



dhia

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Another way to tell if some feed management changes are needed is to review the performance of the cows since starting this particular diet.

Milk pounds have risen steadily since the TMR ration was fed (54 to 58.5). Butterfat percent has remained identical (3.8 percent), which tells me that rumen health has not been compromised.

Percent protein has gone up slightly, but still looks normal for Holsteins (3.2 to 3.3 percent).

MUN has gone down to 10 from 13 indicates that the balance of carbohydrates to protein has increased.

My recommendation in this case is to monitor the above measurements and if no major change occurs, do not change anything.

The cows have told us through DHIA information that although they are sorting and thereby not eating the diet prepared for them; they are able to perform well.

When asked by the dairyman about the addition of water to help keep the feed together, I replied that inexpensive ideas are often the most underestimated.

I suggested that the addition of liquid molasses would be best in my opinion, but he should work with his nutritionists to look at all his options before making a decision. If molasses were to be added, the other carbohydrate sources should also be adjusted due to the previous changes in MUN.

The real concept here is to not just be satisfied with good rations on paper, but more importantly, make sure that you know what your cows are really eating.

Let PA DHIA records tell you about your cows and if you cannot hear what they are saying, maybe I can help.

Average Farm Feed Costs For Handy Reference

To help farmers across the state to have handy reference of commodity input costs in their feeding operations for DHIA record sheets or to develop livestock feed cost data, here's last week's average costs of various ingredients as compiled from regional reports across the state of Pennsylvania.

Remember, these are averages, so you will need to adjust your figures up or down according to your location and the quality of your crop.

- Corn, No.2y — 2.31 bu., 4.13 cwt.
- Wheat, No. 2 — 2.72 bu., 4.54 cwt.
- Barley, No. 3 — 1.47 bu., 3.15 cwt.
- Oats, No. 2 — 1.37 bu., 4.27 cwt.
- Soybeans, No. 1 — 5.30 bu., 8.85 'cwt.
- Ear Corn — 58.50 ton, 2.93 cwt.
- Alfalfa Hay — 128.25 ton, 6.41 cwt.
- Mixed Hay — 114.37 ton, 5.71 cwt.
- Timothy Hay — 116.00 ton, 5.80 cwt.

Dairyman To Dairyman

GEORGE CUDOC
PA DHIA
Consulting
Dairyman



I made a visit to this farm because only experience can determine whether separation of feeds as seen by the dairyman is a legitimate concern.

I had requested in advance that a sample of feed be kept as it was discharged from the mixer. I arrived at the tail end of the feeding period with feed left over from the morning feeding.

The amount looked to be adequate and the feeder reported that total leftovers for the day were a bit less than what I saw at the end of the daytime feed period.

I advised them that feeding for an 8 percent refusal was important and that this should be checked periodically with the scales on the wagon so that the eyeball method can be a bit more accurate.

When comparing the mixed feed with the refusal, it was apparent that the cows were sorting. The most accurate way to measure the severity of separation is to lab analyze both of the samples.

QUESTION: What can we do to prevent separation of grain and forage in our TMR? If we do nothing will our cows perform as they should?

ANSWER: Certain feeding situations make this a very good question.

A TMR made up of dry hay and grain is the extreme example of two ingredients that are so different in physical nature that maintaining a homogeneous blend of feed is almost impossible without using some sort of binding agent like molasses, liquid fat, wet by-products such as brewers, or even water.

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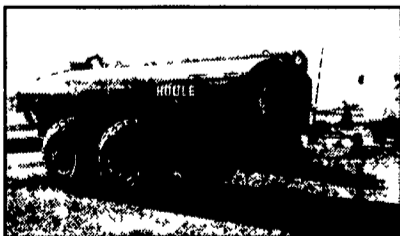
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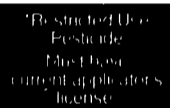
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