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LUCERNE HAY FOR DAIRY CATTLE

To measure is to know

What are the advantages of doing an NIRS analysis?

► **Feed advantages**

- Knowing the quality of your roughage
- Accurate feed formulations

► **Financial advantages**

- Assigning the correctly economic value to lucerne hay
- Profit maximization
- Reduced feed costs

Advantages of feeding the correct grade of lucerne to your dairy cows

Table 1 Milk response of 168 lucerne hay based diets as generated by AMTS.Cattle

	Medium	Mean	Median	Maximum	Range	SD	CV
Milk yield (kg/d)	35.72	43.01	43.58	48.69	12.97	2.78	6.46
Metabolisable energy milk (kg/d)	35.72	43.01	43.58	48.69	12.97	2.78	6.46
Metabolisable protein milk (kg/d)	38.42	45.74	46.02	52.76	14.34	2.88	6.3

(Scholtz et al., 2009)

- o The variation in lucerne hay quality according to ME and/or MP allowable milk ranged from 35.7 to 48.7 l/day
- o Thus, normal variance of ME and MP in SA lucerne hay alone can vary milk production of high producing Holstein cows by almost 13l / cow / day

► For example (see Table 2):

Assume:

- o Grade 1 lucerne price = R2800/ton
- o Milk production = 36 liter/cow
- o Lucerne intake = 8kg/cow/day
- o Milk price = R6/liter

Thus:
Lucerne costs R2.80/kg
- R22.40 per cow per day

Table 2 Financial implications of using the correct lucerne hay

Increased milk production	Increased income	Relative lucerne price per cow	Relative lucerne price/kg	Thus, price per ton
-2 liter	-R12	R34.40	R4.30	R4300
-1 liter	-R6	R28.40	R3.55	R3550
0 Liter	R0	R22.40	R2.80	R2800
+1 liter	R6	R16.40	R2.05	R2050
+2 liter	R12	R10.40	R1.30	R1300
+3 liter	R18	R4.40	R0.55	R550

Which grade is suitable for which animals?

Table 3 Quality Standards

GRADE	NLQI*	FOREIGN MATERIAL
Supreme	108 and higher	Absent
Prime	104 - 107	Absent
Grade 1	100 - 103	Absent
Grade 2	95 - 99	Present
Grade 3	94 and less	Present

(NLQI = National lucerne hay quality index)

► Supreme

- o Very low fiber content and highly digestible
- o Very low effective fiber
- o High soluble protein
- o Suitable for cows in early lactation - mixed (use with caution in combination with effective fiber source)
- o Suitable for young calves (adaptation period, use with caution)
- o Characteristics equal to concentrate. Consult with nutritionist.

► Prime

- o Low fiber content and high digestibility
- o High soluble protein
- o Suitable for young calves (2-3 months)
- o Suitable for high producing dairy cows in early lactation – mixed

► Grade 1

- o More effective fiber
- o Suitable for producing dairy cows in late lactation
- o Suitable for heifer (3 - 12 months)

► Grade 2

- o Higher fiber, lower digestibility
- o Not suitable for producing dairy cows
- o Suitable for heifer (12 - 18 months)
- o Suitable for dry cows

► Grade 3

- o Not suitable for producing dairy cows
- o Suitable for heifer (18 - 24 months)

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MILK BULLETIN

Sustainable dairy farming for all



LUSERN: WL 458 HQ


UITSTAANDE KWALITEIT


VEELSYDIGHEID


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LANGER LEWENSDUUR



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Dit kan dien as 'n kultivar vir lang rotasies weens sy lang produksielewe en hoë toleransie teen plaë soos stam-aalwurms en die belangrikste lusernluise.

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For more information about GWK Lucerne, our products and services, speak to our national management and marketing team:

Head of Feed and Fibre | Fanus Linde | 082 888 0016

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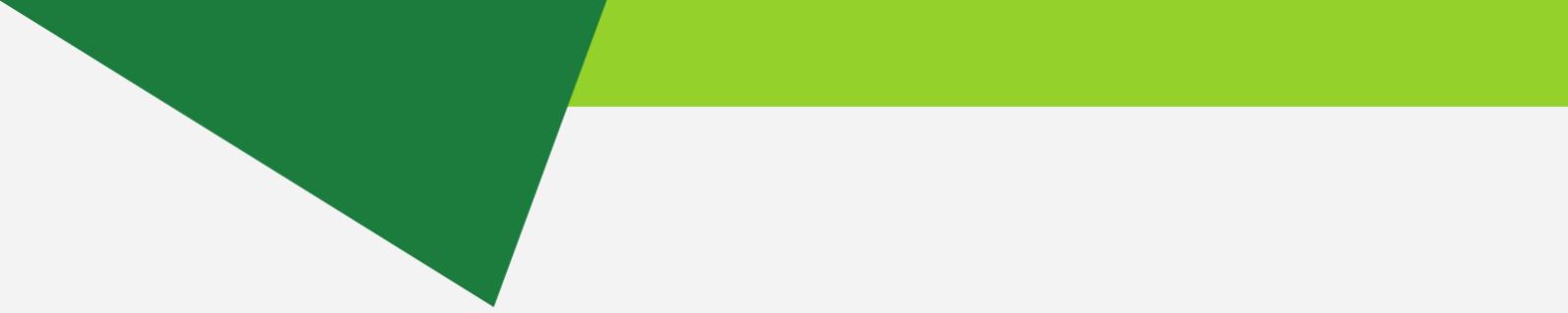
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