

# News from the Farm Advisory Service:



## Farm Management Handbook 2024/25 is now available!

Read the 45th edition online now!

The Farm Management Handbook is an essential tool for any progressive farm business, providing a comprehensive and up-to-date source of information for farmers, crofters, rural professionals, students and consultants.

To read online or to place an order for a print copy, use the QR code below or visit [www.fas.scot](http://www.fas.scot)



## Cattle mineral supplementation

Throughout the year and production cycle, the cow goes through different phases with varying nutritional requirements depending on her stage of production. An essential part of a cow's diet is minerals, these are important for the animal's growth, productivity, and immunity. It is vital that supplementation of minerals takes place at the correct time and quantity throughout the cycle to ensure that the cow's requirements are met.



When starting to think about mineral nutrition for your cattle, the following three questions are a good place to start.

- Do you need to supplement?
- Which minerals do you need to supplement?
- What is the best supplement for your system?

Mineral nutrition requires careful balancing to ensure that the cow's requirements are met without under or over supply. An undersupply of minerals can cause deficiency in the animal whilst an oversupply can cause toxicity, some minerals have a wider range between deficiency and toxicity than others.

Macro minerals are required in relatively large quantities in the diet of cattle, these macro minerals are vital for bone development and nervous system health. Trace elements are required in small quantities in cattle diets, these trace elements are essential in the animal's growth, immunity, and reproduction. Essential macro minerals for cattle include calcium, phosphorus and sulphur which are the most abundant in the body whilst copper, selenium and iodine are vital trace elements, particularly in fertility.

Diagnostic tests can be completed on forage and grass samples whilst blood sampling can determine if the cattle have a deficiency. Supplementation can be done in a variety of ways depending on what suits your system the best. Depending on the regularity of handling, supplementation can be given as a long term or short-term treatment. There are a variety of options available such as buckets, boluses, drenches, mineralised concentrates or powdered minerals, each method can provide a consistent supply of minerals to your cattle. If you are unsure where to start with mineral supplementation on your farm or croft, please seek advice from your vet or nutritionist to discuss a plan.

*Dr Cara Campbell, SAC Consulting*

To read the full version of this article, please visit: [www.fas.scot/article/cattle-mineral-supplementation/](http://www.fas.scot/article/cattle-mineral-supplementation/)



### Outwintering beef and dairy cattle?

Join us on 6th November for a live webinar on Mineral Requirements for Outwintering Systems. Dr Annie Williams will look at mineral requirements for beef and cattle herds, along with different grazing systems and how seasonal fluctuations can impact mineral availability.

Visit [www.fas.scot/events](http://www.fas.scot/events) for more information

## Free Events



At the Farm Advisory Service we run a range of events both online and in-person.

Visit [www.fas.scot/events](http://www.fas.scot/events) to sign up or contact the advice line and we'll help you get booked on.

### Farm-Scale Renewables Events

Ayr, 4th November, 10:30am - 2:30pm

Kinross, 20th November, 10:00am - 2:30pm

### Sustainable Beef Systems - Easter Howgate Farm

Penicuik, 5th November, 10:00am - 3:00pm

### The Cow of the Future Part 1 - Where Are We Now?

Online, 6th November, 7:30pm - 8:30pm

### Preparing Crofts & Small Farms for 2025 - Kyle

Dornie, 6th November, 2:00pm - 4:00pm

### Common Grazings Acharacle - Managing Finances Part 1

Acharacle, 7th November, 6:30pm - 9:00pm

### Nutrient Management Workshop - Campbeltown

Campbeltown, 7th November, 7:00pm - 9:00pm

## Sheep scab control



**Sheep scab is one of the most contagious diseases of sheep in Great Britain. The disease seriously affects the welfare of sheep and has a significant economic impact through its effect on the condition of ewes, the growth rate of lambs, damage to wool and reduced quality of sheepskins. Sheep scab is becoming an increasing problem, but due to under-reporting the full scale of the problem is unknown.**

Here are some tips to help you control sheep scab in your flock:

### Quarantine or test

Movement of sheep can spread sheep scab, therefore quarantine treatment or testing to check for exposure is essential.

### Identify the problem

It is important to identify the cause of itchiness in your sheep as not all treatment options cover all problems. If you suspect sheep scab in your flock, you should notify APHA and then contact your vet to take a skin scrape to look for mites under a microscope or obtain blood samples to test for antibodies to mite faeces. Your vet will also be able to rule out other causes of itchiness e.g. lice or dermatophilosis (wool/fleece rot).

### Treatment options

There are only two treatment options for sheep scab – plunge dipping with OP or injectable macrocyclic lactones. All sheep on farm need to be treated at the same time as sheep scab mites can survive up to 12 days after treatment, so avoid mixing treated and untreated sheep. If using OP dips, sheep should be plunged a few times and remain in the dip for at least 60 seconds. Use of OP dips in showers is ineffective for the treatment of sheep scab.

Resistance to injectable macrocyclic lactones is becoming more common. If you suspect ineffective sheep scab treatment, speak to your vet and consider retreating with an OP dip.

*Moira Gallagher, SAC Consulting*

More information on sheep scab can be found at:

[www.fas.scot/livestock/sheep/sheep-health/parasites-in-sheep/](http://www.fas.scot/livestock/sheep/sheep-health/parasites-in-sheep/)

Scotland's Farm Advisory Service is funded by the Scottish Government. It is delivered by SAC Consulting, part of Scotland's Rural College, and Ricardo Energy and Environment.



### National Advice Hub

T: 0300 323 0161

E: [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot)

W: [www.fas.scot](http://www.fas.scot)

If you need more advice on any topic, the Farm Advisory Service has a range of support and help available:

### Advice line

For free telephone advice on a wide variety of topics including cross compliance, water framework directive requirements, climate change and other technical issues call us on **0300 323 0161** or email [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot). The advice line operates between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

### Bespoke Advice and Grants

FAS can also help you to increase the profitability and sustainability of your farming business through Scottish Government grants including Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMPs) – worth up to £2,000.

The ILMP will identify opportunities and cost savings for your business, based on an independent and confidential assessment of your business by an experienced farm business adviser of your choosing. As part of your plan you can choose to benefit from up to two further specialist advice plans.

### Online

Our website contains articles, videos and much more at [www.fas.scot](http://www.fas.scot)



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