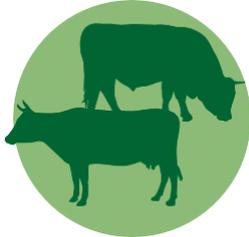




Diary Cows Improved Milk Yields, Increased Fertility & Better Output from Farm Grown Feeds Hefin Richards



12,500 dairy cows,
4000 followers, 2000 beef animals



Hefin Richards
Feed Adviser,
Rumination Nutrition

Key outcomes of feed advice

- Improved milk yields
- Increased fertility
- Better output from farm grown feed

Background and area of expertise

Hefin comes from a farming background and took a Degree at Harper Adams University before undertaking a number of roles in animal nutrition. He founded his own independent consultancy Rumenation Nutrition in 1998, and works predominantly with progressive dairy farmers providing advice on forage production, feed sourcing, ration formulation, and feed management for milking and dry stock, plus replacements. He also works with a number of beef rearing and finishing units. Hefin is responsible for around 12,500 dairy cows plus another 4000 followers, as well as 2000 beef animals.

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

In a 250 dairy cow herd, Hefin was able to advise on changes to bring about significant improvements in the herd performance including increased **milk yields per annum up** from 8500 to 10500 litres; increased fertility (**calving intervals down from 440 to 396 days**); major **improvements in transition cow health**; and better harvesting and utilisation of forage.

In order to achieve this Hefin's advice focused on improving forage quality during harvest and storage/ feedout. He changed the diet formulation to optimise rumen health and efficiency, and promoted better dry cow management and nutrition including the introduction of a heat detection system. He also introduced better grassland species and fodder beet into the rotation to improve output from farm-grown feeds. Increased feed efficiency and overall performance will also have had a positive impact on greenhouse gas emissions from the herd.

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

Hefin is a firm believer in continuing professional development (CPD), and FAR gives feed advisers' CPD both a clear structure and a recognised status. He believes that registered members of FAR should work to raise the scheme's profile among the livestock sector. This will provide farmers with confidence in and's' level of knowledge, and a greater understanding of the key issues facing the livestock and wider food industries.