

For Immediate Release

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Quality Liquid Feeds Introduces Pasture Supplements with FEB-200™ New Approach to Managing Cattle Performance on Endophyte Infected Fescue

FAYETTEVILLE, AR, (Feb. 2004) ... The beef industry loses over six million dollars a year to the effects of fescue toxicosis. Despite 50 years of research, we have not seen the development of effective management strategies. But a new feed additive, FEB-200™, may offer a new solution to this old problem.

Speaking at the “Fescue Toxicosis: Pursuing New Solutions” seminar held February 4, 2004 in Fayetteville, AR, Dr. Ken Coffey, University of Arkansas, summarized historical efforts to combat the effects of fescue endophyte. Coffey emphasized that most logical approaches to the problem have simply not worked.

From a practical standpoint, “fescue toxicosis can lead to mineral deficiencies, but it is not corrected by mineral supplementation,” said Coffey. The use of implants shows promise, but is not appropriate for cow herds. And, he added, clearance approval for any pharmaceutical means of treatment is unlikely.

An alternative approach focuses on identifying substances that would physically bind to the toxins, thus preventing them from having a negative impact in the animal. According to Coffey, for such a binding agent to be successful, it would have to be toxin-specific and work over a wide range of toxin concentrations.

Dr. Peter Karnezos, Alltech, presented the group with information on a new feed additive that seems to fit these criteria. FEB-200™, a product based on a specific yeast fraction, has been shown to both increase the proportion of endophyte toxins that are safely excreted in the manure, and improve animal performance on endophyte-infected tall fescue.

A series of research trials, conducted at the University of Kentucky, demonstrated the impact of FEB-200™ supplementation in cow/calf pairs, stocker cattle and horses. According to Karnezos, the key findings of these researchers were that FEB-200™ increased toxin excretion, increased dry matter intake, increased animal gains, and reduced the elevations in body temperature associated with fescue toxicosis.

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FEB-200™ is designed to be fed at a rate of just grams per day, which dictates the need for an effective carrier. According to Dr. Cathy Bandyk, beef cattle nutritionist for Quality Liquid Feeds (QLF), free choice liquid supplements offer a practical, cost-effective means to deliver this additive to cattle on fescue pastures.

“This program brings synergistic benefits to the animal,” said Bandyk. “Besides delivering the additive, the supplement works to reverse the depression in forage intake typically seen with toxic endophyte levels. And as overall nutrition is improved, the animals are better able to deal with the toxicosis challenge.”

Bandyk emphasized the value of the convenience of self-feeding, combined with the relatively consistent intakes of liquid supplements. She reviewed results of several research trials which showed more consistent between-animal and between-day intakes of liquid in lick wheel feeders as compared to both free choice minerals and self-fed protein tubs.

“The bottom line is that this program works and can be a good investment for beef producers,” said Bandyk. “In an on-farm trial conducted in central Missouri last summer, the FEB-200™, delivered in a QLF supplement, added 20 pounds to weaning weights. We saw that kind of pay-back after just a 74-day feeding period, during extreme heat and drought conditions.”

According to Coffey and Karnezos, the costs of grazing infected fescue involve both reduced weight gains and reduced reproductive performance. A review of published studies showed an average decrease in pregnancy rates of 26% and 205-day calf weights of 69 pounds when cow herds consumed tall fescue containing the endophyte.

"That means we see an average of 175 pounds less calf per cow when grazing infected tall fescue," said Coffey.

"These costs are significant," emphasized Bandyk. "But often producers don't appreciate how great they are because they don't have alternative experience to compare to."

"We are convinced we are bringing an effective and economic strategy to the market," said Karnezos. "And we are excited to be able to offer a tool that can add value to what is already the most abundant and economically important cool season pasture grass in the U.S. today."

Headquartered in Dodgeville, WI, Quality Liquid Feeds has over 25 years of experience in developing liquid feeds. Founded in 1977, the family-owned agribusiness offers a full line of liquid feed supplements for feedlot, pasture cattle and dairy cattle. Quality Liquid Feeds also manufactures and markets a premier line of products to enhance the palatability and performance of specialized textured feeds primarily for horses, calves and show animals. Quality Liquid Feeds can be contacted at WWW.QLF.COM or 800-236-2345.

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