

Weekly Article

1-17-2022

Don't Forget to Put Out the Mineral

Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of agriculture. It is hard to believe we are halfway through the month of January. One upside to time flying by is that our days are getting longer each day by almost 1 minute with the sun rising around 7:55 and setting at 5:14. This will continue until June 21s (summer solstice). As an agriculture educator and farmer, I can only dream of longer days, warmer weather, drier ground, and green grass! Speaking of green grass before most producers have any green grass to turn livestock out on, they are most likely replacing pastures with hay for silage. 2021 was a great year for forage yields with many producers having great yields with many forage fields producing almost 50% more than they did a year ago, believe it or not I had to chop half the number of acres of corn to fill my silo compared to 2020's crop. With high yield came lower quality, after reviewing many forages test results I have seen lower protein levels, lower digestibility, higher fiber content, lower relative feed value. My corn silage had 1.5% lower amounts of protein, 8% less digestibility, and 5% higher acid detergent fiber compared to last years crop. If you have not tested your forage, I would recommend having it tested, it is not too late this season. If you need guidance and help deciphering the results you can always call me at (937)544-2339. So, if you do decide to get your forage tested and the results are not as good as you would like to see what do you do? With forage aplenty and supplemental grains such as corn, soybean meal, and corn distillers grain almost double the price as they were a year ago many producers are wonder what else they can do to make sure livestock still get adequate nutrition. One of the often overlooks factor that many producers tend to forget about is mineral.

My top 3 nutrients for any of your livestock are 1. water, 2. fiber and 3 mineral. Minerals come in two main categories Macro and Micro. Macro Minerals include calcium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, chloride, sulfur, and magnesium. Here is a quick rundown of these nutrients and their importance in livestock diets.

- Calcium and Phosphorus- If you are feeding grass hay or corn silage you can count on low levels of calcium no matter quality of forage. Calcium and phosphorus play a critical role in skeletal growth in young livestock and stability/strength in mature animals. Lack of calcium in late stages of the animal's trimester will equal weak offspring's, lack of milk production and poor-quality colostrum. Deficient phosphorus levels in an animal's diet

can create poor reproduction in mature livestock and delayed puberty in young livestock. Calcium/ phosphorus ratios need to be 1.5 to 1 to 4 to 1 depending on stage of growth.

- Sodium chloride – All feed stuffs should be considered sodium and chlorine deficient. Sodium and Chlorine have a direct on livestock nervous system, water consumption, weight gain livestock consuming manly silage or dry grass hay will need to consume 0.5-1.9 oz of white mixing salt a day.
- Potassium- If you were like many producers and had your hay ran through the rinse cycle before bailing, most likely your forage is low in potassium. When cured forages are rained on have lower amounts of potassium due to leaching, if graze stockpiled fescue potassium is usually deficient. Potassium plays a key role in water retention, growth, good hair coat and should be 0.6% to 0.7% of the animal's ration.

Some other details to go over.

- Weed University – February 3rd located at Cherry Fork Community Center 14825 State Route 136 Winchester Ohio 45697. Fee is \$40 dollars including educational materials and meal. Registration Deadline is January 21st Register by calling 937-544-2339.
- February 24, Ohio Beef Cow/Calf School Located at Scott Farm 9681, US 68 Georgetown, Ohio 45121. Cost is \$10 per person, RSVP with OSU Extension Brown County by February 17th by calling (937) 378-6716. Herd Nutrition will be the main topics discussed at the school.
- February 15th private pesticide/fertilizer applicator recertification, location of this event will be at the West Union Frisch's (back meeting room) 11157 St Rt41, West Union, Ohio 45693. Register by calling (937) 544-2339 and mailing payments of \$35 for both Pesticide and fertilizer or \$15 dollars for fertilizer only to the office 215 North Cross St RM104 West Union, OH 45693.
- 2022 Tobacco GAP recertification course will be March 31,2022 at Raines Farm and Greenhouse, 10:00am-12:00pm. This event will be open to both Adams and Brown County producers. Call the Adams County OSU Extension office to RSVP at (937) 544-2339.
- Adams County Soil and Water Conservation Continues their annual Tree seedling Sales please call soon to order at (937) 544-2033 ex.4
- February 4th USDA Organic transitioning education and certification program application deadline. Call the FSA office at (937) 544-2033 for details.