

Animax Bolus Range

Allsure™

Tracesure-I™

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Allsure™ delivers on all counts for spring calving producer

A dairy farmer who runs a pasture-based system says the Allsure boluses are a guaranteed means of ensuring his herd's health is not compromised by shortages of trace elements.

"We know that each cow is receiving the right trace elements at the right time and in the right dosage," says David Gravell, who runs 310 spring-calving cows at Muddlescwm Farm, Kidwelly.

Mr Gravell and his wife, Laura, converted their system at Muddlescwm Farm, Kidwelly, to spring-calving in 2000.

They had looked at different means of improving the herd's trace element status but reckon the Allsure bolus is the only product that can deliver on all counts.

In their system, pasture forms the bulk of the herd's diet which means that dry matter intakes vary from day to day. "The Allsure bolus is a low hassle, low maintenance form of making sure that the trace element requirements of the cows and the young stock are satisfied, and at a small cost," he says.

"We had previously looked at feeding minerals in the trough but I was



Welsh farmers like David Gravell have benefitted from Irish product development.

concerned about wastage and also I didn't really have the confidence that each cow was getting the right amount each day."

Fertility is an issue too. They have cut their empty rate from 17% to just 8% but as well as the effects of the Allsure bolus they credit a focus on breeding the right cow to suit a grassland system and correctly managing that animal.

The maiden heifers are dried off a month earlier than the cows. "The heifers are usually the first to lose condition so we look after them well," says Mr Gravell. "If an animal is looked after in her first lactation the likelihood is that she will stay in the herd for longer. By giving her an extra month off her lifetime production will be longer."

The Allsure boluses from Animax are administered at drying off. "This allows the cows time to take it in during the dry period and she is firing on all four cylinders when she calves and thereafter," says Mr Gravell.

Animax boluses were researched and developed at The Grange in a joint collaboration between veterinarian Les Porter of Animax and Dr Phil Rogers.



Bolusing in the dry period means the cows fire on all four cylinders when they calve.

ANIMAX
veterinary technology

Spring herd has best fertility results ever with Allsure™

A dairy producer who runs a large spring-calving herd on the Pembrokeshire coast has achieved some of his best fertility results since supplementing the herd with Animax Allsure boluses.

Chris James, of Stackpole Home Farm, Stackpole, saw his empty rate after 10 weeks of breeding plummet to 6%.

“Our herd health status seems to be in very good shape and on the current results we will continue to use the Allsure bolus,” says Mr James, who farms 480ha on the southern coastal tip of Pembrokeshire in partnership with his brother, Nigel.

The herd is split into two groups of 500 cows. They also have a heifer rearing enterprise, rearing 400 replacement heifers annually to calve as two-year-olds.

Mr James started using Animax boluses when the enterprise expanded beyond its housing capacity. He off-winters some of the stock on sandy soil six miles from the farm and much of the youngstock is win-



Chris James has eliminated any trace element shortages since using the bolus. tered on kale and round bale silage.

Kale and other green crops are fantastic sources of protein and energy but the downside is that there are goitrogens present in these crops that inhibit the uptake of iodine in the thyroid gland, which controls the metabolism. Poor metabolism has

a detrimental effect on fertility and milk yield in dairy animals.

