



# Beef Briefs

## The Latest Information on Beef Cattle Nutrition



### Beef Report 2018 By: Jack McCoubrey

Mother Nature is surely in charge, the Weather Station has a hard time guessing what's about to happen tomorrow or even later today. At the time of writing this, September 4th, at my place southwest of London we have had almost 10 inches of rain in the past 3 weeks, I declare 'the drought is over'!. Most of the province has had some moisture, while the areas that were quite dry have been somewhat replenished, and pastures have returned to green, just in time for fall grazing, and now with this heat, growth has been rapid for pastures and hay fields.

I cut 2nd cut hay August 2nd, and planned on baling it dry on the 5th, well, it was not quite dry and we thought it needed another day. After checking my two most reliable weather stations, it looked good until at least 3 p.m. on the holiday Monday. We got started at noon and my baler guy calls me at 1:30 p.m., "It's raining here, how is it at home?" Well it was still okay, but within 15 minutes, it was raining here also. Hence, 4+ inches of rain on 2nd cut doesn't really make for a positive result. My CROPPER neighbour driving by the other day texted me, "I see ya got some good beef cow hay". It ended up being a rescue just to get it off the field, yes it was 'black as your boot'. So much for depending on the accuracy of the weather station!

As I communicate with producers far and wide and travel to other areas, there certainly is a smorgasbord of moisture conditions. The north and east (above Highway 9 and into Quebec) were quite affected by drought conditions, many producers had little grass in July and into mid August and were forced to feed cows winter feed and 1st cut hay was only a small percentage of previous years' yields. Of late, some of these areas have received some rain to help bring back the pastures, but generally hay is and will be in short supply.

Then there are areas in the south, with many producers having record yields of 1st cut hay, pastures have been ample, with some stress periods, while generally crops look in most cases to be 'bin busters'. Wheat was all of an average crop, while straw is heavy based on variety, but now the challenge, of trying to dry these 35-40 ft. windrows out. A task in itself.

Cont. >>

#### Inside this Issue:

Beef Report 2018  
By Jack McCoubrey

### KENPAL'S KING OF CREEP A HIGHLY-PALATABLE CREEP FEED FOR CALVES



- Developed to promote feed intake in calves
- Helps increase weaning weights
- Helps achieve and maintain a healthy hair coat
- See results with top sale prices for calves

### GETS CALVES OFF TO THE RIGHT START

Volume 11, Issue 1  
September 2018

At home here we finally finished baling straw on August 16th after raking some twice. With the rains the past couple weeks, fields were hardly fit to drag a wagon across. With recent drier weather, we were able to finish hauling bales home on the weekend, with thanks to my daughter Molly for helping her Dad out.

I talked to a producer this morning, he still has 150 acres of straw lying in the field, while having a few thousand bales already baled but too wet to move. I asked him what his strategy is to dry those windrows out. He says, "Got to rake it and move it and we better have right weather soon, 'cause it is deteriorating". Some guys are tedding it out, but that's a whole lot of straw to move with these big combines. I have already got in my mind that we will chop and bale cornstalks and wrap them later this fall, these make not only good bedding but can make super feed also when done right. My neighbour that gets my manure, he has a tremendous corn crop in 20" rows, a whale of a bunch of stalks that he surely has problems breaking down in his no-till program. Many croppers are eager to get rid of these stalks in a min-till or no-till program, so check with your neighbours if you can help clear their field. A few years ago while visiting with a producer, he dumped a bale of ensiled cornstalks in his yard, cows walked away from the hay feeder to munch on these appetizing stalks. They can be a good source of nutrition if you're shy on hay.

We're certainly seeing shades of 2012 this year, and in some areas it is worse than 2012. A multitude of producers in 2012 went in and planted oats, oats and barley, or oats, peas and barley after the wheat came off, and that surely was a RESCUE. A whole lot of feed was made in a few months and saved producers from selling down on cowherd numbers. I remember the day I was standing in South Bruce County, visiting with a producer, he says, "Jack, not sure what I'm going to do for feed, I have fed 35% of my hay to this point, what are my options?" I told him, "Well, you certainly can use straw and mix with wet distillers and some hay, you'll need a TMR, or the other option, plant oats and barley right here in this field, hoping you'll get a rain and it has to rain some time, you need about 70 days." Well I can tell you, that is what the man did. In fact, he drilled in 300 acres of oats! He called me the day after he got done wrapping, "Jack, I had to call you, I just got done wrapping 1800 bales of oatlage, I actually have feed to sell now!" True story!

