



Douglas Green

Consulting Ltd

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

Included in this issue:

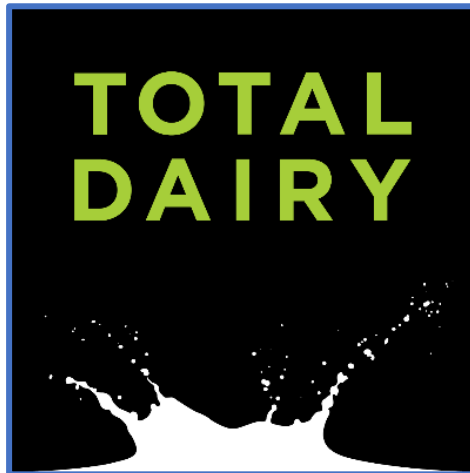
- Total Dairy – A round up from the 2019 conference
- Dates for your diary

Welcome to the autumn edition of the Douglas Green Consulting Ltd newsletter.

With the ever-growing demands on our time it is easy to forget to put aside a little time for knowledge transfer, yet the information gained can be invaluable to a business. During the summer Emily attended the Total Dairy Conference and in this edition, she outlines some of the key points of interest.



Total Dairy 2019 and Event Details



Total Dairy 2019

Total Dairy offers an opportunity for both farmers and professionals to learn about the latest developments in the dairy industry. This year's conference saw 450 dairy farmers, herd health advisers and dairy trade representatives engage in a range of presentations and workshops given by international dairy experts. This year Emily attended the seminar and was able to attend talks on the role and requirements of crude protein and sugars in the dairy cow diet, nutritional management for optimal rumen health and robot specific nutritional management.

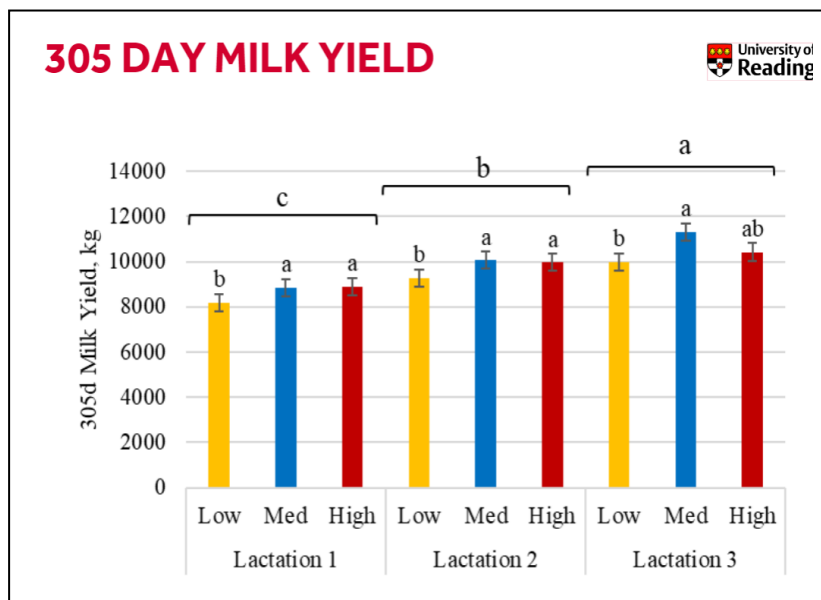
One of the standout talks of the day was a paper presented by Jon Moorby and Chris Reynolds on research being carried out at Reading University into dietary protein levels. Over the page we have outlined the key findings and take home messages for the research paper.



Can we feed lower protein diets to the dairy herd?

With ever increasing pressures on the agricultural industry to look at emissions, and the fact that 40% of N₂O production comes from ruminants and only 25% of the protein being fed is being fully utilised, research is being done to see if we can feed lower protein diets to the dairy herd without significantly compromising milk production and cattle health.

Reading University have been comparing the effect of 14%, 16% and 18% protein diets.