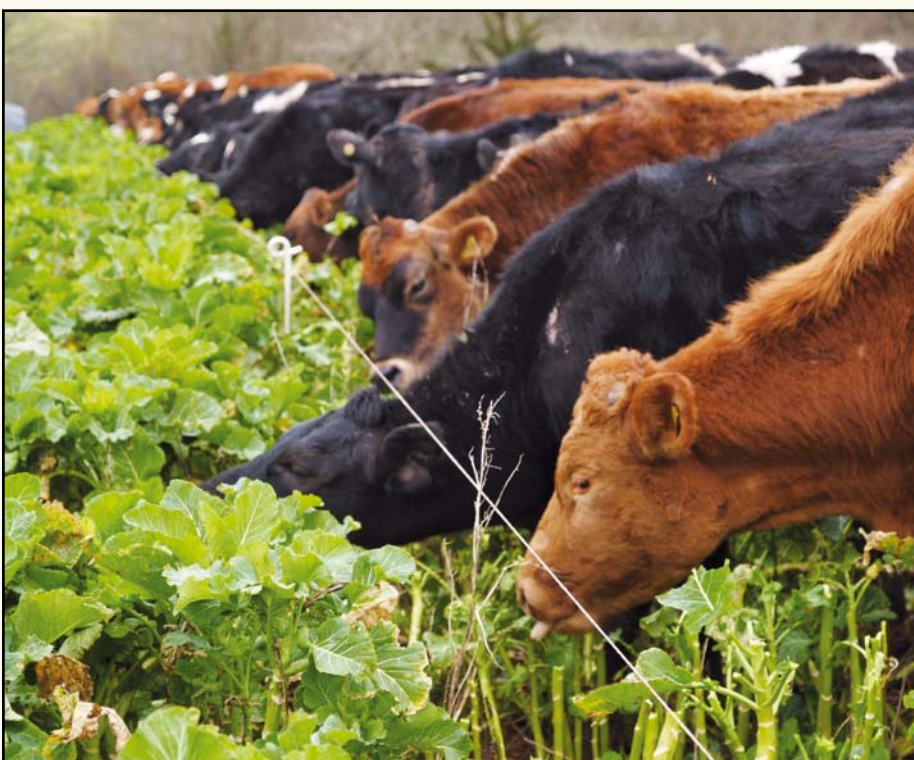
Soil samples and silage analyses showed not only a shortage of iodine but of cobalt, selenium and copper too.

“We looked at different means of getting the trace elements we knew we were short of into our stock and with so many cattle away from the farm in the winter the only way I felt we could do this was through the bolus route,” says Mr James.

“We chose the Animax bolus because we found it to be cost effective and with correct handling we find it is very easy to administer, especially because we use a head scoop when applying the bolus.”

Mr James says that since using the bolus any trace element shortage issues have been eliminated.

“Our fertility rates are very good and our levels of post-natal cleanings have been very good too. The cattle’s coats look very healthy. We are very pleased with the boluses,” he says.



Bolus shows yield increase in dairy cows

A scientific study on the impact of iodine deficiency in dairy herds found that cows supplemented with the Tracesure bolus produced an additional 327 litres of milk during their lactation.

John Cook, a leading veterinary surgeon, undertook his study in four average-yielding commercial herds of between 100-150 cows in Cumbria.

“There was no method of being able to supplement cows with a known quantity of iodine before the Animax bolus was developed. The bolus contains a measured amount of iodine released in a consistent way,” says Mr Cook, is technical director of a leading AI company.

Because the bolus also contains selenium and cobalt the study was

unable to separate the effects of the three trace elements so any benefits recorded were due to the bolus.

The cows recorded an uplift in milk yield of 327 litres during lactation but what was significant was that the bulk of this additional production – 225 litres – was during the first 100 days of lactation.

The bolus is released slowly over six months and, as the cows had been given it at drying off, this period would have ended when the cows had been in milk for 100 days.

“The bulk of the improvement was in those first 100 days so by giving the cows the bolus we were making them more efficient in the first third of lactation,” says Mr Cook.



Research: John Cook's study used Animax boluses.

Bolus counters iodine shortfall in Moorepark trial

Expansion of livestock herds is encouraging more farmers to consider out-wintering cattle on forage crops as an alternative to housing but this can lead to lost production if trace element deficiencies are not addressed.

In recent years both dairy and beef producers have turned to high protein forage crops as a low-cost means of feeding heifers, suckler and dry cows and beef animals during the winter months.

Weight gains can be successful if animals are managed properly and a key to this is ensuring that they don't run short of iodine, selenium, copper and cobalt, says veterinarian, Les Porter.

