

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.

Update 20 th August 2026	Baseline Farm	EL TAD Farm	EL OAD Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2,256	2,258	2,281
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/d, last 2 weeks)*	36	36	38
Current Rotation Length (days)	48	49	47
Cows in milk/Total Cows	67/81	68/82	65/82
Average Body Condition Score (EL = Extended Lactation, NC = New Calvers)	4.6 Milkers	4.6 EL Milkers 4.4 NC Milkers	4.6 EL Milkers 4.5 NC Milkers
SCC ('000)	137	150	139
Litres/cow/day (average of farm)	20.5	18.2	12.7
Kg MS/cow/day	1.89	1.94	1.38
Kg MS/cow, season to date	31	71	58
Kg MS/ha, season to date	91	209	171
Supplement offered (kgDM/c/d)	Milkers 4.0 PKE Milkers 1.9 bale Dries 0-3.8 PKE Dries 0-3.9 bale	Milkers 4.0 PKE Milkers 1.9 bale Dries 0-2.3 PKE Dries 0-3.6 bale	Milkers 4.2 PKE Milkers 2.0 bale Dries 0-2.0 PKE Dries 0-3.3 bale
Purch Supp Fed, season to date (kg DM/c)	PKE 224 Baleage 54	PKE 296 Baleage 114	PKE 290 Baleage 117
Managers Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	3	5	6
Rainfall (last two weeks)	34 mm		

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

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Continuing cold dry weather is keeping pasture growth down but utilisation higher than normal for August. It has been easier this year to hold rotation length slow and maintain pasture covers.
- Calving is 85% finished, with few problems in the beautiful weather. Cows are milking better than expected reflecting the good sunshine hours and high quality pasture
- Some of the Extended Lactation cows have elevated SCC despite no pathogens present after culturing milk samples. This milk is currently going to calves and we will review whether these cows stay on the farm after our herd test in two weeks.
- Calved cows will be metrichecked and treated as needed.
- Nitrogen continues behind the cows at 80 kg/ha urea.
- Our Fulkerson Kikuyu paddock has just received it's second grazing, and we expect the Poa to die off and kikuyu plants to increase in size as the spring progresses.