



## Alternative Feeds?

Dr. J.D. Bobb

The high costs of hay and corn have led many producers to ask the question “should I consider feeding a by-product or alternative feed”. This is a great question but the answer is quite complex. It depends on the number of animals you are feeding and the choices you have for an alternative feed, and ultimately the cost associated with the alternative feed.

With current lamb prices nearly twice what they historically have been, the simple answer is feed the best feed you can to maximize production in the ewe and growing lambs. With the current prices you can afford to purchase \$6.00 corn and \$200.00 a ton for hay. For small flocks with less than 100 ewes this perhaps is the best advice, just keep it simple and basic. For large flocks of ewes there are many choices that would help a producer reduce feed costs. You must always calculate the cost per pound of TDN (total digestible nutrients) and cost per pound of protein.

	DM	CP	TDN	CF	Ca	P
Soy Hulls	91.	12.	80.	39.	0.60	0.17
Wheat Midds	89.	18.	70.	8.5	0.15	1.0
Corn DDGS	90.	23.	88.	12.	0.35	1.4
Corn Gluten	90.	22.	83.	10.	0.50	0.90
Cottonseed whole	93.	28.	90.	22.	0.20	0.73
Corn Stalks	85.	6.6	50.	34.	0.50	0.10
Wheat Straw	92.	4.1	40.	42.	0.17	0.04

DM=Dry Matter, CP=Crude Protein, TDN= Total digestible nutrients, CF=Crude Fiber, Ca=Calcium, P=Phosphorus.

You should always work with a ruminant nutritionist when using an alternative feed source to help balance the energy and protein requirements as well as the minerals. Some feedstuffs have additional concerns such as high sulfur in DDGS, or high copper in corn gluten.

Soyhulls are a very digestible high fiber feed, and a decent source of protein. So if you are considering using soyhulls get a price per ton and calculate the value of the TDN per pound and compare to corn.

In recent weeks both corn and soybean oil meal have come down sharply in price. Corn at \$6.00 per bushel is only \$214.00 per ton and soybean meal is around \$300.00 per ton. They are the gold standards for pricing and should always be used to compare any alternative feedstuff.

Many of the alternative feedstuffs have to be limited in the total amount of the diet. Always get professional advice when trying a feedstuff for the first time.

# How many lambs and rams have to die before we quit using sheep mineral?

\*There is no justification for feeding phosphorus to sheep.

\*Consumption of sheep mineral is controlled by salt and flavoring agents, not by need.

\*Sheep generally need salt, iodine and selenium in addition to their ordinary diet intake.

\*Feedlot lambs need 20 lbs. of salt and 30 lbs. of limestone per ton of concentrate ration. Ammonium chloride can be added to further control urinary calculi.

Selenium/Iodine Premix (#8770) now contains trace minerals and iodine as well as selenium. Sodium molybdate is included to help ward off excess copper.

We have added iodine and trace mineral to our sister product Vitamin E-Se-Iodine Premix (#6249). This should be fed winter and spring as Vitamin E content of feed stuffs declines.

## DIRECTIONS FOR USE

Mix 1 lb. of either premix with 50 lbs. of salt.

Offer salt free choice.

#8770—Selenium/Iodine Premix 5# — 10.00

#6249—Vit E/Se/Iodine 5# - \$27.50

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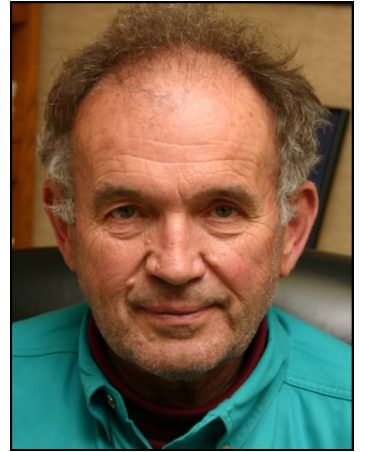
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# Straight Talk

The Katahdin Expo is history now. It was a lot of fun. Attendance for the event included 150-200 people from 25 states and three countries. The sale was extremely successful with buyers from 19 states. The average price paid per lot was \$824. The ewes sold extremely well and the rams sold well for a late season sale.

The farm tours and educational sessions were well attended and we received many thanks and compliments from those attending. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for coming and hope you found it worthwhile. I know that all of us here in Pipestone enjoyed you coming.



Dr. Bobb is writing an article in this issue addressing alternative feed sources. There is a lot of interest in alternative feeds. Check out his article. It's a good one.

I continue to get questions about worming. A couple of thoughts, unless you are in a semi arid or dry region, lambs on grass generally don't work. If the worms don't get them, coccidia generally will. Our grass here in the Midwest and in the heavier rainfall areas just doesn't work without extremely good management and I question the risk reward value.

When we deworm sheep we need to move them to a dry lot and then rotate pastures. Without, we just keep worming and get nothing back except exercise. Of the wormers use Dectomax, it gets more of the immature stomach worms. Levamisole is very effective against adults. I have given up on the white wormers. They are effective against tape worms which will eventually go away on their own anyway.

If you have more grass, run more ewes. It takes a whole lot less TDN to finish a creep fed lamb than it does one run on grass. It's a three to one conversion. Be careful of running replacement ewe lambs on grass or with the ewe flock. My fall born lambs I no longer allow to graze their first summer. It just isn't worth it. When I do, they have numerous problems.

If we are going to stay in the sheep business we need to learn how to raise our own replacements. Preferably they are of different breeding than our terminal sired lambs.

It is important that ewe lambs come off full feed at 80 pounds but grass isn't the answer and at that young age they need to be hand fed grain and have free choice hay and their body condition needs to be continually monitored.

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*Veterinary services, procedures, biologicals, and drugs mentioned in this publication represent the personal opinions and clinical observations of the contributing author. They are in no way intended to be interpreted as recommendations without the consent of the producer's own practicing Veterinarian. We strongly urge that producers establish a patient-client-veterinarian relationship that allows extra-label use when there are no drugs approved for treatment or if approved drugs are not effective. This procedure allows veterinarians to go beyond label directions when "prudent use" is necessary. The limited availability of drugs and biologics in this country is a major factor in restricting the growth of the sheep industry and allowing producers to compete in the world Market place.*

# North Star Sale

The 37th Annual North Star Bred Ewe Sale will be held Saturday, October 29th, 2011 at the Pipestone County Fair Grounds in Pipestone, MN. We will be selling 140 ewes, including Suffolks, Hampshires, Dorsets, Rambouillets, Katahdins and Southdowns. The sale begins at 7:00 p.m. For a sale catalog or information, contact Angie DeGroot @ 507-825-4211 or email her at [adegroot@pipevet.com](mailto:adegroot@pipevet.com).

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