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Goat Milk processors back forming new organization

Goat farmers will soon be voting on a check-off which will fund Ontario Goat for the long term. Two of the heavy hitters in the Ontario dairy goat industry, Tony Dutra of Woolwich Cheese and Bruce Vandenberg of Mariposa Dairy were in Stratford recently to help establish a marketing board for the entire goat industry. The purpose of the marketing board will be to promote the industry and represent the industry when dealing with various levels of government. A check-off will also be applied on goats sold for meat. Goat milk comprises of two percent of the world milk consumption. Similarly, goat cheese now represents two percent of all cheese consumed in North America. Vandenberg suggested Ontario Goat would be able to do the same for the three sectors of the goat industry—dairy, meat and fibre. He described the .075 cent check-off being proposed as an insurance policy, funding an organization to deal with such things as an outbreak of infectious disease. "This opportunity will not happen again" predicted Vandenberg in reference to the upcoming vote on establishing a self-funded goat organization to represent the industry. "People have to look at investing in technology", Vandenberg said in reference to producers here. "If you have no debt you can make a living milking 400 goats", he said. "But if you want a life you have to milk 500", he added. "The hobby people are getting out and the business people are getting in" Dutra said. The industry learned recently, in an announcement the two main brokers of milk, Hewitts Dairy in Hagersville and Ontario Goat Co-Operative in Teeswater, that Woolwich Dairy would be increasing milk prices by two per cent, beginning in June with similar increases in 2013 and 2014. This represents 1.7 cent per litre increase in price, based on an average milk price paid to producers of 85 cents per litre. Woolwich Dairy uses approximately 80 per cent of the milk produced in the province. (Ontario Farmer)

Finding the difference between conventional and Organic

Is there a real difference in the quality of meat from conventional, organic and free range chickens? And if there are differences, what are these and do consumers recognize them? German and Italian studies tell the answer. Consumers in several regions of the world show a rising interest in organic food, including organic chicken meat. Despite this rising demand production of organic chicken meat increased only slightly. Although supporters of organic production claim better quality, the knowledge on the main factors contributing to the observed differences in quality is still limited. Consumers who prefer meat of slow-growing birds raised with access to free-range believe that the meat has improved texture and flavour. This is supported by some studies which revealed that in comparison to conventionally reared birds, meat obtained from an organic production system is more yellow, has a lower ultimate pH, a better water holding capacity, less cooking losses and higher shear values.

Cooking loss differs

Meat of broilers fed with a conventional diet was significantly paler and less red than from broilers fed with an organic diet, whereas, meat from birds fed with an organic diet was slightly more yellow . Interestingly, access to free-range however did not influence carcass and meat quality significantly. Members of a taste panel noted differences between FG broilers fed with conventional diet and broilers fed an organic diet. They assessed FG broilers to be more tasty.

Italian Experiences

Results show that as could be expected, conventional birds had a dramatic higher carcass and breast meat yield whereas free range birds had higher wing and leg yields. Both meat and skin of breast and leg coming from free range birds were lighter and less red and more yellow. FR birds exhibited higher water-holding capacity in both breast and leg meat. Finally, although shear force did not differ in breast meat, leg meat from FR birds were tougher.

Overall the data shows that noticeable quality trait differences exist between free range and conventional labelled poultry products and validates the existence of different market segments. (World Poultry)

WE WILL BE CLOSED ON JULY 2, 2012 FOR CANADA DAY.

Sow Compliance Not 100% in EU

With a January 1st ban on sow stalls looming across Europe, the situation remains confused. In England, where widespread compliance seems likely, there are predictions hog production will decline by 5—10 %, driving pork prices higher. But there are 12 member nations of the European Union that have not yet given assurances they will be able to get all their hog farmers to comply with the standard. So far three countries say they have achieved compliance and another nine say they expect they will be able to meet the Jan. 1 deadline. Tim Horton's in Canada is now demanding pork from pigs not using stalls.

Ontario Farmland Values Rise

The average value of farmland in Ontario increased by 7.2 percent during the second half of 2011, according to a new Farm Credit Canada (FCC) Farmland Values Report. Overall, farmland values have increased in nine provinces and remain unchanged in Newfoundland and Labrador.

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Supplements—a necessary evil!

