

FEED FOR THOUGHT




News For Cattlemen From Suga-Lik® A Product Of U.S. Sugar Corp.

Act NOW To Keep Horn Fly Populations Down



Horn flies bite. Not once, but 20 to 40 blood meals per day. This constant biting makes horn flies an important vector of disease and causes cattle to waste energy and graze less. In the southern United States horn flies may infest cattle all year. It has been documented that cattle with high infestations of horn flies have higher heart rates, increased body temperature, increased respiration rates, require more water and have a greater protein requirement compared to cattle with low horn fly infestations. This equates to stress that result in lowered gain, efficiency of gain and weaning weight. The chart below is a summary of research trials in which horn flies were, or were not controlled and the subsequent impact of horn fly control on weaning weight.

HORN FLY CONTROL		
	IMPACT OF HORN FLIES ON WEANING WEIGHT	REFERENCE
	12.8 lbs	Campbell 1976
	46.2 lbs	Haufe 1982
	27.5 lbs	Cocke 1989
	Average response from control of horn flies = 28.8 lbs	

This research demonstrates that apart from the potential effects of horn flies on disease transmission or the potential impact of horn flies on the body condition score of the cow, the effect of horn flies on weaning weight indicates horn fly control makes economic sense.

Since a horn fly can mature in as few as 10 days, the population can quickly explode. During that time, a single female horn fly can lay 500 eggs.

Within just one month a single horn fly has the potential to generate 250,000 horn flies. Complete 100% control of horn fly populations on cattle is neither biologically feasible nor necessary to achieve improvements in weaning weight shown in the chart on the left.

One method of achieving economically feasible levels of horn fly control is by incorporating Altosid® IGR Cattle Feed-Thru in your Suga-Lik® Fully Fortified® supplement program.

Altosid® IGR Cattle Feed-Thru is unique in that it focuses on stopping growth of new horn flies. The insect growth regulator is consumed by cattle, and then passed with the manure, where horn flies lay their eggs. The product disrupts the natural growth pattern of the horn fly pupae so that they never develop into biting adults.

This spring Suga-Lik® Fully Fortified® supplements will be available with a new liquid formulation of Altosid® IGR Cattle Feed-Thru. By feeding Altosid® IGR, you can achieve economical control of horn flies and reduce labor costs and minimize the animal stress associated with other horn fly control methods, such as sprays, pour-ons, dusts and ear tags.

Approved by the Biopesticide Division of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in December 2005, the product causes no residue, runoff or contamination problems; it is nontoxic to beneficial insects. For more information about how to integrate Altosid® IGR in your supplement programs, contact your Suga-Lik® feed representative, visit www.altosidigr.com or call 1-800-347-8272.

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Pounds vs Percents

Charlie Hofer, PAS

Most times, when discussing animal nutrition, the terms 'percent' and 'pound' come up. A pound is a unit of weight measurement and a percent is a measure of concentration. Sometimes, folks prefer to use one term or the other, but the two terms should not be confused with one another. And, of course, when talking about nutrition, pounds and percentages both have significance.

A cow (or any animal) does not understand percentages. She does not really understand pounds, either. But a cow does know when her rumen is full or empty. She also knows (for the most part) if she is energy-starved or salt-deprived. Beyond that it is up to us to be sure she has a complete, balanced diet that will sustain life, optimize body condition, and foster disease immunity and reproduction.

In the springtime, your cattle have access to some of the highest-quality bahiagrass. This springtime bahiagrass has a high percentage of energy and protein. So why is it such a challenge to keep cattle in good body condition in the springtime? That's right! There aren't enough pounds of forage out there to get the job done. What she eats is 'good stuff.' But without enough pounds of protein, energy, etc., the cow cannot meet her requirements. This is why it is important to consider continuing to supplement your cows during the springtime. Even though the grass quality is top-notch, the sheer quantity may be lacking. The opposite can happen in early fall. Your cows have plenty of grass, but because the quality is declining they cannot physically fit enough in their rumen to maintain condition. Pounds of grass consumed may be sufficient, but the percentages of nutrients are low in the grass. I realize this is a basic example, but it sets the stage for all other feeds, too.

Some examples: If you determine your cattle need 3 pounds of supplemental energy (TDN), you have several options. You could feed 2 lbs of tallow, 3.7 lbs of standard cane molasses, or 8.7 lbs of cottonseed hulls. Then, if you chose to feed one pound of supplemental protein, you still have several other options. You could feed 0.35 lbs of urea, 8.4 lbs of hominy, or 14.5 lbs of citrus pulp. As you can see, there are various ways to reach one certain nutrient level. However, it is critical that pounds and percentages of nutrients are taken into consideration. It is also critical to give your cattle a nutritionally balanced supplement. Feeding one feed ingredient commodity alone may reach one nutrient requirement, but leaves the others out of balance.

Choosing a springtime supplement can be challenging, as well. Individual cattlemen have personal feed preferences or management styles that lend themselves to certain feeding programs. But remember, your cows' nutrient requirements remain the same. To have a successful spring, your cattle need a properly-balanced supplement to match the forages your cattle are eating. Quite simply, there is no single commodity that accomplishes this balance. Even a premium free-choice mineral cannot get the job done alone. In addition to water, your cattle have a daily requirement for protein, energy, vitamins and minerals that you need to provide. This is why Suga-Lik® supplements are Fully Fortified® for the springtime or any other season of the year. Suga-Lik® Fully Fortified® supplements are formulated to meet your cattle's nutrient requirements for protein, energy, vitamins and minerals. One last thought: Not only can Suga-Lik® meet your cattle's nutrient needs, but we can meet your needs, too, through labor savings and cost-effective supplementation.

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