

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 6 th August 2026	Baseline Farm	EL TAD Farm	EL OAD Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2,236	2,216	2,153
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/d, last 2 weeks)*	28	27	28
Current Rotation Length (days)	41	46	48
Cows in milk/Total Cows	51/81	63/82	58/82
Average Body Condition Score (EL = Extended Lactation, NC = New Calvers)	4.7 Milkers	4.3 EL Milkers 4.7 NC Milkers	4.5 EL Milkers 4.6 NC Milkers
SCC ('000)	125	171	200
Litres/cow/day (average of farm)	20.1	14.6	12.2
Kg MS/cow/day	1.96	1.62	1.35
Kg MS/cow, season to date	15	52	45
Kg MS/ha, season to date	44	155	133
Supplement offered (kgDM/c/d)	Milkers 0 Dries 2.6 PKE	Milkers 4.4 PKE Milkers 2.1 bale Dries 2.6 PKE Dries 1.9 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 186 Baleage 41	PKE 237 Baleage 99	PKE 231 Baleage 102
Managers Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	3	5	6
Rainfall (last two weeks)	30 mm		

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

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Cool weather is keeping a cap on pasture growth. Pasture utilisation has been good for this time of year which is helping hold pasture covers steady.
- The new rubber matting in our herd home allowing us to hold the dry cows on the feed pad for periods to prioritise pasture to the milking cows.
- Some of the Extended Lactation cows have dropped milk production in recent weeks, especially on the once-a-day farm. We will have a close look at these cows after the next herd test in two weeks' time.
- Nitrogen continues behind the cows at 80 kg/ha urea.