Issue 12 | April 2017

Milk Manager NEWS

Farm Advisory Service
National Advice Hub
T: 0300 323 0161
E: advice@fas.scot
W: www.fas.scot

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Market Update

UK Wholesale Dairy Commodity Market

- Fonterra's recent online GDT auction (4th April 2017) showed a small increase of 1.6% in the weighted average price across all products reaching US $3,005/tonne. Skim milk powder (SMP) fell only 0.8% from the last auction on 21st March but prior to that fell 10.1%. The current weighted average price is $1,913, which continues to put downward pressure on the UK SMP price.

Commodity	March 2017 £/T	Feb 2017 £/T	% Difference Monthly	March 2016 £/T	% Diff 2016-2017
Bulk Cream	1,690	1,540	+10	820	+106
Butter	3,650	3,450	+6	1,850	+97
SMP	1,550	1,700	-9	1,200	+29

Source AHDB Dairy - based on trade agreed from 1st-24th March 2017

- Surprisingly, UK butter prices are rising despite the approaching spring flush. They climbed 5.8% throughout February and have since increased by a further 3% to £3,750/t as of 6th April and bulk cream is showing a similar trend due to availability issues (www.agra.net.com).

- Cheese markets for mild cheddar have been relatively stable over the last month despite EU cheese stocks reported to be plentiful. There has been a distinct lack of spot trade due to buyers hoping for weaker prices in the spring, reflected in the very small drop in MCVE of 0.2ppl for March.

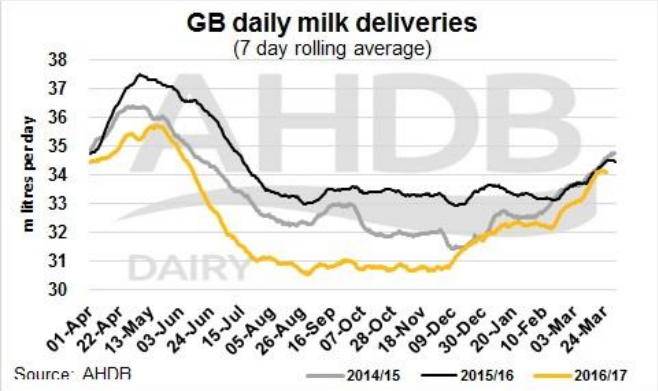
	March 2017	February 2017	12 months previously	*Net Amount less 2ppl Haulage – March 17*
AMPE	27.80ppl	28.30ppl	15.50ppl	*25.80ppl*
MCVE	32.10ppl	32.30ppl	16.20ppl	*30.10ppl*

Source: AHDB Dairy

- SMP price on the continent is hovering around or just below intervention levels. As of the end of March, German SMP dropped below the official EU intervention price of €1,698/t for the second week in a row to €1,670/t. If demand does not pick up soon, it is reported that some producers may be preparing to sell into intervention. As of 7th April, 472t of SMP has been placed in intervention storage from Poland. Despite several tender offers, less than 100t of the 354,000t of SMP in intervention storage has been sold and the Commission warned that it may take at least two years to sell these stores.

- With high stocks of EU intervention powder, markets are also being affected by slower Chinese imports of dairy products so far this year. It has also been suggested that the US will be increasing exports this year, with its cow herd reaching its highest level since 1996.

UK and EU Milk Deliveries



- UK milk deliveries have risen dramatically so far this year and are now only 1.1% below the same week last year, which equates to 0.4 million litres/day. Production continues to climb with a week-on-week rise of 0.5% up until 25th March.

- Almost 44,000 farmers in the EU have qualified for support from the EU Milk Reduction Scheme for the first quarter of October to December 2016, despite 52,000 famers applying. The reduction achieved was 0.85m tonnes which fell short of the 1.06 million tonne target. Despite this target not being met, the scheme significantly contributed to the milk price recovery that has been seen in recent months.

Monthly Price Movements for April 2017

It looks like we have seen the last of any milk price rises as daily volumes continue to rise. Many milk buyers are standing on last month's price with some buyers starting to reduce their milk price (Barbers -1.25ppl, Meadow Foods -0.4ppl and Freshways reduction capped at -0.39ppl from 1st May).

