



**Great Plains Livestock Consulting, Inc.**

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# The Great Plains News Feed



**Great Plains Livestock Consulting, Inc.**  
*“Turning Science into Money”*

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## The Latest Across the Plains



### **Happy New Year!**

Welcome 2011! A new year is upon us, and we hope that everyone has their New Year's resolutions in mind, if this year you want to get the best performance out of your livestock remember that it starts with nutrition and that's where we can help! Remember Great Plains Livestock Consulting, Inc. is here to help you start your new year off right. Contact us with any livestock nutrition needs you may have!

### **Retained Ownership or Investing**

The benefits of retained ownership or investing are: making additional money, delaying income, taking advantage of your genetics, knowing how your cattle perform and having records to prove it, and being able to sort out cows that do not raise high performing calves. We can run profit projections to give you estimates on profitability. Remember high priced grain does not guarantee a loss; likewise, cheap grain does not guarantee a profit. Great Plains Livestock Consulting, Inc. works in 18 states in the central U.S. and can connect you with a yard we know and work with to help you get started; whether that is a larger yard, a yard close to a specific packing plant, or a yard close that you can see the cattle regularly. Finding a perfect yard to match your needs can be as simple as a phone call to one of our nutritionists. Give us a call and see what we can do to help you!

## Staff



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## Calendar of Events



- **Jan. 6-23** National Western Stock Show, Denver, CO.
- **Jan. 19-20** Minnesota Pork Congress & Trade Show, Minneapolis, MN.
- **Jan. 26-27** Iowa Pork Congress & Trade Show, Des Moines, IA.
- **Jan. 26-28** International Poultry Expo/ International Feed Expo, Atlanta, GA.
- **Jan. 28** Indiana Livestock, Farm, and Forage Convention, Indianapolis, IN.
- **Feb. 1-2** Illinois Pork Expo, Peoria, IL.
- **Feb. 3-5** 104<sup>th</sup> Annual Minnesota Grain & Feed Association Convention and Trade Show, Duluth, MN.
- **Feb. 8-10** World Ag Expo, Tulare, CA.
- **Feb. 9-10** Missouri Pork Expo, Columbia, MO.
- **Feb. 12-20** 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Beef Expo, Des Moines, IA.
- **Feb. 14-20** Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic, Kearney, NE.



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## Timely Reminders

### General

- ✓ Analyze Winter Feed Supplies.

### Beef

- ✓ Switch cowherd to Calving & Breeding Mineral 60 days prior to calving.
- ✓ Remember protein and energy requirements increase during the last third of gestation.
- ✓ Twine or net wrap have no nutritional value.
- ✓ Bulls and pregnant cows need 6-8 gal. water/day and lactating cows need 11-14 gal. water/day (liquid form works best).
- ✓ Knock frozen points off pen surfaces.
- ✓ Keep cattle bedded in harsh conditions.

### Swine

- ✓ Producers should plan to test DDGS every quarter to check for variability.
- ✓ Lock in some feed ingredients on a long term basis to minimize volatility.
- ✓ Vaccinate for circo virus.

### Unused Feed

- ✓ "Courage is being scared to death - and saddling up anyway."

## Feeding Co-Products Fact vs. Myth



By Dr. Ki Fanning, Ruminant Nutritionist

There are more myths about distillers grains and gluten feed than I can list. However some of the more interesting myths I have heard are that distillers grains will cause Leptospirosis in sheep. Leptospirosis is actually caused by *spirochete* bacteria and is spread by oral or venereal transmission. Distillers grains has also been blamed for foot rot and bloat, when in fact it will reduce the chance of bloat if fed correctly and with its dense mineral content, improves bone and hoof hardness. Another myth we have run across is that soybean hulls are equivalent to ground up 2 x 4 boards. Other myths are that you can't feed breeding animals co-products; you can only feed a maximum of 25% co-products; and marbling and yields will be reduced. None of these are true. This leads me to my first point; consider the source of your information. The guy at the coffee shop, your neighbor, or even your local feed dealer may be repeating a myth rather than a fact.

The facts of feeding co-products are numerous, but some of the more important ones are that all creep feeds and show feeds contain at least one co-product, they have been fed for over a hundred years, and they can improve performance if used correctly. If they are not used correctly they can be lethal, just as corn can be if fed incorrectly.

Distillers grains is the co-product from a dry milling plant which produces ethanol and CO<sub>2</sub> gas. It has a protein content around 30%. Distillers grains is sold in three common forms: wet distillers grains (33% dry matter), modified distillers grains (50% dry matter), and dried distillers grains or DDG (90% dry matter). Relative to corn, wet distillers grains has the greatest energy value (130% ± 10% the NE<sub>g</sub> of corn). Modified is next at 112% to 116% the NE<sub>g</sub> of corn and DDG has approximately 105 to 110% the NE<sub>g</sub> of corn. All three forms have a greater energy value than corn due to the fat content but this is also the limiting factor along with sulfur when feeding these products. If fed between 30 and 40% of the complete diet on a dry matter basis, the cattle will perform at their best gains and feed efficiency compared to a corn based diet, or a lesser or greater amount of distillers grains.

