MINERAL CONTENT OF PASTURES SELECTED BY GRAZING DAIRY COWS

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Mineral deficiencies in the diet can limit efficiency of milk production and reproduction. The aim of this study was to identify possible mineral deficiencies in pasture selected by cows on 3 dairy farms in south-eastern N.S.W. The pastures were predominantly ryegrass/clover from April-November and kikuyu/paspalum from December-March.

Results in Fig. 1 show that concentrations of calcium and phosphorus in pasture selected frequently were suboptimal for milk production, on all 3 farms. Other mineral deficiencies identified were copper (throughout the year), magnesium (August-September) and sodium (January-March). The most economic strategies for correcting these mineral deficiencies currently are being investigated.