

Harbro
QUALITY LIVESTOCK NUTRITION

BEEF UPDATE

Getting the management right pays off for Cadzow Brothers' Luining herd

The use of Harbro's Beefstock & Yea-Sacc in the Cadzow Brothers Ltd's herd of Luining cattle has been key to their heifers calving successfully at two years of age.

This famous farming operation based on the island of Luining is home to Shane Cadzow and his family, pioneers of the Luining cattle breed. The breed was evolved, bringing together the outstanding complementary qualities of two great native beef breeds - Luings became a breed in their own right in an act of parliament in 1965.

The herd of 320 cows is now all based on the island after a split in the partnership a few years ago, resulting in a proportion of the herd being sold off.

Six families

The herd is based on six families which continue to be run in separate groups on each area of the island. Cows are all out-wintered and calve over an 11 week period from March through to May.

The best 15% of the male calves are left entire with the rest castrated and sold as weaned stot calves at the autumn calf sales. The bull calves are weaned and taken through the winter on a maintenance diet based on silage with 2-3kgs of Beefstock & Yea-Sacc and moist cereal minerals which



Cattle returning from winter in Scarba

are high in selenium and zinc to maximise the fertility status of these young stock sires.

At 12 months of age, the final bull selection is made and those not being kept are sold store. Mr Cadzow and farm manager, Leslie Robson then select the bulls that are going forward to the next year's society sales and those which will be used on the island in one of the six families.



Stock bull, Luining Bosun and calves

Heifer calves are split at weaning with the replacement stock heifers retained, the smaller end sold as calves in the autumn sales and the stronger heifer calves, wintered and sold as bulling heifers at the society sales.

The replacement heifers are housed for a week when they are introduced to 2 kgs of Beefstock & Yea-Sacc plus silage daily. After a week to ten days, they are then out-wintered on the same diet with the addition of Cattle Booster buckets in their first winter. The heifers are then bullied in May, ready to calf down at two years of age. Once in calf, the heifers receive their autumn dosing for fluke and worm and after calving, start on a diet of 3 kgs of Beefstock & Yea-Sacc and silage. They also receive All-Trace boluses three months before calving.

Earlier calving

The herd previously calved down at three years of age and when the decision was taken to move to calve a year earlier, changes to the nutrition and management were required to improve the frame size to allow this to happen.

Mr Robson says "It was a major move when we changed to bulling the heifers at two years. This was a real challenge as we needed the heifers to be bigger and stronger at a year old without spending a lot more money on feed. All we have done is increase the amount of silage and feed 2.5 kgs of Beefstock nuts from weaning through the winter."

"No changes have been made to any of the cattle genetics or the herd's strict management policies," added Mr Cadzow.

Profitable

"Getting a calf from a heifer at two years old is working for us. Calving at this age is more profitable but paying more attention to how we prepare the heifers before bulling has been key. By feeding Harbro's Beefstock, we are getting the frame size we want in the cattle that are the future of our herd" said Mr Cadzow.

July, 2012



Harbro farm walk raises £12,300 for three charities

A farm walk organised by Harbro and hosted by the Buchan family at Easterton of Lenabo Farm, Mintlaw, Aberdeenshire has raised £12300 for three charities.

JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation), Friends of Anchor and Monty's Maggie's Appeal have all benefitted equally from the event.

450 farmers

Around 450 livestock farmers from a wide area attended the event on 7 June 2012, which gave them the opportunity to view one of Scotland's biggest cattle finishing units. Auchtydore Farms, run by David and Valerie Buchan, their son John

and his wife Hayley specialise in finishing bought-in store cattle and cull cows.

Tour of cattle

The event included a tour of grazing cattle and cull cows being grazed on Dundas high sugar grass mixtures, viewing finishing cattle and cows being finished inside on ad-lib feed plus a stockjudging and 'guess the weight'.

A presentation covered how the Buchans start their cattle on a safe ad-lib diet, balancing high starch cereal diets using the live yeast Yea-Sacc to ensure rumen health and how rumen damage can occur in this type of feeding system.

The farm also has a serious challenge from molybdenum in the forage which locks up most available copper. A special form of copper has been developed and has been used at Auchtydore for both breeding and feeding cattle for a number of years to overcome this problem.

The evening was rounded off with a barbecue of prime Scotch beef followed by an auction of items donated by local businesses including a heifer donated by the Buchans which raised £2100.

Overwhelmed

Commenting on the success of the day, Harbro regional sales manager David Mackenzie said "We were overwhelmed with the response from everyone who supported and attended, illustrating the willingness and generosity of the farming community to support worthy causes."

"We were delighted that so many farmers attended the farm walk, particularly those from other parts of our trading area including parties from as far afield as Orkney and Yorkshire," he added.

Increased feed efficiency with Rumitech

With feed prices rocketing and finisher margins tight, we need to try and focus on feed efficiency to ensure costs are kept to a minimum. To this end, Harbro has been working over the past 12 months with a unique product, Rumitech which has been shown to greatly improve feed efficiency by reducing methane loss from the rumen.

In many ways, this new product works like Romensin used to do by reducing the feed required for each kilo of weight gain – a huge benefit with today's feed prices.

Product testing

To test the product, Harbro has carried out trials with a prominent beef farmer in Aberdeenshire. Rumitech is aimed at reducing methane but the main benefit that has been established is the massive difference the product is making to feed efficiency.

A finishing diet of home-grown moist barley, Invercrombies, sugar beet, pot ale and Grampian Intensive Finisher minerals was being fed to large finishing steers for the last 100-120 days before slaughter. A batch of cattle was randomly selected and

Rumitech was added to the diet. Within two weeks, it was noted that the cattle being feed Rumitech were consuming much less compared to the control group.

Intakes and weight gains were closely monitored right through to slaughter in all finishing cattle on the farm. Weight gains were very similar between all the cattle but the key result from the trial was that the Rumitech group had an intake of 20% less than the control group. This impressive figure mirrored the results in the previous trials with this product.

The trial has been repeated again on this farm with a consistent result to the original trial, with the farmer also finding that the cattle fed on Rumitech were achieving a better killing out percentage than his other cattle. Rumitech is available this summer for inclusion in finishing diets – please contact your Harbro specialist for details.

With the dramatic rise in grain future prices and a greater drive for efficiency, this product will have an important place in reducing feed costs in finishing diets this year.

For further information, contact your Harbro sales specialist

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