



PLANET COMPOUNDS HELP GET THE MOST FROM GRASS

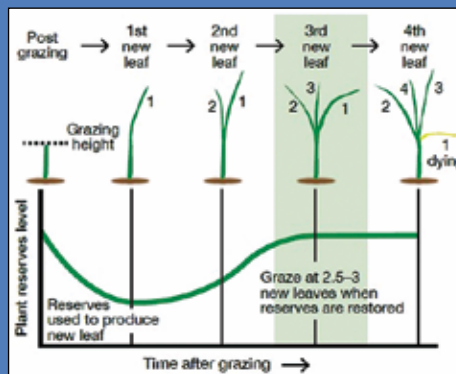
If you want to maximise performance at grazing, you need to select the right supplementary feed to compliment grass. The Planet Dairy range will not only help you get the most from grass but also help reduce your carbon footprint.

Dairy farmers need to focus on several key areas at turnout to maintain margins. The first is to make sure milk price is maximised by maintaining high milk quality.

The second is achieving the maximum contribution from grazed grass. This does not mean turning cows out and stopping supplementary feeding or feeding a low specification feed. It means supplementing grazing both nutritionally and cost-effectively, providing the nutrients to balance those in grass.

These have been grazing objectives for many years, but now we are seeing a new challenge. Milk buyers want suppliers to produce milk more sustainably, looking closely at feed efficiency and reducing carbon footprint.

To get the best from grazing it is essential to ensure grass is managed to deliver high yields of young, digestible and high quality grazing. To help maintain quality, turn cows into paddocks when the grass cover is around 2700kgDM/ha, taking them out when they have grazed down to 1500kgDM/ha.



Here is where an empty beer can, can become a valuable management aid! Move the cows in when the grass is as high as a beer can standing upright in a field, moving them out when grass gets to the height of the beer can on its side.

Look to achieve a dry matter intake from grazing of 12-14kg per cow per day and then supplement carefully to achieve the target total dry matter intakes and complement grazed grass, which is not a perfectly balanced feed for dairy cows.

No soya or palm

Our Dairy is an ideal supplement for grazing cows. It is a feed containing no soya meal, soya hulls, palm oil, palm kernel or C16 fat. All ingredients are sourced with the minimum possible food miles. The blend of ingredients will help cows perform as well as possible at grass.

We use barley, sugar beet pulp and wheatfeed to give high energy with a balance of starch and fibre energy sources for effective rumen function. While wheat gluten, beans, wheat distillers and sunflower give a good balance of proteins to complement grazing.

To help improve protein utilisation and reduce nitrogen waste, Planet Dairy contains Novatan, an essential oil which helps reduce the consequences of high milk urea when high protein grass is being grazed. If milk urea levels rise, the cow must use energy to excrete it, costing energy that she could have used for milk production. We have had a lot of success with Novatan in our other grazing feeds and so are confident it will deliver great results in Planet Dairy.

Keeping butterfats up at grazing can be a challenge. High oil levels in the diet can depress butterfat percentage as the rumen bugs cannot digest fibre in the rumen with excessive levels of oil. Low included oil levels in the Planet Dairy range help to reduce the level in the overall diet when cows are on spring grass which contains high oil levels.

Grazed grass is widely known as an unreliable source of minerals so the Planet Dairy range contains our FiMLAC mineral premix, specifically formulated to contain balanced levels of trace minerals with high levels of bio-availability to help maintain fertility, health, and production at grass.

With global feed cost volatility, making more of grazed grass this year will be more important than ever to help you take control of costs. Planet Dairy will help your cows produce to their potential at grass and help reduce carbon footprint too.

For more information, talk to your Feed Specialist.



Steve Jones
Feed Specialist
07976 562 667



Farming thoughts

As I write this, 50% of the adult population have had their first dose of Covid vaccine. Hopefully, if the rate of vaccination continues and supplies are unaffected, the country will start to open up during the summer, so we can enjoy some much-needed networking.

Here at Harpers, we are encouraging all our staff to have the vaccine so that they will be protected along with their families and friends, their work colleagues and you, our customers.

Carbon footprint and Sustainability

When things start to get back to normal, consumers, retailers and processors will be heavily focusing on carbon foot printing and sustainability of food production, particularly meat and dairy products.

I have had a team working behind the scenes on this throughout the pandemic, looking at how we can help customers reduce their carbon footprint. Our Planet Range of feeds, containing no palm or soya products, lends itself to the grazing and spring platform, helping deliver a more sustainable approach to feeding ruminant livestock.

We are already sourcing sustainable soya credits to supply all Rodda's producers as of 1st April 2021.

Our beef team are working with Exeter University and the Ruby Red Devon cattle society to investigate net zero Ruby Devon beef. There is a gap in the market to promote grass finished beef and to promote the value of grazed and conserved grass in absorbing carbon while delivering nutritional benefits to livestock. I will keep you up to date with the findings.

