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## PROVIDING NUTRITIONAL CONSULTANCY AS A LARGE ANIMAL VETERINARIAN

Recent years have seen a change in the relationship between large animal veterinarians and their farming clients, with a move away from traditional responsive ambulatory work towards the provision of proactive consultancy type services. This has been driven in part by a desire for additional engagement with clients from within the veterinary profession, but also by the reduced opportunity for revenue generation by medicine sales and the increased competition from paraprofessionals in what have traditionally been regarded as areas of veterinary expertise. Whilst much veterinary consultancy has focussed on the control of production and endemic disease; an opportunity exists for large animal veterinarians to provide nutritional consultancy to livestock keepers.

These services can vary from monitoring and troubleshooting on farm to the provision of a full rationing and feed costings service. Whilst veterinarians may believe this lies out with their specific area of expertise, there is within Europe no formalised pathway to become a ruminant nutritionist, and veterinarians training and experience provides an ideal platform from which to move into this field. Nutritional consultancy can be provided either within or out with the veterinary practice model, and the potential pitfalls of either route should be considered by those wishing to provide nutritional services.

The successful provision of nutritional consultancy provides the most significant opportunity to positively influence the health and welfare of the animals under the veterinarians care; and the profitability of the animal owners business.