Dairy cows are selected for milk production. Genetic improvement has increased output of kilograms of milk and solids (protein and fat) in breeds that were already good at making milk. We have done so well that we now have to carefully manage the animal’s health and nutrition. A failure to do so results in metabolic diseases, impaired fertility and structural fragility. The same is also true for ewes. The most important problems recorded in dairy cows are lameness, mastitis, reproductive failure and milk fever and its associated problems; ketosis, retained placenta and twisted abomasum. These are considered important because they affect the welfare of the animal, leading to either pain, prolonged sickness or death. The financial consequence of poor animal welfare management is lost productivity, increased health costs and depressed output. A rigorous health and nutrition regime may be an extra business cost, but is essential to maintain cow comfort.

The national average for lambs weaned from successful pregnancy is about 50%. So we are allowing half of our output from breeding females to die. Not only is genetic improvement lost, it also presents a welfare issue. In today’s media rich environment, the agricultural industry does not need negative attention.

Best Practice Management
The excuse of not knowing is not a valid excuse when animals suffer or livestock die from mis-management. Most of the rural people I have met love their animals and prioritise their wellbeing and comfort. Dairy Australia, Sheep CRC, MLA and others provide excellent information on how to manage stock. State agricultural departments have also been doing this for many years, either with extension officers and now more so via internet sites and regular publications. The RSPCA act as governors of policy regarding animal comfort. We all cringe when we see news items covering animal neglect. The potential fines or prison sentences reflect the seriousness of breaching the welfare laws. I am not saying that a high incidence of milk fever or a large death rate in a lamb flock is the same as a paddock of starving horses owned by someone careless. I am saying that it won’t be long before questions start being asked of Australian farmers.

We are given the tools to manage breeding females. We have academic experts and wise farmers with the knowledge to reduce animal suffering as a by-product of the desire for increased production. We all should be using them. Best practice is not an option, it is what we all should aim for.

Nutritional Support
From pregnancy, we have the responsibility to manage the female to support her welfare. Principally, this is immunity, disease status, intestinal integrity and structural soundness. Nutrition via diet manipulation is usually the largest cost as it happens every day. Smaller costs, and more often followed are vaccinations and parasite control. The use of hoof trimming and management for hoof soundness is becoming more prevalent.

Continued Page 5
As we close out 2015, I thought I would take a look back at this year, highlighting some of the changes Performance Feeds and the US & Australian Cattle Industry went through.

**Year of Volatility** - To say that cattle prices have increased in Australia and decreased in the US would be the understatement of the year. Following a 2014 that was the highest recorded cattle prices, for all classes of cattle, in the history of our industry, 2015 has searched and is still searching for the bottom. The saying that what goes up must come down is very much true in this circumstance. $30 Billion in revenue was generated in 2014. At the time of this writing, we have given $28.5 Billion back. Australia on the other hand has seen dramatic increases in cattle prices this year. Fewer numbers, a more competitive AUD and increase in exports have helped move prices to near record levels. I would strongly suggest keeping your eyes wide open concerning the Global and Domestic Beef & Cattle markets as sometimes what seems too good might not be sustainable in the long run.

**Year of Change** - Performance Feeds saw the retirement of one of our long-term Territory Managers. Ken Sykes retired this year after many years of selling and providing knowledge and service to arguably the largest portion of Performance Feeds’ Rangeland business. Ken’s skill set included tremendous product and industry knowledge, but it was his passion for customer service that defined him. Whether to his Distributors or Producer Customers, Ken always ensured that they had what they needed to be successful. Thank you and job well done. Performance Feeds searched and found a tremendous replacement by hiring Josh Lockwood. I had the pleasure of traveling with Josh for 3 days in October and I think our Distributors and Producer Customers will be as happy as I am with Josh’s commitment to excellence, passion for service, and enthusiasm to share his knowledge. In the US we lost a legend in our business to cancer. Very few, if any, would know the name Pete Jameson. However, our company both in the US and Australia, might very well not be here today without him. I hired Pete 23 years ago to help me start Anipro in the US as Performance Feeds existence, like any other commercial company, relies on customers to purchase our products. Our creed is to find people that subscribe to what we believe in, then aim to make those people and their livestock as happy and profitable as possible. In return, a portion of our profit is used to promote our products. So the cycle continues.

Getting the message about Anipro and our other products to people who may need it can be difficult. We firmly believe that word of mouth is by far the most efficient method. The bush grapevine accounts for a large amount of our new customers. However, we still need to raise brand awareness and advertise our wares in traditional media. We advertise in the various state agricultural newspapers, in conjunction with a trade show, breed sale or expo.

