

MGA TIMES

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Simon Draper
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Martin Froment, ADAS Bridgets

FEEDING ADVICE

Re-appraise your maize diets

Chris Savery (MGA Ruminant Consultant) gives the following tips to members:-

How much maize silage do you have available? - time to check stocks. If cows and other cattle are to be kept inside for some time, can you maintain the current amounts of maize in the diet?

Maize remains the best buffer forage. Once cows go out you should aim to maintain a minimum of 10 kg maize in the diet of the higher yielders, - so helping to maintain a consistent supply of high quality forage.

Warm weather will be with us again soon and it is essential that the clamp and face management are good if deterioration is to be minimized. This is especially important once less is being fed per day.

Re-assess your mineral supplementation. Once cows are about to go out, a higher level of magnesium is required in the diet. This can be obtained by changing to the MGA Grazing mineral. Alternatively, continue with the MGA Superspec mineral and add calcined magnesite or magnesium chloride flakes over the critical time.

Details of the MGA's range of summer & winter Minerals are available from the office on request if necessary.

MGA TRIALS FOR 2001

MGA Farmer Demo Site Trials Cancelled

Unfortunately but inevitably the MGA Council has decided to cancel this years series of demonstration trials which are traditionally carried out on 10 members farms throughout the country. We will also need to cancel most of the small plot trials.

However, there will be a small amount of work carried out looking at a Vaderstad drill and grain maize at farms where the risk of Foot and Mouth is minimal. At these farms however there will be no visits and the assessments will be carried out by the host farmers themselves (apart from harvesting assuming that the threat has passed by then).

On a more positive note hopefully the epidemic will have passed by the autumn - if so there will be demonstrations and maize 'master classes' held locally on how to harvest the maize crop and how to prevent soil wash.

More information will be given in future mailings.

DRILLING TIPS

Can your contractor access your farm to drill your maize?

Simon's technical note details the points to consider in order to achieve a good maize crop this year, particularly in view of the wet season - this is assuming that your contractor will be able to access your farm to drill

We have had a report from a member whose contractor will not be able to access his land in view of Foot & Mouth. Unfortunately this problem could affect other members. Simon has confirmed however that it is possible to drill maize with a conventional corn drill - please contact the office if you are in this situation & require advice.

NIAB SEEK TRIAL HOSTS

Could you host a variety trial site?

NIAB are currently trying to locate trial sites on arable only blocks of land for their variety

testing. Sites of 2-3 ha are being sought within the following areas:-

- *Hants, Dorset, Somerset*
- *East Devon, Dorset, Somerset*
- *Cheshire, Staffs, Shropshire*
- *Oxon, Berks & Wilts*
- *Yorks & N Yorks*

If you feel that you would be able to host a trial site, please contact Ross Mitchell at NIAB (01223 342348).

FERTILISER UPDATE

MAFF Fertiliser Recommendations reviewed by ADAS & MGA

Enclosed with this mailing is a summary of the MAFF publication RB209, which details recommendations for fertiliser application rates in agricultural & horticultural crops. The update includes research results from work undertaken by MGA and ADAS. Martin Froment (ADAS) has written the enclosed summary of the 175 page document as a guide to help farmers.