I have had many conversations recently regarding selling stock whilst the values are so good. I am a firm believer in 'little and often'. I would keep picking, finishing, and culling whilst the values are so good.

Pricing

Unfortunately, feed prices will increase from 1st May 2021 for four months until we get new crop cereals. Hopefully, we will see prices coming down 1st September 2021 before next autumn.



Glen Johns
Sales Director
07831 725 779

harpers@harpersfeeds.co.uk

GRAINS AND STRAIGHTS UPDATE

The market has finally lost the momentum from the early part of the year. However, ingredient prices still remain expensive and are likely to continue this way until we see new crop wheat later this year.

Prices are currently riding on the back of the wheat price and with the lack of forward purchases we are likely to see spot premiums and tight spot supplies as shippers will be nervous to bring large shipments in to store.

Old crop wheat is trading at around £40/t higher than new crop, so every cereal grower in the country will have their stores empty at the end of the season. For once old crop wheat in the south is more plentiful than other regions in the UK and is travelling north and east, hence it being a discount in the south west. Old crop barley remains in short supply and export demand is still apparent. The gap has narrowed between wheat and barley and is now more like £30/t, down from £45/t where it has been for the majority of the season.

Recently it was announced that the Viverno ethanol plant will re-open in the spring of 2022. At capacity the plant will use one million tonnes of wheat per annum and produce around 300,000 tonnes of wheat distillers.

Global stocks of wheat remain the highest they have been, and essentially wheat prices have been inflated by maize prices. It's only really the UK that has a tight balance sheet.

Global stocks of maize and soya are at the lowest for around five years, so we don't want to lose any major production this year. With funds holding long positions on major commodities, prices are unlikely to fall dramatically until they sell. The main question is when will this be?

The South American harvest is progressing well, with Brazil predicted to produce a record 134 million tonne of soya and Argentina slightly below average at 47.5 million tonnes.

The new crop soya on the way has made soya hulls look attractive for the summer and are a huge discount of around £50/t compared to sugar beet. With the EU and UK sugar beet crop around 25% down, availability is low.

If you would like to discuss any of these matters, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Andrew Davies
Operations Director
01409 254 300

CHECK LIST FOR SILAGING PREPARATION

With spring fast approaching and grass showing signs of life, its time to plan for 2021 silage making if you have not already done so.

- Prepare fields by rolling them. Do not forget to deal with moles if they are a problem.
- Check and improve sward quality, you may need to stitch in new seeds. While too late for first cuts this will improve further cuts.
- Repair and clean silos
- Clean silage pit and remove old silage and pressure wash the walls.
- Empty effluent tanks and clean effluent channels and pipes
- Repair and service all silage making equipment including all tractors, forager, trailers, mowers, tedder and rowers and buck rake.
- If you haven't spoken to your contractor yet, speak to them now and agree dates. Tell them in advance your wants and needs that you have. Remember you are the customer!
- Order silage sheets in plenty of time including oxygen barrier, black sheets, and top weighting sheets such as Galebreaker. Don't forget Harpers Farm Supplies will deliver with plenty of notice given.
- Order your silage inoculants, take advantage of the early order discounts and give us a fighting chance to get them to you in plenty of time.

When it comes to silaging, I have just a few reminders.

- Pre-cut Testing- Please ask your feed specialist to test nitrates, NDF and sugars.
- Cut grass when the dew has dried off and sugars are well up so preferably after noon.
- Spread grass out as soon as possible to give more drying ability.
- Target: Pick up when grass dry matter is between 28-32% DM
- Simple Test: Wring grass out on very little or no juice seen.
- Pick up grass and deliver to the pit only as fast as the buck rake operator can handle it. Roll continuously.
- At the end of each day, or on a weather pause, cover the clamp.
- When finished, clamp is rolled, covered and weighted down. Please do not forget to fence off to prevent stock getting on the clamp.



Keith Callender
Feed Specialist
07880 406 213

harpers@harpersfeeds.co.uk

CARBON FOOTPRINTING MUST BE BALANCED

We are working with Cornwall Grassland Society to challenge the current formulas for carbon foot printing.

Current carbon calculators take no account of the amount of CO₂ taken out of the atmosphere by grass and cereal crops which is then photosynthesised into oxygen and glucose. All the expert speakers during AHDB's carbon week in early March avoided this issue.

If producers are to be accountable for carbon usage and emissions levels, they must also be credited with the amount of CO₂ that grass and crops take out of the atmosphere.

This process of respiration should be measured to go with the level of sequestration, the process of storing carbon in soil and roots. The two levels should be added together on the credit side of any carbon calculator. This is important as a hectare of grass yielding 10t DM/ha stores 4.5t carbon and produces 4.5t oxygen per year.

