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 29th October 2026	Baseline Farm	EL TAD Farm	EL OAD Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2,359	2,402	2,328
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/d, last 2 weeks)*	77	70	64
Rotation Length last 10 days (days)	24	24	24
Cows into vat/Total Cows	76/79	80/80	78/80
Average Body Condition Score (EL = Extended Lactation, NC = New Calvers)	 4.1 NC Cows	4.78 EL Cows 4.12 NC Cows	5.24 EL Cows 4.28 NC Cows
SCC last 5 days ('000)	106	131	156
Litres/cow/day (5d herd average)	22.5	17.1	13.2
Kg MS/cow/day (5d herd average)	2.08	1.75	1.42
Kg MS/ha/day	5.51	5.10	3.98
Kg MS/cow, season to date	165	189	148
Kg MS/ha, season to date	488	559	436
Supplement offered (kgDM/c/d)	0-2 PKE	0-2 PKE	0-2 PKE
Purch Supp Fed, season to date (kg DM/c)	PKE 300 Baleage 61	PKE 382 Baleage 128	PKE 362 Baleage 125
Silage on Hand (kgDM/cow)	127	106	147
Managers Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	3	3	3
Rainfall (last two weeks)	10.5 mm		

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

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Low rainfall and cool winds slowed pasture growth and we had to put closed silage paddocks back into the grazing round. We currently have no surplus paddocks and PKE is being fed strategically where residuals indicate under feeding.
- Milk production and BCS have lifted slightly indicating full feeding now.
- Mating is going well with 3-week submission rates of: 85% of Baseline Cows, 97% of EL TAD cows, and 100% of EL OAD cows. We are using only wearables for heat detection and checking the drafting gate each day. The handful of Baseline non-cyclers will be milked OAD for two weeks to try and induce cycling. This has worked well in the past.
- With rain expected early next week we will continue Sustain behind the cows at 60kg/ha.