

Feeding takes centre stage at national dairy industry's leading show

A taste of what's to come

With a fresh new venue, new dates and plenty of new products as well as familiar favourites, this year's DairyEvent and Livestock Show promises to be the best yet. Here we offer a few tempting morsels to tickle your taste buds prior to September's show.

text Rachael Porter

Nutrition plays a vital role in herd health, welfare, fertility and, of course, milk production. And, in recognition of its importance, a series of Feed Science Forums will be held for the first time at the Dairy Event. These will offer practical science-based advice to producers, consultants and feed advisers. Event organiser, the RABDF, and the British Society of Animal Science are organising the forums, which will be staged in the Feeds and Forage Zone. Presentations will be made throughout the two-day show by some of the UK's leading ruminant nutritionists and technical specialists, and will cover eight subjects, including nutrition for robotically milked cows, feeding to reduce saturated fats in milk and the benefits of red clover silage. Visitors will be encouraged to participate in the sessions by using voting keypads.

A number of nutritional products and innovations will also make their debut at this year's show.

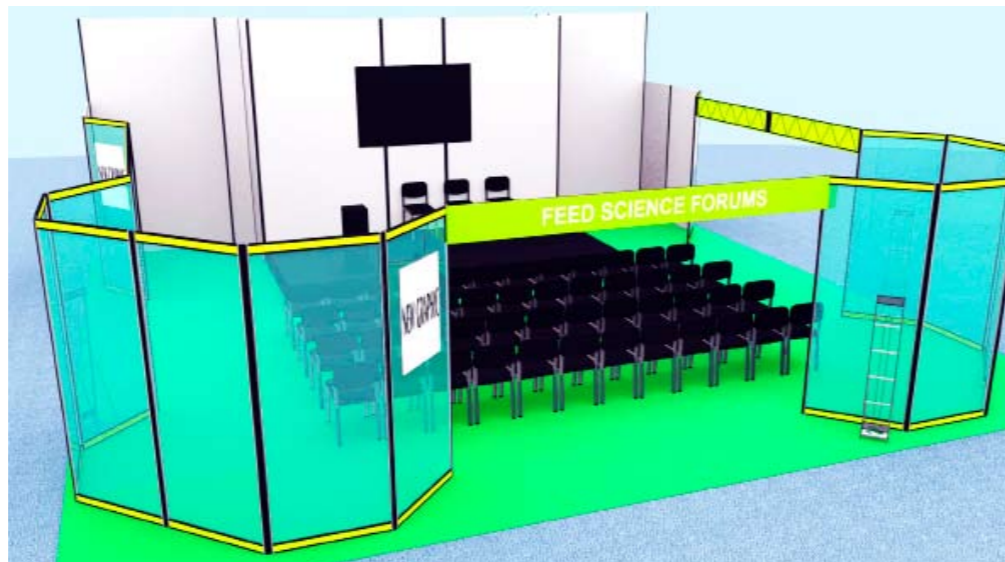
Rumen management

One is a rumen management tool, designed to enable producers to measure rumen pH, maximise their cows' microbial yield and subsequently minimise acidosis, according to EnviroSystems UK. It has developed the 'Well Cow System' on-farm tool with Edinburgh University's spin out technology companies, Well Cow and Bioparametrics.

"It's a system that enables producers and their advisers to use the most advanced technology to measure rumen

pH, achieve diets which optimise milk from forage, improve fertility and longevity and overall profitability of their herds," says EnviroSystems' Liz Russell. The innovation comprises four features. The first is Biopara-Silage analysis, which uses predicted in-vitro gas production in combination with NIR to accurately measure rumen microbial activity. The second is Optimise Plus silage inoculant, which provides enzymes that increase the fermentability of the Neutral Detergent Fibre (NDF) to increase the microbial activity and digestibility. Then there's the on-farm Well Cow Bolus, which can be placed in a single cow within the herd to determine and monitor rumen pH through wireless technology. And there's ration balancing with Biopara-Milk. A feed programme researched and

Leading ruminant nutritionists will talk at the Feed Science Forums



developed during the past decade to accurately predict rumen fermentation, acid production, bicarbonate production and the transport mechanism for Volatile Fatty Acids (VFAs) through the rumen wall.

"Acidosis is very common and an underlying problem on many farms leading to impaired fertility, lameness and digestive upsets. The ultimate goal of BioPara Milk feed system is to eliminate acidosis," says Bioparametrics' Roy Fawcett.

"The Well Cow System is designed to help put producers in control of their cows' rumen by allowing them to feed diets that optimise milk from forage and ensure the rumen consistently achieves pH 6.2 or higher – a level required for optimum function."

The silage additive Optimise Plus can consistently increase ME levels at any level of NDF by increasing its fermentability, which in turn determines the forage's feed potential, according to Liz Russell. "Those carbohydrate and protein fermentation rates are, for the first time, being measured as gas production in the Biopara-Silage analysis. This is believed to be the most accurate method of silage analysis available today to predict rumen pH fluctuations and to achieve accurate ration formulation,

which protects the cow from acidosis," she says.

"The Well Cow Bolus is a supporting tool that logs rumen pH every 15 minutes from a representative cow and transmits the readings wirelessly from a distance of two meters via a hand-held device. This former research device is now available to support the Biopara-Milk ration formulation service, which gives more certainty of rumen pH."

Antioxidant 'package'

Specialist animal nutrition company, SCA NuTec, is launching its new antioxidant feed additive, which offers much higher bio-availability of antioxidants to the animal than vitamin E or vitamin C, at this year's show.

NuShield has been developed through parent company Provimi's research and development programme and it contains flavonoids that are present in plants, but are particularly high in grapeseed.

"Our trial results have shown that the antioxidant status of cows fed on diets including NuShield compare favourably with cows fed diets that include the more traditional antioxidants such as vitamin E," says SCA NuTec's Norman Downey.

"But taking this a stage further, our research programme has proved that a combination of antioxidants, including NuShield and vitamin E, is much more effective than a single antioxidant at higher levels.

"This means that by combining the correct combination of these two antioxidants we can provide better defence against free radicals and therefore improved immunity than the traditional approach of increasing vitamin E."

Looking to young stock, computerised calf feeding systems, will be launched by

The new U40 Twin can be used with two different milkreplacers



Volac. Called the Urban U40 Twin, the system can be programmed to feed two different calf milk replacers (CMR) at any one time, allowing mixing of calves within a batch. For example, a specifically formulated heifer CMR for replacement heifers can be fed from the same system alongside a CMR designed for dairy-bred beef calves.

Dual milk replacers

In addition, two different formulations of CMRs can be fed and optimally adjusted according to the calf's stage of

development – a high protein CMR, for example, can be fed in the early stages and then replaced by a lower specification towards weaning.

"The system has been designed to offer producers increased flexibility to enhance their calf feeding and management, together with cost savings," says Volac's Sophie Gale. "In addition, the system delivers all the benefits of a computerised calf feeding system of labour saving combined with a precisely controlled feeding regime to exploit growth potential." |