Commodity Produced	Company Contract	Price Change	Standard Litre Price for April 2017
Liquid & Cheese	**Arla Farmers UK**	*-0.42ppl*	27.03ppl Liquid, 28.13ppl Manufacturing
Liquid & Cheese	**Arla Direct**	*No information available for April*	March Price 25ppl Liquid 25.99ppl manufacturing
Liquid & Brokered Milk	**First Milk Mainland Scotland**	*No information available for April*	Feb Price 26.09ppl
Cheese	**Fresh Milk Company (Lactalis)**	*No information available for April*	Feb Price 28.47ppl. Level profile price 29.05ppl
Liquid & Manufacturing	**Grahams**	*No information available for April*	Feb Price 26.75ppl
Liquid & Manufacturing	**Muller**	*No change*	26.69 ppl
Liquid, Powder & Brokered	**Yew Tree Dairies**	*No information available for April*	Feb Price 27.5ppl Standard A litre price

- Arla's milk price drop from 1st April was a shock to their suppliers, with the actual drop being 1 euro cent of 0.79ppl. The currency smoothing mechanism provides an increase of 0.37ppl, bringing the net reduction to 0.42ppl. This reduction is a real blow to their producers, given that Arla branded products achieved growth of £37million in 2016, the largest growing grocery brand in the UK out of the top 100 grocery brands listed. With Arla reducing its milk price, there is concern that others will follow suit.

- While Muller will stand on its current milk price until 1st June for non-aligned contracts, its retail supplement from Aldi, Lidl and Morrisons will reduce to 0.3ppl, taking the estimated milk price paid to 27ppl.

- Bucking the trend are the aligned contracts with Tesco (TSDG) announcing a 0.62ppl increase as of 1st May and Sainsbury's (SDDG) offering 0.33ppl increase as of 1st April. This brings Tesco's standard liquid litre to an expected price of 29.37ppl which will hold until the end of July for Muller suppliers and to 29.37ppl for Arla suppliers. The Sainsbury's increase brings their standard liquid litre milk price to 27.67ppl (for Muller suppliers) and 27.55ppl (for Arla suppliers).

- Arla has warned that prices of milk, cheese and cream could soar on the back of a hard Brexit. Once the UK leaves the EU, World Trade Organisation tariffs of 36pc on imports and exports would be applicable if a transition agreement is not made. Free movement of goods is of significant importance to the whole dairy industry, according to Tomas Pietrangeli, Managing Director for Arla UK. He recently quoted in The Telegraph (3rd April), "if we move into a hard Brexit and there is no transitional agreement in place, that would have potentially bigger implications than those just for us as a company. It is generally a low-margin business so 36pc tariffs pretty much closes exports and imports. If you look at dairy exports and imports in the UK, there is a deficit of 25pc." He also added, "there is neither the milk nor the capacity in the UK to supply the population with their need for dairy products, which has potential implications in terms of food inflation, supply and quality".

EU Exceptional Adjustment Aid Scheme

- The window is now open for farmers to apply for the EU Exceptional Adjustment Aid Scheme of which around £2.4million is available to Scottish dairy farmers. The money will be allocated at a rate depending on the milk price paid during the crisis period of January to August 2016, with the highest payment going to those worst hit. In order to qualify for a payment, farmers must be currently performing or be willing to put in practice both forward milk production profiling and milk recording with a minimum of 4 recordings per lactation. More information is available from the Scottish Dairy Hub at http://scottishdairyhub.org.uk/notices/eu-adjustment-aid. Application forms are available from your local RPID website or from the RPA website: https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite-rest/fscontent/repository/portal-system/mediadata/media/resources/sct0217239020-1_euro_inter_rd.pdf.

lorna.macpherson@sac.co.uk, 07760 990901

Straights Update

Straights prices for delivery in artic loads as of early April are as follows (varies depending on location):

£/T for 29t loads delivery + £7/t haulage	Apr 17	May 17	Jun-Oct 17	Nov 17-Apr 18
Proteins				
Hipro Soya	309	309	309	311
Rapeseed Meal	200	194	Jun-Jul 194 Aug-Oct 178	189.50
EU Wheat Distillers	207	207	202	199
Starch				
Wheat	154	155	Jun-Jul 156 Aug-Oct 141	147
Barley	130	130	Jun-Jul 130 Aug-Oct 117	122
Maize	183	181	Jun 184 Jul-Oct 188	Asa178
Fibre				
Sugar Beet Pulp – home produced (cheapest zone)	183	183	183	183
Soya Hulls	POA	POA	Asa136	139

Source: Straights Direct on 10th April 2017
Barley and wheat prices are based on delivery to central belt.
For North-East, deduct £5/t for wheat and add £1/t for barley.
Courtesy of Julian Bell, Senior Rural Business Consultant, SAC Consulting.
Prices do not include seller's margin.

