

Newsletter JUNE 2021



Sulphur – To Apply or Not Apply

By Aisling Claffey - (B.Agr.Sc., Ph.D.) – Ph: 086 0317483

FACT- Only 20% of recent grazed samples analysed that we have analysed in Offaly and Westmeath were in the target range for Sulphur of 0.2-0.25%!

Sulphur is an essential element for all crops and farm animals, because it is an important component of protein and therefore has a wide range of functions in both plants and animals.

However, there is a very fine line between satisfying an animal's requirement for Sulphur, and over doing supply to the extent to which it can start having a detrimental effect on animal health. The optimum range for Sulphur within the dairy cow is between 0.2-0.25% of Dry Matter (DM) intake. Above 0.3% it can pose a challenge to the availability of other nutrients and above 0.4% it is toxic to the rumen.

Sulphides produced in the rumen are used by rumen microbes for microbial protein synthesis. Excess Sulphides can lock up other elements and also produce Hydrogen Sulphide gas within the rumen in extreme circumstances. This is the same toxic gas we associate with slurry and it can be extremely damaging to the microbial population in the rumen, thereby impeding intake, digestion, and feed conversion efficiency (FCE).

The high Molybdenum levels we encounter in grass and forages of many of our customers can severely interfere with Copper availability. Copper is essential to energy metabolism and fertility. High levels of Sulphur make this problem worse.

The only way to truly identify Sulphur levels, is to assess the mineral content of the herbage from differing soil types within your farm and use these results to guide decision making with regards to a requirement for Sulphur in your fertiliser program. This will also identify if Molybdenum is a challenge to your herd. Soil Molybdenum levels do not truly reflect actual herbage levels because high pH, low soil temperatures and anaerobic conditions can all increase Molybdenum uptake by the plant.

The optimum time to take these herbage samples is in the second/ third grazing rotations. Historically speaking, mid-summer is when many people apply the bulk of their Sulphur fertiliser. So now is the time to get a true picture to see if Molybdenum is a problem on your farm and if you need this Sulphur or not.

Contact the J. Grennan & Sons team to discuss this service today!



4 WAY COPPER BUCKETS

20Kg Molassed Mineral
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For all Calves, Weanlings, Beef Cattle and Cows, but particularly suitable for livestock grazing on High Molybdenum / High pH / Low Copper / Peaty Soils.

This bucket is unique, because it delivers high levels of four different forms of Copper. In addition 40% of the total Copper in this bucket is Protected Copper. This means it will not be mopped up in high Molybdenum situations and will remain available to the animal.

Total Copper content is set at the maximum level allowable i.e. 3500 mg/kg.

There are very few, if any, other mineral buckets currently available on the Irish market, with such high Copper levels. For our own stock we were unable to source any mineral bucket that delivered the quantities and quality of Copper we required - that is why we have introduced this one.



Call us today on 057-9133002

The Cost of Acidosis at Grass in Dairy Cows

By *Shane Gonoude* - (B.Agr.Sc) – Ph: 087 646 6707

& *Aideen Fleury* - (Bsc.VN/RVN) – Ph: 057 91 33585

Subacute ruminal Acidosis (SARA) remains the most economically important digestive disorder among Irish dairy farms. SARA is caused by the high accumulation of volatile fatty acids (VFA) in the rumen. It is an important issue for all Spring calving herds because these cows are in early to mid-lactation when grass growth peaks and the risk of acidosis is at its highest.

Clinical Acidosis is defined as occurring when the pH of the rumen falls below 5.5. This is often caused by the consumption of low fibre, rapidly fermentable grazed or zero grazed grass. Inconsistent feeding times within the day and individual cow behaviour can further contribute to SARA.

In a study conducted by UCD in 2007, over 140 cows were sampled for SARA between day 80 and 150 of their lactation. 53% of the cows were affected by SARA, highlighting the fact that Acidosis is prevalent in grazing Irish dairy cattle. This study raised serious questions regarding effective pasture utilisation and the possible consequences for cow health. health (O'Grady et al., 2007).