Mr Porter, whose company, Animax, produces slow-release trace element boluses, referred to a trial conducted last winter at the Teagasc Moorepark Research Centre comparing four groups of heifers in different wintering situations.

Two of the groups were housed and fed silage of different quality, a third was kept outside on kale and round bale silage and the fourth group had access only to kale. An indication of how important the researchers regarded trace elements to their diets was that all four groups were bolused with an Animax bolus.

The trial concluded that the heifers on the kale-only diet made the best progress.

Trace elements are needed to help cattle better utilise their food to get the growth rates needed for finishing or getting into calf at two-years-old.

Kale and other green crops are fantastic sources of protein and energy but the downside is that there are goitrogens present in these crops that inhibit the uptake of iodine in the thyroid gland, which controls the metabolism, says Mr Porter.

“Poor metabolism has a detrimental effect on fertility and milk yield in dairy and suckler cows and on the growth rates of beef and dairy heifers,” he says.

Insufficient available iodine can also lead to stillborn calves, failure to get cows back into calf and slow growth rates in calves.

A silage diet can also leave cattle short of trace elements, in particular selenium, because silage is harvested when the grass is leafy and high in polyunsaturated fats which can lead to oxidative tissue damage when consumed.

Mr Porter says it is important not to give cattle excessive doses of trace elements in a single administration, such as by drench or injection because this can cause toxicity. He recommends bolusing cattle in the autumn and the spring.

“The beauty of boluses is that they are slow release, they supplement cattle over a six month period so it means an animal is getting sufficient levels every day,” says Mr Porter, who developed his range of trace element boluses at the Grange Research Centre and Teagasc with Dr Phil Rogers, whose previous research had shown shortages of selenium, cobalt, copper and iodine to be problematic in Ireland, partly related to good grazing conditions with rapid grass growth.



Green crops can inhibit the uptake of iodine in the thyroid gland.

Allsure™ bolus achieves milk yield uplift

A dairy producer with 1200 milking cows has seen a one litre per cow uplift in daily milk yield after bolusing his autumn-calving herd.

Ed Dale farms in partnership with his parents and wife in Cheshire. The farming enterprise is on four sites and it was this fragmented land base that made bolusing an attractive option.

“We wanted simple solutions to getting trace elements into the cows,” says Mr Dale. “We were getting disappointing cow performance both in milk yields and fertility.

“Having used a lot of crops in the diet and out-wintering on fodder beet and kale we probably weren’t getting enough trace elements into the cows.”

High iron content in drinking water had also restricted copper intakes.

“We felt the cows looked short of trace elements and that was causing us a lot of problems,” he says.

“We gave the cows an Animax bolus and within a week the milk had lifted by one litre a cow and we think that the bolus is probably the reason why. We got an instant response and within a couple of weeks they looked different animals altogether, really



Ed Dale credits the Animax Allsure boluses with lifting milk yields by a litre a cow.

sharp and a lot happier.”

The Allsure bolus has improved fertility in the spring-calving cows too. “We have gone from well over 20% empty after 10 to 12 weeks to well under 20%. Perhaps that’s not just down to the bolus but I’m sure it has made a big contribution,” says Mr Dale.

He gives the bolus at drying off and again at pre-servicing.

He also trialled the Allsure bolus on yearling heifers that had not

achieved target weights. They were weighed six weeks later and had caught up with the rest of the group. “They were growing considerably faster than the ones that hadn’t had the bolus so we bolused the whole lot,” says Mr Dale.

He now gives the Triplepack to his eight-week-old calves too. “We are really going for it wholeheartedly to see if we can boost them up,” he says.

The Allsure bolus suits his system because he can be sure the cattle have had their trace element requirements. “With so many sites and different people managing them day to day it’s great to know that once the Allsure bolus has gone down the animal’s throat that’s it for six months. That’s the main reason why we adopted it and it has now meant we are getting better results.”



Ed Dale’s calves also get the Animax boluses once they are ruminating.

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