

July 2026

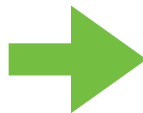
Subacute ruminal acidosis (SARA)

SARA is a condition in which the contents of the rumen become more acidic than they should be. This is caused by excess rapidly fermentable carbohydrate with insufficient fibre in the diet. Specific signs are rarely obvious in affected individuals, but may be seen at herd level.

Signs include reduced milk production, reduced milk fat and a drop in body condition due to reduced feed intake and impaired digestion. Diarrhoea can also be seen, with no apparent infectious cause. The acidity of the rumen may allow bacteria to cross the walls of the rumen and travel to the liver, forming abscesses. Occasionally these abscesses erode into major blood vessels - allowing bacteria to spread to the lungs, which in rare cases can cause a fatal haemorrhage.

We can diagnose SARA by extracting fluid from the rumen to analyse the health of the microbes living in it, which are important for gut health. This can inform changes to the herd's diet to improve health and productivity.

Medicines training needs to be done every 5 years to comply with Red Tractor Farm Assurance. Join us at one of our sessions over the next few months. It also counts towards your CPD requirements for the SFS



It's Show Time!



Fenton Vets are hitting the show circuit this season! Call in to see us @
Fishguard Show 7th August, County Show 19-20th August, Martletwy Show 26th August, Camrose Show 29th August



MASTERING MEDICINES

10:00-13:00 WEDNESDAY 22ND JULY
PELCOMB INN
Lunch provided!
£25 if FC registered

RSVP: 07766995118



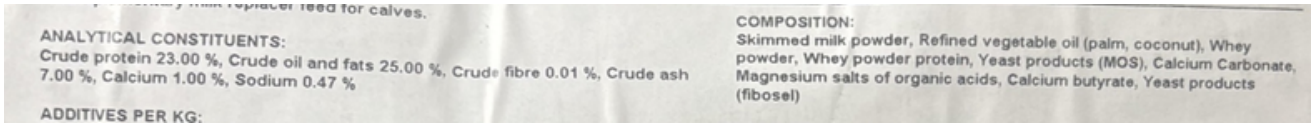
Subsidised by Farming Connect
Make sure you have re-registered with FC
& selected the course on the FC Skills Hub website



Milk Powder



Milk powder labels are difficult to understand – for vets and farmers alike!
 Good quality milk powder is crucial for good calf development. Calves need protein & energy to grow and thrive!
 So, what are you looking at on a milk powder label? How do you decipher the jargon on the packet to work out what it's actually giving your calves?



Crude Protein

Target 20-24%. Dairy protein sources (milk skim and whey) are the best as they are well digested by calves. Non-dairy proteins (soy, pea, potato) or 'vague' dairy ingredients ('milk protein'/'dairy product') should ring alarm bells!

-Skimmed milk – this is the closest to the proteins found in whole milk. It forms a clot in the abomasum and keeps calves feeling fuller for longer. Hungry calves don't thrive! This is a premium product, but worth its weight in gold! Be aware that there are differences in the quality of skim products due to different processing. We are looking for human-grade skim. Ask your rep as they should know these details!

-Whey – usually a bit cheaper. This is easily and quickly digested by calves, in as little as 20 minutes! It doesn't form a clot in the abomasum, so doesn't keep calves full for as long

Crude oil and fats

- Essentially a measure of energy content

-Fat is full of energy. Whole milk is full of good digestible fats for calves, but these are not used in calf powders due to cost. Vegetable oils such as palm and coconut contain fats closest to those found in whole milk, and are the mainstays used in calf powders

-Fat content should be above 18%, but over 20% is best!

Crude fibre

-There should be 0% fibre in milk. Usually, if there is more than 0%, there is an undisclosed non-dairy protein source. This may affect the digestibility of the milk powders and is worth asking your rep about

-High fibre (>0.15%) should ring alarm bells. This is usually high at the expense of good protein or energy content

Crude ash

-Refers to minerals content of the powder

-Should be less than 7%

-High ash (>10%) is something to be aware of. This is usually high at the expense of good protein or energy content

If you notice calves with poor, hairy coats and dirty back ends, it's worth considering the quality of the milk powder you are feeding.

Also, compositions of milk powders can change due to the availability of raw materials, so just because you haven't actively changed milk powders, doesn't mean there hasn't been a change to what the calves are drinking! In general, you pay for stability, so the more expensive milk powders are more consistent, but as always check with your rep.