- **Global cereal markets are relatively flat** as the market awaits news of spring planting progress and early crop growing conditions. US wheat prices rose modestly on further reductions in US winter wheat sowings though rains have helped crop condition. US maize plantings are also expected to fall this year. Early predictions of world grain supply and demand from the International Grains Council suggest production could fall below demand for the first time in five years, depending on the weather. Nonetheless because of high grain stocks the overall picture is of a well supplied global market at this stage unless a severe crop problem emerges somewhere important.

- **In Scotland, winter crops are in generally good condition** and Scotland is on-track to produce another surplus of wheat this harvest due to a rise in winter sowings. Spring barley sowings have been slow but current dry weather is helping plantings catch up. Overall spring barley sown area in Scotland is likely to be static or lower due to higher autumn plantings. With distilling demand for malting barley expected to increase this year, good yields will be needed. Otherwise we may see another year of tight local feed barley supply in Scotland. Overall however, the UK is expected to see a bigger feed barley surplus due to higher English plantings.

- **Global soyabean stocks are reported to be at a record high**, and although price has come back in recent weeks the market does still remain quite firm. The UK soyabean meal price will likely be impacted by weather conditions for the Argentinean harvest and the currency with Brexit negotiations. The current forward price of soya for next winter looks similar to just now.

- **There are many reasons for the fall in soya prices over the last month**. The USDA recently forecasted a big rise in the number of acres planted this year. As of 1st April, planting reports indicated a significant shift from wheat to soyabean acres, with a record planting of 89.5 million acres of US soyabeans (6 million acres up on last year), meaning that another sizable US crop is on the cards. In addition, Argentina's forecasted soyabean production is thought to rise by 1.7 million tonnes to 56.5 million tonnes and Brazil's output is estimated to be up by 3.2 million tonnes to 111 million tonnes.

- **The price of UK rapemeal has not fallen as much as expected**, given the market pressure from soyabean meal and sunflowers. However, with new crop availability in August/September, rapemeal is likely to fall below £200/t. In Scotland, animal nutrition company Norvite, has recently commissioned the second phase of its NEOS (Norvite Expeller Oilseeds) plant which will bring additional protein to the market place. The expansion will increase the plant's annual capacity to 8,400 tonnes of expelled rapeseed meal (NEOPRO) and 3,600 tonnes of a high energy supplement for pigs and poultry (NEOFLO).

- **Other protein sources from distillery by-products are hard to come by**, particularly in the North of Scotland. Barley dark grains are unavailable and increased use of draff and pot ale syrup in AD plants means that availability is poor and contracts are likely required to guarantee tonnages. Wheat dark grains are

available from both Vivergo (pellets) and Ensus (meal) bioethanol plants.

- **Supplies of straw are incredibly tight** with unprecedented demand. There has been a lot of straw coming up to Scotland from south of the border. However, supplies are reducing due to both domestic and continental demand.

- **Stockfeed potatoes are hard to come by** as prices for ware and seed potatoes are good and there is less wastage.

julian.bell@sac.co.uk, 07795 302264
lorna.macpherson@sac.co.uk, 07760 990901

Maintaining Butterfat at Grass

Milk contracts are increasingly rewarding milk solids and maintaining butterfat levels at grass can be a challenge, particularly in the early part of the grazing season. Spring grass is typically high in soluble sugars and unsaturated fats and low in structural fibre, depressing butterfat synthesis in the udder. This risk of lower butterfats also applies to housed herds that are zero-grazed.

Look at your milk contract to determine the penalty of lower butterfats and see what the reduction in butterfat was last year when cows had access to fresh grass, to estimate the potential loss in your milk cheque. Even liquid milk contracts will result in a penalty if butterfat falls below a threshold level.

The high sugar content and low structural fibre in lush spring grass also contributes towards sub acute ruminal acidosis or SARA, affecting fibre digestion and further compounding the suppression in milk fat. If there is a 0.3-0.5% reduction in butterfat over a week or milk protein drops by 0.3%, then SARA could be the cause. Keep an eye on milk yields as a two to three litre drop over a week can also point towards acidosis issues. Individual milk recording data can be used to diagnose SARA if over 10% of the herd has a higher milk protein than milk fat percentage.

