



Zinc Options from BEC

New Zealand farmers don't need to be reminded about the seriousness of Facial Eczema.

Prevention of facial eczema provides challenges during the summer and autumn months for mainly north island farmers. Each year is different, from the early onset of high summer conditions (warm & dry) any significant rain can trigger ideal conditions for the facial eczema cause agent (*Pithomyces chartarum*) to thrive. That, with overnight temperatures of over 13°, ensure the fungal survival and exposure to your grazing livestock.

The 15/16 Summer/Autumn was a particularly bad season for Facial Eczema, coupled with a shortage of Zinc products, made for a bad season with poor animal health and performance outcomes.

The 16/17 Summer was mostly cold and wet, so not ideal for the facial eczema causative agent to thrive.

Summer 17/18 – hottest and driest on record (December '17), mixed with tropical storms make for ideal conditions for the fungal agent to thrive.

It is unclear what each season will bring but it's best to plan for the worst and hope for the best. Talk with the technical sales team at BEC Feed Solutions for your options. Risk periods are generally January to May each year.

ABOUT FACIAL ECZEMA

Facial Eczema is a result of liver damage caused by the mycotoxin sporidesmin. Sporidesmin is produced by the fungus *Pithomyces chartarum* which grows in the base of decaying pasture. When ingested, the toxin damages the liver and bile ducts which can then lead to photosensitisation. An early key sign of clinical presence of facial eczema is a significant reduction in milk production, on a cow by cow basis. Losses are much greater than they appear. Facial eczema, when no symptoms are visible, can reduce lifetime production by up to 25%¹.

Pastures are monitored across the country by vet practices but even low level exposure over a long period is cause for concern before spore counts get to hazard levels. Early prevention techniques are best and extended until the conditions improve (normally into late Autumn (as late as May)).

USING ZINC AS A PREVENTATIVE

Zinc is a well-known preventative measure against liver damage. Zinc works because the zinc reacts with sporidesmin, the toxin causing facial eczema, making the sporidesmin 'unavailable' to cause the liver cell damage and bile duct blockage that leads to Facial eczema².

In New Zealand the ACVM Act requires any zinc product sold for facial eczema to be registered with MPI. This helps to guarantee the effectiveness and suitability to preventing facial eczema.

Start zinc preventative treatment before the rise of the fungal toxins begin.

Start early – at least two to three weeks before the spore growth danger period³.

Zinc sulphate dosed through the drinking water is a useful method of prevention but beware that palatability can be an issue and ALL drinking water must be treated (stock should not be allowed access to untreated water during FE danger periods). Zinc sulphate dose rates need to be monitored closely and water treatment is daily or at least multiple times per week.

Zinc boluses are labour intensive but useful for extensive grazing situations such as dairy heifers.

Zinc oxide or Zinc Mineral Blends suit many dairy operations with the ability to dose into mixer wagons or in-shed feeding systems. Zinc Oxide alone is unpalatable at full dose rates and doesn't flow well through mineral dispensing systems as it is a very fine powder.

If adding zinc into feed is an option, consider MAINSTAY™ + ZINC

¹Facing up to Facial Eczema Version 2 - Beef + Lamb New Zealand | ²Facing up to Facial Eczema Version 2 - Beef + Lamb New Zealand
³Facial Eczema Fact Sheet Dairy New Zealand <https://www.dairynz.co.nz/animal/cow-health/facial-eczema/>



MAINSTAY™ + Zinc

MainStay™ + Zinc is a convenient, free flowing, premixed Zinc, Magnesium and Calcium Supplement for the prevention of facial eczema.

Mainstay™ + Zinc contains a quality sweetener and flavour to enhance palatability and minimise refusal issues due to the zinc inclusion.

Each dose, when used as per label recommendations, contains the ACVM registered Global Supa Zinc A6944 at the required dose for facial eczema prevention.

Magnesium is included, from the popular Bolifor® Mag33, but at a reduced rate equivalent to the summer magnesium needs of your livestock. As well as calcium at suitable levels for late lactation.

DOSE

Talk to your BEC Representative to calculate dose rates based on the liveweights of your cows. 120g/cow/day is suitable for a 500kg cow.

Dose through in-shed dosing units or mix in with a feed blend wagon to deliver to your stock.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS 100G MAINSTAY™ + ZINC

Zinc Oxide (as Global Supa Zinc 100% Zinc Oxide A6944)	11g (8.8g elemental zinc)
Magnesium	6.4g
Calcium	22g
Plus Flavour & Sweetener for enhanced palatability	

PACK SIZE: 25KG BAG

ALSO AVAILABLE
Zinc Oxide
for mill nutritional
use 72% & 80%
(POA)

