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#### Harish Rohila

Department of Livestock Production Management, Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Hisar, Haryana, India

#### Amar Shroha

Department of Livestock Production Management, Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Hisar, Haryana, India

#### **Rakesh Kumar**

Department of Animal Nutrition Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Hisar, Haryana, India

Correspondence Harish Rohila Department of Livestock Production Management, Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Hisar, Haryana, India

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# Effect of rumen protected fat supplementation on nutrient utilization and body condition in dairy animals: A review

# Harish Rohila, Amar Shroha and Rakesh Kumar

#### Abstract

RPF (Rumen Protected Fat)/ bypass fat in the rations of the high producing dairy animals is very crucial for enhancing the energy density of ration. Rumen Protected Fat means that resists lipolysis and bio hydrogenation in rumen by rumen microorganisms, but gets digested in lower digestive tract. Most of the animals in developing countries including India are fed on agriculture by-products and low quality crop residues, which have got inherent low nutritive value and digestibility. The shortage of feed resources coupled with their poor nutritive value. Hence, during early lactation, dairy animals are often forced to draw on body reserves to satisfy energy requirements (negative energy balance); this leads to substantial loss in body weight. Cereal grains and fats plays an important role as source of energy in the ration but due to use of cereals for human consumption and monogastric animals the alternate source of energy in dairy ration is limited to 3% of dry matter (DM) intake, beyond which digestibility of DM and fibre are reduced. So, diets containing rumen protected fat often stimulate energy intake, improved efficiency of utilization of energy without adversely affecting the DM intake and improved body condition in dairy animals.

Keywords: Rumen protected fat, nutrient utilization, body condition and dairy animals

#### Introduction

Dairy animals in developing countries including India are fed on agriculture by-products and low quality crop residues, which have got inherent low nutritive value and digestibility. And shortage of feed resources coupled with their poor nutritive value is of major concern. Lactating buffaloes in early lactation do not consume sufficient dry matter to support maximal production of milk (Goff and Horst, 1997)<sup>[9]</sup>. Demand for energy is very high during early stage of lactation but supply is not commensurate with demand due physiological stage or limited intake may affects production potential of animal in the whole lactation length (Sirohi et al. 2010)<sup>[32]</sup>. Hence, during early lactation, dairy animals are often forced to draw on body reserves to satisfy energy requirements (negative energy balance); this leads to substantial loss in body weight which adversely affects production (Kim et al. 1993) [11]. Cereal grains plays an important role as source of energy but due to use of cereals for human consumption and monogastric animals the alternate source of energy in dairy ration is supplemental fat (Saijpaul et al. 2010) <sup>[23]</sup>. And inclusion of unprotected fat in dairy ration is limited to 3% of dry matter (DM) intake, beyond which digestibility of DM and fibre are reduced (NRC, 2001) [18]. It has also depressing effect on rumen cellulolytic microbial activity (Ranjan et al. 2010) [22]. Another attempts have been made to augment milk production from dairy animals with bovine somatotropin which is galactopoietic in nature (Bachman et al., 1992; Singh and Ludri, 1994) <sup>[1, 30]</sup>. Because of the environmental hazards and secretion of hormone into milk, the application of this technology could not become popular (Prasad and Singh, 2010) <sup>[19]</sup>. Subsequently researchers focused on the use of nonhormonal preparations and herbal medicine to augment lactation because they augment milk yield without affecting the energy balance (Singh et al., 2014) [31]. So, bypass fat supplementation increases energy density of the diet which is reflected in improved BCS and productive performance of animals (Ganjkhanlou et al., 2009)<sup>[7]</sup>. And by protecting the fats from ruminal degradation, it is possible to increase fat content of the ration up to 6-7% of the DM intake, so that the fats get digested and absorbed optimally in the lower tract for milk and fat production without affecting digestibility of DM and fibre.

It is stated that supplementing ration of lactating animals with bypass fat enhances energy intake in early lactation which reduces deleterious effect of acute negative energy balance on lactation (Tyagi *et al.* 2010) <sup>[36]</sup>. Diets containing supplemental fat often stimulate increased milk production because of increased energy intake, improved efficiency of utilization of energy, or both (Maiga and Schingoethe, 1997) <sup>[13]</sup>. Bypass fat in the form of calcium salts of fatty acids (Palm oil and others) has been known to increase energy density of the ration without adversely affecting the DM intake and digestibility (Naik *et al.* 2009) <sup>[16]</sup>.

## Effect of RPF on dry matter intake

Jenkins and Palmquist (1984) observed no significant difference in dry matter intake by addition of calcium soaps of fatty acids in rations of lactating Holstein cows <sup>[10]</sup>. Schauff and Clark (1992) found a linear decrease in dry matter intake when cows were fed rations containing 3, 6, and 9 per cent of protected fat as calcium soaps of long chain fatty acids and attributed to the worse palatability of the supplemental fat <sup>[25]</sup>. Schneider et al. (1988), Erickson et al. (1992) reported no difference in DM (Dry Matter) intake <sup>[26, 5]</sup>. Kim *et al.* (1993) reported reduction in DM intake attributable to dietary CSFA has been reported <sup>[11]</sup>. Garg and Mehta (1998) also did not find any significant effect of bypass fat on dry matter intake<sup>[8]</sup>. Sarwar et al. (2004) reported daily dry matter intake ranging from 10.8 to 11.0 kg in different groups of lactating Nili-Ravi buffalos fed 0 to 6 per cent ruminally protected fat, which was statistically non significant <sup>[24]</sup>. Tyagi et al. (2009) have reported that daily dry matter intake of the ration had remained unaffected on supplementing rumen bypass fat <sup>[37]</sup>. Most of the workers reported that the DM intake of dairy animals was not altered (Naik et al., 2007b; 2009a; Tyagi et al., 2009b; Thakur and Shelke, 2010; Sirohi et al., 2010; Mudgal et al., 2012) on supplementation of bypass fat [15, 17, 39, <sup>28, 32, 14]</sup>. Chouinard et al. (1997) reported decrease and Tyagi et al. (2009a) reported increase in DM intake in dairy animals fed bypass fat <sup>[2, 38]</sup>. Bypass fat supplementation in the ration of lactating animal, enhances the energy intake and reduces the adverse effect of NEBAL during early lactation (Drackley, 1999; Ganjkhanlou et al., 2009) without affecting rumen cellulolytic bacterial activity (Thakur and Shelke, 2010) <sup>[4, 7, 35]</sup>. Shelke et al. (2011), Mudgal et al. (2012), Ranjan et al. (2012) and Desai (2012), did not found significant effect on DMI <sup>[29, 14, 21, 3]</sup>.

