



Summer 2026

## Market Update

- Global Geopolitics
- Market S&D
- Weather and Climate Impacts

Given world events it's not surprising that we are seeing global feed commodities firming in price. We have seen wheat and soya prices rise considerably and molasses is not immune from this. The situation in the Gulf has impacted on global markets in a number of ways. The most obvious one is increased fuel prices adding significant costs to both global ocean freight and local logistical costs as well as production costs. This has been compounded by changes in currency and global supply policies which is resulting in countries looking to increase renewable energy production to offset the oil market volatility. The net effect is more feed materials going into ethanol production and biogas. On top of these politically and economically driven impacts we are also seeing more "normal" market factors having an effect. With global sugar prices depressed we are seeing a reduction in sugar planting which will have a knock-on effect on molasses supply pushing prices upwards. We are also seeing predicted global weather patterns likely to impact on crop production. El Niño is predicted to have a significant impact in Asia and the Americas with dry weather likely to affect crop yields. On top of all of these challenges we are seeing big increases in fertiliser prices and concerns around availability which may lead to reduced usage and subsequent reductions in crop yield leading to higher prices.

### Popularity Grows

We continue to see the use of molasses based liquids on farm grow, as both livestock farmers and nutritionists recognise the value they provide. Last summer in particular we saw a large increase in demand for our products with the long dry weather taking its toll on forage availability leading to the increased used of straw. The use of high protein options such as **Regumix** and **Regupro 38 & 50** was very popular and allowed many livestock farmers to get through the forage challenge.

## Feed Efficiency – Key to Maximising Profits this Summer!

Home grown feeds whether it be forages, grass, hay or silage, or home-grown cereals are the cheapest feedstuffs available on farm and producers should look to maximise their use, while ensuring feed efficiency and digestion are optimised in order to achieve cost effective animal production. Our three key pillars for making the most of home-grown feeds and increasing feed efficiency are:

### INCREASED FEED EFFICIENCY

Drive Dry  
Matter Intake

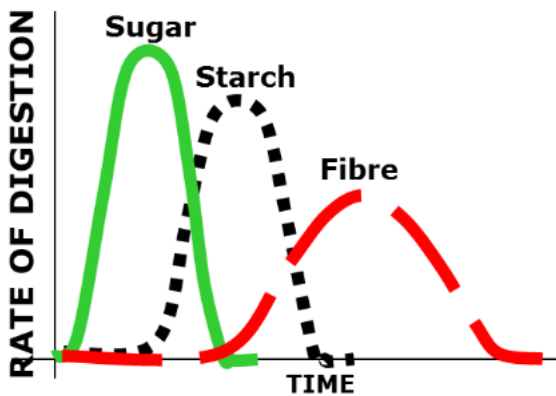
Enhance  
Rumen Function

Improve Ration  
Digestibility

Increasing dry matter intakes, especially of home grown forages and cereals, can be achieved by reducing sorting behaviour, dust levels and increasing the palatability of the total ration. All of these factors can be improved with the addition of a molasses based liquid feed into the ration, with research showing an average dry matter intake increase of 1.1kg/head/day when liquids are added.

Secondly, a healthy rumen environment is key to making the most of forages and cereals, when the rumen pH is healthy, between pH 6.2-6.8, fibre-digesting bacteria thrive and increase the digestibility of feeds. To keep the rumen healthy, it is key that volatile fatty acids (VFA's) are quickly removed and ideally fewer undesirable acids, such as lactic acid, are produced during fermentation. Cereals such as wheat and barley, lead to propionic and lactic acid production in the rumen. Lactic acid is ten times more acidic than the other major rumen volatile fatty acids and is often produced when starch is

in excess in a ration. Therefore, the key to maximising rumen performance is to get the correct balance of all energy sources: sugar, starch and fibre.



Research shows that by replacing a proportion of cereals with a molasses based liquid feed will balance the supply of carbohydrates without the increased risk of sub-acute ruminal acidosis (SARA) from lactic acid production. The added sugars have also been found to help maximise dry matter intake (DMI) and feed efficiency, contributing to higher levels of animal performance.

