

■ Molasses: The high palatability of molasses feeds makes them ideal supplements for poor quality hay and silages, by increasing intakes and enhancing their nutritive value

Molasses liquid feeds, a cost effective and reliable solution to forage problems on Irish farms

By Brian Campion M.Agr.Sc.



Adding molasses is a great way to improve palatability and DM intakes.



Nationwide delivery from our depots in Cork, Limerick and Belfast.

The poor weather conditions during the silage season will have a major impact on forage quality and quantity this next winter and spring. A recent Teagasc survey showed that one third of dairy and more than 15pc of beef farms are facing a shortage of winter feed.

Dry matter (DM) and digestibility (DMD) values of silages will be low with accompanying losses due to poor preservation and soil contamination. In addition cereal and protein ingredients prices have increased significantly so compound feeds will be more expensive so most farmers need to examine their feed options.

The area sown to cereals this year is estimated to have increased by almost 40,000 acres, so straw may be the most plentiful forage source available. When used in combination with silage and molasses liquids, a cost effective solution to the fodder problems can be achieved.

Molasses liquids are now very competitive in price. The high palatability of molasses feeds makes them ideal supplements for poor quality hay and silages, by increasing DM intakes and enhancing their nutritive value. Liquid feeds are the ideal complement to total mixed ration (TMR) diets; as well as supplying energy and protein, liquid feeds unique physical characteristics facilitate in binding the TMR and distributing nutrients evenly to ensure safe and uniform consumption.

Premier Molasses ingredients include sugar cane molasses (energy), condensed mo-

FEATURED PRODUCTS

Nutri-Thrive	Hi-Pro 50
The ultimate nutrient rich liquid feed containing GLYCERINE	Provides a good balance of energy and protein with excellent palatability
Dry Matter: 67% Protein: 21.5%	Dry Matter: 67.5% Protein: 21.5% Sugars: 42%
ENERGY & PROTEIN	ENERGY & PROTEIN

lasses solubles (protein), whey concentrate (energy) and glycerine (energy). We are able to offer high quality blends which provide flexible energy and protein levels and handling characteristics suitable for dairy cows, beef cattle, sheep, pigs and horses.

New Xtra Range-Special Offer for September!

These products contain the unique technology of V&O core which in combination with

molasses has shown a synergistic effect in increasing voluntary forage intake. V&O core works by stimulating the cow's senses to increase appetite and reduce stress levels.

For September only, Premier Molasses is including V&O core in all its farm liquid feeds at no extra cost!

Feeding Guidelines

Molasses liquid feeds are very flexible—they can be top-dressed on forages, mixed with



Availability
Molasses feeds are available in bulk deliveries (10-28 tonnes) nationwide, and in IBCs (mini bulk tank of approx. 1.25 tonnes). Feeds can be safely stored in vented waterproof tanks for up to 6 months.

For more technical data on liquid feeds availability, delivery terms etc please contact your local co-op/merchant or Premier Molasses. Tel: 069-65311 or visit our website www.premiermolasses.ie

dry feeds or fed in a diet feeder as part of the TMR. They can also be fed free access through lick wheel/ball feeders.

Dairy cows: Up to 3kg (normal 1-2kg) per head per day or 15% of the total diet mix
Beef cattle: Up to 2.5kg (normal 1-2kg) per head per day or 15% of the total diet mix
Young cattle: Up to 1.5kg or 5% of the total diet mix
Sheep: Lambs 10% of diet (0.3kg per head per day) and ewes 15% of diet (0.6kg per head per day)

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Diets to stretch your silage

Dairy Cows
Table 2 shows the options available for dry cow diets.