### Effect of RPF on efficiency of nutrient utilization

Maiga and Schingoethe, (1997) reported that diets containing supplemental fat often stimulate increased milk production because of increased energy intake, improved efficiency of utilization of energy, or both <sup>[13]</sup>. Naik et al. (2007b) reported that no effect on DCP intake by the supplementation of bypass fat to dairy animals <sup>[15]</sup>. Naik et al. (2007b), Sirohi et al. (2010) reported that TDN intake was either not altered on supplementation of bypass fat in the diet of the dairy animals <sup>[15, 32]</sup>. Naik et al. (2009a) reported no increase in the DE and ME intake on bypass fat supplementation to buffaloes <sup>[17]</sup>. Tyagi et al., (2009a), Thakur and Shelke, (2010) reported that TDN intake was increased on supplementation of bypass fat in the diet of the dairy animals <sup>[38, 28]</sup>. Tyagi *et al.* (2009a; 2009b), Thakur and Shelke, (2010) reported no effect on CP intake and by the supplementation of bypass fat to dairy animals [38, 39, 28]. Tyagi et al. (2009a) reported decrease in the intake (kg) of DM (0.81 vs 0.78 and 0.82 vs 0.76); CP (0.12

vs 0.11; 0.12 vs 0.11) and TDN (0.52 vs 0.51; 0.52 vs 0.50) per kg of milk and FCM production in crossbred cows indicating better utilization of DM, CP and TDN due to bypass fat supplementation <sup>[38]</sup>. Sirohi *et al.* (2010) also observed decrease in the CP intake (130.72 vs 118.87, g) per kg FCM production in crossbred cows indicating better utilization of the dietary CP <sup>[32]</sup>. Sirohi *et al.* (2010) reported increase in CP intake (1.44 vs 1.60; kg/d) in lactating crossbred cows supplemented with bypass fat <sup>[32]</sup>.

# 2.5 Effect of RPF on body weight and body condition

Komaragiri et al. (1998) reported that the addition of fat in early lactation diets is commonly thought to improve energy balance by reducing body fat mobilization and use of supplemental dietary fat for milk production <sup>[12]</sup>. Solorzano Kertz, (2005) reported that supplementation of fats is done to minimize the body weight loss and hasten body weight gain postpartum while maintaining milk production in dairy animals <sup>[34]</sup>. Purshothaman *et al.* (2008) reported no significant effect of feeding calcium salt of palm oil fatty acids on body weight change in dairy cows <sup>[20]</sup>. Ganjkhanlou et al. (2009) reported that bypass fat supplementation increases energy density of the diet which is reflected in improved BCS and productive performance of animals [7]. Wadhwa et al. (2012) reported that the body weight of the animals improved in the bypass fat supplemented group as compared to the control group (551 vs. 508, kg), though the differences were nonsignificant <sup>[41]</sup>. Vahora *et al.* (2013) reported that feeding of calcium salt of palm oil fatty acids significantly reduced (p < 0.05) the loss in body weight (11.72) vs. 38.30) in comparison to that of control group <sup>[40]</sup>. Metabolic body weight at the beginning of experiment was more (p < 0.05) in the control cows; however after 90 days of experiment the metabolic weight increased significantly (p < 0.05) in the PF supplemented cows (Singh *et al.*, 2014) <sup>[31]</sup>. Singh *et al.* (2014) reported that the decline in BCS (p<0.01) was more in control than the PF supplemented cows <sup>[31]</sup>. Friggens et al. (1993), Sharma et al. (2015) observed that additional dietary fat could result in better energy partitioning and improved energy balance in dairy animals <sup>[6, 27]</sup>. Garg and Mehta (1998) observed that the BSC of the cows improved due to bypass fat feeding indicating reduction in weight loss in the first quarter and helped gaining substantially after 90 days of feeding [8]. Naik et al. (2009b) reported better recovery in BW (-2.08 vs +14.13, kg) and BSC (-0.06 vs +0.02) in crossbred cows during early lactation in bypass fat supplemented group <sup>[42]</sup>. Thakur and Shelke (2010) reported that supplementation of calcium salts of soya acid oil fatty acids at 4% of DMI improved the ADG (553.10 vs 577.60, g) in Murrah buffalo calves owing to higher TDN intake (2.14 vs 2.42, kg/d)  $^{[28]}$ .

# Conclusions

It may be concluded that by supplementation of bypass fat in the diet of dairy animals it is possible to alleviate problems of negative energy balance without adversely affecting the dry matter intake and rumen fermentation. Supplementation of bypass fat gives additional benefit due to increase in milk yield, efficiency of nutrient utilization, post-partum recovery of the body weight and body condition score of the dairy animals.

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