Yes, the oat thing surely added good feed for winter, and since 2012, oatlage has been a part of many producers feeding programs. During the fall of 2012, Beef Cow/Calf guys made their way to the various TMR dealers in the province, and they bought every piece of TMR equipment that would mix feed, some not fancy, they were cheap, but they worked. Others ventured out and bought new or quite new, the TMR dealers certainly were happy the drought of 2012 came as they emptied out their yards of used inventory. Myself, I bought one off Kijiji for \$7000. It needed some fix'n but I used for it 2 seasons without spending a buck, then when it was necessary I spent a few thousand on it. But, it has been quite a movement, TMR's on beef cow farms, then you can feed stuff that cows would just not eat on its own. As one producer stated, "I got hay left over". Lots of options, most any vegetable crops, depending on what is available in your area - potatoes, carrots in the Cookstown/Elliston areas, additional vegetable options in Delhi/Simcoe areas, while in most cases, these cull vegetables can be purchased and trucked for the value of just the trucking. I have harvested my oats after having a foot of snow on them, had to wait for the field to dry out, and baled/wrapped it the 1st day of December. One thing about oats/barley, they like cooler weather and will keep growing, even with a few hard frosts, they still stay green. If you need feed, and most areas have moisture now, plant oats, they like cooler weather, throw a little fertilizer on, and you'll get a crop!

There are other options, and for sure some producers with poor quality hay last year have improvised. One producer called me and we discussed options, he had a pile of poor quality hay and his cows barely had a taste for it. We discussed the TMR thing but he was not ready to invest, so what he did was get a custom hay/straw chopper guy in and he'd chop 40 bales of this poor hay and blow it in the end of his shed. While buying corn that he would grind, he layered poor hay and ground corn in his feeder wagons. With the corn he was adding calories, he was amazed at his art of mixing and amazed at the intake of his cows and the condition he was able to maintain. A few lbs of corn can replace numerous lbs of hay, keep this in mind!

Wet brewers, wet distillers and wet gluten are all options, but you're required to mix this to a degree and for sure a TMR does a fine job. If you're interested in trying a TMR, there are numerous dealers that will rent on a monthly basis, that's certainly an option. But, with these wet products, shelf life is a concern. In the cold of winter, they'll maintain themselves, but as soon as warm weather hits, they can spoil quickly. While in each case, they can be transported to you by a truck/trailer that has a plastic bagger attached. Put it right in the bag, few extra bucks, but for sure worth it, as it keeps better!

Corn silage is also a valuable option. If you're not growing corn, maybe you can buy a few acres from the neighbour. It can be bagged or stacked. Big square bales can make a useful wall, and wrapped round bales do also. In fact, some producers will align their wrapped bales so that they can do a stack of corn silage between them. Packing is essential! It can also be covered with plastic to help it keep. We do have producers that will saddle

up their back pack sprayer and give it a treatment of SILO GUARD. It works here right at home!

Let's not forget the value of a few lbs of corn, whole kernel, I prefer rolled or coarse ground, 4-5 lbs a day. You will need some kind of feed bunk to accommodate this. A few years ago, prior to the days of feeding TMR, I got quite good at portioning out cracked corn in my loader bucket to numerous feed bunks in my yard. Right from my tractor seat! Use it to maintain or improve condition. Have you looked at the corn market lately, corn is cheap! While, if you have not checked the calf markets lately, prices are as this past year, there is a shortage!

Flies have been an issue with this hot and humid weather. If you have a fly problem that persists, you're likely going to have a pink-eye problem. For sure there are some reports of pink-eye but not as bad as last year, as more producers are addressing their fly problems. Back rubbers, that are kept in good repair, and fly repellent kept in supply are really good tools. My own 'no fault' control is Lice X Liquid from the local feed store, roughly \$30 for a 4 L jug and my trusty little hand held pump sprayer. Turn the nozzle so it shoots out 15-20 ft, wind at your back, you don't need to get a lot on their backs or heads, every 10-12 days, works here.



