

*Maxed out on Quota?  
Bretts have a 'Nutritional Solution'*

If milk quota is a constraint on your dairy farm you may be thinking of reducing the level of meal feeding, however this may not be the best option. Dropping meal feeding levels excessively is a **damage limitation exercise** – it will lead to a drop in milk supply between now and the end of March but it also hits milk supply for the total lactation and unfortunately it will have a detrimental effect on cow body condition. **Excessive body weight loss and infertility are closely related. If the cow is not to lose too much bodyweight, silage quality (at least 70% DMD) and grass supply must be consistent in quantity and quality, something that is difficult with current weather conditions. Only in exceptional cases would we recommend that a farmer feeds less than 5 Kgs of meal with early lactation cows.** This is not just because we wish to sell more feed - but because the effects of this regime are long lasting on cow performance in terms of milk supply and reproductive performance.

A combination of dropping the level of dietary protein in the concentrate from a typical 18% to a 14% and reducing the feeding level from 7 Kgs to a minimum of 5 Kgs will lead to a decrease of approximately 2.3 litres (0.5 gallons) per day in milk yield. To assist our clients in feeding their herd in such circumstances Bretts have a **specialist cube to reduce milk supply between now and the end of the quota year, but even more importantly, to help minimise bodyweight loss in cows, which will positively influence milk supply for the total lactation and assist with cow fertility later in the spring.** The most detrimental effect to your herd would be to feed a low energy, high protein feed as the high protein encourages milk production and the cow will start to 'milk off her back' leading to thin cows at breeding.

***MAXI BREEDER DAIRY CUBE – The feed for herds with limited quota***

**Brief Description:** A low protein, energy dense (11.2 MJ/kg as fed; 13.0 MJ/Kg DM Basis) cube, specifically formulated for feeding on early spring grass. Fed in conjunction with grass silage, or silage and grass in tandem, this feed is ideal if you are trying to manage early lactation cows in a tight quota regime.

- ◆ **Contains native cereals and digestible fibres**– High energy is vital to maintain cow body condition in early lactation. Recommended feed level of 5- 7 Kgs, depending on forage quality and body condition.
- ◆ **Protein content of 14%** - The reduction in protein helps to stem milk production while at the same time partitioning more energy towards cow body condition.
- ◆ **Includes Protected Minerals (Copper, Zinc) & Sel-Plex Selenium** - A form of minerals which are more available to the animal, and **proven** repeatedly within Irish trials to promote and protect good herd health reducing the incidences of SCC, mastitis, lameness & improvements in fertility.