



BRETT'S FEED FORUM 2020

Thank you to all our customers that attended our recent Feed Forums. We had an excellent turnout with over 250 attending the two events. This month, we will recap on the key messages from the events.



OPTIMISING PERFORMANCE IN 2020

The key to maximising output is a healthy, fertile and productive cow with a healthy calf. Optimising grass in the system, while not underfeeding the cow in early lactation is the cornerstone of good fertility and the aim is to minimise body condition loss in the first six weeks after calving. Two of the most common problems in freshly calved cows relate to milk fever and retained cleanings. If you have an incidence of 5% or greater of either of these problems, talk to your Brett Sales Rep and we will work through these issues to identify a solution.



MILK FEVER

Milk fever occurs close to calving or within the first few days of a cow starting its lactation period, due to a reduced concentration of blood calcium known as Hypocalcaemia. This metabolic disease is more prominent in herds with a high degree of jersey genetics, cows calving with excess body condition and older cows. Milk fever can lead to issues such as a reduction in milk yields, calving difficulties, mastitis, metritis, poor fertility and retained cleanings. Prevention is paramount, consider body score condition (3-3.25) prior to calving and the feeding nutritional requirement for your herd.

COMMON CAUSES FOR RETAINED CLEANINGS

Under normal circumstances, the afterbirth should be expelled within 24 hours after calving. If not, there are several factors linked to incidences of retained cleanings; a poor immune system due to a lack of vitamins and trace minerals, twin calves where the uterus becomes weak, over conditioned cows, and calcium and phosphorus deficiencies.

If you have an issue with retained cleanings, please contact one of our technical team as it can be prevented with appropriate mineral nutrition. Feeding a highly palatable post calving drink such as Reviva can also help to reduce the incidence of retained cleanings.



EARLY LACTATION FEEDING

Concentrate feeding levels should not be set in stone but reactive to herd demand, weather, silage quality and grass intakes. The table opposite outlines recommended feeding levels depending on forage available and milk yield. Do not overestimate grass dry matter (DM) intakes, freshly calved cows must transition to grass slowly, and silage should still be part of the diet in order to achieve good DM intakes. When the cow calves, feed 2kg of the Brett's Dairy Cube. On the first day of milking, feed 2kg morning and evening in the parlour, increasing gradually to reach 3kg morning and evening by day 8.

FEBRUARY SPECIAL OFFER

Get two bags FREE with every 1 tonne order of Gold Start Calf Milk Replacer placed this February

PRODUCT FOCUS

Gold Start Calf Milk Replacer

At Brett's we have launched our own brand of Calf Milk Replacer, Gold Start. Gold Start is a carefully formulated milk replacer, containing 24% protein, 18% oil and includes whey protein concentrate in an easy mixing formula, suitable for bucket feeding and automatic feeders. The product is tailored to suit twice a day feeding and, with good management, can be fed once per day after day 28. The unique nutritional pack included in Gold Start is identical to Brett's Ultra Calf Feed.



RECOMMENDED CONCENTRATE SUPPLEMENTATION

| Forage Available | Recommended Dairy Cube | Milk Yield | | |
|--|--|------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | 22 Litres | 26 Litres | 30 Litres |
| Indoors full-time on 70% DMD Silage | Milkwell 18% Milk Max 18% | 6.5kg | 7.5kg | 8.5kg |
| Grass by day (6kg DM) Adlib 70% DMD silage by night | Milkwell 18% Milk Max 18% PIP Spring Dairy 16% Ultra Dairy 16 | 5.5kg | 6.5kg | 7.5kg |

If the quality of Grass Silage is 65% DMD, increase feeding levels by 1kg/cow/day

This table gives an approximate guideline, for detailed recommendations contact your Ruminant Support Specialist

THE 5 'Cs' OF SUCCESSFUL CALF REARING

Colostrum: remember the 1,2,3 rule; the first feed of colostrum should be within the first 2 hours of birth and a minimum of 3 litres

Comfort: calves need a dry, draught free, warm bed with plenty of straw and good ventilation

Consistency: feed calves at the same time each day and ensure milk replacer is measured accurately

Cleanliness: all milk feeding equipment must be washed daily and anyone visiting the calf shed should have clean boots dipped in disinfectant

Calories: calves require half of their daily feed to maintain condition, keep them warm and functioning, and the other half for daily growth

Brett Brothers Ltd.,
Callan, Co. Kilkenny
Tel: 056 7755300

Brett Brothers Ltd.,
Windgap, Co. Kilkenny
Tel: 051 648204

Brett Brothers Ltd.,
Ardfinnan, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 052 7466208

Brett Brothers Ltd.,
Portlaw, Co. Waterford
Tel: 051 387396