

## EFFECT OF ANTIBLOAT CAPSULES ON BLOAT AND MILK PRODUCTION OF DAIRY COWS

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Anti-bloat capsules (ABC) (Elanco Products Co.) designed to release monensin within the rumen for 100 days decrease bloat and improve liveweight gain in beef cattle (G. Ball unpublished data). This experiment investigated the efficacy of ABC to reduce the incidence of bloat in dairy cows and influence milk production.

Forty eight cows were allocated to two groups based on their milk production and susceptibility to bloat. Cows in one group received an ABC on 15th November, 1988. The herd rotationally grazed pastures conducive to bloat for the next 14 weeks. The cows grazed either perennial ryegrass (DDM 700 g/kg, N 33 g/kg or white clover (DDM 720 g/kg, N 42 g/kg) or red clover (DDM 700 g/kg, N 33 g/kg) dominant pastures. Measurements included individual cow daily milk yields, weekly milk composition and daily visual bloat scores (Johns 1954). Bloat mainly occurred when cows grazed red clover, and to a lesser extent white clover.

Table 1 Effect of anti-bloat capsules on incidence of bloat and milk production in dairy cows over a 14 week period

	Control	Anti-bloat capsules	l.s.d. P<0.05
No. of incidents of bloat score > 2	20	4**	
Milk (l/cow)	1564	1636	54
Milkfat (kg/cow)	68.9	69.0	3.3
Milk protein (kg/cow)	48.9	50.7	1.7
Milk lactose (kg/cow)	77.3	81.0	3.1
Milkfat (g/l)	44.2	42.3	1.8
Milk protein (g/l)	31.4	31.0	0.5
Milk lactose (g/l)	49.4	49.5	0.6

\*\*  $\chi^2 = 9.9$ , 1 df.  $P < 0.01$

ABC significantly reduced the incidence and severity of bloat. There was an increase in the yield of milk, protein and lactose and a reduction in the concentration of fat in milk (Table 1). Increased production may be due to higher food intake in combination with improvements in digestion.

Our results show that based on control, cost and labour input this method of bloat control is a practicable alternative to current methods.

JOHNS, A.T. (1954). N.Z.J. Sci. Tech. 36:289.

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