

Future Dairy Farm Systems Project – NARF (Dargaville)

This project is funded by DairyNZ, MPI (Sustainable Food & Fibre Futures) and Hine Rangī Trust.

The NARF farm has been significantly affected with flood damage from cyclone Gabrielle. Below is commentary on current management including steps taken to get the farmlet study up and running.

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- All cows will remain in one herd until 1st May, when they will be returned to their respective farmlets in preparation for the trial resuming on 1st June.
- Dry cool weather in the last fortnight has slowed growth further and pasture covers have dropped to 1800-2000kgDM/ha.
- All culls have now gone and low producers have been dried off. Supplement feeding at 3kg PKE and 2-4kgDM silage per cow per day has helped maintain production at 1.0kgMS/c/d and lift BCS further to 4.25.
- Early sown new pastures are looking good, they got plenty of rain in March. Later sown pastures have struggled to establish with lack of moisture in April, particularly the fescue and cocksfoot pastures. The Alt Pastures herd will consequently dry off on 1st May and go to off-farm grazing for 10-15 days to allow the farm to build cover.
- The Current Farm and Low Emissions herd will be dried off according to individual cow BCS and calving dates from early May.
- Full results for the season will be presented at the field day on 7th June.

For photos and further commentary of the NARF farm see our facebook page – search NDDT.