Distillers Solubles (Syrup) is also from a dry milling plant. It is the liquid fraction of the distilling process that has had some moisture removed. Syrup usually has a protein content of 18% ± 4% and it has a dry matter content of 32% but we see a range from 18 to 40% dry matter. The energy content is also dependent on the percent of fat (15% ± 5%); however, it has around 50% more energy than corn.

Gluten feed is a co-product of the wet milling industry which produces high fructose corn syrup among a multitude of other products. It has a protein content of 18% ± 6%. Gluten feed is sold in three common forms: wet gluten feed (42% dry matter), Sweet Bran 60 @ (58% dry matter), and dry gluten feed which is usually pelleted (90% dry matter). Wet gluten feed and Sweet Bran 60 @, if fed between 20 and 60% of the diet on a dry matter basis has a NE<sub>g</sub> value of 100 to 110% of corn. Dry gluten feed has less energy than corn, only 85 to 90% the NE<sub>g</sub> value of corn.

Soybean hulls are a co-product of soybean crushing that extracts soybean oil. Soybean hulls have a protein content of 10% ± 2%. In a feedlot finishing diet they are inferior to corn on an energy basis (<80% the NE<sub>g</sub> of corn); however, in backgrounding and growing diets they are equal to or slightly greater than corn (100 to 110% the NE<sub>g</sub> of corn). The reason for the difference in energy content by diet is that corn has a negative associative effect on forages and soybean hulls have a positive associative effect. Therefore, soybean hulls improve digestion of forages while corn reduces the efficiency to digest forages and fibers including soybean hulls.

There are more co-products than we have time to discuss in this article, but by knowing the nutrient analysis and make of the product, an educated guess can help you utilize the co-product and hopefully reduce your cost of gain. It should also be noted that the energy values are not taken from lab analysis because of the inaccuracy of the equations used to calculate the NE<sub>g</sub> values when used for co-products. Instead these numbers are calculated from actual feeding trials done with dry rolled corn, so the NE<sub>g</sub> values are the performance response of the cattle. Trials using steam flaked corn show energy values of these co-products greater than corn but only half the advantage as compared with dry rolled corn diets with the co-products.

## Ionophores in Beef Cows



By Dr. Jeremy Martin, Ruminant Nutritionist

Ionophores are generally regarded as being the most important in feedlot diets, but they should not be overlooked for cattle in grazing situations. Ionophores are often used in stocker cattle on pasture, as they have been proven to produce more gains on forage. One of the key actions of ionophores in the rumen is to increase propionate production, which is also beneficial in beef cows, and is generally favorable for reproduction. Choosing whether Bovatec or Rumensin is the right ionophore for your ranch depends on your situation.

Bovatec (lasalocid) is approved for feeding with Aureomycin (chlortetracycline), so for ranches where anaplasmosis is a concern, Bovatec is the ionophore of choice because it can be fed in combination with Aureomycin to control anaplasmosis. Feeding Bovatec has been shown to improve forage digestibility in pregnant cows on low-quality winter pasture. Research indicates Bovatec may improve the percentage of cows that conceive within 90 days of calving. However, results are variable; and while it will not reduce conception rate, Bovatec may not enhance fertility in all

situations. Bovatec is more palatable than Rumensin, and generally does not affect forage intake.

Rumensin (monensin sodium) has been widely studied in beef cows and is clearly a valuable management tool in cows. In general, research indicates using Rumensin in low-quality forage diets reduces forage intake while allowing cows to maintain weight and condition. Research consistently indicates cows fed Rumensin maintain the same weight and condition on 5-10% less forage compared to cows not receiving Rumensin. This is true even in winter grazing situations. In cows receiving higher-quality diets, such as lush spring and summer pasture, supplementation with Rumensin increases weight gain and results in higher body condition scores. Even young, thin cows respond to Rumensin supplementation by achieving increased body condition when pasture conditions are favorable. Even more importantly, in situations where weight gain is increased by Rumensin supplementation, particularly in cows at condition score 4 or greater, Rumensin decreases the postpartum interval which should result in more cows bred early in the breeding season. Similarly, Rumensin will hasten puberty in developing heifers, which improves the chances of a heifer calving as early as a two year old. Therefore, Rumensin favors both feed savings and reproductive efficiency in beef females depending on the type of forage available at the time.

One important note about supplementing cows with Rumensin or Bovatec is that they are both toxic to horses. If you have horses, please be careful that they are not allowed access to feed or mineral containing Rumensin or Bovatec. With a little management, this should be achievable. With the potential benefits available, we encourage you to find a way to safely offer either to your cowherd without putting your horses at risk.

Another important note about Rumensin supplementation of pregnant cows is that gestation length is not affected. Calf birth weight may be negligibly higher. As an added benefit, calves that receive Rumensin supplement also gain more weight prior to weaning. Although controlled research does not exist to support this, calves born to cows fed Rumensin during late gestation are less likely to experience coccidiosis early in life. This is an important management tool for operations that calve on the same location each year, particularly if cattle are confined. As a result of the combined effects of Rumensin in cows, there is potential for pounds of calf weaned per unit of feed to be increased. We look forward to talking with you about how to implement an ionophore feeding program on your ranch. Make it your New Year's resolution to evaluate management practices based not solely on cost, but on return. We appreciate your continued business and look forward to working with you in 2011 and beyond.



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