

Extended Lactation Farm Systems Project – NARF (Dargaville)

This project compares the impact on productivity, profitability, people and the environment on three farms:

1. **Baseline Farm** – Spring calving, twice-a-day milking, 3.0 cows/ha
2. **Extended Lactation TAD Farm** – 50% herd calving each year, full season twice-a-day milking, 3.0 cows/ha
3. **Extended Lactation OAD Farm** – 50% herd calving each year, full season once-a-day milking, 3.0 cows/ha

This project is funded by DairyNZ, MPI – PSGF & NDDT

Update 12 th October 2026	Baseline Farm	EL TAD Farm	EL OAD Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2,226	2,323	2,317
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/d, last 2 weeks)*	76	78	72
Rotation Length last 10 days (days)	26	27	26
Cows into vat/Total Cows	77/79	80/80	80/80
Average Body Condition Score (EL = Extended Lactation, NC = New Calvers)	3.97 NC Cows	4.83 EL Cows 4.02 NC Cows	5.15 EL Cows 4.22 NC Cows
SCC last 10 days ('000)	105	119	135
Litres/cow/day (average of farm)	21.5	16.5	13.2
Kg MS/cow/day	1.94	1.64	1.35
Kg MS/ha/day	5.51	4.82	3.98
Kg MS/cow, season to date	137	164	129
Kg MS/ha, season to date	399	472	374
Supplement offered (kgDM/c/d)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Purch Supp Fed, season to date (kg DM/c)	PKE 280 Baleage 61	PKE 362 Baleage 128	PKE 343 Baleage 125
Managers Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	2	2	2
Rainfall (last two weeks)	6.5 mm		

*Pasture growth rates are calculated using platometer readings in conjunction with Halter estimates

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- We had harvested another cut of silage on all farms, but limited rainfall and lower growth meant the last closed paddocks have been put back into the grazing round. We currently have no surplus paddocks.
- BCS and milk production have dropped slightly so we will use PKE strategically to top up intakes where residuals indicate the need
- Mating is going well with 61% cows submitted in 14 days. We are using only wearables for heat detection, and checking the drafting gate each day.
- With rain falling today we will continue Sustain behind the cows at 60kg/ha.