

## Cull Potatoes For Livestock Feed Have Limits, Say Extension Men

With the price of potatoes at farms low and going lower, and with the national potato advisory committee recommending that only number one grade potatoes be put on the consumer market, the problem arises, What shall be done with the second and cull grades of potatoes? Livestock extension specialists from the Pennsylvania State University have come up with some recommendations for using the cull potatoes as livestock feed. There are some precautions, however, which should be considered for any potatoes are fed to livestock. Cull potatoes are sometimes fed to livestock. Their value varies with the way they are fed and to the class of live-

stock consuming the potatoes. Potatoes are rather watery and, therefore, they are usually used in the areas of potato production since it does not pay to transport the water. Badly sprouted potatoes should have the sprouts knocked off before feeding.

### Beef Cattle

Cull potatoes may be used in rations for steers or wintering brood cows. They are worth about 80 per cent as much as corn silage in TDN.

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but are deficient in Vitamins A and D and protein. If fed to steers, the potatoes should be started at three pounds per head daily and increased until they are consuming not more than twenty pounds, extension livestock specialists say.

A liberal supply of good hay should be fed with potatoes to make up for the deficiency of Vitamins A and D. Since potatoes are low in protein, they should be supplemented with 1½ to 2½ pounds of protein supplement per day depending on the quality of hay fed and the size of the steers.

A satisfactory silage can be made by adding 20 to 25 pounds of dry roughage such as hay or corn stover to each 100 pounds of potatoes. This silage will be eaten readily by cattle or sheep.

Some feeders prefer to chop or crush potatoes before feeding to cattle. This prevents the possibility of choking.

### Swine

Experimental data shows that cooked potatoes should be fed to swine. 420 pounds of cooked potatoes equal 100 pounds of shelled corn if properly balanced with other feeds. Swine should not be fed more than four pounds of potatoes to each one pound of grain.

Potatoes should be cooked until soft, the surplus water being thrown away (it is bitter and unpalatable).

When feeding potatoes to swine, a good commercial hog supplement should be fed at the rate of one pound of supplement to each two and one-half pounds of shelled corn. Not more than four pounds of potatoes should be fed to each one pound of corn.

### For Dairy Cattle

The total digestible nutrient (TDN) content of potatoes is about equal to that of corn silage and approximately one-third that of good quality hay. Potatoes are relatively low in dry matter, protein and vitamins A and D. Some good

quality legume hay or grass silage should be fed with them to help make up some of these deficiencies, says Richard Adams, extension dairy specialist.

While some cows may eat 15-60 pounds of potatoes, it is recommended that dairy cows be limited to 15-25 pounds per head daily. The grain mix used with potatoes should contain approximately the same level of protein as would be used with a similar amount of corn silage. Potatoes should be considered as a pound for pound substitute for silage. It takes 2½ and 3 pounds of potatoes to equal 1 pound of average and good hays respectively.

Unripe, decayed or frozen potatoes should not be fed as they contain a poisonous substance, solanine. For the same reason, sprouted potatoes should not be used unless sprouts are removed.

Gradually introduce potatoes into the ration to prevent digestive disturbances. Potatoes should be sliced or chopped through an ensilage cutter before feeding to insure against choking of cattle and improve palatability. Most diversion programs require that potatoes be chopped or sliced. Potatoes should be fed after milking and withheld for 4 hours prior to the next milking to avoid milk flavor problems.

When feed supplies are inadequate, potatoes are worth a maximum of 20% of the value of the grain mix. For example, potatoes may be economical at 60 cents or less per cwt with grain at \$3.00 per cwt. If higher in price, it would be more economical to feed grain at heavier rates, Adams said.

Try to visualize what plants are going to look like when they grow up before you plant them, is the suggestion of A. O. Rasmussen, extension ornamental horticulturist at Penn State. It's easy to make the mistake of setting plants too close together, he says, not realizing how large they'll be when they mature.

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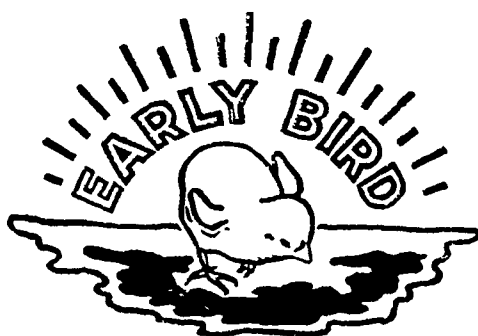
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