Also, a balanced carbon calculation will include organic matter returned to the soil either in the form of farmyard manure or after digestion by cattle or sheep. A carbon calculator should look like this.

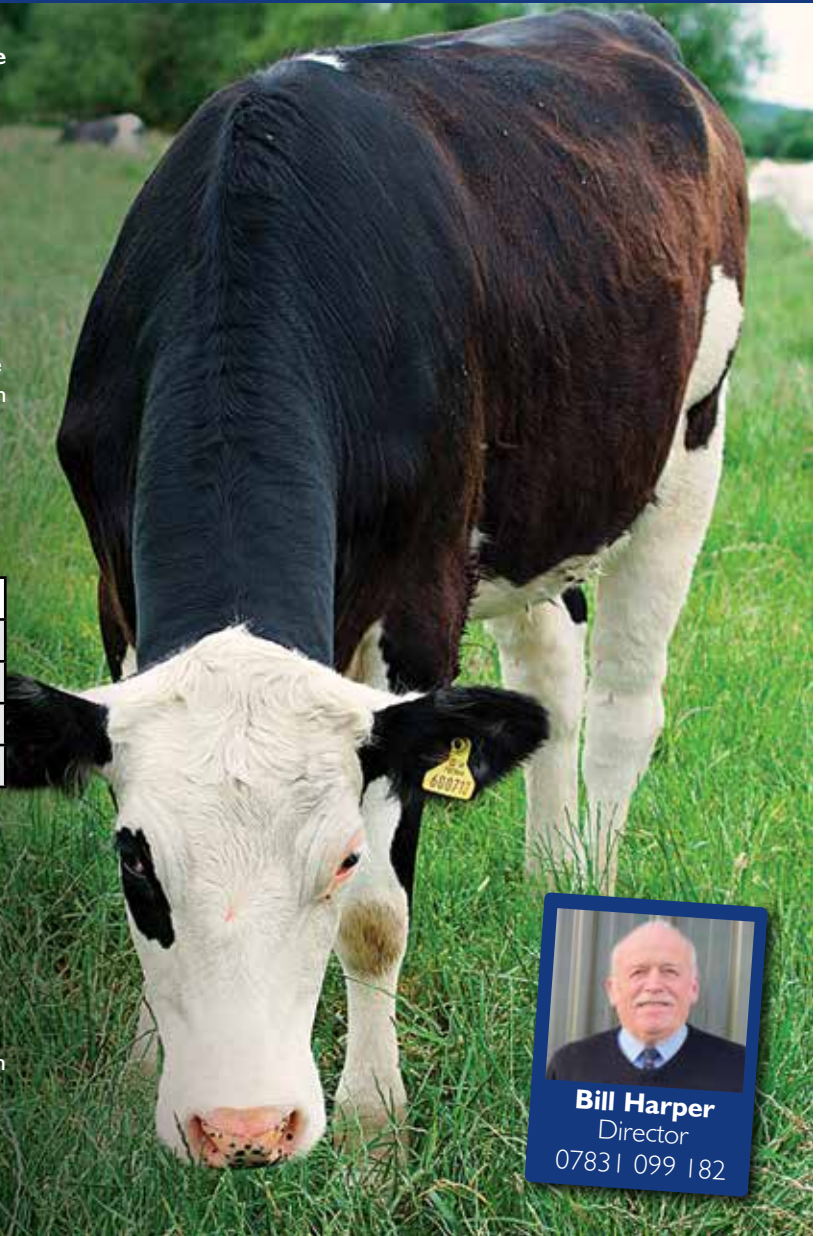
Negative	Positive
Fertiliser	Sequestration
Fuel	Respiration use of CO ₂
Purchased Feed	Production of Oxygen
GHG Emissions in CO ₂ equivalents	Return of organic matter

The consumer needs to know the full story of the removal of CO₂ from the atmosphere, the production of oxygen and grass growth to feed our animals producing meat and milk.

We are fortunate here at Harpers Feeds to have agriculture undergraduate, Joe Routly helping us along with Alex Cornish who has experience in this area. Both are working hard to highlight the issues that our farming customers are not being assessed fully, particularly on the credit side of carbon foot printing. We need figures for CO₂ captured by our growing plants, oxygen production from photosynthesis and a credit allowance for organic matter returned back to the land.

We will continue to campaign on your behalf.

For more information, please contact the office.



Bill Harper
Director
07831 099 182

TIME TO PLAN FOR INOCULANTS

In the next few weeks the forage harvesters will be out in force as first cut gets underway, so now is the time to start planning your silage inoculant needs.

Silage inoculants play two important roles in forage production by encouraging a fast and efficient fermentation to ensure a higher quality feed and by helping reduce waste.

