

31 May, 2017

Controlling Bloat in Dairy and Beef Cows

Bloat is generally associated with grazing high legume content pastures in spring or autumn. Clover content over 50% is considered dangerous. Occasionally young grasses can also cause bloat if they contain large amounts of soluble protein. Mornings with dew on the pasture or overcast, windy days are frequently associated with bloat events.

Heifers are three times more likely to die from bloat than mature cows. Jerseys are three times more susceptible than Friesians and crossbreds twice as susceptible.

Signs of Bloat

- Not grazing
- Distended left abdomen
- Appear distressed – vocalise
- Strain to urinate and defecate
- Rapid breathing with mouth open and tongue protruding

Prevention

There are numerous methods that can be used to manage and prevent bloat, as outlined below. However, there are differences in the ease of implementation and palatability.

Molafos Liquid Supplements

Molafos Bloat is a molasses and Teric blend which is designed to aid in the reduction of bloat in the herd. The palatability tends to be high due to the molasses content. It is also convenient to implement by simply placing the product in open tubs or roller licker tubs in field.

Molafos Bloat can be fed ad lib to cattle, however 1-2kg/head/day is recommended.

In addition to aiding bloat prevention, Molafos Bloat is a high-energy feed source, which can help cattle to process high protein pastures available at this time of year.

The following solutions are also available to assist with the control of bloat:

- Other Molafos products customised with the addition of Teric oil.
- Customised blends that incorporate Sodium Monensin and canola oil.

Pasture Management

Silage, hay or more mature pasture can be used to reduce the cow's appetite. Cows should only be allowed access to suspect pastures for short periods of time. Cows should be monitored closely during grazing and immediately after removal from pasture.

Preventative Medication

- Fermentation modifiers e.g. Sodium Monensin
- Detergents e.g. Teric
- Anti-Foaming agents e.g. Parafin oil and vegetable oil

Spraying Pasture with oil

Spraying the entire days grazing with anti-bloat oil requires pastures to be strip grazed to ensure effective control. Oils only give 2-4 hours' protection so therefore need to be applied and consumed during the grazing period. Cows require a dose of 85ml of oil per day.

Feeding in the bail

Detergent and oils have been added to supplementary feeds with good results. Teric or bloat oil in powdered form can be used by home mixers. Cows will only eat Teric voluntarily if mixed with molasses in equal proportions.

Flank Application

30-70ml of thick bloat oil can be applied to the flank of each cow with a brush. Cows will lick this from themselves during grazing.

Water Trough Application

Detergent can be added to troughs if it is the only source of water available to the cows. Teric is added at the rate of 40ml per 15lt of drinking water.

Bloat Blocks

With this method, an adequate intake of the block by all cows is required for a suitable level of protection.

For Further Information

Please contact your local Molafos distributor or call GrainCorp Liquid Feeds on 1800 333 010.