Frequently Asked Questions on Feeding Barley Fodder to Livestock

Q: Hello live in Ky. interested in knowing the feed value of fodder, and what other feeds you supplement with it if any. I have a friend with a small dairy making cheese and I raise turkeys. I have done some sprouting on a small scale, would like to tour a farm or get some more info.

A: Did you see the webinar on feeding fodder. there is a link on the facebook page. there is also a copy of the presentation which you can see the analysis of the fodder and how it changes from the grain.

You need to feed non fodder for 80% of a cow's dry matter need (calculate by multiplying the animal's weight by .03) Some farmers will feed up to 30% but there is a decrease in efficiencyat that rate.

For Turkey's I am less familiar with their needs but I would think it similar to what portion of their diet can be grass or about 30% could be fodder and the rest grain. Farmers have found they can feed less than the .03 of body weight due to an increase in efficiency by feeding fodder. (Fay Benson)

Q: Where can I get barley for sprouting?

A: Supply is limited this year. "Please tell your farmers that if they are buying barley for sprouting, this year, they really must ask their supplier whether the grain has been through a grain dryer...such grain is not likely to sprout well." (Mary Howell)

Q: How are minerals affected by sprouting grains?

A: Below lists each mention of minerals in “Review of Hydroponic Fodder Production for Beef Cattle” by *Meat and Livestock Australia* in Queensland (see ‘Files’ tab on facebook page).

* Sprouts can regain some DM weight with the uptake of minerals and effective photosynthesis however in the short growing cycle there is most commonly a DM loss ranging from 7% to 47% (p. 10)
* Lorenz (1980) states that the sprouting of grains causes increased enzyme activity, a loss of total DM, an increase in total protein, a change in amino acid composition, a decrease in starch, increases in sugars, a slight increase in crude fat and crude fibre, and slightly higher amounts of certain vitamins and minerals (p. 18).
* The trace minerals present in barley grass will reflect those that were originally present in the barley grain and would be present in slightly higher proportions because of starch losses (Cuddeford 1989) (p. 18).
* Chung et al. (1989) found an initial depression in protein content by the second day of sprouting, followed by a return to pre-germination protein levels with the same trend observed in the ash (minerals) content (p 20).
* Phytic acid occurs primarily in the seed coats and germ of plant seeds. It forms insoluble or nearly insoluble compounds with minerals including Ca, Fe, Mg and Zn. Diets high in phytic acid and poor in these minerals produces mineral deficiency symptoms in experimental animals (Gontzea and Sutzescu 1958 as cited in Chavan and Kadam 1989). The sprouting of cereals has been reported to decrease the levels of phytic acid (p 21).