

Cobb Shipping Service LLC

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Free Choice Feeding with Liquid Supplements

Many of the Westway Liquid Supplements have been formulated for “free-choice” feeding. Supplements fed in lick wheel feeders save time and labor and allow livestock the opportunity to eat what they need. Free Choice feeding programs provide excellent nutrition at a reasonable cost. With 24 hour availability, cattle receive their fair share. Weaker and smaller animals have more opportunity to get the daily nutrition they need. Also, as pasture and roughage quality decline, cattle will increase their consumption to meet their nutritional needs.

There is NO ideal consumption level. Cattle will consume between 1 and 3 lbs. per head per day depending on their forage quality.

The following items outline the management of free-choice feeding with Liquid Supplements for beef cattle, replacement heifers and dairy cows using a lick wheel feeder.

1. Is your lick wheel feeder working properly? Do the wheels turn freely? Is the cover securely fastened?
2. Is your lick wheel feeder clean? Debris, water and other contaminants should be removed and the tank rinsed clean before use.
3. How many lick wheel feeders do you need? The recommendation is to have a one wheel for every 25 head. A two wheel tank handles 50 head.
4. Where should the feeder be located? There should be at least 50 feet or more between the feeder and the water supply. And, do not locate the feeder too close to any other feed supply. Many dealers will locate the feeder close to the road or fence line for easy filling.
5. Ensure animals have free access to clean water all season. If the water supply runs dry, the cattle will use the feeder as their water source.
6. Make sure cattle have free access to salt and minerals. Feeding a balanced mineral goes along with the free choice liquid supplement.
7. Provide unlimited roughage, pasture, or hay at all times.
8. Keep the lick wheel feeder full. DO NOT let it run empty.
9. Make sure you supply water and forage to newly arrived cattle BEFORE they have access to the lick wheel feeder.
10. Consumption rates may be high or low during the first 1 to 2 weeks after exposure to the lick wheel feeder. If abnormal consumption continues after the adjustment period, adjustments in the ration or the placement of the feeder should be made. Contact Cobb Shipping Service for further consultation.