

Hand feeding cattle in emergencies

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Todd Andrews, Beef Development Officer, NSW DPI, Armidale

Introduction

Full hand feeding is required when pasture is insufficient or inadequate to support stock. Feeding cattle in containment areas is easier and protects soil and pasture.

The feed quantities presented below refer to 'as fed' amounts required daily and are calculated on typical energy content-

megajoules of metabolisable energy per kilogram of dry matter (MJ ME/kg DM).

Energy and protein levels for these feeds can vary widely and they can be analysed to enable more accurate calculations.

Silage varies in dry matter content and this also affects the amount required.

Table 1. Feed requirements 'as fed' (kg/head/day) for full hand feeding of cattle.

Stock class	Liveweight (kg)	Grain* 12MJ ME	Hay 8.5MJ ME	Pit silage 35%DM 8.5MJ ME	Bale silage 45%DM 10MJ ME	Grain:hay 50:50	Grain:hay 80:20
young stock gaining 0.2kg/d	200	3	5	13	8	4	3.5
	250	3.5	6	15	9.5	4.7	4
	300	4	7	17	11	5.5	4.5
	350	4.5	7.5	19	12	6	5
	400	5	8		13	6.5	5.5
dry stock at maintenance	450	4.5	7.5	18	12	6	5
	500	5	8	19.5	13	6.5	5.5
	550	5.5	8.5	21	14	7	6
8 month pregnant cow (no gain)	500	7	8	19	18	9	8
	550	7.5	8	20	19	9.5	8.5
	600	8	Short term feeding only		20	10	9
	650	8.5	>9MJ ME required		21	10.7	9.5
Lactating cow (no gain) with calf	500	Not Suitable 20% roughage required	Short term feeding only		25	12	10.5
	550		>10MJ ME required		26	12	11
	600		to maintain cow weight		27	13	11.5
	650		28	14	12		

* Calculations are for crushed grain. Feeding whole grain can increase the amounts required. Increase all amounts by 20% in cold weather, using hay where possible.

Feed costs can be calculated using the Drought and Supplementary Feed Calculator app, downloadable for free from the iTunes app Store or Google Play.

The Drought and Supplementary Feed Calculator app allows users to:

- choose from a library of feed types
- customise energy and protein contents according to feed test information
- vary animal weight within each stock class
- compare the cost of feed options and mixes.

Warning and more information

Purchasing fodder at short notice or when it is in short supply increases the risk of using unsuitable feed that may contain unacceptable residues in stock products. Refer to NSW DPI Primefacts 315 and 311 for more information.

More information about feed cattle in confined areas is contained in Primefact 554 Confinement Feeding stock.

More information about testing feeds is available at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/content/aboutus/services/das/feed-quality-service>.

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