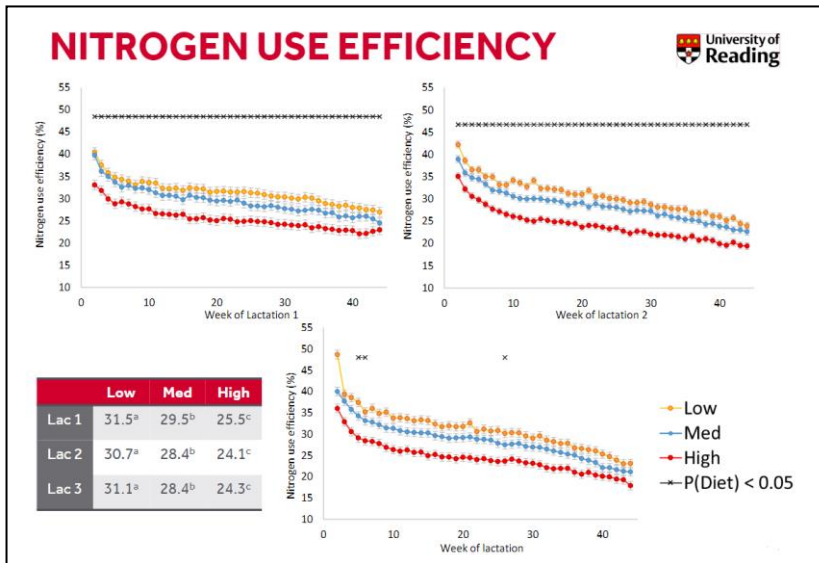


The table shows the 305-day milk yield for lactation 1- 3 animals at the 3 different protein levels:

- Low protein 14% - Orange
- Medium protein 16% - Blue
- High protein 18% - Red

There was only a marginal difference in milk yield between 16% and 18% CP diets, but on 14% CP diets milk yield was significantly reduced. However, fertility performance was improved in the 14% CP diet.





Overall Nitrogen Efficiency at the 3 protein levels clearly showed that nitrogen use efficiency declined as the crude protein content of the diet increased.

KEY FINDINGS

Feed costs relative to milk production, cow fertility and vet and med costs were all reviewed

- Feed costs are highest in the 18% protein group.
- The 16% protein ration generated the highest net margin.
- Fertility was best in the 14% protein group, but this group ended up with the highest replacement rate!
- Vet and Med costs and waste milk was highest in the 14% protein group.

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

We should be aiming for **16% CP diets** in order to balance feed costs with environmental benefits, without compromising net margins.



Can we feed growing heifers lower protein levels?

The second part of the research project focused on heifer replacements to see if this is another area where the levels of protein fed can be reduced without affecting performance and profitability.

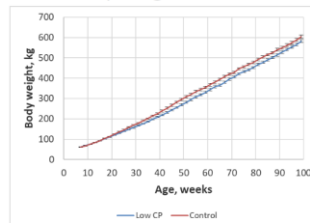
TRIAL INFORMATION

- Just two levels of dietary protein were used – 14% and 16%
- All other criteria kept the same (environment and diet)
- Looked at impact on growth rate and body condition

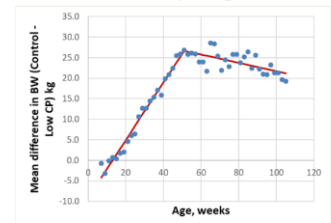
Heifer growth rates

Mean growth rates were lower for CP animals for the first year of life

Mean body weights



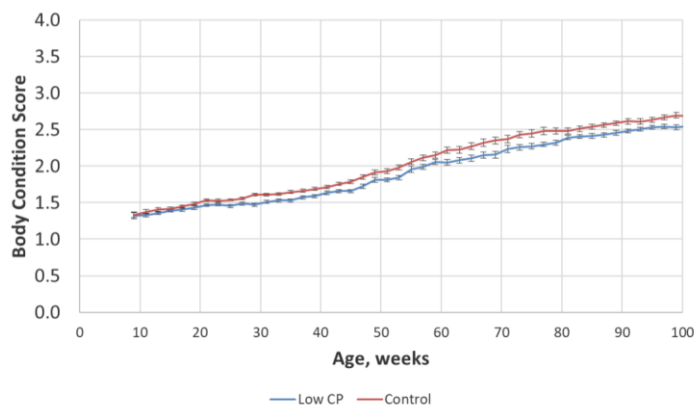
Difference in body weights



Mean growth rates
kg/d

	Low CP	Control	SED	P
Weeks 7-51	0.69	0.80	0.023	<0.001
Weeks 51-99	0.88	0.85	0.020	0.107

