

Animax Bolus Range

Tracesure-I™

Copasure™

Allsure™

Trace element bolus proven to boost milk yields in dairy herds

Top-selling trace element bolus, Tracesure-I, which has been proven to improve cow health post-calving, has now been shown to increase milk yield too.

An independent study by a leading vet confirms that the bolus, formerly known as IONOX, increases milk yield by an average of 327 litres (72 gallons).

Based on current milk prices this adds up to an extra €102 worth of milk per cow from a bolus procedure costing less than €10.

Vet John Cook, an expert in cattle medicine and production who led the study in four commercial herds in Cumbria, says the results are very exciting.

“It is the first time that anyone has used a bolus to determine the

impact on milk production,” he says.

“It is difficult to be entirely specific about the exact reasons for the lift in production because these boluses contain iodine, selenium and cobalt; it could be any one of these or a combination producing this result.

“But what I would say is that the bolus improves cow health post calving and it naturally follows that a healthier cow will produce more milk.”

Mr Cook, who is Technical Services Director with Genus ABS, proved the bolus was responsible for the uplift in yield by focusing on the five month period immediately after it had been administered.

He noticed that in the first 100 days of lactation there was a variation in milk yield between the treated and untreated groups of cows.

“After 100 days of lactation the effects were declining because these cows had been given the bolus five months previously,” Mr Cook explains.

“After correcting these data to allow for factors such as the age of the cow and the length of dry period I found a significant ($P \leq 0.02$) difference of 225 litres (49 gallons) milk yield per cow between the treated and control animals. Over the whole lactation there was an advantage of 327 litres for the treated animals.”

Animax Ltd has 24 years’ experience in producing slow-rumen release trace element products.

Aled Davies, Animax’s sales and marketing representative in Ireland, says farmers had long recognised the benefits to herd health from administering these boluses but they could now be confident of the strong economic benefits too.

“The simple conclusion is that direct economic advantages were shown from a straightforward procedure which points the way towards practical improvement in herd health and production,” says Mr Davies.

Mr Cook’s paper on the link between the Tracesure™ range and the reduced retention of foetal membranes in dairy herds has been published in the Veterinary Record. His paper setting out the results of the milk yield study is in preparation.



Irish dairy producer Gary Hurley, pictured with his son, Brian, and champion heifer, Clonpaddon Susie Mist, says Tracesure I has made his herd healthier, resulting in better milk yields.

ANIMAX
veterinary technology

Farmers abandon conventional minerals for trace element boluses

Livestock farmers who have traditionally supplemented their herds' diets with conventional minerals are switching to a bolus which delivers the necessary levels of essential trace elements – and nothing else.

Animax's Tracesure-I™ guarantees a slow release of iodine, selenium and cobalt for up to six months, giving farmers the reassurance that grazing animals are getting precisely what they need, minus unnecessary elements which reduce the effectiveness of these essentials.

Tracesure-I™ contains exceptionally high doses of iodine at levels recommended by the Teagasc Grange research centre in Ireland. It was in this country that Animax originally developed the Tracesure™ range because Ireland has conducted more research into iodine levels in livestock than anywhere else in the world.

Les Porter, who established Animax two decades ago, says his boluses only include trace elements that stock need. "Conventional supplements contain materials that there is absolutely no point in giving to animals," he says. "A prime example is phosphorus. Grass won't grow without phosphorus so we know that stock are getting enough in their diets. And iron, which is frequently given in mineral formulations, doesn't become deficient in cattle other than in

the extreme situation of calves reared on milk. The overall effect therefore is to reduce absorption of key trace elements."

For years many farmers have relied on minerals to get the essential micro-nutrients into their animals but Mr Porter suggests that it is a highly variable method, especially in situations of free access where the intakes vary hugely.

As commodity prices have climbed steeply, to around €30 per cow for a basic mineral during the dry period, farmers are recognising that they can get all of their selenium, iodine, copper and cobalt needs from Tracesure™ boluses.

The Animax approach is to focus

on the elements which are often low, and which will cause problems if not corrected.

The four production limitors are selenium, iodine, copper and cobalt; if any of these are low in the animal, production will be limited, says vet Les Porter.

"We provide these by bolus, so that each animal gets enough," he says. "Supplementary needs of cattle vary from herd to herd, it is down to individual farmers to consider how the trace element needs of their cattle are best served.

"To maintain efficient production, farmers should consider how the focused Tracesure™ bolus approach might best fit the needs of their herd."



A Tracesure™ bolus delivers the right levels of essential trace elements – and nothing else.

There are many components that go into conventional mineral supplements but are they necessary?

Phosphorus: grass won't grow without phosphorus so why add more? Phosphorus deficiency is only found in near desert range conditions and is therefore not a problem in Ireland.

Calcium: normal forage has sufficient calcium levels. Milk fever is not caused by calcium deficiency and is not prevented by feeding minerals. Hypocalcaemia can only be minimized by well known special procedures at calving.

Magnesium: there are adequate levels of magnesium in good forage, although it can be lower in old-fashioned store wintering where straw and turnips are the primary feed sources. Staggers, or hypomagnesaemia, is not the result of magnesium deficiency.

As with milk fever it is caused by low blood levels on the day, and prevention by conventional mineral feeding is not the answer.

