



The Rumen Friendly approach

By Stuart Cameron,
Harbro Dairy specialist
and Regional Sales
Manager

Having worked for Harbro for over a decade and with a number of my customers for well over 20 years, farmers often comment that the recent evolution of data and technology has revolutionised the way they manage their businesses. With our Milk Monitor scheme we take monthly measurements of key performance indicators, enabling us to advise on tailored nutrition programmes aligned to the objectives of each unit.

Records from October and November show us that on average rumen rates and yield have dropped slightly. Although there could be a variety of causes, one reason is that in many cases the tail end cows, especially the spring calving cows in late lactation are not responding as well which is affecting overall herd yield. Also, some herds have summer/autumn calving cows that have not transitioned through the dry period well due to poor weather conditions. That considered, yield has only fallen marginally with milk protein % maintaining its status suggesting sufficient energy intakes. Butterfat % has increased very slightly due to the concentration of milk solids from lower milk yields along with variable forage qualities. Due to this, weight of milk solids has fallen very slightly, although it is still above 2kg/cow/day.

We're currently advising that feed is targeted to high yielders as it will be those cows that will pay dividend in the spring. Farms also need to consider strategies for cows in late lactation and those not producing to avoid using valuable resources better spent on the fresh cows.

	Nov figures	Oct figures
DMI	21.48	21.56
RR	1.29	1.31
Yield	27.47	28.02
BF	4.13	4.11
Protein	3.33	3.33
Energy Corrected Milk	27.71	28.11

The remaining winter looks set to challenge the dairy farmer in a number of ways, from potential issues with availability of feeds, to health and fertility concerns as well as a volatile milk price. Measuring and benchmarking on farm performance can assist you to make nutritional/management decisions to overcome these challenges. Come and join our growing number of Milk Monitor dairy farms and let us help you achieve a competitive advantage in these times of change.

01888 545200 info@harbro.co.uk