



Press information



Prepare for spring turnout - and getting the most from grass

* Keenan is holding a series of four, on-farm meetings at selected venues around the country which take an in depth look at new ways of maximising milk production when cows are out to grass.

Tuesday 16th March: South West. Host farm manager Brian Huxter of Denhay Farms Ltd, Broadoak, Bridport, Dorset DT6 5NP

Wednesday 17th March: West Midlands. Host farmer P S Smith & Son Lower Castle Hays, Needwood, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE13 9PH

Thursday 18th March: North West. Host farm J Smith & Sons (Chorley Ltd.), Blindhurst Farm, Heath Channock, Chorley, Lancashire PR6 9HA

Friday 19th March: Scotland. Host farmer J Wilson, Largs Farm, Twynholm, Kirkcudbright, Dum & Gall DG6 4NR

All events open 11.15 am for 11.30am start

A series of meetings organised jointly by Keenan, Yara and the RASE has been designed to provide visitors with details of the latest developments in milk production from grass. These include the preparation of the herd for the transition on to grass and the actual nutritional management of the cows during the grazing season to ensure maximum productivity and cow welfare.

..... more

The line-up of speakers is a formidable and, as such, offers a vast depth of experience and advice on grassland nutrition plus some welcome views from dairy farmers who explain how their own systems operate.

Promising to be of major interest is the question of how Keenan's PACE feed management system can be used successfully to link in with grazing.

PACE has already made a major impact on the way cows are fed during the winter – not only does it allow precise and consistent formulation of high quality, Mech-fiber rations but also provides detailed performance and costings for individual cows.

With this in mind, Keenan's dairy nutritionist Eoghan Mullery will provide chapter and verse on how to balance the cows' energy requirements at grass – an involved and important subject which is essential if milk yield is to be maximised and cow health maintained.

“The problem with grass is that its feed value is variable and there is little control on how much the cow actually consumes,” he says. “However, assessments can be made, as we shall see but this is only half of the solution.

“The other half is to ensure the cow fully utilises the grass she consumes and for this we need to look to the inclusion of a Mech-fiber ration that ‘fires up’ the cow's rumen and helps her process the grass effectively.”

From New Zealand, a country renowned for its utilisation of grass, comes dairy nutritionist Donal Blackwell who will be explaining how to make the best use of grass – New Zealand style.

He points out that for New Zealand herds, which calve mainly in the spring, grazing typically represents 65% of their intake, maize/grass silage 17% and concentrates 18%.

“The benefits of feeding a Mech-fiber ration while the cows are at grass has resulted in significant increases in milk yield,” he says. “For each kilogram of dry matter feed the cows receive, the milk yield has increased by a quarter of a litre/day. This is an extra 5litres/day/cow for a 20kg DM ration.”

.....more

He adds that those dairy farmers who opted for the PACE system are also receiving additional financial benefits from feeding accurate and consistent rations.

Yara’s agronomist Mark Tucker is set to provide the latest news on how to improve grass yields along with its feed value.

“It’s one thing to discuss the merits of grass consumption by cows but if there is insufficient grass to graze there may be problems,” he says. “To help avoid them we take a look at grassland management, its establishment, fertiliser requirements and grazing intervals.”

Combined with actual working experiences from dairy farmers who will reveal how they manage their cows at grass – their successes, failures and aspirations – these meetings promise to be interesting, informative and a valuable insight into ways of increasing productivity from grass.

All the events are supported by the RASE organisers of the 2011 Grassland & Muck Event, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire.

For further information please contact:

Max Ford

UK Marketing Manager

NAC

Stoneleigh Park

Kenilworth

Warwickshire

Tel: 07860 830211

Email: mford@keenansystem.com