

Supplement Use in a Variable Climate Project – NARF (Dargaville)

This project compares three farms with different supplement use on production, profit and environmental impact. Each farm is 28 ha. The three farm systems are:

1. **Pasture Only Farm** - No imported supplement - 2.7 cows/ha
2. **PKE Only Farm** – PKE used to fill feed gaps within milk FEI limits – 3.1 cows/ha
3. **PKE Plus Farm** - PKE used until milk FEI limit and then other supplements added – 3.1 cows/ha

This project is funded by DairyNZ, MPI (Sustainable Farming Fund) and Hine Rangi Trust.

25 th February 2021	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2054	2114	2020
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/d, last 2 weeks)	34		
Rotation Length (days)	31	34	32
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	0.94	1.17	1.41
Cows in Milk/Peak Cows	76/78	88/88	86/88
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	2.56	3.68	4.43
Production - Season to date (kg MS/ha)	825	1042	1129
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	2.2 Silage	3.6 PKE 1.9 Silage	3.7 PKE 1.6 DDG 1.9 Silage
Supplement Fed - Season to date (kg DM/cow)	311 Silage	511 PKE 154 Silage	511 PKE 243 DDG/SH 154 Silage
Average Body Condition Score	4.0	4.0	4.0
Proportion cows under BCS 4.0	21%	18%	19%
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	4	5	4
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	174	172	168
Milk FEI	A	B	B
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	43 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- A small lift in pasture growth with a couple of wet days last week.
- Residuals are still reasonably low so we are feeding as much supplement as we can. Body condition score has held stable so we will hold off culling cows yet.
- Some fescue paddocks have stalky clumps so we will top these paddocks to improve quality
- The Pasture Only and PKE Only cows continue on once-a-day milking (OAD). PKE Plus cows will continue on twice-a-day milking with heifers and light cows on OAD
- PKE supplemented farms continue feeding as much PKE as milk FEI will allow. Baleage continues to be fed on all farms and DDG feeding continues on the PKE Plus farm
- We are spraying out 11% of each farm next week to set up for the new trial. We would not have sprayed out any paddocks normally so to compensate for this we will source baleage for each farm to make up for lost pasture.

For more information including past updates and field day handouts, go to www.nddt.nz

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