When possible, we like to use our advertising funds to support local community. Advertising in the school newsletter is an effective way to promote our brand and gives a little to the school kids as well. Our long running distributor in Roma, Col Brosnan, has organised and run a charity BBQ at the Roma show for the last 5 years. We work with local rural merchandise stores to run information evenings where a meal and drinks are offered. Not only do we believe this offers people the opportunity to take the night off, but it also gives them the chance to socialise. We support camp-drafts, rodeos and roping events, race meets and golf days. Even the Quirindi rugby team wore our logo for a season. It is not only money that supports the community, but people as well. Our staff work as volunteers setting up trade shows, loading stock onto trucks, “manning” the crush or serving on committees committed to improving livestock performance and ultimately, the business of raising livestock. These are only some examples of what we do to support our livestock industries and communities across this great land.

So when you see someone with a Performance Feeds shirt, feel free to say g’day. We are not out to sell something, but to share news, offer knowledge of what we do or just shoot the breeze. If we can help make the business of growing stock more profitable or efficient for you in the process, then it is time and money well spent for both you and us.

**The Year That Was**

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Crude Protein: A Very Dirty Word

It has been recognised for decades, but it may come as a surprise, that crude protein is a terrible measure of feed quality. We all know about crude protein. We use it to compare forages, grains and purchased supplements.

But crude protein is like an ill-mannered ghetto -punk. Cattle and sheep, luckily, don’t know about crude protein (CP is his gang name) - they party with another group; and their leader is a guy called MP (Metabolisable Protein). That’s a fancy name and his story is more relevant and exiting.

If you make it to the end of this article, you will be ready to befriend this guy called MP, and his friends. Along the way we cover supplementing forage fed livestock and reveal a controversial secret about “by-pass protein”. Most importantly, you will learn that MP is the motivator of weight gain and milk production. You will also view crude protein (CP) in a new light.

The Wrongness in Crude Protein

A rumen is like a 2-stroke motor where protein is the fuel. Get the fuel blend right and everything is hunky-dory. Light or heavy on the oil, then that motor spits and smokes like Uncle Morris on cup day. Our stories villain, CP, has an arm tattoo that says “fuel” - unattractive and very unhelpful.

The fuel could be 20:1 or 50:1. What we really want is the blend. That’s why CP is mostly irrelevant. We should be drinking with CP, but he’s an elusive character. Like the chainsaw fuel - cattle and sheep like the protein mix spot-on. Get the blend right and MP CP comes out to play.

The rumen, as well as being like a 2-stroke, is also a big party of bugs. The diet dance is always attended by MP’s mates, and only then can they get him to show up. The protein pals - as they prefer to be known are the 2 RDP brothers (rumen degradable protein) and the RUP twin’s, goodRUP and badRUP. RUP represents rumen undegradable protein. We will cover the twin’s later on. Notice how everyone’s nickname is letters - very 1980’s.

The Rumen Party has a Water-Slide?

MP is a quiet achiever. He doesn’t have a “tat” or wear labelled clothes. You won’t see MP’s number on a bag of feed or a bale of hay. Wheat, oats nor any other feedstuff have an MP amount. Oh, and he lives and works in the intestine.

MP’s gang are vital to get him active. His dance style depends on which friends are most persuasive, and when they arrive and leave the rumen party.

RDP and RUP arrive in the animal’s feed and go straight to the rumen. Once inside they separate. Everyone likes the 2 RDP brothers; soluble and insoluble. Funny names, I know. Soluble RDP is a 2 pot screamer. It doesn’t take long and he is converted by the bugs. Insoluble ends up the same way - it just takes him a few more stubbies. So the RUP boys, in their new clothes become rumen bugs, and more bugs are great for the animal. We give them a new gang name - MCP (microbial crude protein). MCP leaves the party by the water-slide and moves onto the small intestine bar.

MCP are 1 half of MP. He is company enough for dry cows. But if you really want an animal to really move - MP needs his secret girlfriend - goodRUP. The RUP twins (they’re not identical) don’t get on with rumen bugs - their stage-name is “by-pass protein”. After getting off the bus at the rumen stop, they jump straight on the waterslide without talking to any of the little guys. Good RUP meets up with the MCP gang in the intestine. Bad RUP doesn’t even stop there. She’s so anti-social she ends up in the manure pile - a waste of talent really.

So here is secret 1 revealed. MP is not 1 guy - he is a covert group of proteins. MP is the total of MCP and good RUP. In nutrition speak, Metabolisable Protein is the total of 1 - microbial protein and 2 - good by-pass protein. Bad by-pass protein is that which ends up unaffected and in the manure.

MP is what we want. It is the best type of protein and a good nutritionist will aim to maximise it in the cheapest way possible.

The Crude Protein Pull-Apart

Crude protein is the total of the brothers and sisters - soluble and insoluble RDP and good and bad RUP. However, “crude protein” does not tell us who is home. Like students, proteins get graded. A grade proteins are instantly available to rumen bugs. B class degrade less quickly, and C grade are 100% bad by-pass. CP never even went to school.

