



Animal Health & Nutrition Specialists!

90365 Bruce Highway, Sarina, Qld 4737
PO Box 583, Sarina, Qld 4737
Phone: 07 4943 1177 Fax: 07 4943 1179
ABN: 91 097 622 627
[email: admin@cattleking.com.au](mailto:admin@cattleking.com.au)

Lush Green Feed

When feeding lush green feed, such as in the weeks immediately after rain and when feeding lush forage crops, a different set of nutritional problems can arise. The feed in this case is high and often excessive in protein particularly soluble, rumen degradable protein. The feed is also often not available in sufficient bulk and has a low or very low dry matter content. This means it is often difficult for the beast to consume enough feed to satisfy their requirements for energy in the grazing time they have available each day.

As the feed is very low in effective fibre, which is required for correct rumen function, providing coarse roughage in the form of dry hay or stood over pasture can help the beast to utilise the nutrients in the green feed. By doing this the speed with which the feed passes through the digestive system is slowed thus allowing time for digestion and absorption to occur. The rate at which this soluble feed can be fermented can also cause acidosis. Roughage causes cud chewing increasing the supply of saliva which buffers the rumen against acidosis. Allowing a feed containing a highly absorptive material such as zeolite or bentonite will also help slow the rate of passage of the feed.

Excessive levels of soluble protein in the diet can lead to an increase in the population of Protozoans in the rumen. These protozoans reduce the efficiency of digestion as they can actively move and so remain in the rumen where they consume bacteria and other matter and are not digested by the beast. In severe cases scouring and weight loss can be experienced on plentiful green pasture. Supplying bentonite or zeolite in these conditions can reduce the protozoal population and so restore productivity.

Where adequate bulk is available high performance can be expected on these feeds. To support this higher performance adequate levels of nutrients need to be supplied. Phosphorous is often the primary limiting nutrient on green pasture but other nutrients such as Magnesium can also limit production. Acute magnesium deficiency manifests itself as Grass Tetany or staggers. This problem is common on temperate pastures and can be managed by the provision of magnesium supplements. A supplement supplying a full range of macro and micronutrients balanced for the class of stock and the country can minimise problems and maximise productivity from nutrient deficiencies on green feed.

Bloat can be a problem particularly with temperate legumes such as clover and lucernes. Pasture bloat is caused by natural foaming agents in the pasture which cause foam to form preventing the belching out of gases naturally produced in the rumen. Supplying anti bloat detergents and introducing the feed slowly where possible can help minimise this. Providing roughage as hay or dry pasture can also help with preventing bloat. With anti bloat products it is essential to ensure that every beast takes the product to ensure protection for the whole herd. Pulp kidney can also be a problem on lush feed. An annual booster with 5in1 or 7in1 vaccine will help prevent deaths from this at a minimal cost.

By providing access to dry hay or pasture, vaccinating your stock annually against clostridial diseases (5in1) and introducing them slowly to lush feed problems can be avoided. By providing

a supplement containing a range of macro and micronutrients with an absorptive product such as bentonite or zeolite the maximum gain can be achieved from green pasture.