

**ED&F
MAN**
EST. 1783

**Liquid
Products**

Molasses Blends

The Essential Ingredient

TIME TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT MOLASSES BLENDS

Molasses blends can play a valuable role in dairy rations this winter. Georgina Chapman, Technical Manager with ED&F Man Liquid Products says there are five very good reasons to choose molasses blends.

REASON 1: The natural way to make better use of high fibre silages

Molasses blends are high in six carbon sugars which are more highly rumen fermentable and more effective at improving fibre digestion, increasing microbial protein production and stimulating rumen fungi, which is especially beneficial with this year's high fibre (NDF) and lignin silages.

New research carried out by ED&F Man at the University of Reading shows that feeding molasses blends has a beneficial effect on fibre digestion. As the proportion of the molasses blend increases in the diet, NDF digestibility increased significantly meaning cows were making better use of forages by extracting more of the nutrient value.

REASON 2: Make better use of protein

With soya and rape prices likely to remain high all winter, improving efficiency of protein use will be crucial for cost effective production.

In further ED&F Man trials at The University of Reading, the effect of replacing 40% of the rape and soya in the diet of mid-lactation cows with Regumaize 44, a urea enhanced molasses blend was evaluated. Milk yield and butterfat remain constant while milk protein was increased due to the extra fermentable metabolisable energy in the Regumaize 44.

In today's market, the diet including Regumaize 44 would equate to a cost saving of £5,000 over the winter.

REASON 3: Reduce diet sorting to improve intakes

The addition of molasses blends can improve diet presentation and consistency, encouraging better intakes, reduce sorting and the risk of acidosis, allowing cows to produce to their potential. By stimulating rumen fermentation, molasses blends increase rumen throughput and encourage higher dry matter intakes.

REASON 4: Extend forage stocks

New ED&F Man research carried out at The Agri-EPI South West Dairy Development Centre shows that replacing a proportion of grass silage with straw and a palatable high energy and protein molasses based liquid feed allows production to be maintained while preserving silage stocks.

The cows on the diet including some molasses and straw milked as well as cows on the traditional diet but with slightly better compositional quality. There was no difference in body condition changes between the two groups. There was a saving of 7.5kg of silage per cow per day. Assuming 200 cows were fed the lower silage diet for 18 weeks, the total silage saved over this time would be a potential 200 tonnes.

REASON 5: Flexibility and ease of feeding

Cows crave a consistent diet and with time at a premium on many farms, molasses blends can be quickly, easily, and accurately added to a TMR. Finance schemes are available on storage tanks helping spread the cost of buying a tank.

As the quality of forage varies during the winter the amount of molasses blend being fed can be adjusted quickly and if needs be an alternative blend can be used helping you get all the benefits from molasses while fine tuning the diet.

The question is not 'should I feed a molasses blend this winter?' but 'I am going to include a molasses blend, so which is the most suitable for me?'.

Want to know more?

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