

Media Release
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Worldwide product developer to visit innovation success in New Zealand

International animal nutrition specialist Provimi is to visit Winslow to see the success of a calf nutritional innovation.

Mid Canterbury agribusiness company Winslow has developed a way that farmers can use the whole milk on hand to feed calves but still get the nutritional benefits that are in the powdered milk supplements.

The innovation, called NuStart Milk Additive, is the first of its type in the country and, according to Provimi which was a partner in development, the first in the world.

Winslow nutritionist Dr Rob Derrick was part of the team that developed NuStart Milk Additive – a natural nutritional supplement that farmers can add to the whole milk they have on hand to feed calves, instead of having to buy in specially formulated milk powder.

Dr Derrick says milk alone will not bring a calf to optimum condition in its first three months.

“Unsupplemented milk is not enough because calves are not getting the many small milk feeds per day they would get from mum, and they are kept in large groups with increased risk of disease. You only have to look at the anaemic, lethargic calves produced under milk-only veal systems to appreciate that.

“Research has shown the first 12 weeks is key to a calf’s lifelong potential as a dairy cow. It is a critical period for rumen development and calves are most at risk of immune-related problems and disease. It is also the most efficient period for daily live weight gain.”

But with feed costs rising by the week, many dairy farmers will want to make best use of milk they have available while still wanting their calves to reach target growth rates and do well post weaning.

Developed by Provimi - one of the World’s largest premix manufacturers - NuStart provides calves with the benefits of an effective prebiotic, etheric oils (from herbs and spices) and functional fibre that helps optimum rumen development, sets them up to go onto grass earlier and put on maximum weight.

Winslow group sales and marketing manager Grant Hay said Winslow initially added NuStart to its hard feed in 2004, with good results. In 2006 Winslow had the idea of enabling farmers to add it to whole milk and asked Provimi to help trial it.

Provimi is the largest ruminant feed company in the world and world leader in development of animal nutrition solutions. With over 100 plants in 30 countries, Provimi’s 8000 employees include 600 scientists.

Now after 12 months of NuStart Milk Additive being used by South Island customers, Winslow has had unprecedented feedback from customers, Mr Hay said.

Feedback included calves reaching 100kg 10 days earlier than previous seasons despite a poor spring, calves were heavier and required cheaper input costs to achieve target weights.

“Due to the huge amount of positive feedback from the field and the unprecedented demand we are experiencing, Winslow has recently negotiated a distribution deal so NuStart Milk Additive has become available nationwide through CRT and Farmlands.

“There’s real interest out there from distributors and customers because there is nothing else like it on the market. It’s giving calves the start of a lifetime.

“At Winslow we are farmers as well as product developers. We source tools and apply technology to enhance farmers’ productivity, profit and peace of mind. With our new NuStart Milk Additive we have a cost effective whole milk additive that’s making a real difference to the way farmers view rearing calves.”

Detailed trials by Provimi have demonstrated repeatedly that NuStart in milk outperforms a range of alternative additives. NuStart Milk Additive promotes gut development, stimulates digestion, encourages feed intake, reduces incidence of scouring, minimises disease challenge, and increases daily live weight gain. Its ingredients are natural, non-GM and free from antibiotic digestive enhancers.

“It’s not just about getting what you can out of your stock, it’s also about looking out for their health and welfare and ensuring they are in the best condition possible,” Dr Derrick said.

“All that adds up to peace of mind, which farmers certainly need more of these days. It is especially pleasing to hear farmers say that heifers that benefited from NuStart as calves are now entering the herd well grown and capable of holding their own. ”

Provimi’s technical manager Norman Downey will be in New Zealand at the end of this month to see the results of NuStart Milk Additive and meet with distributors and customers.

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