regumix, a palatable high energy and protein molasses based liquid feed in replacement of grass silage within a buffer feed, allows production to be maintained whilst preserving silage stocks.

The trial compared a traditional grass silage buffer diet against the treatment diet, which replaced 7.5kg grass silage with 1.5kg of straw and 1.5kg of Regumix. In both diets, the grazing intakes were the same and the total dry matter intake was unchanged. Performance was then compared between cows on the two diets.

Over a six-week period, there was no difference in yield between cows on both diets, with the cows on the molasses buffer milking as well as cows on the traditional buffer, but with slightly better compositional quality. There was also no difference in body condition changes between the two groups.

The saving of 7.5kg of silage per cow per day can be expanded for a 200-cow herd over a typical 18-week period, totalling a potential silage saving of almost 200 tonnes. This silage is then available to increase the silage fed per cow per day over the winter feeding period, or ensure stocks are sufficient for a longer housed period.

## Magnesium

It's that time of year again to consider additional magnesium supplementation in your molasses. Rapidly growing spring grass is prone to magnesium deficiency for several reasons; fast growing doesn't allow time for magnesium uptake, additional potassium in fertiliser locks up available magnesium and alongside the lower dry matter and fast transit time in the rumen, this can result in low magnesium levels in the animals bloodstream.

Although grass staggers aren't considered a prominent issue in the UK, with an average incidence under 1%, when grass staggers strikes in these cases, 30% of the time the result is fatal. It's also often the case that if one animal shows signs of magnesium deficiency, there will be other cattle in the herd with sub-clinical disease. Most clinical cases of grass staggers can be seen in freshly calved beef cattle, but that's not to say it does not affect dairy herds too. It is estimated that sub-clinical and chronic magnesium deficiency can go unrecognised in 3-4% of lactating dairy cattle.

Magnesium is an essential macro mineral for ruminants and is necessary for bone growth, calcium regulation, nervous system function and can also aid fibre digestion in the rumen. Magnesium is mainly stored in the bones; however, cattle do not have a mechanism by which magnesium can be released from storage to make up any dietary shortfalls. Therefore, livestock rely on a daily supplementation of magnesium to maintain optimum levels.

It is not as simple as supplying more magnesium in the diet to raise overall levels in the animals bloodstream. In fact, there are two factors, which will determine how much of the dietary magnesium will be absorbed. Firstly, dietary magnesium has to be solubilised in the rumen before it is absorbed. Rumen pH can have a huge influence on the solubility of magnesium so it's important to reduce any acidosis risks. There are also a number of dietary factors that have the potential to affect magnesium absorbability such as potassium and aluminium levels, which act as an antagonist to magnesium absorption, as well as animal factors such as species, age, etc. Overall, the absorption of dietary magnesium is extremely variable and must be considered when choosing how to supplement. ED&F Man use magnesium chloride in molasses blends as it is extremely soluble, allowing for even distribution and consistent animal intakes, the sugars also help to mask the bitter taste of magnesium, improving palatability.

Magnesium can be added to all ED&F Man bulk blends at a range of inclusion rates. Depending on the feed rate of the molasses blend, this will indicate the amount of magnesium required to be added. For example, a target of 35g magnesium should be supplemented for lactating dairy cows. If fed 1kg of liquid feed per day, a 3.5% inclusion rate is required to achieve this target. The table below shows the different inclusion rates based on the feed rate.

Mag Inclusion (%)	Feed Rate for 35g supplement (kg)
3.5	1
3	1.2
2.5	1.4
2	1.75

## Cost v Value: Understanding Liquid Products

Over the last few years, we have seen several liquid co-products, from alcohol production to dairy processing, come onto the market and be sold as competing products to molasses. However, on closer examination, these products were found to be of significantly less value than molasses blends, both nutritionally (lower fermentable value) and physically (low dry matter, poor keeping qualities and handling problems), also erratic availability. Most of these products are now being used in Biogas (AD) Production, meaning availability for animal feed is very limited and prices have increased significantly. This has created more demand for ED&F Man's range of high performance liquid feeds.

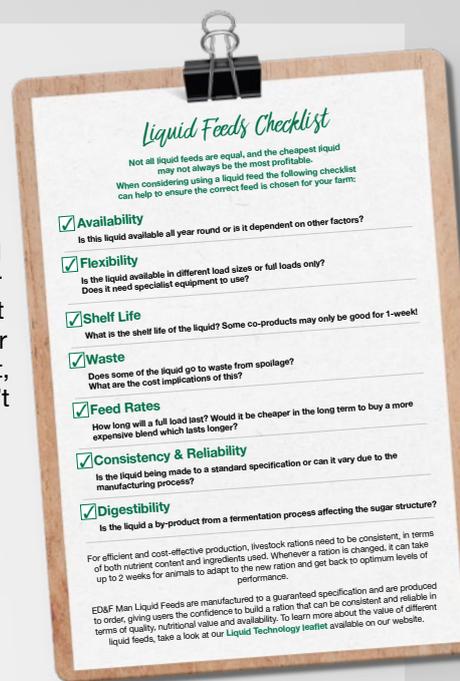
## Syrups v Molasses Blends

So, when it comes to choosing a liquid feed to use on farm it's important to remember that not all liquid feeds are equal, and the cheapest liquid on offer may not always be the most profitable. While cost per metric tonne is important, this is less crucial if it can't be combined with:

- Availability
- Flexibility
- Shelf Life
- Waste
- Feed Rates
- Consistency & Reliability
- Digestibility

For efficient and cost-effective production, livestock rations need to be consistent in terms of both nutrient content and ingredients uses. When a ration is changed, it can take up to 2 weeks for the rumen to adapt to the new ration and return to optimum levels of performance.

ED&F Man Liquid feeds are manufactured to a guaranteed specification and are produced to order, giving users the confidence to build a ration that can be consistent and reliable in terms of quality, nutritional value and availability. To learn more about the value of different liquid feeds or to utilise our handy liquid feed checklist when choosing a liquid feed, go to the Latest Updates on our website and take a look at our **Liquid Technology Leaflet** and **Liquid Feeds Checklist**.



## Want to know more?

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