

Adams Advanced Nutrition, Inc.

Doug Adams, PAS
PromiseLand Feed & Seed
9187 Myersville Road
Myersville, Maryland 21773
240-818-8401 or 301-293-8444
E-mail: advadams@verizon.net
WEB: www.rennut.com

Dry Cow Management...

The overall goal of any dairy farm should be to maximize feed intake and increase milk production and bottom line profitability. Good management during the dry cow period provides a foundation for success in lactation. Management goals include:

- ◆ Ensuring adequate nourishment for the developing calf
- ◆ Maintaining optimum body condition score (3.0 to 3.5)
- ◆ Preparing the mammary gland for the next lactation
- ◆ Minimizing digestive, metabolic and infectious diseases

It is important to remember that no one program will fit all farms or even all the cows on the same farm! The dairy producer must rely on skill and knowledge of the herd to properly adjust management programs. Previous milk production, body condition at dry-off, and herd health history all must be considered when putting together a successful dry cow program.

Feeding the Early Dry Cow

During the initial 40 to 50 days of the dry cow period, it is important to address these feeding considerations: a). maintain optimum dietary fiber content; b). limit energy intake; c). avoid overfeeding of crude protein; and d). meet mineral and vitamin requirements. The dry cow ration should provide adequate, but not excessive, amounts of required nutrients. Overfeeding energy or protein should be avoided. Excessive energy intake leads to over-conditioned dry cows, which may increase the incidence of metabolic disorders at calving.

Fiber Requirement During Dry Period

It is recommended that a dry cow ration include 1% or more of body weight as coarse, dry roughage. Low-moisture haylage may replace up to two thirds of this roughage requirement. Ideal roughage sources during the dry period include coarse hays, grass or grass-legume mixtures, straw, and even corn or sorghum stalks when properly supplemented. Limit corn silage to 2% of body weight. This amount equates, for example, to about 25-30 lbs. for Holsteins. If corn silage is fed to lactating cows, including 10-20 lbs. in the dry cow ration, intake and rumen function may improve after calving. Although a cow should eat a minimum of 1% of her body weight as coarse roughage, daily forage dry matter intake should be closer to 1.6 to 1.8 percent of body weight. The total ration of forage and concentrates should contain 80-88% forage dry matter. If the body condition score is low, limit concentrate intake to not more than 0.5% of the cow's body weight. Avoid finely chopped silage or ground hay. Just as in the lactation ration, a chop length of at least 1/2-inch is recommended. Feeding forage of adequate particle length



will help to rehabilitate the rumen epithelium and maintain normal rumen function. Limit legumes in the dry cow ration to less than 1% of body weight, or no more than 30-50% of the forage dry matter intake. Legumes may contain high levels of crude protein, calcium, and potassium. Cows consuming excessive amounts of crude protein, calcium, and potassium are more susceptible to udder

edema, milk fever, ketosis, and downer cow syndrome. Avoid excellent quality forages for dry cows. Dry cows require higher fiber levels (35-50% NDF or more), and high quality forage is best reserved for early lactation cows with high energy requirements.

A well-balanced dry cow ration, combined with good management, can make a difference in the next lactation. I can assist you in reviewing your current program and recommending opportunities that can enhance your herd's productivity and profitability. Prepare your dry cows for a healthy and productive future. The future starts today!

(Edited from an article by Dr. Rick Grant, The Miner Institute, New York; more in the next issue)

Renaissance ~ The Team for Results Year-Round!

To Preserve... or not to Preserve -

Do you use a preservative or inoculant on hay or ensiled forages? Regardless of the growing season, using a preservative can benefit your livestock at feedout. Whether cutting and baling hay, or ensiling haylage, small grain silage or corn silage, this is an effective way to maintain and even improve the nutrient value of your forages. This is an investment in your future ration program. While applying a preservative or inoculant cannot make poor silage much better, it can keep it from getting worse... while helping to make good silage even better! It will soon be time to take the first cutting for hay... and we recommend **FreshStart**[®] - ideal for baled hay! And start planning for the fall harvest today. Get all the facts and see what product is best for you, depending on the forages you have and available equipment. Renaissance offers the best in preservatives and inoculants: BIOTAL and KEMIN, so that there is a product to work in any situation and management style. Call today for assistance!

Interested in discussing topics in this newsletter, or want to do a better job feeding and managing your cows? Call me! My goal is to help you. That's Renaissance's commitment to you!

VOLUME 4 – Number 5 – May 2005

RENAISSANCE...
*20 Years of Quality
Nutrition & Service!*



Plan ahead ~

FOR HEAT STRESS BEFORE IT HAPPENS!

Check with me on ideas and tips that can make a valuable difference this summer: reviewing rations, facilities and programs to help reduce the threat and impact of heat stress on your cows. You'll enjoy the difference... and so will the cows!

Adequate Energy in Rations

**Airflow and/or Sprinklers
for Better Cow Cooling**

Fresh Clean Water at All Times

**Protection from Direct
Exposure to the Sun**

WHAT'S IT LIKE AROUND THE FARM?

Farm safety is everyone's business and it requires constant attention to ensure everyone's well being. Here is a checklist of things to consider:

- ◆ Are the keys removed from all farm equipment when not in use? Maintain a central location for all keys when not in use, along with an identification tag.
- ◆ Do you keep riders off of tractors, wagons and other farm equipment?
- ◆ Are power takeoff (PTO) shields in place on all equipment?
- ◆ Are all other safety shields and guards in place on tractors and machinery?
- ◆ Make sure warning and danger decals are clearly and prominently posted on all farm equipment.
- ◆ Ensure slow-moving vehicle emblems are in place and still reflective. These may fade with age and exposure.

(edited from DAIRY HERD MANAGEMENT, December 2004)

A POINT TO PONDER...

May is here! Soon, children will be out of school and beginning a variety of summer activities. Whether around the farm or when traveling in town, we need to keep in mind that their safety (and ours) is important. Children do not always think before running into or across a street – they just run. Be alert to local speed limits, traffic laws, and children playing along a road or riding bicycles. Don't rush from place to place... and take time to enjoy the opportunities and people around you. Have a safe spring!



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Planting time!

Think nutrition...

Think summer...

Check it out.