Nutritional strategies to help maintain butterfat levels at grass include the following:

- Provide adequate fibre through supplementary feeding. Buffer feeding with forages such as grass silage and/or wholecrop will add structural fibre. Consider 0.5kg straw in the buffer ration to help improve cudding behaviour. This will in turn promote saliva and sodium bicarbonate production to buffer the rumen. The key is to provide sufficient effective fibre in the buffer while limiting the extent of substitution of buffer for grazed grass.

- While starchy concentrates are useful to provide rumen fermentable energy to help utilise some of the excess rumen degradable protein in the grass, non-starch concentrates high in digestible fibre can help butterfats. Examples are sugar beet pulp, soya hulls and citrus pulp. Soya hulls tend to be slightly better than beet pulp for butterfat production. Although lower energy than beet pulp, soya hulls are lower in sugar, which is already in excess in fresh grass and they are also more cost effective.

- Avoid high levels of wet distillery by-products such as draff and brewers grains. Their high unsaturated oil content combined with the oil in lush spring grass can depress butterfat levels further. As a rule, feed half the winter level so four to five kgs maximum.

- Assess acidosis risk. Acidic conditions in the rumen are detrimental to the microbes responsible for fibre digestion to produce acetate, the precursor for butterfat production in the udder. If necessary feed a rumen buffer.

- If butterfats are still struggling, consider the use of C16 fats, which are designed primarily to increase the production of milk fat in the udder. However, they are expensive and there must be a return on the investment. General recommendations are to feed in the region of 300-400g/cow/day depending on the response desired, and the cost at this level may outweigh the benefit of increased butterfat, depending on your contract.

- Avoid excessive condition loss in early lactation cows at grass. Cows in poorer condition will use body reserves to drive milk yield, which in turn will reduce butterfat.

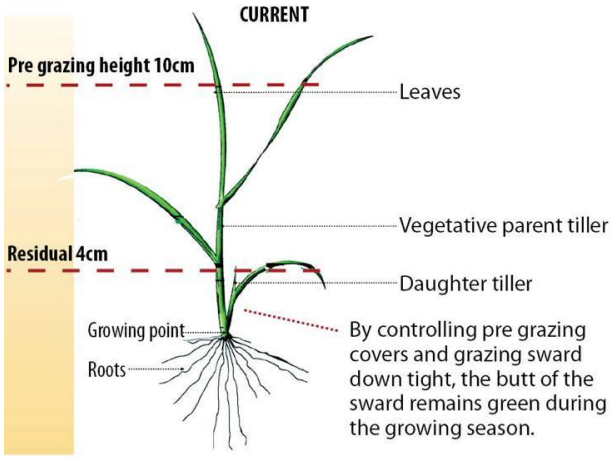
lorna.macpherson@sac.co.uk, 07760 990901

Managing Grass Swards in Spring

Timing of turnout and managing pre and post-grazing grass covers are important to maintain grass quality throughout the grazing season and maximise production and utilisation.

Ideally paddocks should be grazed when covers are in the region of 2800-3000kg DM/ha, which is between the 2.5 to 3 leaf stage. At this stage the majority of plants have a 3rd leaf and plant reserves will have built up to allow rapid recovery from grazing. Above this stage (past 10-12cm grass height), a fourth leave starts to appear, at which point the first leaf dies off (see diagram below).

Target grazing height and residual of a ryegrass plant



However, bear in mind that with a rotational grazing system, if you turn out when there is 2800-3000kg DM/ha cover in your first paddock, by the time you are half way through your paddocks, the ungrazed paddocks will be overmature and of poorer nutritional quality. Turnout at covers in the region of 2100-2400kg DM/ha may be necessary along with buffer feeding until pasture growth is adequate.

Grazing too early below the two leaf stage means that plant reserves will not be fully restored and repeatedly grazing before the 2.5 to 3 leaf stage will result in slower regrowth, with reduced pasture yield and persistency of the sward.

On the other hand, there is no advantage in leaving grass to be grazed above 3500kg DM/ha. Although new leaves will be produced, there will be a build up of dead leaves at the base of the plant, with no increase in net pasture mass. The consequences are lower energy content of grass, reduced utilisation and wasted forage, more disease, such as rust on dying leaves, and less clover in the sward due to shading. Dead material at the base of the plant will prevent the sward from being grazed down tight.

