



December 2023

## Market Update

Market volatility continues to be an issue across the feed commodity markets. Currency while not as low as it has been is not helping. Winter molasses pricing was done when currency was at approx. £/\$1.27 and it is currently just below 1.24. While we can't predict where currency will go, global molasses prices are unlikely to fall in the short to medium term. Ocean tanker freight which increased significantly following Russia's invasion of Ukraine remains firm and as we move through the winter and demand for oil increases this is unlikely to change.



Ongoing high oil prices are also continuing to keep fuel ethanol prices high. This has a direct impact on the in origin value of molasses. On a positive pricing note, urea prices have come back significantly from their peak last winter and we are able to offer full winter contracts on all of our high protein Regulated Release products.

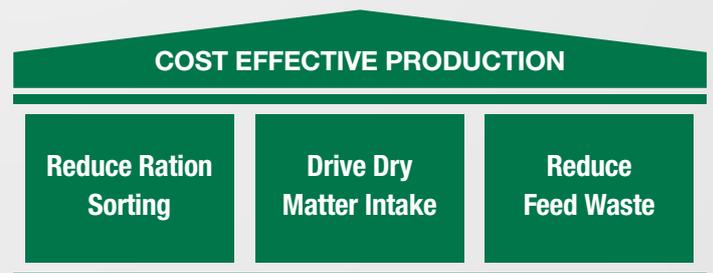
With a background of high prices, we continue to see strong demand for molasses based liquid feeds as customers recognise the unique benefits they offer. With the reduction in milk price farmers are looking to make better use of home grown feeds, especially more effective use of silage.

## Winter Feeding Guide

The variability in silages across the country are creating a serious challenge to implementing balanced rations this winter and as such we have seen reduced animal performance and several reports of heating silage. The average silage quality this year has analysed at 0.9% sugar, in comparison to previous years when sugar was around 2-3% this is extremely low and many rations are struggling to reach the ideal sugar level of 6-8% in the diet.

By achieving 6-8% sugar in the diet, this can lead to several benefits for both animal performance and health. The source of sugar in a diet is critical as it is important to remember that not all sugars are equal either. Sugars present in animal feeds can be categorised as either 6-Carbon or 5-Carbon sugars. Molasses is a naturally rich source of 6-Carbon sugars such as, glucose and fructose, which are proven to be more highly rumen fermentable, increase microbial activity in the rumen and improve fibre digestion promoting better use of home grown feeds and higher feed efficiency. In comparison to 5-Carbon sugars which do not have these benefits and are typically found feeds that have been fermented such as liquid co-products e.g., pot ale syrup and wheat syrups, silages, and processed feeds.

With the variability of silage quality this winter across the regions, it is important to focus on achieving the ideal sugar level in the diet for cost effective production. The three pillars below highlight how a molasses based liquid feed can support animal health and production:



**Reduce Ration Sorting:** Ration sorting can be a major issue in herds, especially when concentrates form a large percent of the ration, or when less palatable feeds are being fed. Trials have shown that molasses based liquid feeds can reduce sorting by coating all the individual ingredients, making it



harder for animals to select specific components. The addition of a molasses based liquid feed also improves palatability with the sugars masking bitter tasting components such as minerals. This eliminates sorting, drives intakes and ensures a consistent ration is consumed.

**Benefit:** Less health problems and more efficient production

**Boost Dry Matter Intakes:** With high performing livestock, it can be difficult to maximise Dry Matter Intake (DMI) when only using dry feed ingredients. Adding an ED&F Man molasses blend to the ration has been shown to increase DMI due to its unique liquid nature and low substitution effect. Additionally, ED&F Man molasses blends are highly palatable which helps support higher intakes. Encouraging animals to eat more is a key driver of animal production (either milk production or daily live weight gain).

**Benefit:** Increased production and efficiency

**Reduce Waste:** It is vital that every kilo of feed grown or bought is consumed and utilised effectively by the animal. It has been proven that mixing a molasses based liquid feed into a TMR not only increases intake and reduces feed wastage through improved palatability but also improves the digestibility of the ration, especially the fibre portion. A farm trial found by increasing the sugar content of the TMR from 3% to 6% after 6 weeks this resulted in a 17% increase in fibre digestion. This means much more energy was extracted from fibre and less ended up as waste. With the target of 40% fibre digestibility on farm, a molasses based liquid feed can easily help achieve this! In addition, adding a molasses based liquid feed to a TMR can reduce breathable dust levels which can cause health problems to both stock and stockman alike, it is often the case that the dust is caused by expensive diet components such as minerals and vitamins so reducing the amount of lost feed can help save money too!