The crude protein of urea is 288%. It is class A; 100% solubleRDP. The protein in young grass is mostly A and some B. Vegetable protein meals have small amounts of A, lots of B and a little C type proteins. Remember this for later.

As grass ages it gets less A and more B. Mature, dry grass has mostly B with some C. So you see, when grass is yellow, or even pale green, the soluble and soluble RDP brother is missing. The rumen party actually starts to slow. MP production reduces and animal performance declines. By adding back some A class protein (urea) you can turn the music up and the joint starts hopping again.

So does it matter what the crude protein content of a protein supplement is? Only if the label tells us how much of the crude protein is urea, and how much is contributed by the other protein pals.

Not Everyone likes a Party Animal

The rumen bugs enjoy the company of solubleRDP, but only in small doses. In other words, the rumen needs urea to run efficiently, however, too much at once is dangerous. Performance Feeds makes a urea alternative called Rumapro®. It moves around the rumen at a controlled rate, slowly exposing itself to rumen bugs. That sounds shady, but that is what works best. RumaPro® increases the amount of MCP produced, compared to traditional urea, and therefore, also increases the amount of MP. RumaPro® is a liquid, so is a great fit for our liquid protein supplement; Anipro.

Our loose mineral protein supplement range is FibrePro. Its protein is delivered as biuret - another slow release urea. Biuret is actually closer to the other brother in nature. It is not very soluble, so passes through the rumen and uses a side-entry to contribute to MP. What a cool dude. In that respect, biuret, like RumaPro, is an extremely safe way to supplement cattle and sheep.

Getting Supplementation Right

We have to consider 2 aspects of protein nutrition. Give the rumen what it wants, as well as the animal. Urea is fine for the rumen, but the animal wants the end-result of a rumen/urea interaction.

So how do we do our best by the animal? Look at the manure - and that’s another story.

**Pasture Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very young and green; high moisture. Low fibre.</th>
<th>Lots of soluble, class A</th>
<th>Green and very liquid. Could be hitting the ground 6 feet from the animal.</th>
<th>Add some fibre to the diet. Slow-down the rumen party.</th>
<th>WeatherPro MagPlus. High calcium and magnesium to maintain rumen stability.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Hard leaf and possibly the start of a stem. | Medium RDP, with fibre levels | Probably the perfect pat. Does not spread, increasing when new. Enjoy this moment. is green and shiny | WeatherPro GP Grazer or start Anipro Liquid Supplement. |
| Hard, yellowing leaf and definite stem | Protein starting to drop and digestibility declining | Pat will have a definite wall, with possibly some long fibre. | If you haven’t already, supply a protein supplement. | Anipro Liquid Protein, or FibrePro. |
| Hard leaf and seed head. | Low protein, high fibre, but still palatable. | Pat will sit up and be dark in colour, Long fibre visible. | Getting to late to start with supplementation. If higher weight gain required, add some protein meal or grain. | Anipro Liquid Protein or FibrePro. Maybe grain with Restrict. |
| Plant is mature | Very low protein, no soluble RDP and some type 1 RCP. | Has a lot of long fibre. Very dark. Piled with definite rings. | Definite protein supplement required. Maybe move to high molasses mix. | Anipro Liquid Supplement, or M8U. Add some whole cotton seed or grain assist. |
| Pasture is dry and sparse; droughted. | Low available dry matter and no protein. | Resembles sheep pellets. | Not enough to eat. Hand feed or shift stock. | Anipro or M8U. Add Whole Cottonseed or cottonseed meal, or similar. |

Soybean meal or cottonseed meal don’t have enough “A” to be suitable as a protein supplement when pasture is old and dry. If you add some urea to the cottonseed meal, then you have a better diet. All that is lacking then is some grain - and by then you have a feedlot mix. So aren’t you better off locking the cattle up and feeding them? That’s a talk for another party.
Performance Feeds is excited to introduce a new concept in time for the main Anipro supplementation period in the southern part of Australia. However, it is applicable for all parts of Australia.

The Performance Feeds TimeWise Planner allows farmers to sit down with our Territory Managers and accurately plan their supplementation program. The planner takes into account the type of stock to be supplemented and the range of products to be used (Anipro, FibrePro or WeatherPro). It also uses farm specific information to calculate costs and how much supplement will be required.

The information required is set out below:

- **Class of Stock:** Heifers, Steers, Dairy Cows, Dry Cows, Ewes etc.
- **Type of Program:** you may want to develop the weaner heifers really get them to grow and do well coming up to joining or just maintain the weight on some mature ewes.

