



## SILAGE KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE AND HOW MUCH YOU HAVE

Now is the time to focus on feed available for the winter ahead. It is critical to assess silage quality and to determine if you have enough silage available.

**Quality** - It is too early to draw any main conclusions, however silage results to date are variable between farms. One farmer had three pits ranging from 21.5% to 33.0% of Dry Matter (DM). It is fair to say that a lot of silage is very dry (close to 30% DM) but unfortunately in many cases the Dry Matter Digestibility (DMD) is less than 70%. With weather conditions deteriorating quickly, silage pits are being opened and we recommend to test silage sooner rather than later to make calculated decisions on concentrate feeding requirements.

If silage is being fed to dry cows, request a mineral analysis on your silage. This is a small price to pay to get ahead of problems such as milk fever, retained cleanings and stillborn calves, all of which are preventable with targeted mineral nutrition and good dry cow management.

**Budget Silage** - Plan for the worst-case scenario of a late spring and having to feed silage for the next 5 months (early November to end of March). If you want to calculate the amount of silage available against stock requirements, please contact any member of the Brett Brothers team.



## ROUGH RULE OF THUMB TO CALCULATE TONS OF SILAGE IN THE PIT

Measure your grass silage pit in feet and multiply the length x breadth x height to give you the volume in cubic feet and divide this by 50 to give you an estimate of tons of fresh silage.

SILAGE REQUIREMENTS PER MONTH DEPENDING ON DM OF SILAGE

Animal Type	Fresh tons of silage/ month at 20% DM silage	Fresh tons of silage/ month at 25% DM silage
Dairy cows	1.6	1.3
Suckler cows	1.4	1.1
Weanlings	0.7	0.56
1-2 year old (in-calf heifer)	1.3	1.0

TABLE 1



## PRODUCT FOCUS

### Brett Brothers Autumn Dairy Boost 15%



With the 1st November behind us, at least 60% of your farm should now be closed off. On many dairy farms, silage is being fed to maintain total DM intake. Our Grass Watch Report shows grass DM of 13% and average protein of 25%. Our new Autumn Dairy Boost 15% contains high levels of barley, oats and maize and is designed to complement low DM, high protein grass alongside good quality silage. Now is a key time to focus on cow body condition, especially with the challenging grazing conditions of late it is important to monitor it. Our 15% protein Autumn Dairy Boost Cube provides 57g (2oz) of Cal Mag in 3kg as an aid to the prevention of grass tetany.

## FARM MINERALS

All livestock require mineral supplementation with silage. Brett Brothers have a range of minerals available, please discuss requirements with a member of the Ruminant Support team.

**Brett's PIP Dry Cow Minerals** are specifically formulated to meet the requirements of the dry cow, taking into consideration that silage is generally low in copper, selenium and iodine. Our **PIP Dry Cow Mineral** is fortified with high levels of vitamin E which boosts immunity and vitamin D3 which helps calcium regulation and the prevention of milk fever at calving. Dry cow minerals are crucial to ensuring that pregnant cows get the appropriate mineral and nutritional components for a successful calving and stress-free start to lactation. The incidence of problems such as retained cleanings, milk fever and stillborn calves can be reduced greatly if cows receive appropriate dry cow nutrition. It is essential that minerals are fed to ensure all cows get the correct amount, so if feeding space is limited, we suggest feeding minerals twice per day. For a dry cow management brochure, please visit our website [www.brettbrothers.ie](http://www.brettbrothers.ie) or contact your Brett Brothers Sales Rep.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCT AND FEEDING LEVELS  
DEPENDING ON SILAGE QUALITY AND ANIMAL TYPE

Silage Quality	Recommended Brett Brothers Feed	72% DMD	68% DMD	64% DMD
<b>Weanlings and store cattle</b>	Heifer Rearer or Weanling Cube 18% Surethrive Cubes 16% Beef Grower Cubes 16%	1.0kg	2.0kg	3.0kg
<b>Finishing Steers/heifers (depends on breed, carcass spec required)</b>	Eurobeef Cubes 15% Beef Elite Cubes 14% Beef Crunch 16% Coarse Beef 14%	5.0kg	6.0kg	7.5kg
<b>Finishing Bulls</b>	Beef Elite 14% Coarse Beef 14% Bull Beef Ration 12%	7.5kg	Ad Libitum	Ad Libitum

TABLE 2

## WHAT TO FEED WEANLINGS AND BEEF CATTLE?

Farmers will always ask the question what to feed and how much, but it really does depend on silage quality and the target for livestock. For example, for spring born weanlings, the target daily weight gain is a minimum of 0.7kg/day. Silage of 60% DMD will only maintain weight, while silage of 72% DMD will give approximately 0.4kg of weight gain per day, over half of the daily target.

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