**Benefit:** Better animal health, reduced feed wastage and improved performance

## Fresh Guard

Due to the variation in silages and reports of higher mycotoxin loads there is a greater risk of aerobic spoilage of the ration at feed out. The first signs of this are the ration heating, usually accompanied by distinct off odours. When this occurs, the most digestible and valuable nutrients are lost first such as sugars and amino acids. Furthermore, due to the production of off odours the ration becomes less attractive meaning increased levels of feed are wasted and dry matter intakes are depressed.



A typical 5% reduction in dry matter due to heating in the TMR can equate to a loss of 1.1kg DM/cow/day significantly reducing animal performance. To help prevent aerobic spoilage consider adding a ration conditioner like **Fresh-Guard**.

**Fresh-Guard** is a cost-effective addition to any bulk ED&F Man molasses blend roughly costing around 3p/cow/day, it has been proven to reduce heating and undesirable microbial activity in TMR's and helps to ensure intakes are maintained in challenging conditions.



## Sheep Feeding this Winter

The wet and cold weather of this winter season has settled in now and during this weather maintaining ewe condition can be a challenge. Dry feeds and forages are necessary during these times. However, a molasses based product can be the ideal complement. Molasses based liquid feeds are unique in their high nutrient density and low substitution rate in the rumen allowing feed intakes to be increased during critical periods. The addition of a liquid feed can help palatise any higher dry matter low sugar silages such as round bales or hay and help achieve good intakes of these forage sources helping the ewe extract more nutrients from forages.

**Potblack** is a 14% crude protein as fed blend which can fit these systems very well where an extra boost of protein can help maintain ewe condition during the winter season.

Alternatively, **Prime 20** can be used to improve ewes' nutritional status and body condition score. Prime 20 is a high sugar, protein blend containing 20% crude protein as fed alongside a source of trace elements and vitamins.



Ewes in late pregnancy are particularly prone to 'twin lamb disease', a metabolic disease arising from the high nutritional demands placed on the ewe within the last two months of pregnancy when 70% of the lamb growth takes place. This results in additional stress for both ewe and farmer at an already busy time of the year. The rule that prevention is better than the cure is particularly true in this situation with only 30% of twin lamb disease cases being treated successfully. By feeding the ewe properly, in terms of both quantity and quality, twin lamb disease can be prevented.

**Sheepmol** and **Sheepmol Plus** are high dry matter, high energy, high sugar blends of cane molasses, glycerine and liquid co-products formulated specifically to feed sheep. The unique mix of energy sources is ideal to promote healthy lamb growth and maintain ewe health. Sheepmol Plus has all the benefits of Sheepmol with the added inclusion of a vitamin and mineral pack to further enhance ewe health. Key benefits include:

- Extra energy boost from feeding sugars and glycerine reduces risk of Twin Lamb Disease
- Ad-lib feeding reduces stress for sheep and saves time for the shepherd
- Highly palatable and improves intake and forage digestibility
- Balances variations in grazing/forage quantity and quality
- Easy and convenient to store, handle and feed

Post-lambing liquid feeds can also help to support good quality milk production from the ewe.

## Feeding Guidelines

Molasses based liquid feeds are unique in having a low substitution rate allowing feed intakes to be increased or maintained in late pregnancy when rumen space is restricted. ED&F Man's sheep liquid feed range can be fed to sheep either top dressed, free access via a wheel or ball feeder, or fed as part of a mix. Typical feed rates of 250-300 grams/ewe/day.

## Transport

Through the challenges of the last 12 months, our transport and customer service teams have been working hard to ensure great levels of service are maintained. We have also been working to measure and reduce the environmental impact of our trucks. Fuel prices have firmed over the last few months and in general we are seeing transport costs increase - be assured we are doing everything we can to keep any increases to a minimum. To help maintain our high levels of service we ask our customers to give us as much lead time as possible especially in the run up to Christmas.