New leaves are produced at different rates throughout the grazing season and may be as short as 15 days at peak growth but as long as 30 days later in the season. This is why grass budgets should be carried out on a weekly basis and the rotation length should coincide with the time required for ryegrass plants to grow three leaves.

Maximising pasture growth and utilisation therefore relies on managing the post-grazing residual. Remove cows from paddocks when they have grazed down to 4 to 5cm or a 1500kg DM/ha residual. The aim is to graze to the same residual each time. This can be challenging in very wet weather but avoiding poaching should be the priority at the expense of a higher residual. Once weather improves and conditions allow, refocus on the target residual. If grass growth outstrips demand, management practices such as topping or making silage will allow target residuals to be achieved.

If ryegrass plants are allowed to produce a seed head, then annual growth rates are effectively reduced by as much as 50%. The plant requires a

lot of energy to produce a seed head, which could have been used for leaf growth. Achieving the target residual means that the seed head is being continuously removed during the early stages of development. As a result, the crown of the plant produces more tillers, increasing the density of the sward. The seed head of weed grasses will also be grazed out, so they will not remain in swards that are grazed tightly in the spring. Tiller production is at a peak in the spring and lasts between three to six months, so it is essential to ensure that new tillers are always being produced.

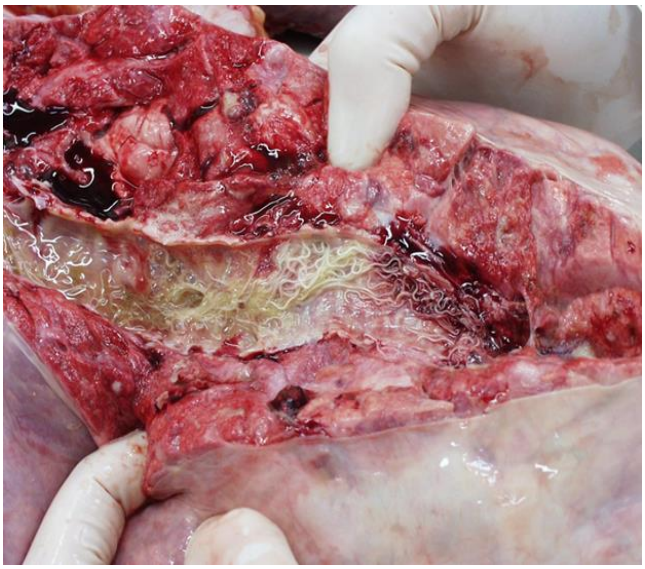
Managing your swards based on pre and post-grazing target covers requires close observation of your pastures. Weekly measurements of grass growth should be made, either with a plate meter, sward stick or visual assessment. Grass growth is essential to monitor early on in the season, as the window of opportunity to influence pasture quality is relatively small. Software such as the AgriNet system is a useful management tool to help create and manage grass budgets on your farm (www.agrinet.ie).

lorna.macpherson@sac.co.uk, 07760 990901

Five Minutes on Lungworm in Youngstock

Five facts:

1. Lungworm (known colloquially as "husk" or "hoose") is the cattle roundworm "*Dictyocaulus viviparus".*



2. The disease is typically seen in youngstock in their first grazing season and occasionally in susceptible older cattle.

3. Outbreaks are most frequent between June and September, with peak incidence in August. The risk period can extend if weather conditions favour grazing later into the autumn.

4. Diagnosis is usually made on the basis of clinical signs and history, and can be supported with laboratory testing for confirmation (by blood or dung test).

5. Affected animals have reduced growth rates (or production) and typically develop a cough. If infection is very severe or goes untreated, this can develop to advanced signs of pneumonia and even death. Natural immunity develops after first exposure, typically taking a couple of months, and strong immunity is maintained provided cattle get re-exposed each grazing season.

Five questions:

1. **Have your youngstock had lungworm outbreaks in recent grazing seasons?**
   If so then a vaccine programme is strongly recommended. Contact your vet to discuss an appropriate protocol. If you have never had a lungworm problem then don't forget to quarantine and treat incoming cattle, as these can potentially bring lungworm into your herd.

2. **How do you normally control gut-worms in grazing calves?**
   The drugs that kill gut-worms also kill lungworm. If you typically use regular or long-acting treatments for gut-worm then you are unlikely to see lungworm problems in the first grazing season. The calves may not get exposed to enough lungworm to develop natural immunity however, and might still be at risk during their second grazing season. If you use wormers strategically to control gut-worms (based on grazing history, growth rates, faecal sampling etc.) then remember that lungworm can be very unpredictable and always watch for early signs of infection.

