

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 24 th July 2026	Baseline Farm	EL TAD Farm	EL OAD Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2,345	2,170	2,117
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/d, last 2 weeks)*	22	28	27
Current Rotation Length (days)	100+	59	61
Cows in milk/Total Cows	39/81	57/82	55/82
Average Body Condition Score (EL = Extended Lactation, NC = New Calvers)	5.2 Dries 4.8 Milkers	4.3 EL Milkers 4.6 NC Milkers	4.5 EL Milkers 4.7 NC Milkers
SCC ('000)	176	176	218
Litres/cow/day	14.7	11.6	10.5
Kg MS/cow/day	1.69	1.34	1.26
Kg MS/cow, season to date	1	35	31
Kg MS/ha, season to date	2	103	91
Supplement offered (kgDM/c/d)	Dries 3.8 PKE Dries 3.8 bale Milkers 2.4 PKE	Milkers 4.6 PKE Milkers 2.6 bale Dries 2.6 PKE Dries 1.3 bale	Milkers 4.7 PKE Milkers 2.7 bale Dries 2.4 PKE Dries 1.3 bale
Purch Supp Fed, season to date (kg DM/c)	PKE 168 Baleage 36	PKE 188 Baleage 72	PKE 187 Baleage 69
Managers Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	4	6	6
Rainfall (last two weeks)	13 mm		

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

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Pasture growth rates have continued to remain low relative to previous years. However, drier soil conditions have improved pasture utilisation and assisted in holding rotation lengths resulting in a slight increase in pasture covers.
- Cows calving are in great condition. The extended lactation cows that are not calving this year have started lifting body condition, especially the once-a-day herd.
- The Baseline Farm has good pasture covers, supplement inputs will drop to a minimum to just get extra magnesium into the cows.
- Nitrogen continues behind the cows at 80 kg/ha urea.