Heifer body condition scores

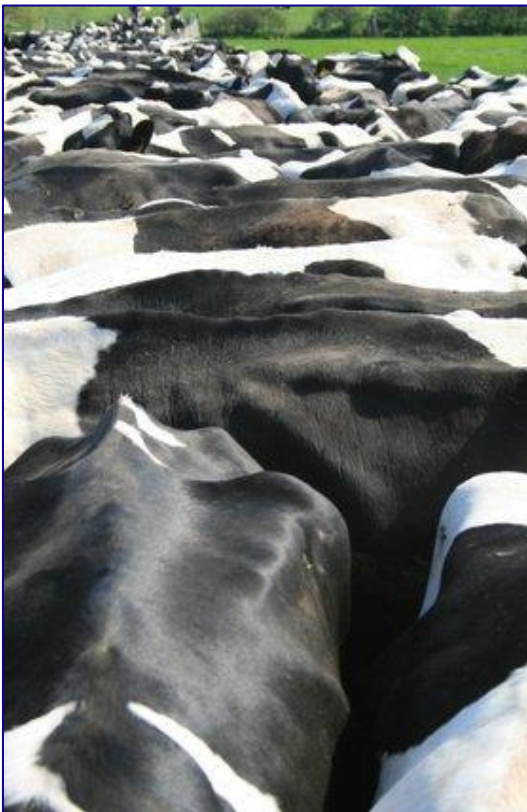


KEY FINDINGS

- After 1 year there was no difference in the heifer growth rates.
- There was no difference in the age at first calving.
- Heifers fed the lower protein diet during rearing tended to have higher DM intakes, and produce more milk during their first lactation.
- There were no apparent detrimental effects of feeding lower protein to growing heifers.

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

When looking to reduce protein levels in youngstock diets to **14%** it is critical that you **regularly weigh animals** to ensure that expected **growth rates** are achieved.



Are you meeting the nutritional needs of your herd?

Continued reviews of nutritional management and dietary requirements of your herd can ensure improved feed efficiency, health and productivity.

We have huge experience developing dairy businesses by combining technical and business solutions.

Don't hesitate to get in touch. We would be delighted to help.

100% independent, 100% for you.

Call our office on 01666 817278

sarah@douglasgreenconsulting.co.uk

Find out more at:

www.douglasgreenconsulting.co.uk



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Dairy Show 2019

Come and visit the team on **stand 43** in the **Dartmoor Pavilion** at the Dairy Show on **Wednesday 2nd October 2019** for light refreshments and the opportunity to discuss how we can assist with your business development.

Autumn Farm Walk – Managing an Organic Robot System

Douglas Green Consulting and Lely are delighted to invite you to this event being hosted at:

Church Farm, Atworth, Melksham, Wiltshire

On

Thursday 14th November

From 10.30am – 3.00pm

Hog Roast and refreshments will be provided

Chris and Michelle Hole run an impressive 140 cow organic milking herd through 2 robots. Cow focus is at the heart of the business development. The herd is currently achieving 12,044 litres at a feed rate of 0.30kg/l with grazing. High quality forages have kept concentrate spend down with organic 1st cut grass silage at 11.5ME.

We would like to invite you to join us to learn more about Chris and Michelle's business and how to ensure your business is sustainable post Brexit. **Whatever your dairy system (organic or conventional) this event promises to cater to all and is one not to be missed!**

Invites will be sent to all clients in October with information on how to book your place.

Douglas Green
Consulting Ltd