3. **Do you know the signs of a lungworm problem?**
   Make sure everybody that will be checking young-stock at grass are alert to the clinical signs of lungworm. Early treatment as soon as signs occur gives the best chance of a good response. Check stock carefully for coughing or increased effort breathing, especially as summer progresses.

4. **Do you normally use a wormer pre-housing?**
   Removing lungworm burdens in youngstock at or prior to housing can be an important part of autumn pneumonia control programmes. A long-acting treatment given two weeks prior to housing may help to reduce the risk of other types of pneumonia during the winter.

5. **Have you seen signs of lungworm in older cattle?**
   Lungworm isn't always limited to young calves. Second grazing calves may be at risk if they have not been exposed during first season grazing, and vaccination prior to second turnout might occasionally be appropriate. Adult cattle can get a 're-infection' syndrome if they graze highly contaminated pasture. Lungworm should always be considered if coughing or other signs of pneumonia occur in cows at grass.

For more detailed information on lungworm, gut-worm and liver fluke control visit http://www.cattleparasites.org.uk/.

timothy.geraghty@sac.co.uk, 01224 711177

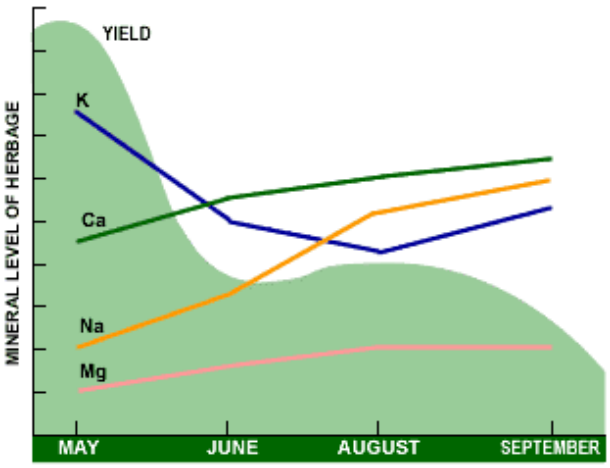
Grass Staggers – Are your Cows at Risk?

Grass staggers or hypomagnesaemia refers to a deficiency of magnesium which tends to be most common in beef cows in early lactation. However it can also occur in dairy cows, especially during the dry period if they receive inadequate supplementation. Magnesium is essential for a number of functions including bone growth, nervous system function, fibre digestion and calcium metabolism (mobilisation and absorption from bones). Magnesium must be provided on a daily basis through the diet as body stores in the skeleton are not readily available.

Magnesium is secreted in milk so the higher the milk yield, the greater the risk and older cows tend to be more commonly affected. The supplementary level often quoted for suckler cows is to provide 30g of magnesium/cow/day. However, modern day Holsteins may need as much as up to 75g of magnesium in their total diet. To protect newly calved cows, aim for 0.3% in the diet, which should provide in excess of 60g/cow/day and for mid-lactation cows, up to 0.25% should be adequate (Foster et al, 2007).

Lush spring grass is low in magnesium (see graph below) and structural fibre, resulting in faster rates of passage through the rumen, meaning that there is less time for absorption of magnesium. The rapidly degradable protein in spring grass also has a negative effect on magnesium absorption. The issue can be compounded by high levels of potassium in the ground from slurry/muck and artificial fertiliser. Potassium reduces the absorption of magnesium, as does high levels of ammonia from nitrogenous fertilisers. Stress or poor weather conditions that typically occur in the autumn can also trigger staggers by reducing dry matter intake, and consequently magnesium intake and absorption.

Seasonal uptake of macro-nutrients in grass swards



Source: Potash Development Association, (on AHDB Dairy website)

The incidence in British dairy herds is very low and is estimated at 0.5% but some farms may have up to 10% of the herd affected (Foster et al 2007). For every clinical case there are likely more subclinical cases which could be in the region of 3-4% in lactating dairy cows (NADIS). Very subtle subclinical signs of hypomagnesaemia include ill-thrift a slightly nervous appearance with cows

being reluctant to be herded or milked. Dry matter intake and milk yield can be depressed. If the disease progresses to the clinical stage cows can show restless, excitable and aggressive behaviour, walk with a staggering gait and exhibit excessive chewing and salivation, eventually leading to convulsions, coma and death. In the dry period, low blood magnesium greatly increases the risk of milk fever as magnesium is responsible for triggering the hormone that releases calcium from bone.