## Sustainability

ED&F Man have been continuing to work on making our business more sustainable and reducing our environmental impact. We have recently achieved ISO14001 certification. ISO 14001 is the leading international standard for environmental management systems (EMS). This certification helps to control all environmental aspects of our business, reduce impacts and ensure legal compliance. The ISO14001 certification moves our business along the road of continuous improvement and better environmental control.



8 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals cover both 'mitigation of environmental impacts' and 'adaptation to changes in the environment' - both covered by ISO14001 and making it a perfect fit in ED&F Man's Sustainability Strategy.

UK livestock production must move quickly to be more sustainable and climate friendly, feeding a molasses based liquid feed can help encourage sustainable practices in several ways:

- Reduce feed waste
- Increase rumen efficiency and fibre digestion
- Allow better use of all feeds
- Help improve soil fertility - we offer a range of soil nutritional products - contact us for more information

## ReguSmart 27

The Essential Ingredient

**NEW Amino Acid Enhanced Molasses Blend: ReguSmart 27**

A new amino acid enhanced blend combining the proven benefits of molasses, regulated release protein and methionine can help farmers drive production from home grown forages and improve cow performance as well as nitrogen and feed efficiencies. **ReguSmart27** is the latest high dry matter, protein liquid feed with 53% sugars, 27% crude protein alongside 9.25g/kg of digestible methionine and is formulated to be fed at 1.4kg/head/day. ReguSmart 27 can be used to support higher levels of milk constituents for those on manufacturing contracts or used to reduce overall levels of protein in the ration without impacting on performance and helping to achieve sustainability targets.

Around 85% of UK dairy diets are deficient in the amino acid **methionine**. Correct supplementation can have a positive effect on cow performance and efficiency. Molasses based liquid

feeds are well known for improving dry matter intakes, milk constituents, fibre digestion and rumen function. Combining these benefits with a proven source of methionine in the form of MetaSmart has created a practical and easy way to deliver the methionine needed to help cows perform to their potential.

Preliminary trial results from the University of Reading show that 1.4kg of ReguSmart 27 can reduce dietary crude protein (CP) by 500g/day, the equivalent to 1kg of soya! The farm diet was originally 17.5% CP but with the addition of ReguSmart 27, this diet could be reformulated to 15.8% CP which improved nitrogen use efficiency by 6.6% as well as significantly reducing milk urea, and feed costs fell by 10p/cow/day.

If you would like to know more about this product and how it can work for you, contact your local merchant, ED&F Man commercial manager or Adisseo.



## Supporting Sales

ED&F Man is one of the few animal feed businesses that has an ongoing R&D program. This has led to numerous peer reviewed publications appearing in British Society of Animal Science, The Journal of Dairy Science and many others. We are also actively working to promote the results from our trial work to highlight the benefits of using our products. This has generated a lot of media coverage in publications such as Dairy Farmer, British Dairying, Cow Management, Beef Farmer and Sheep Farmer. If you would like more details on any of this please contact us.



## Out & About

It has been great to attend a number of key trade events and meet customers and suppliers in person. We have recently attended:-

**Dairy Day UK** 12th September, Telford

**South West Dairy Show** 2nd October, Shepton Mallet

**Borderway Agri Expo** 28th October, Carlisle

**AgriScot** 22nd November Ingliston, Edinburgh

Looking forward to 2024 we will be at:  
**Dairy Tech** 7th February, Stoneleigh



## Why not try our coffee break Wordsearch...

S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y	EFFICIENCY
E H O R P D A O A K F R I I	MOLASSES
D Q A V C R W P U E R E F E	SHEPMOL
T R S P D P Y Z S W E G U F	SUSTAINABILITY
P A O F I H W F T U S U A F	FRESHGUARD
P R O T E I N I O F H S M I	PROTEIN
M O L A S S E S G P G M E C	SILAGE
P G P E M S E S U M U A P I	METHIONINE
S I L A G E H U A S A R D E	REGUSMART
M E T H I O N I N E R T A N	SUGAR
U Y T A S P L S M I D I C C	
S U G A R S H E E P M O L Y	

## Want to know more?

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