



## Why you should use AB Lime Healthy Cow Supplements

Calcium is extremely important in the lactating dairy cow, particularly during calving and early stages of lactation. It influences production, reproduction and affects the efficiency of feed conversion in the cow through muscular function.

The colostrum milk contains up to 10 times as much calcium as the cow has immediately available. Calcium is also used in the muscular effort of delivering a calf, and is required to get the uterus to shrink back to normal. Slow shrinkage will delay the return to oestrus, and increase the risk of clinical infections, therefore reducing reproductive performance.

In most cows calcium levels at this time will be very low, due to reduced uptake from suppressed intakes while on dry cow rations, which can be further affected if cows have been grazing low calcium diets prior to calving, such as crops or cereal silages. This causes subclinical hypocalcaemia which then develops into milk fever as calcium levels drop further.

Cows with milk fever have suppressed immune systems and so are more susceptible to other infections including mastitis.

The sooner the calcium requirements of the lactating cow are met, the quicker the cow will gain normal physiology and metabolic status. It will influence how quick the cow starts eating fully, which in turn increases the energy in the diet, and this will reduce the amount of body condition required to be mobilized.

The period of subclinical ketosis and appetite depression is also reduced.

By reaching peak appetite, and peak production at a quicker rate the lactational persistence will be greater.

As milkfat and milkprotein percentages increase, so does the amount of calcium per litre.

Dietary calcium requirements increase both with increased volume and increased milksolids.

Feed such as grain or cereal silages contain virtually no calcium.

Cows can be hypocalcaemic and get milk fever at any stage during lactation. Contributing factors can be excess activity, oestrus, sudden dietary changes, adverse weather - especially high chill factor, poor rumen function including rumenal acidosis, low calcium diets, low dry matter intakes to name a few.

Calcium should be provided all the way through the lactation.

AB Lime have developed a range of calcium supplementation products that are able to be used in differing situations to the lactating cows.

The percentage of calcium, magnesium, and the particle size are of particular consideration for absorption in the gut, and also for cost effectiveness. The higher the percentage of the element the less total product is required. The finer particle size ensures maximum uptake is obtained.

AB Lime's products are made from very high calcium percentage limestone and magnesium, and have been finely ground to ensure the absorption rates can be maximized.

The Healthy Cow Products should be used throughout the season to maintain optimum herd health, and ensure production in your herd is maximized.

*Jill Russell (Bachelor Agricultural Science).  
Farm Business Management Consultant.*



# AB LIME

AB Lime produces top quality agricultural lime from its Kings Bend quarry and only uses trusted suppliers to provide additional materials to make Healthy Cow products.

Made by AB Lime, Winton, Southland

Call 0800 227 559 [www.healthycow.co.nz](http://www.healthycow.co.nz)