

Triticale Grain Works Well for Lactating Dairy Cows

Three recent university studies have provided additional documentation that triticale grain works well as an energy supplement for dairy cows. The observations and conclusions reported in those studies concur with those from previous work.

High feed intake and milk production

Feed intake and milk production for cows fed triticale grain as a partial substitute for corn or barley did not differ from that for cows fed corn and barley.

Ground or Rolled

Previous research had shown that rolled triticale grain works well. In one recent study, in which triticale grain was fed at 8 lbs. per day (12% of ration dry matter), triticale grain that was ground rather than rolled resulted in intake and milk production equal to that from feeding rolled corn and barley.

High protein

Triticale grain typically has higher protein content than corn or barley.

New opportunities in ration formulation

Triticale grain is highly digestible in the rumen. Both the starch and protein of triticale grain have been shown to be digested more rapidly than that of corn or barley. Although highly digestible starch can pose a risk of rumen acidosis if not properly managed, research suggests that dairy nutritionists can use the digestibility of triticale grain to good advantage by matching it with sources of highly digestible protein or blending it with corn or other sources slowly digested starch.

Consult with your nutritionist, veterinarian, or farm advisor about use of triticale grain for dairy rations.