



# African Lovegrass supplementation strategies

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## Feed quality of Lovegrass from Autumn to Early Spring

<b>Metabolisable Energy (MJ/Kg DM)</b>	<b>4.8</b>
Crude Protein	Less than 2%
Neutral Detergent fibre	90%
Digestibility	Less than 39%

## Pasture quality on a 30 day rotation

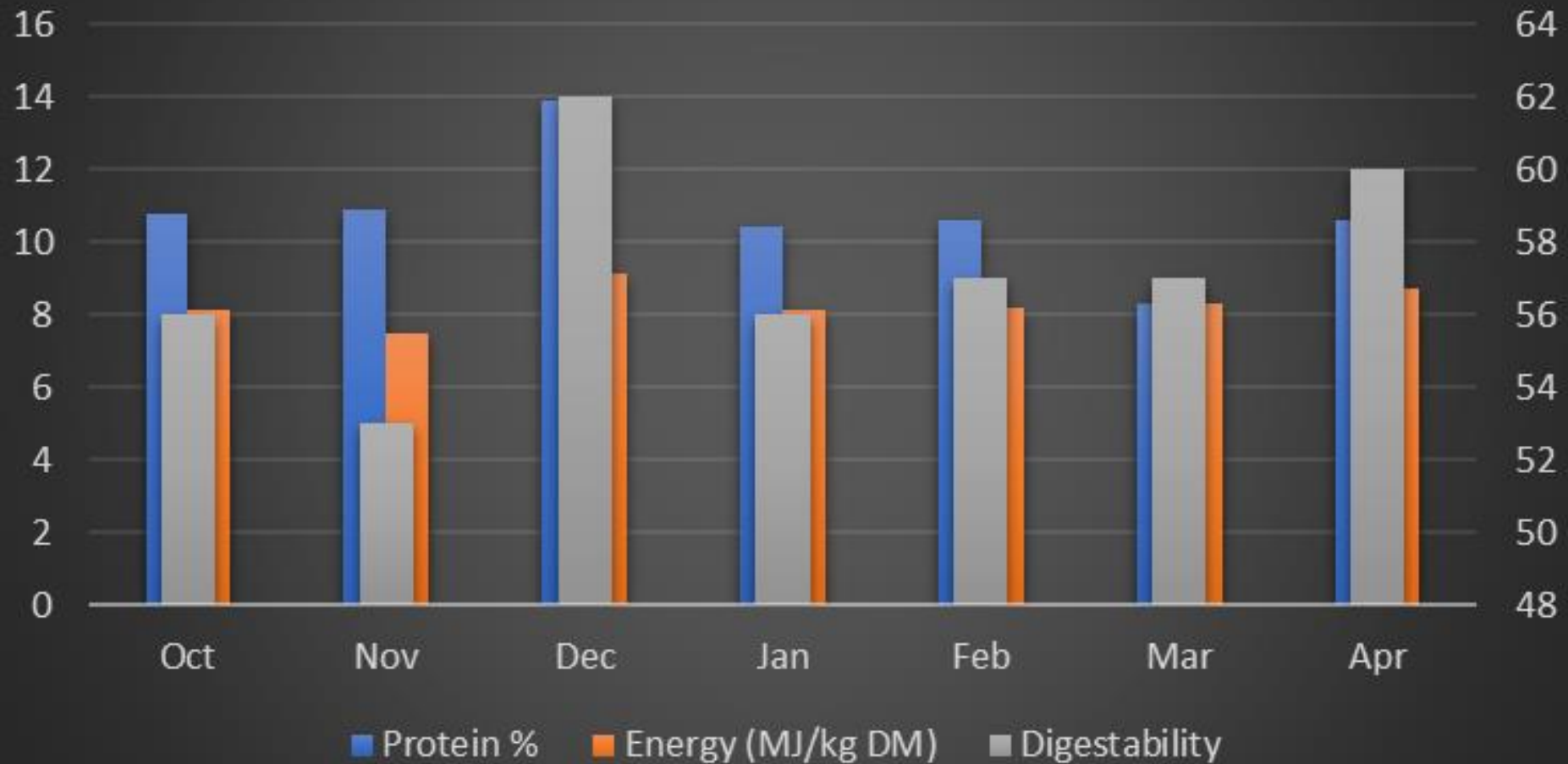


Table 1: Minimum energy and protein requirements  
(50kg/DSE)

Production State	Metabolisable Energy (MJ/kg DM)	Crude Protein (%)
Survival	8	7
Late Pregnancy/ Lactating	12+	12+
Growth	10+	12+
Finishing	11-12	12-15

