Launch Milk Production to New Heights for Sustained Profitability

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A successful lactation is similar to the successful flight of a rocket. It must start fast and accelerate quickly to reach the highest possible peak, and then follow a sustained glide path to a successful landing. If anything goes wrong during launch, the results can be catastrophic at worst but at the very least result in the rocket not achieving the desired peak.

In dairy cattle, the launch of a cow’s lactation begins with the transition period. A smooth, trouble-free transition can boost peak milk production, increasing the altitude from which the trajectory and glide path of her lactation begins. From that higher peak and elevated lactation curve, she’ll see increased milk production for the entire lactation. If cows fail to transition smoothly and accelerate quickly to a high peak, there is very little you can do after the peak is reached to change the trajectory of the lactation curve or increase total lactation milk output. Sound investments made during this short 42-day transition period will reap rewards throughout the entire lactation.

Choline’s Role in a Successful Transition

Choline is a required nutrient that enables cows to utilize the fat (NEFA) mobilized from body stores. Production of NEFA is the cows’ natural way of managing negative energy balance during the early stages of lactation and is a primary source of energy for many functions. Issues occur when the cow’s liver cannot effectively process all the NEFA being mobilized, which can adversely affect its function. This leads to increased ketones in the blood (ketosis) which can negatively impact feed intake and further exacerbate negative energy balance, leading to even more NEFA mobilization.
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Rumen Protected Choline</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>SEd</th>
<th>P =</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DMI, lb/d</td>
<td>39.98</td>
<td>41.60</td>
<td>+1.62</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.0042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk, lb/d</td>
<td>70.88</td>
<td>75.75</td>
<td>+4.87</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>&lt;.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECM, lb/d</td>
<td>76.87</td>
<td>82.78</td>
<td>+5.91</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>.0038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat yield, lb/d</td>
<td>2.788</td>
<td>3.042</td>
<td>+0.254</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein yield, lb/d</td>
<td>2.300</td>
<td>2.467</td>
<td>+0.167</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analytics completed by Ric R. Grummer, Ph.D. Emeritus Professor, Department of Dairy Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison

New Research Shows ReaShure’s Benefits Extend Throughout the Entire Lactation

New research from the University of Florida (Zenobi et. al., 2017) has discovered that the benefits of feeding ReaShure® Precision Release Choline during the transition period extend throughout the entire lactation, and possibly even beyond. Cows fed ReaShure during the transition period had higher peaks and produced an additional 4.6 pounds of milk per day during the 40-week trial period, resulting in 1,288 pounds of milk per cow.

Other benefits noted in this study for cows fed ReaShure included; higher first service conception rates, significantly higher IgG levels in the colostrum, significantly faster rates of gain (0.09 lb/day) of heifers exposed to ReaShure in utero, and surprisingly a lower incidence rate of subclinical hypocalcemia (low blood calcium levels post-calving).

Figure 1

Effect of Feeding ReaShure During Transition on Milk Production Over 40 Weeks

ReaShure: 81.5 lb/day
Control: 76.9 lb/day
P = 0.09
Real Results on Real Dairies

Documented results from commercial dairies are virtually identical to those seen from university studies. Over 160,000 cows have participated in the ReaShure Real Results Challenge (90 day on-farm demonstration trials). These herds have reported an average increase in milk production of 4.2 pounds/head/day. Additionally, producers reported health benefits including reduced incidence of ketosis, displaced abomasum, involuntary culls and death loss (Figure 2).

What is My Return on Investment (ROI) When Feeding ReaShure?

ReaShure is fed only during the 42-day transition period (21 days pre-fresh to 21 days post-fresh) to help cows transition more smoothly into lactation. Recent research shows, and field studies confirm, the benefits of a smoother transition are maintained throughout the entire lactation. The table below (Table 2) demonstrates a potential return on your investment based on the results seen in the University of Florida study (Zenobi et al., 2017 in press).

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INVESTMENT</th>
<th>lbs Fed</th>
<th>Cost/lb</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional Feed (305 days)</td>
<td>470 lbs</td>
<td>$0.10</td>
<td>$47.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ReaShure (42 days)</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>$13.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$60.87</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXAMPLE**

**INVESTMENT**

- **Additional Feed (305 days)**: 470 lbs x $0.10 = $47.00
- **ReaShure (42 days)**: 5.55 lbs x $2.50 = $13.87
- **Total Investment**: $60.87

**REVENUE**

- **Additional Milk**: 4.6 lbs milk x 305 days = 1,403 lbs
- **Milk Price**: $0.17
- **Total Revenue**: $238.51

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- **Milk Price**: $0.17
- **Total Revenue**: $238.51

**No. Cows**

- **Return/Cow**: $177.64
- **Total Return**: $88,820

*when factored over 305 days of response
15 week results extrapolated over 305-day lactation
1.54 lbs x 305 days
40 week results extrapolated over 305-day lactation

### Calculate Your Return

**INVESTMENT**

- **Additional Feed**: 470 lbs x $0.10 = $47.00
- **ReaShure in Transition**: 5.55 lbs x $2.50 = $13.87
- **Total Investment**: $60.87

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*Healthy cows eat more feed!*
How Does ReaShure Compare to Other Widely Used Products?

With the tremendous number of feed additives on the market today, it’s important to compare costs and potential returns (Table 3). Your investment in ReaShure is limited to the short 42-day transition period but benefits extend throughout the entire lactation, significantly impacting milk production and ROI.

Summary

The success or failure of an entire lactation is often determined during the 42-day transition period. The health and well-being of the cow during the transition period will determine the amount of peak milk production, which in turn will predetermine the height and trajectory of the remaining lactation curve. Furthermore, very little can be done to positively alter that trajectory once the peak has been attained.

The key to maximizing milk production starts with investing your time, effort and resources during the transition period. Focus on those management practices that impact cow comfort, health and productivity. Include ReaShure® Precision Release Choline during the short 42-day transition window to help fuel a successful launch, high peak and elevated flight path for her lactation.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cost $/d</th>
<th>Milk Yield lb/h/d</th>
<th>Increased Milk Income $/h/d</th>
<th>ROI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ReaShure</td>
<td>$0.05¹</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>$0.78</td>
<td>17.3 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monensin</td>
<td>$0.03</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>$0.26</td>
<td>8.1 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rBST</td>
<td>$0.45</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>$1.70</td>
<td>3.8 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumen Bypass Fat</td>
<td>$0.60³</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>$0.77</td>
<td>1.3 - 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Cost calculated per day for a 305-day lactation.
²Milk Price $0.17/lb
³1 lb feeding rate.