



FAR Case Study Dairy Cows

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Key outcomes of feed advice

- Making appropriate dry cow silage
- Reducing the incidence of transition diseases
- Better cow performance in early lactation

Background and area of expertise

Lorna gained a BSc in Animal Science from the University of Aberdeen and went on to specialise in dairy cow nutrition with a PhD in On-Line Metabolic Profiling in Dairy Cows from the University of Nottingham. She worked for 12 years in the animal feed industry before joining SAC Consulting as a Dairy Consultant in 2016. Lorna works with dairy farmers on herd nutrition and delivering various Scottish Government funded projects on different aspects of dairy and beef production.

Give an example of how your feed advice has made a measurable difference

Working with a 200-cow herd over the last few years Lorna was seeing a high occurrence of milk fever and retained foetal membranes at calving time. She identified that the dry cow rations were based on high quality grass silage with a high slurry rate application leading to a very high CAB (Cation Anion Balance) value.

In addition, with 5 cuts of silage a year changing pits often resulted in issues flaring up. With Lorna's advice the farm changed to making a more mature silage with no slurry specifically for feeding to dry cows and then focussed on tailoring the minerals in the diet to address the issues. Ensuring the correct balance of magnesium and calcium has led to a reduction in milk fever and retained foetal membranes whilst improving transition. Increasing the protein diet in the dry cow ration has improved colostrum quantity and increased milk yield in early lactation.

What difference does FAR make to you and to your customers?

Being a registered feed adviser gives customers reassurance that the advice they are receiving is of a certain standard. The register provides recognition, and with the ongoing CPD modules that advisers are up to date with current legislation and important topics affecting livestock production.