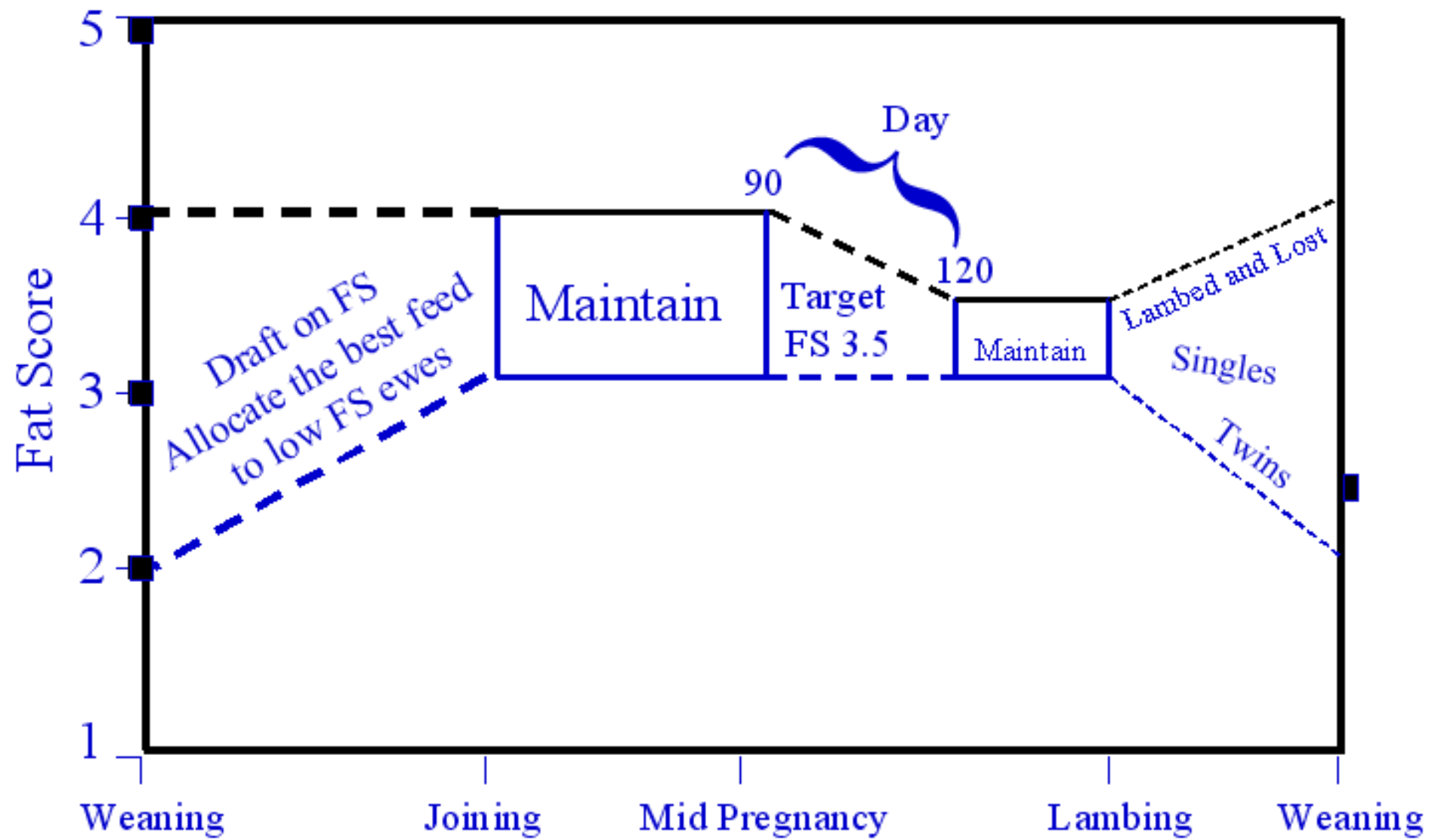






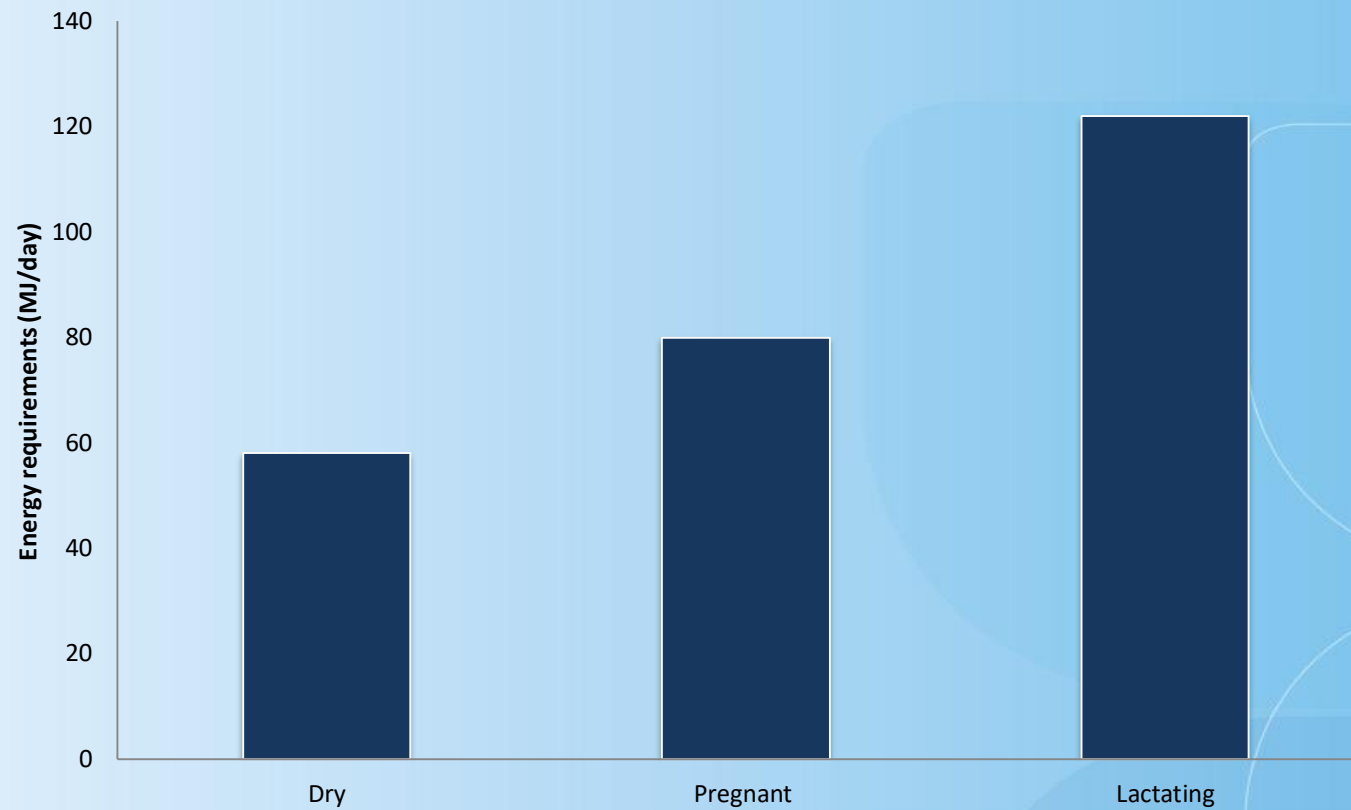






# Nutrition

Energy requirements of a breeding cow





A wide, open paddock with sheep grazing under a cloudy sky. The foreground is filled with dry, yellowish-green grass. In the middle ground, several sheep are scattered across the field. The background features a line of trees and a hillside under a bright blue sky with large, white, fluffy clouds.

Be mindful of total volume in the paddock. When depleted look at substitution options

## Management approaches should include:

- ensuring there are no 'free loaders', for example cows that are empty or not going to produce a calf on time. These are simply going to eat feed that could be available for cows that are pregnant. Identify by early pregnancy testing and cull empty or late cows
- mouth cows/ewes and cull those with unsound teeth as part of an annual routine. They will struggle to rear a good calf/lamb

## Supplementation not substitution



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Protein supplementation when grazing dry feed has shown to increase appetite/intake by as much as 30%, leading to improved feed efficiencies and growth/productivity.

Cereal and Legume hays - more of a substitution

Cereal grains - produce lactic acid in the rumen,  
which slows down the digestion and consumption of  
fibrous mature Lovegrass in cattle.



## Cattle Supplementation Considerations

- Proprietary blocks and dry licks - Licks and blocks may be a suitable option in the early stages of pasture quality decline.
