



## **LACK OF GRASS CONCERNS BEEF AND SHEEP PRODUCERS**

The hot July weather has burnt off many pastures and supplementary feed manufacturers are experiencing a surge of enquires from cattle and sheep producers concerned about the situation.

“At the Royal Welsh Show last week the issue uppermost in many farmers’ minds was the grass situation. The hot sunshine and lack of rain in most parts of the country over the last few weeks has accelerated the usual mid to late summer decline in grass quantity and quality. Farmers are now very concerned about finishing stock growth rates,” says Rumenco technical manager David Thornton.

Mr Thornton points out that even in good grass growing years the growth rates of cattle and lambs decline as the season progresses. “This is simply because of the natural fall off in grass sward digestibility. But in a drought year this digestibility deterioration simply accelerates and you can even find your animals losing weight.”

He adds that the late summer, post weaning period is also the time when breeding stock need to recover body condition loss caused by lactation. It’s also important to prepare ewes for tugging so that they are on a rising plane of nutrition before they go to the ram.

“Last winter’s harsh conditions highlighted the importance of having stock in good condition with plenty of body reserves and unless farmers take action now they will be storing up problems for next winter. Consequently it is important to find some way of supplementing what grass is available.”

Mr Thornton says that many farmers turn to straw to maintain growth rates in young cattle and lambs – and to keep milk output up in ewes and suckler cows – but this is short supply and expensive. Rumenco says farmers should look at feed blocks.

“Rumevite is proven to encourage fuller utilisation of dried pastures through increased foraging behaviour. For example, introducing Rumevite will typically improve cattle growth rates by 0.2-0.3kg/head/day and improve the weaning weights of suckler calves. And do it very cost-effectively.”

Rumenco says that if grass is sparse it is advisable to make some form of additional forage available. This can be silage, hay or straw. The other key benefit offered by Rumevite is mineral supplementation. Salt intake is particularly important in hot weather and by offering a fully formulated feed block no additional supplements are necessary. To keep feed blocks fresh they should be placed in containers near water troughs or in the shade in summer time.

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**Picture supplied (library image; only to be used in conjunction with this press release):**  
The hot July weather has burnt off many pastures, and stock condition will suffer unless farmers take advice on appropriate supplementary feeding.

#### **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.

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