

MODULE 5

Dairy livestock feeding

FARMWORKER AND SUPERVISOR MODULE



Optimising milk production requires an advanced feeding strategy. Students will learn about the different feed types available for dairy animals namely, roughages, concentrates and minerals. The quantity and quality of feed, in addition to water, largely determines the dairy animal's health and productivity and many dynamic factors influence the nutrient requirement of animals along with the nutrient availability from feeds. The course will cover both pastures and total mixed rations (TMR) systems. Successful dairy cow nutrition starts with maximising dry matter intake (DMI), which is why the use of TMR is a popular and effective way of meeting the nutritional needs of dairy cows. Although the level of milk production on pastures is usually lower than with a TMR system, it is often more economical. Supplementary feeding and licks can serve as tools to better manage pastures, cow body condition, fertility and milk composition. Ultimately, deciding what feeding system to use will depend on availability, cost, quantity, and quality of feed. Students will learn proper planning, implementation and maintenance of feeding facilities to align with the primary objective of dry-cow nutrition and management: optimising health, milk yield and reproduction in the following lactation period.

NQF Level 2, 3



Knowledge

- Dairy feed types and feeding practices
- Feeding of heifers
- Feeding of cows in milk
- Feeding of dry cows
- Feeding facilities and equipment



Practical skills

- Prepare, mix and distribute supplementary and concentrated feed
- Monitor feed stock and storage



Work experience

- Assist and observe an experienced person preparing and distributing feed to lactating cows on a dairy farm for one week
- Attend to preparing and distributing feed to lactating cows for one week under supervision
- Attend to preparing and distributing feed to lactating within normal farm reporting structures and oversight for two weeks