Iron: iron deficiency anaemia is caused deliberately in milk-fed calves, to give pale meat and is otherwise not a problem. Iron oxides are very common components of mineral mixtures, to give an attractive red or yellow appearance. However, excess iron seriously reduces absorption of trace elements which are really needed - especially copper.

Zinc and Manganese: these are important elements, involved in many enzyme systems. However, in domestic cattle, actual deficiency problems don't seem to happen.

Tracesure I cuts calf deaths in top Irish herd

Calf mortality rates which had been costing an Irish pedigree dairy farm thousands of euros in lost income every year are virtually zero since a trace element bolus was used to treat iodine and selenium deficiencies.

Gary and Patrick Hurley had been losing up to 20% of their calves at birth, stock worth €3,000 a piece.

“The cows were very sleepy at calving which meant the calves were slow to be born and were then born

dead,” says Gary.

The Hurleys were aware of the iodine and selenium deficiencies at Clonpaddon Farm, Arklow. Five years ago they started bolusing their herd with Tracesure-I™ in an attempt to rectify this lack of trace elements.

The improvement has been remarkable. The cows are quicker to give birth, the calves are lively and there are far fewer cows with retained placentas.

“It has made a vast difference to the health of the herd and to farm income. These were valuable calves we were losing,” says Patrick.

The brothers run one of Ireland’s top performing pedigree Holstein herds. Their star cow, Craden Hill Linjet Fame, was reserve dairy champion at the National Dairy Show in Millstreet while in-calf heifer, Susie Mist, earned a first place at the World Holstein Friesian Conference in Cork.

The Clonpaddon herd was established by Gary and Patrick’s father, John, in 1955 and it now numbers 84 milkers, yielding an average of 1900 gallons.

With such high yielding, valuable cows the Hurleys place great emphasis on fertility. Before they started using Tracesure-I™ the herd’s conception rate was 62% but, since bolusing, fertility in the cows has risen to 79% and to 85% in the heifers. The all-the-year-round calving herd is dosed six weeks before bulling with two boluses of Tracesure-I™. “No calves equals no milk so good fertility is essential,” says Gary.



Patrick Hurley, pictured with Craden Hill Linjet Fame, says calving problems have been virtually eliminated since using Tracesure-I™.

Boluses reduce empty rates by half in suckler beef herd

A County Wicklow suckler beef unit has cut its empty rate by half since using trace element boluses.

Seamus and Maurice Wafer had a 20% empty rate in their herd of Limousins at Kilcavan Farm, Carnew, before they dosed the herd with Tracesure I and Copasure.

Poor fertility resulting from a trace element deficiency was their biggest issue. They are now in their second year of using Tracesure I™ and Copasure™ and have reduced their empty rate to 10%. The boluses slowly release doses of copper, iodine, selenium and cobalt over a six month period.

“The cows get back into calf much

quicker,” says Seamus. “We try to run a closed herd and Tracesure™ is making it easier for us to achieve our objective.”

The cows are bolused four months before calving with two boluses of Tracesure-I™ and one of Copasure™. “The cows are a lot healthier and so are the calves. They are up on their feet much quicker and we have less problems with scours,” says Seamus.

The Wafer brothers run a 125 head herd. The heifers are sold to the Petite supermarket chain at between 18-23 months while the bulls are exported to finishing units in Italy. The Wafers are currently achieving the top E and U grades with half their beef exports.



Bolusing has improved fertility in Seamus Wafer’s suckler beef herd.

A guide to improving herd health with Tracesure-I™ and Copasure™/Allsure™

My spring calving herd is already getting Tracesure-I™ pre service. Should I also be giving them something before they calve?

- ▶ Tracesure-I™ has been proven to reduce retained foetal membranes by up to 70% when given at drying off. The calves are stronger calves and eager to suckle. New research has also shown that milk yield is improved significantly.
- ▶ Copasure™ given at drying off can also aid fertility, by keeping up conception rates.
- ▶ You can still give Tracesure-I™ pre service, raising blood levels to aid conception.

How do I ensure good blood levels of essential elements at both calving and service?

- ▶ Bolus with Copasure™ and Tracesure-I™ at drying off, or alternatively Allsure™ (now called Tracesure-Cu/I™), the combined product.
- ▶ At one month pre-service, Tracesure-I™ may be sufficient, unless copper is a problem.

I know our farm has a copper problem, what is the most effective way of supplementing my cows with copper?

- ▶ Copper oxide needles are the best way of delivering copper.
- ▶ Use Copasure™ at drying off, or at housing and turnout.

I can buy copper needles products with added selenium and cobalt powder. Would this be a better option than using Tracesure-I™ and Copasure™?

- ▶ It would be nowhere near as effective. Whilst the copper would last as long as the Copasure™, the selenium and cobalt levels last for weeks and not months. Tracesure-I™ delivers selenium, cobalt and the all important iodine for up to six months. There are no short cuts when it comes to supplementation.

Which bolus should I use for my cows when they are over-wintered on kale?

- ▶ Both Tracesure-I™ and Copasure™, or the combined product, Allsure™.

I have a herd of large Holstein cows, will one Tracesure-I™ and Copasure™ be enough?

- ▶ Any cow over 550Kg will require greater levels of supplementation - two Tracesure-I™ and Copasure™ for each cow, or alternatively two Allsure™ boluses.

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