# MINERAL MATTERS!

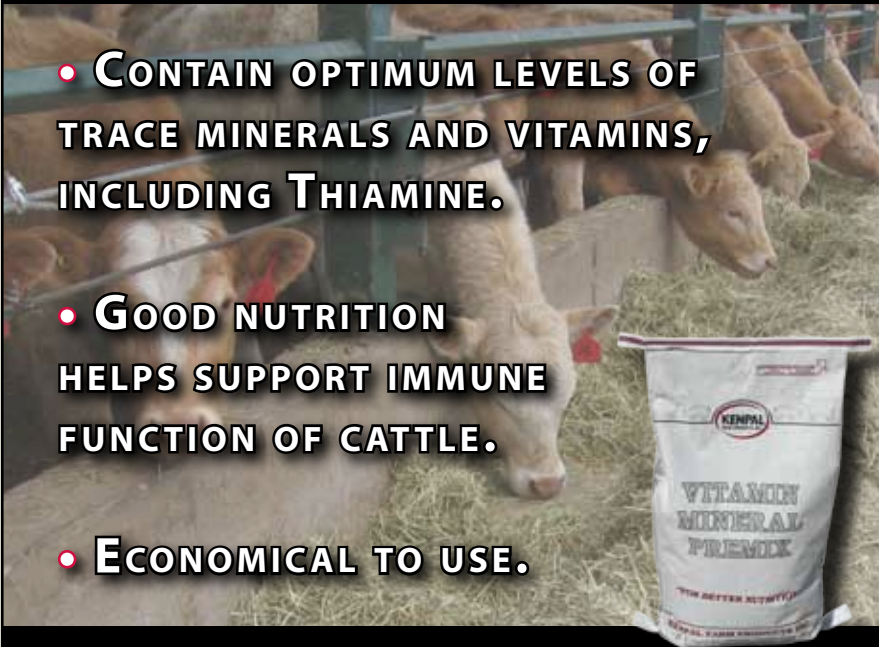
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Calving season 2018 had its challenges, resulting from poor quality feed and for sure weather played a part, with more snow than normal, and more winter snow storms than normal. Then we get into April - what a month that was! We had mud, snow, rain and cold weather, and then that late April snow storm that dumped a foot of snow in the northern counties and mammoth amounts of rain in the southern areas. It resulted in more than normal mortality and a whole lot of work to keep calves healthy and comfortable. It was mostly the same in the western provinces, severe weather and more than normal mortality. I have only heard rumors, but our national calf mortality numbers could be higher than normal, while that is also the same from across the border.

I can tell you, we were called on in numerous cases to a 'rescue'! Seemed like more than normal 'stupid calf syndrome' situations, the result of Vitamin E and selenium deficiencies. It could have been the result of the higher prices of Vitamin E. Anyway, our Kenpal Beef Nurse Cow premix has continued to supply 500 IUs on a daily basis and with added organic selenium, stupid calves can become quite intelligent in just in few days. It is important that the mineral be fed as the tag states though - no supplemental salt!

There were specific areas that had calcium issues, with feed not having normal calcium levels. That can surely impact calving, with poor muscle tone resulting in prolapses, and there were more prolapses in certain areas. Make sure you feed correct levels of mineral, although we do have a cow mineral with extra calcium. Have to tell you this story! Only a couple years ago, a producer would have 4-6 prolapses a year and after a discussion with his Vet, the Vet asked him if he was feeding enough mineral. "Oh, yes I start feeding mineral 2-3 weeks before calving." Well the Vet says, "Feeding mineral to beef cows is a 365 day thing, this is why I am here fixing your prolapses". So, with that discussion, the guy starts feeding mineral all year long, and to his amazement, he hasn't called a Vet for a prolapse in 2 years! Mineral is a wonderful thing in our management toolbox, MINERAL MATTERS!

The addition of yieldSTART R to BEEF NURSE COW mineral for the breeding period is proving to have a profound affect on improved conception. As producers report in, calving intervals have tightened up. In fact, one producer complained about his bulls getting worn out as to many cow/heifers were coming into heat in too short a time. Another producer calls, "send me more of that special breeding enhancer stuff, we've never had so many calves ever in the month of March!" I can tell you, it works for me and it'll work for you!

MINERAL PRICE ALERT! Mineral prices have dropped at Kenpal Farm Products, and significantly, \$4.00 a bag since May 1st, the Vitamin E and A shortage has been resolved, a bag of our industry leading Kenpal Beef Nurse Cow is now \$32.33!

Hey, always available to discuss!

The KENPAL BEEF GUY/Jack McCoubrey



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69819 London Road, RR #1, Centralia, Ontario, Canada, N0M 1K0

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