Early detection is essential to reduce the risk of clinical cases being fatal and blood sampling between five to eight cows will give an indication of the herd's magnesium status. However, if subclinical hypomagnesaemia is suspected, preventative measures should be put in place immediately.

There are various methods of supplementation to ensure sufficient magnesium supply over the high risk period:

- **Include 60g/cow/day of calcined magnesite in the TMR**. Ensure it is well mixed and do not top-dress as magnesium supplements can be unpalatable.
- **Concentrate feeding with parlour cake** often contains a higher "summer" level of magnesium, which is typically about 0.75%.
- **Molassed "high mag" buckets** at grass are a convenient way to provide additional magnesium but be aware intakes can vary widely and the minimum intake required by all animals is unlikely, leaving them still at risk.
- **Powdered minerals** (whether in-feed or free access) can vary in the level of magnesium they provide. Check with your supplier whether the magnesium content is sufficient for staggers prevention. In-feed supplementation is better to ensure all animals receive the correct amount (only if feed is provided *ad-lib*).
- **Magnesium chloride flakes can be added to the water supply** but do not rely on this alone. Recommended inclusion rate varies widely from 3g/litre to 60g/cow/day. At higher levels palatability of water is affected, reducing overall feed intake. Magnesium provided this way has to be carefully managed and it can be difficult to get the concentration in water correct, as the cows which drink first tend to get more, and then as the trough re-fills, the concentration of magnesium gets lower.
- **Pastures can be dusted with finely ground calcined magnesite** every 10-14 days during the risk period at a rate of 17kg/ha. For set stocked grazing systems this rate should be doubled and in wet weather, should be repeated daily.

Provision of some straw or conserved forage as part of a buffer feed will help slow the passage rate of feed through the gut, allowing more time for magnesium absorption. Also avoid using potassium fertilisers at critical times, especially during periods of rapid grass growth. Low sodium is also a risk factor so ensure adequate salt intake. If in doubt, speak to your vet and/or nutritionist for further advice.

Reference: Forster, A., Livesey, C. and Edwards, G. (2007). Magnesium Disorders in Ruminants. In Practice 29: 534-539.

lorna.macpherson@sac.co.uk, 07760 990901

Brexit and Farm Animal Welfare

At this stage it is not clear how animal welfare will be affected by Brexit, but a debate on the subject has been held in the House of Commons and a Select Committee will hold a consultation in the House of Lords in early April. The main discussion will centre around transferring the current EU legislation on the keeping and transport of farm animals in the UK, and whether this creates an opportunity to raise animal welfare standards, and the effect on exports and imports.

The RSPCA suggested that 80% of the UK animal welfare laws originate in the EU. This includes regulations governing the movement and transport of animals. The 'Great Repeal Bill' announced by The Secretary of State for the Department for Exiting the EU, David Davis will repeal these laws and start the process of setting a new set of UK laws and regulations in place. The minister stated that the bill will 'convert all existing EU law into domestic wherever practical'. At present, the standards under which farmed animals are required to be kept in Scotland are regulated by 'The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Regulations 2010, under the Animal Welfare Act (2006), and similar regulations in the other nations of the UK.

Post-Brexit, animal welfare standards can be reduced or raised. It is unlikely that they will be reduced, as in order to export product into the EU, farmers will still have to meet their requirements. The RSPCA has suggested that standards in animal welfare could be raised in specific areas such as prohibiting non-slaughter, setting higher standards on journey times and mandating CCTV in slaughterhouses. The MP Andrea Leadsom also said that high standards of animal welfare would be a selling point for UK agriculture in the future. However, there is resistance to increasing welfare standards over fears that this would reduce UK competitiveness. There has been a call by a number of groups to ban live exports of animals. However, as this may include animals exported for breeding as well as for slaughter, this has been resisted.

There are some risks for lower welfare standards. It is expected that after leaving the EU, the UK will pursue trading arrangements with individual countries. There has been some concern that these trade arrangements, with countries such as the United States, where welfare standards are generally lower, may result in the reduction in import of products reared in poorer welfare conditions, and eventually a corresponding reduction of standards in this country to maintain competitiveness.