On a Microsoft Excel platform, we input a start date and how many days the program runs for. This will of course be determined to a degree by seasonal conditions and how well the stock are doing on a given fodder source.

We then help you choose the products you would like to use. We enter consumption information and the calculator then gives you an estimate of cost (cents/head/day) that your planned supplementation program will cost.

The planner also has the ability for us to incorporate farm grown or other purchased fodder you may wish to use along with the TimeWise program.

The beauty of the TimeWise planner is that it gives farmers a lot of information, and can be used in conjunction with good management practice to get the most out of your supplementation program. The report gives you a good guide to cost and assists you to make informed choices about when to start supplementing and how different commodities can be used as part of the program and how they contribute to cost of the program. By taking into account local conditions, your stock production goals and your animals requirements, we can tailor your supplementation program to your goals and your budget. The planner is designed to promote animal health and production through the strategic use of Performance Feeds supplements. A TimeWise program can be as flexible as you want it to be.

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**Testimonial - Tyrone Pastoral**

**Customer - Damien Meppen (Manager)**

Damien manages Tyrone Pastoral Company’s mixed farming operation near Gurley in north west NSW. They sell weavers from the Hereford herd and lambs and wool from a self-replacing Merino flock.

Since switching his supplement program to WeatherPro, he has seen a 5 - 10% improvement in ewe scans and cows seem to hold up better during tough times. The wool clip has jumped from 4.5kg to 5.5 kg, which is possibly a result of WeatherPro too. Damien gets his WeatherPro from WMG at Moree.

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**Something New for Anipro Customers**

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She Will Be Missed

Damien Nankervis & Doug Pollock reunited with Maria at a Live Export Conference in Darwin recently.

After 10 years of directing our advertising and marketing programs, Maria Fenelon, has decided to pursue other interests in Sydney. Maria moved to Australia from Brazil after the US Company, XF Enterprises, closed their operations there. Maria was such a valuable asset to the business in Brazil that she was offered the option of moving to the company’s operations in either the US or Australia. Maria chose Australia and we all benefited from her expertise.

Maria was involved in all aspects of the Performance Feeds business. She had developed and produced all of the advertising materials since arriving. Maria was always willing to help in any area of the business this included Producer Nights, Trade Shows, Field Days and countless other activities. Maria was instrumental and the driving force behind this newsletter which has brought so many of you a look inside of our company.

She was tireless in her efforts, passionate about the products she developed but most of all, Maria was dedicated to the excellent service of our Sales Staff, Distributors and Customers. While we will replace her with someone new in the position who will no doubt make their impact known to all, Maria will be the standard by which that person is measured.

Always with a kind word and smile for those she met, Maria will be greatly missed. Best of Luck young lady and know that we are all proud of you for the effort you gave and the job you performed so well.

Geordie Elliott is our Territory Manager for South Australia and Central and Western Victoria. Here is what Geordie does in his spare time.

During the week I spend my time helping livestock producers make the most out of their stock. On the weekend the boots are on the other foot and I become the livestock producer myself helping, my father Will Elliott (also the Western Victorian ANIPRO Distributor) on our family owned property in Byaduk, South West Victoria.

At home we run prime lambs and operate “Corumbene Brangus and UltraBlack” stud. We breed bulls for the local and interstate market.

 continues from Page 1: Transition Management of Ewes and Cows - A Welfare Perspective:

After dry-off, dairy cows are rested. During this time they are heavily pregnant. They are preparing for the stress of birthing and also entering the milking herd. By managing her diet to stimulate appetite, support energy intake and manipulate DDAF, we are assisting her comfort by reducing the risk of milk fever.

For the ewe, target condition scores, vitamin and mineral supplementation at the right time and balancing the energy and fibre can prevent pregnancy toxemia and milk fever. Attention to colostrum quality and lamb suckling behaviour will reduce lamb death.

THE SPECIALISTS IN DRY FEED MANAGEMENT

FibrePro

Protected Animal Performance

Our Solutions

We have prepared programs that take on board best management practice and incorporate our products as the nutritional solutions. There are farmers all over Australia following them with success. PreLac and Anipro are excellent products for dairy cattle. PreLac for springers and Anipro for dry cows. WeatherPro Platform is used to support trace mineral status. It is used to reduce mastitis and harden hooves. Anipro for Sheep, along with WeatherPro MagPlus and GP Grazer are exceptional options when incorporated into a lambing ewe flock.

For details on these programs, look to our website or contact one of our knowledgeable Territory Managers.
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  - M I 0428 827 565
  - E: richard@bigpond.com
- **Colin & Julie Brosnan**
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Quality Products in the Performance Feeds Time-Wise Nutrition Programs.

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- Email: admin@performancefeeds.com.au
- www.performancefeeds.com.au

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Tania Guaran
Territory Manager for Southern NSW, Northern VIC & Gippsland

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