Table 1: Diets for Suckler Cows					
Diet Spec	Diet C	Diet D	Diet E	Autumn Calving	Weanlings
Grass Silage (62 DMD)	7 kg DM	—	3 kg DM	7 kg DM	3 kg DM
Straw	—	6 kg DM	3 kg DM	—	2 kg DM
Hi-Pro 50	2 kg DM	4 kg DM	3 kg DM	—	2.5 kg DM
Nutri-Thrive	—	—	—	4 kg DM	—
Energy Target	7.5 UFL	7.5 UFL	7.5 UFL	9.0 UFL	4.5-6.0 UFL
Energy Intake	6.5 UFL	6.2 UFL	6 UFL	9.2 UFL	5.1 UFL

Deficit of 1.5 UFL tolerable if cows in good BCS & followed by good grazing conditions next spring. If cow BCS is poor (<3.0), no deficit is tolerable and extra supplementation is required. (Assuming 650 kg cow with 7 kg/day milk yield*) * Applies to Autumn Calving Cows

N.B. It is important to feed a good quality dry cow mineral from the time of drying off

Table 2: Diets for Dairy Cows		
Diet Spec	Option A	Option B
Grass Silage (64 DMD)	6kg DM	6kg DM
Straw	3kg DM	3kg DM
Hi-Pro 50	4kg DM	—
Nutri-Thrive	—	3.5kg DM
Meals	—	—
Energy Target	9.6 UFL	9.6 UFL
Energy Intake	9.3 UFL	9.6 UFL
Protein	13%	13%

Options A and B can replace up to half of the silage requirements with straw and a molasses liquid and still set cows up for a smooth transition to lactation.
N.B. It is important to feed a good quality dry cow mineral from the time of drying off

“Molasses liquid feeds are very flexible—they can be top-dressed on forages, mixed with dry feeds or fed in a diet feeder as part of the TMR. They can also be fed free access through lick wheel/ball feeders.”

offering the best opportunity to stretch silage supplies by incorporating molasses liquids and straw. The optimum body condition score (BCS) at calving is 3.25 and in order to achieve this a 12 week dry period is required if cows are at 2.5 BCS at drying off. Cows should be fed to requirements in late lactation to ensure correct BCS at drying off. Cows will need to gain 0.75 BCS (37.5 kg) over the period or 9.6 UFL (unit of energy) per day.

Silage digestibility (DMD) values are likely to be very variable and in the low 60%. Up to 50% of the silage can be replaced with molasses liquids and straw. The table (left) shows the options available for dry dairy cow diets for a 12 week dry period.

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up to half of the silage requirements with straw and a molasses liquid and still set cows up for a smooth transition to lactation.

Suckler Cows & Weanlings

Table 1 gives some examples of suitable diets. Spring calving suckler cows need to have a BCS of 2.5 at calving and have lower energy requirements than dairy cows. However with poor quality silage, their intakes will be reduced to about 7.5 kg DM. A typical cow will eat approx. 6 tonnes of silage DM over a 5 month winter.

If cows are in good BCS (>3.0), they can tolerate an energy deficit and most or all of this silage can be replaced by a straw/molasses diet.

Beef Cattle
In finishing cattle, energy is the most important nutrient and maximising DM intake is the key to optimum performance. Cane Molasses and Nutri-Thrive are ideally suited to inclusion in finishing diets due to their high energy density, improvement in DM intakes and excellent palatability.



These user friendly IBC bulk tanks hold 1.25 tonnes of Molasses

Happy Holsteins

Dairygold milk supplier Noel Crowley and his family have an award winning Holstein herd of spring calving cows on a limited land base near Coppeen in West Cork. The TMR diet includes grass/maize silage, straw and a molasses liquid feed from Barrett Agri. Noel has been

“using molasses based Barrett Sugar Pro Liqui 30 for over three years and finds it good value”. His cows average over 1700 gallons at 3.9% butterfat and 3.46% protein so nutrition is obviously first class

Contented Cattle

Richard Bourns and his family operate a substantial beef finishing enterprise at Lisbeg farm near Eyrecourt in East Galway.

A mixer wagon is used to feed a TMR diet and the ingredients which include molasses are purchased from Liffey Mills. Richard has been “using

molasses for over 20 years and finds it good value for money. It also improves the palatability and prevents other ingredients from separating out of the mix.” Richard “plans to use more straw in the TMR diet this winter provided the quality is good”.