Finally, improving the digestibility of the fibre in forage is essential. Fibre has the slowest rate of energy release but can make up over 50% of the energy supply in the diet. Some of this fibre will be indigestible, but most can be accessed if the rumen microbes are given the opportunity and 'fuel'.

Rumen microbes often have a 'lag phase' when digesting fibre, so by stimulating the activity of the rumen microbes to begin digestion faster this can help improve the amount of fibre digested in the rumen and increase energy supply. Farm trials found that adding a molasses-based liquid feed to a ration and increasing the sugar levels from 3% to 6% resulted in a 17% increase in total ration digestibility meaning much more energy was being extracted from fibre.

With an increase in use of home-grown cereals this year, it is also important to note that using a molasses-based liquid feed has additional benefits of reducing wastage and dust levels in high cereal diets. A liquid inclusion rate into a cereal-based mix of 5% can significantly reduce dust levels and improve the appearance and shine of finished feed. **DB18** is a bespoke liquid blend designed



specifically for on farm mill and mix systems to improve palatability and intakes, it has been designed with optimal flowability to prevent caking and clogging of machinery to keep systems running. **Highland Blend\*** can also be used, either of these liquids will help add nutrient density and enhance the final mix quality. Remember, reducing dust can benefit both stock and stockman alike!

### Available when you need it!

ED&F Man molasses based liquid feeds are available all year round and all blends including our high protein options are available to contract throughout the summer period. All products are blended to a specification to ensure consistency and reliability on farm. Speak to your local commercial manager for more information or advice on our product range.



## Fresh-Guard

Higher dry matter silages, maize silages and TMR's containing high proportions of moist feeds have a heightened risk of aerobic spoilage when fed 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 intake due to heating in the TMR can equate to a loss of 1.1kg DM/cow/day, or up to 2L/day milk loss, significantly reducing animal performance. To help prevent aerobic spoilage consider adding a ration conditioner such as **Fresh-Guard** to your molasses-based liquid feed. Trial work has shown that a TMR treated with **Fresh-Guard** achieved 1.2kg additional dry matter intake compared to an untreated TMR. This is all extra nutrients to the cow for production, health and reproductive benefits.

**Fresh-Guard** is a cost-effective addition to any bulk ED&F Man molasses blend, proven to reduce heating and undesirable microbial activity in TMR's and helps to ensure intakes are maintained in challenging conditions.

## Robomol

With robotic milking systems continuing to grow in popularity, the use of a robot specific molasses based liquid feed can help increase the efficiency of robotic milking systems. **Robomol** is a highly digestible, high sugar, multi-energy source liquid blend designed specifically for use in robotic milking herds. It is extremely palatable with the addition of a flavouring and is proven to encourage cows to visit the robot and to drive production on farm.

A consultant-led trial across 6 UK farms on 1,300 cows was carried out using **Robomol** either across the full herd, early lactation groups or against a competitor monopropylene glycol + glycerine based product. Across all 1,300 cows an average milk yield increase of 1.5kg was found in the **Robomol** groups. More specifically, in the early lactation group (51-100 DIM) there was an average milk yield increase of 2.1kg when using **Robomol** with one farm gaining a huge 4.2kg milk yield in the early group and 3.4kg in the fresh group (0-50 DIM) with improved rumination and feeding times! Alongside increases in milk yield, there was also increased robot visits and a reduction in refusal numbers.

All of these benefits were also shown to support a reduction in ketosis risk by reducing the number of animals over the 1.4 Fat:Protein ratio. Overall, using **Robomol** resulted in an increased milk yield delivering a 2:1 – 4.5:1 ROI, it also outperformed the competitor product.



But don't just take our word for it! One farmer who participated in the trial is Tom Singleton who farms with his father Richard at Eastwood Farm near Myerscough in Lancashire. Currently there are 220 cows in the herd with 200 in milk at any time, milked through four Lely A5 robots which were installed just over two years ago. The cows are housed as a single milking group and TMR fed to M+25 litres. They were fed to yield in the robots with a 16% dairy compound. They could receive up to 3kg/visit and a maximum dairy total of 12kg.