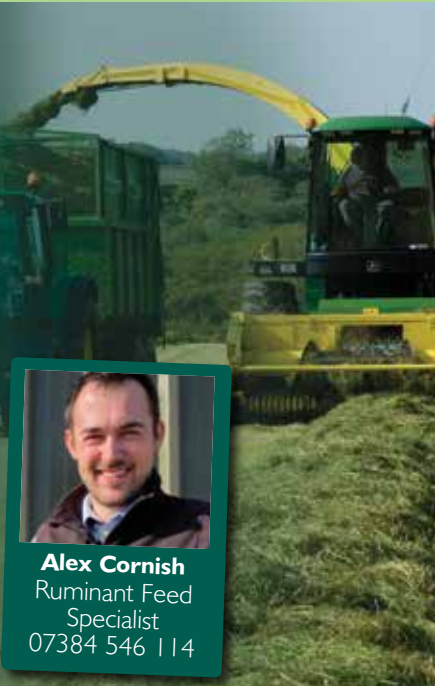
It is usually quoted that around 15% of the harvested dry matter can be lost as a result of inefficient fermentation and by aerobic spoilage once the clamps are open. The financial advantages of steering an effective fermentation and reducing spoilage can be considerable.

By applying specific populations of beneficial bacteria, inoculants will promote a rapid drop in pH required to achieve an effective and stable lactic acid fermentation. The faster the pH drop is achieved, the high feed value the silage will be.

Your choice of inoculant will be largely determined by the dry matter of the silage being made. With lower dry matter grass the focus is on a rapid fermentation, but drier crops are more prone to heating and waste therefore need a different combination of bacteria to ensure a good fermentation and improved stability. So this is why we recommend the Magniva crop and condition specific range of inoculants from Lallemand Animal Nutrition.

For low dry matter grass, especially if conditions at harvest are a bit variable, Magniva Platinum Grass Wet delivers a rapid fermentation while for drier grass and crops harvested in good conditions Magniva Platinum Grass Dry which contains a unique combination of bacteria will ensure a fast and efficient fermentation with improved stability at feed out.

Talk to your Feed Specialist about choosing the right inoculant to ensure you have a top quality feed for next winter.



Alex Cornish
Ruminant Feed Specialist
07384 546 114

AN APPRECIATION OF CHRIS WARE

At the end of April, Chris Ware is retiring from his position as a trusted agent with Harpers Feeds and is going to enjoy a little more time fishing and watching his family grow. He has been a great ambassador for our company over the last 20 years and I am pleased to tell his story of a life spent in agriculture.

Born in Northlew, Chris was a practical lad who left school and followed his family's tradition of farm work at the Adams family's Kimber Farm. Chris learnt all aspects of a mixed farm from milking, rearing calves, tractor driving and harvesting.

At 21, he set up his own farm relief business running up to six sub-contractors with local farms. A change in self-employment rules curtailed this business but it had given him a knowledge of local farms and developed his ability to work with farmers.

His next role was at Ellacott Barton firstly as night milker, then assistant herd manager, then herd manager. Working with good cows and grass nut-based diets, Chris became more interested in nutrition. When the cows were sold, he was asked by the nutritionist, a certain Len Tracey to visit local farms to sell feeds. This was the beginning of a wonderful relationship, with Len providing the nutritional expertise and Chris providing the link with local farmers.

In 1982 Chris had married Andrea and they settled at Crowden and brought up James and Victoria.



In 2000 Len and Chris set up Excell Feeds to ensure full control of the diets they wanted to sell. They placed the manufacturing contract with Harpers Home Mix Ltd and their business grew steadily. Very sadly Len Tracey died in 2001 but Chris carried on the good work.

The whole concept was based on cow/cattle rumen health. Chris has many customers who he has traded with for 20 years and his ability to understand each farms requirements and to fit in with the family structure has made him an invaluable help. He has also immersed himself in helping farmers with the various assurance scheme requirements which, as we all know, is a major undertaking and a real help to busy family farms. You will all be pleased to know Chris has trained his successors and now feels able to leave his business in enthusiastic and capable younger hands.

On a personal note, I consider Chris Ware as a truly trusted friend. In the 20 years we have worked together we have not had a single cross word and we have trusted each other and worked hard together to keep the high standards Len Tracey set out.

We all wish him a long and happy retirement and look forward to keeping in touch.

Bill Harper



County Game Feeds, your first choice for quality game nutrition



Speak to Myles Jones for more information.

T: 01409 254 300
E: harpers@harpersfeeds.co.uk
W: www.harpersfeeds.co.uk



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Harpers Feeds

Waldon Way, Holsworthy Industrial Estate, Holsworthy, Devon EX22 6ER
01409 254 300 | harpers@harpersfeeds.co.uk | www.harpersfeeds.co.uk