- Protein meals and seeds - allow cattle to utilise protein over a longer period of time in comparison to non-protein nitrogen. This allows for twice weekly feeding to be effectively used

Cotton seed is one option for supplementing cattle on mature Lovegrass. It has high energy and protein levels, however it has high oil levels and when fed in excess may cause digestive issues. Intake should be limited to a maximum of 1% bodyweight per day (breeders: 4 kg, weaners: 2 kg).

## Sheep Supplementation Considerations

Protein rich supplements such as pulses are most commonly used for supplementing sheep (lupins, beans, peas etc).

Can be trail fed with minimal wastage

Avoid acidosis - introduced slowly

## Vitamins and Minerals

Of the 'macro minerals' Ca, Na, P and Mg are most important.

Mineral supplementation is recommended when grazing African Lovegrass dominant pastures and/or supplementing with energy or protein rich feeds.

In terms of Vitamin requirements, deficiencies are rare except during drought and/or long-term grain feeding.

Examples of loose lick mixes include the following:

- 2/2/1 Lime/Salt/Causmag (Ca/Na/Mg)
- 2/2/1/1 Lime/Salt/Causmag/Gypsum (Ca/Na/Mg and S)
- 1/1 Dolomite/Salt (Ca/Mg/Na)
- 1/1 Acid Buf/Salt (Ca/Mg/Na plus buffers against acidosis)
- 2/1/1 Acid Buf/Salt/Gypsum (Ca/Mg/Na and S plus buffers against acidosis)

With a short green pick, protein is not as limiting as energy and fibre. A quality hay (if available) as fibre bulk and a grain (or concentrate) as an energy source are needed. If only poorer quality hay is available, then the proportion of grain should be increased.





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