QLF for finishing diets:

Finishing beef cattle profitably is driven by creating optimum conditions in the rumen environment this in turn maximises dry matter intakes allowing a positive FCE (Food Conversion Efficiency) to deliver well finished cattle. Finishing rations contain less forage and more supplements which can lead to increased rumen acidity. When formulating finishing rations care should be taken to always supply adequate levels of structural fibre, generally in the form of straw, fed at between 0.5 – 1.5 kgs per day. Although animal protein requirements should be met by microbial protein a small amount of RDP is needed for the rumen microbes. Many diets are formulated to around 12-13% crude protein in the total diet. However, rumen microbes require a balance of fermentable energy and rumen degradable protein of around 10-11 ERDP : 1 FME. With high starch diets this value can easily be overlooked leaving rumen microbes requirements 'unbalanced'. At very high energy densities, intakes will be compromised as rumen acid loads can be too high. When finishing rations are formulated, two areas should be targeted;

1) Diet parameters for energy, protein, starch, etc
2) Optimising rumen health through the correct balance of nutrients and adequate structural fibre.

Ration Guidelines:

Finishing Cattle:	***Growing Cattle:***
DMI = 2% of bodyweight	DMI = 2.4% of bodyweight.
>1.4 kgs DLWG	0.7 – 1.1 kgs DLWG
30-60% DM	30-60% DM
12-15% CP	15-16% CP
>12.2 Mj/kg DM ME	10.5 – 11.4 Mj/kg DM ME
>25% NDF	40% NDF
6-8% long fibre	6-8% long fibre
<6% fat	3% fat
>33% starch and sugar	<20% starch and sugar
0.6% Calcium	0.8% Calcium

Prior to the growing of maize silage on a large scale, cereals were included as the major energy source in finishing beef diets. To achieve adequate starch and sugar levels of >33%, 5-6 kgs plus of cereals would be fed alongside forages. However, maize silage has become more prevalent on many beef finishing units and where it isn't, should always be considered. Maize silage should contain 25-30% starch and when fed ad-lib will require very little further supplementation in the form of starch. Feeding 1-2 kgs of QLF Steakmaker will increase fermentable energy and in particular sugar to optimum levels, rumen function and intakes will be maximised. Where maize silage and cereals are used 14-15% CP is required so that the higher starch level can be fully utilised.