



## Field Notes for The Week Of

1-10-22

### Got Mineral?

It hard to believe but January is halfway over! So far, the new year has been a roller coaster ride when it comes to weather, I can't seem to decide to wear the right amount of clothing from one day to the next. 2022 has seen some extremely variable weather with 40 + degree temperature swings and plenty of moisture to go along with it. With the freezing and thawing, snow and rain winter feeding conditions can be described as sloppy and muddy. So, the question is, how does this weather effect your livestock's health and wellbeing? It has been researched when the temperature falls beef cattle consumption will increase to maintain body weight and energy needs. As temperatures fall below 5° daily dry matter intake increases as much as 1.16%. So now let's consider the mud, when livestock must walk through mud, they will burn more calories and energy. Livestock will have to consume more to keep up body weight and nutrient needs, if livestock are pregnant or currently nursing an offspring by their side, nutrient and energy needs are even higher! It has been researched that a mature cow in her last trimester of gestation will have an increase of 1.8 Mcal Net energy/day, this is equivalent to a 20% increase in maintenance energy needs. So, the point I am trying to make here is, when the weather is bad feed more! This is the same for sheep and goats, making sure that dry matter intake is at least 4% of body weight and additional energy supplement the last trimester period is important to maintain good health and body condition.

With lower quality forage and feed cost almost doubling since last winter, mineral is more important that ever. Minerals play major roles in an animal's health and wellbeing. Forages and buying the cheapest mineral aren't always a money saver. Minerals come in different forms and formulations, oxide, sulfates, chlorides, organic or chelated. Oxide forms of minerals are commonly cheaper in price but only 20% as absorbable as chelated forms. Minerals are a big investment and can be one of the most expensive feed inputs per ton. When purchasing mineral producers need to make sure that they purchase enough and put out enough for each animal to consume 4 ounces per head a day. Free choice loose minerals provide much needed macro minerals, for beef cattle macro mineral concentrations should be greater than 100ppm of their overall diets. Macro Minerals include calcium, phosphorus, potassium, Magnesium, sulfur, and sodium chloride salt. Don't forget about vitamins, they are critical ingredients in a complete mineral program especially for producers feeding livestock forages rations with little to no protein supplements. Forages made as dry hay are very low in Vitamin A and Vitamin D, making sure that your mineral has adequate amount of both vitamins.