Animal welfare is a devolved issue. There is still a considerable degree of uncertainty over what action will be taken. The government recognises that there is the opportunity for change, but farmers and other stakeholders need to make their views known.

marie.haskell@sruc.ac.uk, 07748 703871

New Senior Dairy Consultant Appointed

SAC Consulting are delighted to announce the appointment of Mr Csaba Adamik as Senior Dairy Consultant, who takes up the post as of 1st May. Csaba has extensive experience of the Scottish dairy sector having held the post of Ruminant Technical Sales Specialist with Cargill Animal Nutrition for seven years, covering Scotland and the North of England. Previously he worked for Davidson Animal Feeds as a Ruminant Nutrition Adviser. He brings a strong set of skills in the areas of nutrition, costings and strategic planning and is well respected within the dairy farming community, having worked with a number of large dairy farms.

Csaba's new role is sector leadership of Dairy Consultancy within SAC Consulting, managing both the specialist Dairy Services Team (which includes himself and Lorna MacPherson) and overseeing the dairy consultancy delivery from staff based in SAC Consulting Rural Offices. The goal is to provide a more joined-up approach to delivery of dairy services from dairy specialists and selected local office staff specialising in dairy work, alongside input from vets and other SRUC dairy staff in research and education. Therefore, we can ensure that dairy farmers have access to the best person for each job depending on requirements.

Csaba will operate from his home base in Aberdour, Fife and looks forward to meeting dairy clients in the near future.

Dates for your Diary

- 13th April – **For Farmers "Back to the Future"**. Catrine House Coffee Shop, Mauchline, KA5 5JY. Time: 19.00-19.30 start. Register your attendance by Tuesday 11th April to Julie Clark on 07920 835523 or e-mail julie.clark@forfarmers.eu

- 19th April – **Border and Lakeland Holstein Club Monthly Show and Sale**, Borderway Mart, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA1 2RS.

- 19th April – **Special Spring Show and Sale of Jersey Cattle**, Borderway Mart, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA1 2RS.

- 19th April – **Special Spring Show and Sale of Red and White Cattle**, Borderway Mart, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA1 2RS.

- 24th-26th April – **Embryonics DIY AI Training Course**. South Scotland. For more information contact the Scottish Dairy Hub on 03454 755110. Event organiser: Embryonics t: 01606 854411 embryonics@embryonicsltd.co.uk

- 26th April – **Special Spring Sale of Montbeliarde Cattle**, Borderway Mart, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA1 2RS.

- 1st May – **Stirling Bull Sales**. United Auctions, Stirling Agricultural Centre, Stirling, FK9 4RN. Time 10.00.

- 10th - 11th May - **Cattle and Sheep Parasitology (CPD for Vets).** Holiday Inn Hotel, Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 6UA. Time 10:00-16:00. To book your place contact t: 0131 535 3130. E-mail: cpdforvets@sac.co.uk

- 10th - 11th May – **Cattle Foot Trimming Course**. SRUC Barony Campus, Parkgate, Dumfries DG1 3NE. Time 10.00-15.50 each day. For further information or to register please contact Team training on 01387 242918 or kyra.redpath@sruc.ac.uk

- 16th May – **Calf to Calving – What Does your Calf House Tell Us?** Glasgoforest, Kinellar, Aberdeenshire, AB21 0SH. Time 10.45. To book your place contact Sharon Lauder t: 07876 706391 sharon.lauder@ahdb.org.uk

- 17th May – **Calf to Calving – Minimising Stress to Maximise Return.** Nethercraig Fram, Eaglesham, Glasgow G76 0PF. Time: 10.45. To book your place contact Sharon Lauder t: 07876 706391 sharon.lauder@ahdb.org.uk

- 22nd May - **Embryonics DIY AI Training Course**. North Scotland. For more information contact the Scottish Dairy Hub on 03454 755110. Event organiser: Embryonics t: 01606 854411 embryonics@embryonicsltd.co.uk

- 24th May – **Open Evening SRUC Aberdeen Campus**. SRUC Aberdeen Campus, Ferguson Building, Craibstone Estate, Aberdeen, AB21 9YA. Time 16.00-20.00.

For any further enquiries regarding the information in this newsletter please contact:

Lorna MacPherson (Dairy Consultant)
SAC Consulting Office
Thainstone Agricultural Centre
Inverurie
Aberdeenshire
AB51 5WU
Email: lorna.macpherson@sac.co.uk
Tel: 01467 625385
Mobile: 07760 990901
Fax: 01467 620607

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