

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

This project compares three farms with different supplement use on production, profit and environmental impact. 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

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27 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Farm Area (ha)	28	28	28
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2240	2131	2198
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	43		
Rotation Length (days)	39	40	40
Cows in milk/total cows	69/78	79/89	80/88
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	1.37	1.91	1.91
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	3.22	4.88	5.01
Production - Season to date (kg MS)	110	141	160
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	1.9 silage	3.4 PKE	2.5 PKE 2.3 DDG
Supplement Fed - Season to date (kg DM/cow)	122 Silage	164 PKE	126 PKE 15 DDG
Average Body Condition Score	Milkers 4.0	Milkers 4.1	Milkers 4.3
Proportion cows under BCS 4.0	18%	18%	6%
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	6	7	5
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	72	67	65
Milk FEI	A	B	C
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	98 mm		

### **CURRENT MANAGEMENT**

- Pre-graze covers have dropped over the last fortnight on the two supplemented farms resulting in grazing residuals being slightly lower than what we would like
- Allocation of pasture to milkers on all farms will move to 110 m<sup>2</sup>/cow. This will move us to a 30 day rotation on the supplemented farms and 34 days on the Pasture Only farm. This is slightly ahead of the spring rotation plan, however pastures are in a good state and we are confident pasture growth rates will support this faster rotation
- The Pasture Only herd remains on once-a-day milking and as a result has shown some improvement in body condition score. This will be reviewed in a fortnight. We have 30 days silage left at the present feeding rate
- PKE supplementation on the two supplemented farms had to be dialled back due to hitting the red on the milk FEI graphs. With greater pasture allocation we will try to increase PKE feeding over the next few days.
- The PKE Plus herd has been receiving DDG over the last fortnight. This will be replaced with soya hull, being a lower protein and lower cost supplement
- Sustain at 90kg/ha and Progibb continue to be used to maximise pasture growth

*For more information including past updates and field day handouts, go to [www.nddt.nz](http://www.nddt.nz)*

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