



# Ruminant Nutrition Notes

Extension Animal Husbandry

North Carolina State University

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## Common Alternative Feeds in North Carolina

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Use of alternative feeds has great potential to reduce feed costs for beef producers. An alternative feed is a low cost option that replaces commercial feeds or a common standard feed (corn + soybean meal). Following are descriptions of common alternatives found in North Carolina and their current prices on November 2, 2001.

**Whole Cottonseed** Whole cottonseed is a good source of protein and energy for both growing calves and brood cows. They are 97% TDN and 22% protein. Limit it to .5% of body weight for mature cows (5-6 lbs/day) and to .33% of body weight for growing calves (2-3 lbs/day). It can be fed off sod, on hay or in a bunk. Current price is quoted at \$80/ton FOB gins.

**Soybean Hulls** Soybean hulls are a byproduct of meal and oil production, and they are available either loose (local sources) or pelleted (imported from other states). They contain 80% TDN and 14% protein. They have proven to be as good as corn and soybean meal for supplementing hay or pasture for growing calves. Currently quoted at \$80/ton.

**Wheat Middlings** Byproduct of flour production. Contain 80% TDN and 18% protein. They are available either pelleted or loose and have been comparable to corn and soybean meal for supplementing growing cattle fed hay or pasture. Currently quoted at \$80/ton.

### **Corn Gluten Feed**

**Byproduct of corn syrup production. Produced at Winston Salem among many other locations. Contains 82% TDN and 22% protein. Results with the dried product have been disappointing. Gains were not comparable to standard supplements greatly reducing their value. Currently quoted at \$80/ton delivered**

### **Recycled Poultry Bedding (RPB)**

**Formerly known as Alitter®. Most useful as a hay replacer for cows or as a protein/mineral supplement for calves. Contains 25% protein and 50% TDN. Must be processed by deep stacking to allow heating. The best feed deal around and most successful backgrounding operations feed some. Many producers in Virginia, Alabama and Georgia feed brood cows RPB during the winter. Currently available for \$15 to 25/ton (20-30% of value). If we want to make money in the brood cow business we ought to feed RPB instead of hay.**