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TRIAL RESULTS CONFIRM THE BENEFITS OF FIBRE PRE-TREATMENT IN DAIRY MIXED RATIONS

According to recent research, application of a fibre pre-treatment to dairy total mixed rations (TMR) before feeding can increase overall milk production efficiency by 11.3%, enabling similar levels of production from 2.3 kg/day less dry matter intake (DMI).

The results come from a trial run by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (AgCanada) at the Lethbridge Research and Development Centre, Alberta. Sixty early lactation Holsteins were fed a silage-based TMR, either with no pre-treatment, or with a *Trichoderma reesei*-derived fungal extract (VistaPre-T) applied as a fibre pre-treatment before feeding.

Fat corrected milk (FCM) yield was maintained (36.3 kg/cow vs. 36.5 kg/cow), despite a 9% lower DMI, with milk fat (3.26% vs. 3.29%) and milk protein (3.03% vs. 2.95%) also similar. The overall effect was that milk production efficiency rose from 1.50 to 1.67 kg FCM/kg DMI.

“The pre-treatment acts to roughen and create pits in the surface of the fibre in the ration, and so increase both the rate and extent of bacterial colonisation of the fibre once in the rumen,” explains AB Vista nutritionist Dr Nicola Walker. “This reduces the lag time before fibre digestion in the rumen begins by around one hour, and leads to improved digestibility of the entire ration.

“The resulting increase in feed efficiency allows either more production from the same feed – typical when cows are in energy deficit – or production to be maintained using less feed. A commercial-scale trial in the UK using 50 first lactation heifers has also highlighted potential fertility benefits, with an observed rise in confirmed pregnancies from 64% to 84%.”

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Notes to editor:

AB Vista is an animal nutrition technology company offering pioneering products and technical services to the global animal feed industry. Since its establishment in 2004, AB Vista has grown to be a top-three player in feed enzymes and is also one of the largest suppliers of natural betaine to the global animal nutrition industry. The company invests heavily in research and development and has a growing portfolio of products and services spanning the poultry, swine, ruminant and aquaculture sectors. AB Vista is headquartered in the UK, with regional offices located in the USA, Brazil, Singapore, Spain, India, China, Germany and Finland.

AB Vista is part of AB Agri, the agricultural division of Associated British Foods, one of Europe’s largest food & retail companies with a market capitalisation of £22 billion.

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