

Focus

Our Informative Quarterly Newsletter
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Main Story

It's A Balancing Act

Significant expansion at Hardgrove Farm near Dumfries in recent years has never been at the cost of herd performance

In 1954, Alistair Marshall's father John, purchased Hardgrove Farm, a 565-acre farm with a 100-cow Ayrshire herd, sheep, beef, and potatoes. A lot has changed since then with the farm now standing at 900 acres and specialising exclusively in milk production from a 580-cow Holstein herd.

Hardgrove Farm currently have five milking groups; yielding 44,40,33,28 and 25 litres respectively with a herd average of 34.8 litres, milked three times a day. Alistair explains "I've always felt that a cow responds best to having a consistent diet 365 days of the year and if you get the nutrition right the rest falls in to place - it is so pivotal to performance. Every aspect is analysed in detail, from forage to minerals to the water, so I can provide the absolute best diet to achieve high yields successfully."

Gordon Macnaughton, area manager at Scotmin has worked with Alistair for over 20 years and explains "My role is to support Alistair's endeavor to get as much out of his dairy enterprise as efficiently as possible. Carrying out pre-cut grass testing, forage analysis and milk analysis are just some of the additional services that Scotmin offer. This allows us to produce products that exactly meet the needs of livestock on a farm by farm basis."

Alistair's detailed approach to nutrition means that he opts for a custom mineral which perfectly balances the specific needs of his herd. At Hardgrove the cows produce a consistent high level of milk, cows return to service quickly after calving, with very few ongoing issues - this is essential to profitability and although costs are under pressure from dairy farmers, I urge them not to cut back on quality nutrition as it can prove detrimental in the long run through poor animal performance,

health issues, vet's bills and extra labour costs.

Alistair concludes, "My target herd size is 600; that's where I feel my business gets the best economies of scale. Aside from that my main focus is soil management and forage quality, as I truly believe making the most out of home-grown forage has the most potential to increase production efficiencies."

To read the full article visit:

www.scotmin.com/news ■



Alistair Marshall



NEW!! ProPlus Pre Topping

ProPlus Pre-Topping has been reformulated, after careful analysis of the latest forage trends.

Now including salmon oil, as a source of Omega-3, to support egg development and lamb vitality. ProPlus Pre-Topping contains high quality rumen by-pass protein and fat, as well as generous levels of Phosphorus, Zinc, Selenium,

and Vitamin E, to help support the reproductive system by way of improving ovulation, implantation, and lamb survival. ProPlus Pre-Topping is ideal to be fed to both hill or lowland ewes, costing 3-5p per ewe/day.

Speak to your Scotmin sales representative today about ProPlus Pre-Topping. Available in 20kg and 80kg Tubs. ■



Avoid Autumn Staggers with MEGALIX Quattro mag and MEGALIX Quattro Mag Sheep

Although the main staggers (Hypomagnesaemia) risk period is spring, some producers will still need to be aware of the condition as autumn is quickly approaching.

The risk of staggers this autumn is likely as we can reasonably expect a second wind of rapidly growing grass, due to the recent rainfall.

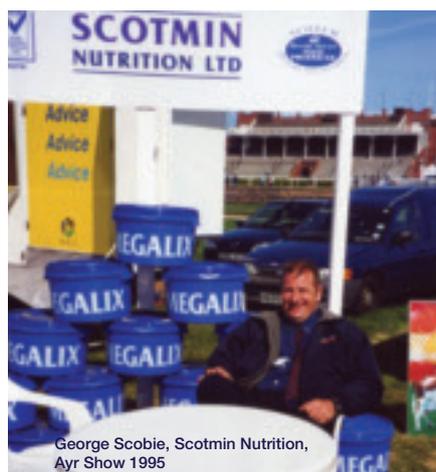
Feeding a supplemental source of

magnesium such as MEGALIX Quattro Mag during the staggers risk period is a good measure to ensure animals are receiving the correct amount of magnesium. Megalix Quattro Mag, contains four sources of magnesium to enable rapid and long-lasting supplementation. There are versions with and without copper, suitable for cattle only, or mixed grazing. ■

Scotmin Throwback

We love to look back at how the company and our products have changed over the years.

That being said, two things remain consistent to this day as they have done for over 25 years. George Scobie is still on hand to offer nutritional advice, and Scotmin continue to manufacture the high quality mineral licks MEGALIX. ■



It's Show Time!

The summer show season is nearing the end, however there are still some great shows to look forward to.

Scotmin Nutrition will be exhibiting at the following events and we would love to see you there.

- **Kelso Ram Sale** Fri 13th September
- **Agriscot** Wed 20th November
- **Livescot** Sat 23rd November

**Complete Ruminant
Nutrition Solutions**



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