



New Ration Recommendations Available

A new ration recommendation program is now offered by PaDHIA to provide additional assistance to dairymen and their nutritional consultants in the feeding of dairy cows. The overall format now applies to most currently used methods of feeding and includes recommended nutrient contents for balancing concentrates fed to producers or dry cows. In addition ration evaluations are automatically included for major items in the diet.

Dairymen or their consultants may choose from five levels of forage intake and three levels of net energy lactation (NEL) in the concentrate portion of the ration. Amounts of concentrate to feed may be provided as a single grain mixture or as two feeds (primarily energy and protein sources). In addition levels of top feed may be indicated using rates provided by the client.

Nutrient specifications are given on an air-dry or as-fed basis for crude protein, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, salt and the chosen NEL content. Concentrate mixtures are not formulated in this initial DHI nutritional package. These may be developed by the client or nutritional consultants using the recommended nutrient specifications and additional ones not included, such as trace minerals and fat-soluble vitamins. The nutrient specifications also may be used to help dairymen select manufactured dairy feeds that most closely meet the needs of his animals at a given point in time.

A balancing forage should be indicated to enable adjustments in forage intake which may be needed to attain the forage intake

levels indicated by the client or meet reasonable minimum or maximums. The recommended intake of the balancing forage is reported. Intake for any forage fed may be indicated by the client on a "same amount" for each animal or free-choice basis. Average intakes should be accurately determined and indicated whenever possible. However, it is possible to enter the balancing forage at unknown intake. The average amount of such forage recommended to meet needs will then be indicated. Another option will force intakes of forage at the levels indicated by the user.

A ration which includes a top-feed at appreciable levels may be more accurately balanced when the top-feed contains some amount of mineral supplementation rather than just energy and/or protein ingredients. This is particularly true on rations containing primarily forages with a low protein and mineral content, such as corn silage and average grass forages. Amounts of top-feed to use for individual cows are printed out according to the instructions given by the client.

The amounts of concentrate recommended on an individual feeding basis are those needed to meet nutritional requirements for maintenance, production, fat test, growth and gestation. Generally they need adjustment only to meet desired flesh scores or offset excessive drops in production or last test day. When a sound TMR is properly fed, animals may adjust intakes on their own to meet flesh needs. If necessary they also may be moved from one TMR to another according to flesh needs, as well as milk production.

Whether feeding is on an individual or group basis, amounts of concentrate are designed to meet protein as well as energy needs whenever concentrate maximums allow. This should help production and health at both ends of the milk production scale.

Proper use of a two-feed system has been shown in some studies to increase returns over feed costs by \$55 per cow yearly over feeding a single concentrate mixture. This option is available in the new DHIA ration program. For example separate feeding levels can be provided for a 12% dairy feed and a 32% concentrate, or high-moisture grain and a high-protein concentrate.

While it is important to obtain good production peaks in early lactation cows by use of a well-balanced ration, major losses in milk production may be attributed to lack of ration balance for cows past peak of lactation. Recommendations in the new DHI nutrition package attempt to improve feeding at all stages of lactation. Improvements in health and production from routinely balancing rations for cows throughout the dry period can further add to returns upon subsequent freshening.

Sound utilization of the new DHIA ration evaluation and recommendation programs do not eliminate the need for nutritional assistance on most farms, but provides dairymen and their consultants with additional tools to use in improving feeding programs, production efficiency and returns. Contact your DHIA Supervisor, Dairy Extension Agent or the State DHIA office at Penn State (814-865-1517) for further information.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR PA. DHIA

Sept 7 Service Center Closed - Labor Day Holiday
 Sept 15 DRPC Advisory Committee Meeting, State College
 Sept 17 Lycoming County Committee Meeting

Oct 7 - 8 PA DHIA State Board of Directors, State College

Nov 11 - 12 North East Caucus Meeting of National DHIA, Mid-East DHIC
 Nov 26 Service Center Closed - Thanksgiving Holiday

Dec 25 Service Center Closed - Christmas Holiday

1993

Jan 6 - 7 PA DHIA State Board of Directors, Erie
 Jan 26 Central District, Family House, Millintown 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Feb 8 Southeast District, Berks Co. Ag. Center, Leesport 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM
 Feb 10 Southwest District, Ramada Inn, Somerset 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM
 Feb 11 Northwest District, Venango Co 4-H, Franklin 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM
 Feb 12 Northeast District, Towanda Elks Club, Towanda 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Mar 19 - 20 1993 Annual Meeting, Pittsburgh area
 (* All members are invited to attend.)
 Mar 19 - 20 PA DHIA State Board of Directors, following Annual Meeting, Pittsburgh

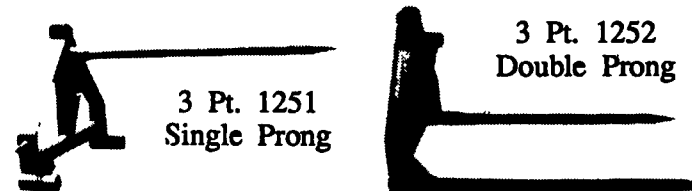
Apr 7 - 8 PA DHIA State Board of Directors, State College

July 7 - 8 PA DHIA State Board of Directors, State College

Oct 5 - 6 PA DHIA State Board of Directors, State College

Hardware Store, Shop & Barn Equip. Sales Will Be Closed Labor Day, Mon., Sept. 7, Sat., Sept. 12 & Mon.-Tues., Sept. 14 & 15 See Page A-19

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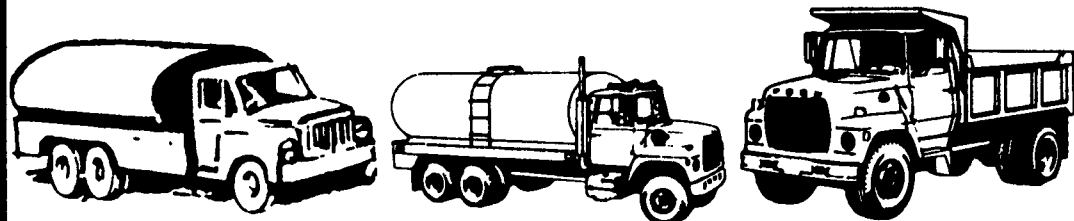
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