Among other things SARA results in the slowdown of rumination, thereby suppressing appetite, and production potential. SARA can be self-perpetuating in certain circumstances and so can

become a long-term issue with some cows/herds if left untreated.

Other signs of SARA include

- Reduced feed intake
- Reduce milk yield
- Reduce milk solids
- Reduced cud chewing
- Poor body condition, weight loss and unexplained diarrhoea
- Liver abscesses and increased culling rates
- Temperature, pulse rate and respiratory rate may increase
- Lethargy and sore feet (Laminitis)

From an economic perspective, SARA has been estimated to cost on average €277/cow/year (O'Grady & Ryan, 2006).

It is vitally important to get the correct balance between maximising nutrient intake from grass and maintaining optimum rumen pH. This can only be achieved by feeding the correct balance of fibre, forage, concentrates and buffers.

Contact us today for more information.



Economics of Meal Feeding Calves at Grass

By Joe Naughton (B.Agr.Sc) – Ph: 086 145 2586

There are many advantages of meal feeding calves at grass; better live weight gain, healthier calves, easier handling, continuous mineral supplementation, heavier calves at housing and less setbacks due to variable grass quality and unpredictable weather conditions.

In addition, young calves have a very high feed conversion rate. Calves have potential to deliver a feed conversion efficiency (FCE) of 3 to 1 (3 kg of feed dry matter creates one kilogram of live weight gain) compared to a 24-month old steer or heifer with a FCE of 10 to 1. We must target an average daily live weight gain of 700 - 800grams for calves on grass. This can be achieved via good grassland management, good parasite control and feeding meal at 1-2kg per day.

Example...

• Feeding 1kg of meal for 150 days from 1st of June to 1st of November. If we take calf/weanling meal at €340/t, cost per calf is approx. €50 over this period.

• If the calf grows at .75kg/day over the 150 days instead of .5kg/day it will be 37.5kg heavier at housing.

• This equates to €80- €90 extra carcass value on that calf, i.e. a good return on investment.

• In addition, calves supplemented at grass usually get to target weights 75 days earlier than non supplemented calves with the above taken into consideration.

So, this summer, consider using Grennan's Turbo Graze or Early Graze Calf nuts to maximize calf performance at grass.



Fodder Crop Options

By Paul Mooney (B.Agr.Sc) – Ph: 086 353 2342

We all know the pros and cons of fodder crops. If we get the right conditions, they can be a major benefit and cost saving on farms but if we get a very wet winter like the one gone by, they can be difficult.

To get the most from your fodder crop, it is important that these crops get a good start and are looked after once sown. Like any crop, be it cereals, beet etc, they need to be sown and fertilised correctly. An important consideration when sowing any crop from now on is to take great care not to allow the seed bed dry out during cultivation i.e. frequently rolling is a must.

There is a large range of fodder crops available each with their own pros and cons

Talk to us today to see what might best suit your needs.



We are major players in the Irish farm polythene & crop packaging area.

We offer all of the highest quality brands competitively priced.

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Introducing the New

Terra Range from

FOR MORE SUSTAINABLE FARMING

THE FACTS:

1. Target Fertilisers have now developed Terra, a new range of fertiliser products that are treated with a bio-stimulant PSI 362 which increases Nitrogen uptake and utilisation within the plant by 20-25%.
2. Terra is a completely natural product with no harmful residues. It has major potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on farm.
3. On farm trials have shown that Terra enables you to reduce Nitrogen applications by 20-25%, without incurring any yield loss.



Target Fertilisers Terra Product Range

<i>Adjust application rates based on slurry application</i>	N	P	K	S	Recommended Rate
TerraCAN + S	22	0	0	3	1 - 1.5 bags/acre per grazing
TerraGRAZE + S	22	0	5	3.5	1 - 1.5 bags/acre per grazing
TerraCUT + S	20	2	12	2	4 bags/acre on 1st cut silage



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