COUNTRYSIDE FEED, LLC MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

VOL. 7

## COUNTRYSIDE KEYNOTES

FEBRUARY 2022

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## **DEVELOPING A YEAR-ROUND MINERAL PROGRAM**

By Tara Jo Bina, Countryside Feed Sales & Nutrition Professional

Developing a mineral program can be useful in knowing what minerals you need and how much to order. Here are a few steps your Countryside Feed representative can walk you through to develop a program that is customized to your operation:

Evaluate cattle needs. What are your goals for your cattle? To achieve 2.5 pounds average daily gain on growing cattle? For cows to calve and breed back quickly? Knowing what your goals are and what stages your cattle will go through in a years time is important when developing a mineral program! For example: a dry cow's mineral requirements are different than a cow getting ready to calve, or a lactating cow. Catering to each of these production phases is a cost-effective way to provide a cow the best opportunity for success.

<u>Know forage quality.</u> Knowing what your forages are providing for mineral nutrition is very important! Minerals are meant to 'supplement', or fill in the gaps left by forages. Working with your Countryside Feed

representative to test forages in order to know the nutrient levels will help you select supplemental feeds and minerals best suited to your operation!

Provide quality minerals. Looking at a mineral tag can be deceiving at times. Higher mineral values are not always an indication of the best mineral for your operation. There are many different forms of minerals that can be used when developing a cattle mineral: oxides, sulfates, chelated, organic, etc. Each of these mineral forms are available to the animal at differing rates. This means some forms of minerals require a higher concentration of trace minerals in order to provide a cow with adequate amounts. Oxides and sulfates are commonly used in minerals, but they are not as available to the animal, whereas chelated, organic, and other forms give animals a better ability to use the mineral, but come with a higher price tag. Using a combination of these mineral forms is a great way to provide the needed minerals, while keeping costs in check!

<u>Seasonal considerations and additives.</u> Changes in forages, stage of production, environmental conditions, and many other considerations can make selecting minerals seasonally a great option! ... continued

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Some common seasonal mineral changes to discuss with your Countryside Feed representative include:

- High Mag mineral in the spring to help avoid grass tetany when grazing lush, green grass.
- Feed through larvicides, such as Altosid®, are a great step toward an effective fly control program in the summer.
- Including Chlortetracycline (with a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD)) to prevent Anaplasmosis.
- Utilizing higher availability minerals such as Availa® and Intellabond® minerals during calving and breeding seasons.

Mineral management Deciding on what minerals to feed is only half of a mineral program. The other half comes once the mineral is on the farm. It is important to know how much mineral your cows should be eating and to target that feeding rate if the mineral is offered free choice. Comparing your cows' mineral consumption to the suggested feeding rate is the best way to know if you are on track. Mineral consumption can be calculated by the following equation: Pounds of mineral offered Number of cows x days to finish offered mineral If your cows are over or under consuming mineral, you should reconsider your feeding strategy. For example, salt can be used to dilute mineral on cows over consuming, while location of the feeder could be one thing to consider when cattle are under consuming. Work with your Countryside Feed representative to trouble shoot issues with mineral consumption. Our sales professionals are always here to answer your questions and help you develop a mineral program designed especially for your operation.





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