Supplements for cattle take many forms and choosing the right one is never easy, often confusing and expensive. Let's start with minerals. The vast majority of cow-calf producers are faced with supplementing minerals. The exact mix required will be a function of location (i.e. soil type, water quality), cattle type and the nature of the diet, particularly the forage base. Mineral supplements are packaged in a variety of forms including loose mineral, blocks or as molasses-based tubs. Macro minerals provide a source of calcium and phosphorus, typically in ratios of 1:1 or 2:1. Expected consumption (listed on the mineral tag) typically ranges from two to four ounces per head per day. Depending on the formulation, these minerals can provide cattle with other macro minerals such as magnesium as well as required trace minerals (i.e. copper, zinc, magnesium, iodine, cobalt and selenium). A bonus is that many supply vitamins A, D and E as well. In the cow-calf sector, mineral feeding is often free choice or with grain.

Perhaps one of the most perplexing aspects of free-choice mineral is variability in consumption. I often get comments from producers such as "my cows won't touch brand X but when I put out brand Z, they eat me out of house and home", or "I just started mineral feeding last week and they are eating it like candy." There is no doubt that some minerals are more palatable than others. Palatability can vary due to differences in phosphorus concentration and by flavouring agents used by different suppliers. My advice, find a mineral that matches your cow's requirements and one they will eat. Then manage the mineral feeder by keeping a weekly record of what is supplied versus consumed, ensuring that intake is limited to that recommended on the tag. Problems with mineral intake can also be overcome by mixing with salt and adjusting the ratio until consumption is at the recommended level. This takes advantage of the animal's requirement/craving for salt. This concept has been applied commercially with the development of trace mineralized salt. Free-choice consumption is again the method of choice for feeding for many cow-calf operators.

When purchasing a mineral supplement, many producers focus on price. I recommend that in addition to price, you pay attention to the tag. The mineral tag will indicate the concentration of each mineral in the mix, as well as the recommended intake. Why is this important? Simply put, the concentration of a mineral such as copper in the supplement will dictate the required intake to meet the animal's requirement. For example, take two mineral supplements, one with 1000 parts per million (ppm) copper at $600 per tonne, the other with 2500 ppm at $700 per tonne. If the cattle consume a total of 56 grams (two ounces) per head per day, the cattle will consume a total of 56 milligrams of copper from the first mineral while they will get 140 milligrams from the second. Typically mature cows are going to require a minimum of 80 to 100 milligrams of copper per day. If our objective to meet the majority of this requirement from the mineral, the question becomes which mineral is the better buy? In the above example, mineral intake from the first supplement needs to be 2.5 times that of the second to get equal intakes of copper. If similar differences in concentration exist in other important minerals, then the answer is obvious—cheaper is not always better?

For those of you who need to supplement protein in addition to minerals and vitamins, the situation is more complicated. The type of protein supplement required will depend on the class of cattle fed, the nature of the pasture or diet and the form of protein (natural versus non-protein nitrogen). Commercial supplements can be formulated to a wide variety of protein levels (i.e. 8 to 32 %) using all natural protein sources or incorporating a non-protein nitrogen source such as urea or biuret. Compounds that supply non-protein nitrogen such as urea are not protein sources per se; rather they provide rumen bacteria with a source of ammonia for protein synthesis.

Again the tag is your guide. A tag that gives the protein level as 32 (0) per cent, indicates an all natural protein supplement while a 32 (14) tag indicates a 32 per cent protein supplement where a maximum of 14 per cent (or almost half) of the protein is derived from non-protein nitrogen sources. All things being equal, the later supplement should be cheaper. Urea-based protein supplement are best utilized when the diet provides adequate energy for rumen bacterial growth such as in finishing rations. In some pasture situations, a protein supplement that is a combination of natural and urea-based protein can increase forage intake and utilization, however the response will vary with forage quality. So you have lots of choices. Do your homework and make sure you are bringing home the right supplement at the best price! (John McKinnon, Canadian Cattlemen)

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Specials for June

***Quick Start Milk Replacer*—Receive an additional $5.00 off per bag when you buy 5.**

***Beef Feeds*—When you order 5 MT or more of #8452 Complete feed or #8465 1 KG Beef Supp (meal) receive an additional $10.00 off.**

Trade Shows

See you at the Stratford Pork Congress on June 19 & 20.

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