



FEAST ON YEAST FOR £13 PER BULL BENEFIT

A new bull beef trial at Harper Adams University College suggests the dietary inclusion of a fermented yeast culture can increase margins by at least £13 per bull.

The study looked at the effect of feeding Rumenco's XP_{LS} fermented yeast culture on the performance of intensively finished dairy-bred bulls fed *ad lib* cereals right through to slaughter.

The trial commenced in mid August 2011 when 36 January to February born bulls (26 Holsteins and 10 Continental cross Holsteins) weighing around 320kg at seven months old were split into two groups of 18. One group received a standard Harper Adams 14% crude protein barley beef ration, the other group were fed the same ration supplemented with 0.4% XP_{LS} yeast culture. All the cattle were housed in straw-bedded yards with free access to straw from feed racks.

"Overall the performance of all the bulls was good," reports Harper Adams University College beef specialist Simon Marsh. "The Holsteins recorded slaughter weights of 555kg at 13.4 months old compared to the EBLEX target of 540kg at 13 months of age. The Continental crosses were slaughtered at 619kg at 13.7 months compared to the EBLEX target of 570kg at 14 months.

"What was interesting though was that the XP_{LS} fed bulls recorded a significantly higher daily liveweight gain compared to the control group (see table 1) due to an increased slaughter weight (+11kg) and earlier slaughter (6 days)," he points out.

"Based on the costs prevailing at the time of the study, the highest margin over feed was recorded with the XP_{LS} fed bulls, which was increased by £12 (see table 2). However, the margin over feed would have been significantly higher if the bulls had been fed the fermented yeast culture from three months old. What's more, if other costs such as machinery water and electricity are costed in at 15p per day this is worth an additional £0.90 per bull, resulting in an overall 4.2% margin increase of £13 per bull."

Simon Marsh says that with the recent increases in cereal prices it's tough to make a margin, so the use of potentially cost-effective feed supplements, such as yeast cultures, that can help boost daily liveweight gain and FCR are well worth evaluating.

"But whatever yeast you feed, it's important to use a product with proven effectiveness and solid trial data behind it. There are a myriad of different ones on the market, so go for something that works and has been independently proven," he says.

Table 1: Animal performance (bulls @ 320kg start weight)

	Control (kg/bull)	XP _{LS} (kg/bull)	Significance
Slaughter weight	570	581	No significant difference
Days to slaughter	204	198	No significant difference
DLWG	1.23	1.32	Significant difference

Table 2: Financial performance

	Control	XP _{LS}
Carcase value (£)	959	993
Feed cost (£ per bull)	297	319
Margin over feed (£ per bull)	662	674

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Picture supplied:

Simon Marsh from Harper Adams University College says that whatever yeast you feed, it is important to use a proven product with solid trial data behind it.



Note to editors

1. Rumenco is a market leader in the ruminant feed supplement market. It is a successful company with strong brands. The well-established Rumevite, Supalyx and Lifeline products, in particular, are trusted and valued by livestock farmers in the UK. The company has forged robust partnership relationships with the agricultural merchant trade based on its branded products and contract manufacture.

Date: 21st August 2012

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