Forage Testing Program:
Arm & Hammer Animal Nutrition Announces Third Annual Forage Testing Program

Arm & Hammer Animal Nutrition and three partnering forage testing laboratories -- Cumberland Valley Analytical Services, Inc.; Dairyland Laboratories, Inc.; and Rock River Laboratory, Inc. -- announce the third annual Arm & Hammer Forage Testing Program. The program will provide complimentary or discounted Dietary Cation-Anion Difference (DCAD) forage testing to dairy nutritionists and producers.

The Arm & Hammer Forage Testing Program runs from May 15 through September 30, 2009, and is valid on the first 750 coupons submitted per lab partner. The labs will conduct wet chemistry analysis to measure and report levels of the macrominerals potassium, sodium, chloride and sulfur, the four components of the DCAD equation.

"In times of tight margins like we're experiencing today, dairy producers must optimize feed utilization," says Arm & Hammer Animal Nutrition senior business manager Mike Cain. "A properly balanced ration DCAD ensures each cow is receiving the nutrients needed for optimal production, health and reproductive performance without overfeeding. We encourage nutritionists and producers to test forages to know exact ration DCAD levels."

To participate in the program, dairy nutritionists and producers may visit www.AHDairy.com and complete an online order form. In return, participants will automatically receive forage testing coupons, which can be printed and submitted with forage samples to the partnering lab of their choice. Producers can submit up to three samples each for their dairy operation, and one coupon must accompany each forage sample. Additional program details can be found online at www.AHDairy.com/ForageTestingProgram2009.

Understanding and balancing ration DCAD levels is important to the health and productivity of dairy cows. The DCAD equation measures the difference between positive cations, potassium and sodium, and negative anions, chloride and sulfur.

• During the close-up period, negative DCAD levels of -8 to -12 meq/100g ration dry matter help cows maintain dry matter intake (DMI), avoid metabolic disorders and optimize peak milk production.
• Postcalving and throughout lactation, DCAD levels should be +35 to +45 meq/100g ration dry matter to help increase milk production and component yields, improve DMI and help offset the negative effects of heat stress.

"Forage quality is an issue dairy producers and nutritionists deal with every year, and it's impossible to determine an accurate ration DCAD without a proper forage analysis," Cain says. "That's why we feel it is important for Arm & Hammer Animal Nutrition to take a leadership role and provide this service to dairy nutritionists and producers."