"Since moving onto the robots the yields have increased from 10,000 litres to close to 11,000 litres per cow, and we are carrying 30 more cows. Visits per day are averaging 3.3 which we are pleased with. We are producing more milk with less staff, and we could not have easily put more cows through the parlour as milkings would have increased to around 10 hours a day," Tom explains. "Milk quality has held up well despite the increased yields at 4.25-4.35% butterfat and 3.35% protein. With the increased production, we were concerned about getting enough energy into early lactation cows. More cows were reaching 50 litres by 14 days in milk, and we were worried that there may be consequences for body condition and fertility. So, we were interested to see how **Robomol** might help."

As the robots were set up to handle liquid feeds the only change needed was the pipework to connect up the IBC. Half the cows were fed **Robomol** while the remainder stayed on the original diet. "We fed 0.5kg of **Robomol** per day which was just trickled onto the dairy compound," Tom explains. "There were no problems getting the cows to take it, so we knew they were getting the extra energy."



Cows that received **Robomol** milked better than the cows that were not supplemented, with higher yields regardless of stage of lactation. In addition to milking better, there were fewer robot refusals among the cows fed **Robomol** meaning cows spent more time eating, lying down and ruminating which will have contributed to better yields. Since completing the trial the Singletons have continued to feed **Robomol** to fresh calvers. All cows are now fed up to 0.5kg/day in the first month of lactation before it is adjusted depending on yields.

"Adding the liquid feed was easy to do and has worked well. It has helped us increase energy supply through the robots and target the cows that need the extra help," Tom concludes.

**Robomol** is recommended at a 0.25-0.5kg feed rate, with the maximum dose per robot visit being limited to 200g. It is available in IBC's, for more information please contact your local commercial manager.

## Arable

With the significant increase in traditional fertiliser prices, the ED&F Man agronomy range is proving even more valuable with its ability to allow reduced nitrogen applications while maintaining crop growth. Our unique range of high-performance, molasses-based agronomy products are designed to offer great results as well as ease of use. With today's increased focus on regenerative agriculture and taking a holistic approach to crop production can you afford not to take a look at **Black label**, **Gold Label**, **Red Label** or **Blue Label**.

Piers Cowling, farm manager of Sparsholt Manor Farms in Oxfordshire, has successfully slashed nitrogen rates by 60kg N/ha with no change in yield thanks to the addition of **Black Label**. The estate had been using liquid fertiliser for many years and were looking for ways to enhance N uptake and make each application kinder to the plant. For the last four years, they have included **Black Label** in all fertiliser tank mixes at 5 litres/ha.

**Black Label** is a molasses-based liquid with a 23% carbon content. It acts as a chelating agent to aid uptake and efficacy of nutrient applications. When mixed with liquid fertilisers, it can minimise the risk of scorch and help balance soil microbial populations, when applied directly to stubble it can also support soil borne bacterial communities.

Tom Perrott, fertiliser specialist at agronomy group Agrii continues that sugar in molasses is a rapidly utilisable energy source for soil microbes. "Adding sugars to soils can increase microbial activity in the rhizosphere, helping to balance soil carbon to nitrogen ratios and promote soil organic matter" Tom explains. This in turn increases mineralisation rates of organic nitrogen from soil bacteria, which makes more nutrients bioavailable to the plant.

This has been evidenced across the soils on the estate where the carbon:nitrogen ratios are noticeably more balanced, with ratios of 10-12:1, which is right where they want it to be. In addition, soil organic matter levels at Sparsholt have increased by 2% since 2018, with levels now in excess of 5%.

For more information please contact Alistair Hugill 07702 876587 [alistair.hugill@edfman.com](mailto:alistair.hugill@edfman.com)



## Events

We are always keen to meet our customers and will be attending a number of events over the summer

- NSA Scotsheep 10th June
- Arable Event 17th June
- UK Dairy Day 16th September



### Want to find out more?

Visit our knowledge hub on the website by scanning the QR code.



### Want to know more?

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