



GRASS TETANY

A METABOLIC DISEASE

Grass tetany is caused by either a magnesium (Mg) deficiency, or an interference with the absorption of Mg and results in high death rates in affected animals.

What causes grass tetany?

Grass tetany occurs when the magnesium (Mg) level in the blood falls below a critical level. Cattle hold Mg in their bones but can't readily mobilise these stores. The animal constantly loses Mg in urine, faeces and milk; therefore it needs a daily intake of Mg.

The balance of Mg in cattle depends on the rate of absorption from the rumen and the rate of excretion of Mg, especially in the milk. A cow in peak lactation needs a constant source of Mg to replace the large amount lost from the body in milk. Grass tetany will occur when Mg losses in milk exceed the amount consumed in pasture, with the highest risk period occurring from calving through to the first few months of lactation.

Clinical signs caused by a rapid drop in blood Mg levels:

LESS ACUTE CASES

- Incoordination
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle spasms
- Extreme salivation

ACUTE CASES

- Sudden deaths
- Drastic behavioural changes.
- Run blindly, staggering, convulsions

6-10 hours from first symptoms death will occur.

When is my herd most at risk?

Grass dominant pastures in late autumn and winter will have lower magnesium and calcium concentrations and higher potassium levels, especially with very short pasture. Grazing cereal crops is generally high risk because they are inherently low in magnesium. Pastures that are excessively high in potassium can also inhibit the uptake of magnesium by cows.

In short your animals are most at risk late autumn and winter. Beware of short grass, cereal crops that are low in magnesium and beware of high potassium. (Please see notes on calving and lactating, page 5).

BEEFMASTER

SUPPLEMENTATION



When it comes to grass tetany, prevention is preferable to treatment as it often occurs without warning. Prevention involves supplementing the animals with magnesium during the period of greatest risk. Olsson's Beefmaster is the supplement to eliminate the deficiency with 111g/ kg of available magnesium. **APVMA Approval No. 40029/15/0905**

Available in 15 & 40kg blocks.



DIRECTIONS FOR USE

To be used in late Autumn, Winter & Spring. Place away from watering points. Place out enough blocks to avoid overcrowding.

TYPICAL ANALYSIS

Magnesium (Mg)	11.1%	Phosphorus (P)	0.11%
Magnesium Oxide (MgO)	18.9%	Molasses	59.77%
Salt (NaCl)	0.32%	Cottonseed Meal	0.39%
Calcium (Ca)	0.21%		

Calving down

Autumn/Winter calving can lead to increased susceptibility of grass tetany in older cows (6+ years old) and overly fat or very thin cows. Olsson's Beefmaster will not only help avoid grass tetany due to pasture and weather conditions, it will also aid in controlling the balance of magnesium lost during lactation, and prior to that, help trigger the release of stored calcium during calving. This helps avoid the onset of other metabolic disorders such as milk fever.

For first and second calf heifers Olsson's recommends the use of Herd Health Pre Calving block. This block protects the younger cows from grass tetany, helps avoid milk fever, as well as provides glycerol for a much needed energy boost when these new mums need it most.

In summary, both the above blocks have high levels of magnesium, with Beefmaster having the highest on the market and Herd Health Pre Calving containing both magnesium and extra energy.

What is the cost of supplementing to avoid grass tetany?

Expected intake of this block would be 50-150 grams/head/day, which would result in 10-30 cents/day depending on intake. (Prices may be a little more in Western Australia due to freight).

In short, Beefmaster is a small price to pay for Olsson's form of life insurance for cattle.

When do I start supplementing with Beefmaster?

Starting to supplement thirty days prior to the grass tetany season will help build up blood magnesium levels. Field trials show that a high intake of Beefmaster thirty days prior could be due to lack of good supplementation (we recommend supplementing with Olsson's Herd Health 365 all year round so the animal is not trying to fulfill all its nutritional requirements with Beefmaster). High levels of potassium, phosphorous and calcium can decrease magnesium efficiency, also leading to higher than expected consumption.

In short, getting the balance right and fulfilling the cows nutritional requirements all year round is important, along with supplementing with Beefmaster during critical times to prevent the onset of grass tetany.

How many blocks do I need, and where do I put them?

1x15kg block per 10 head, or 1x40kg block per 30 head. These numbers have been set after field trials to allow for enough head space and to avoid overcrowding.

Place the blocks away from dams and other water sources. Having the blocks on their rest pads leads to more successful supplementation.

Simply rip off the top of the carton and leave the rest of the block in the cardboard. Some animals may

eat the cardboard which is perfectly safe and designed for them to do so.

Beefmaster is 100% safe for all other livestock including horses and alpacas, and is a successful magnesium supplement for our woolly friends to avoid staggers.

Where do I buy Beefmaster?

We believe in supporting local businesses. Find our products through rural agents near you. Please see our website olssonblocks.com.au for a list of our stockists.

Or, contact our livestock nutritionists for personalised guidance on usage and benefits. HOTLINE 1800 804 096

Please purchase this block early in the season to avoid missing out on the best, most cost effective & easy to handle grass tetany supplement out there.

Made by Olsson's, celebrating 70 years of supplementing Australian livestock.





**ALSO
AVAILABLE**

HERD health



PRE CALVING

Herd Health Pre Calving block quickly draws out and converts crucial calcium & mineral reserves (built up over time by the Herd Health 365 blocks) into usable calcium, reducing the likelihood of milk fever & other issues.

365

Herd Health 365 is an advanced block containing a balanced array of trace elements, vitamins and minerals, providing targeted supplementation for cattle grazing all types of pastures in all seasons.



DRY FEED & STUBBLES

With a balanced mix of trace minerals, micro minerals, vitamins and urea, Herd Health Dry Feed & Stubbles will maintain the animal's nutrition requirements during dry times.



HOTLINE 1800 804 096
olssonsblocks.com.au

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