

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.

27 th January 2021	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2016	1895	1874
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/d, last 2 weeks)	21		
Rotation Length (days)	35	35	35
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	1.04	1.32	1.52
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	2.87	4.11	4.67
Production - Season to date (kg MS/ha)	747	935	999
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	1.7 Silage	3.1 PKE 3.0 Silage	3.1 PKE 1.6 DDG 3.0 Silage
Supplement Fed - Season to date (kg DM/cow)	234 Silage	433 PKE 70 Silage	421 PKE 200 DDG/SH 66 Silage
Average Body Condition Score	4.0	3.9	4.0
Proportion cows under BCS 4.0	17%	24%	21%
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	3	6	4
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	174	172	168
Milk FEI	A	B	A/B
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	21 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Dry weather continues with just a few showers to perk the kikuyu up. Rotation length has been stretched out to 35 days to protect pastures
- The Pasture Only cows continue on once-a-day milking (OAD). With no sign of rain on the horizon and falling cow condition, PKE Only cows will go on to OAD milking. PKE Plus cows will continue on twice-a-day milking
- Pasture Only and PKE Only cows have around 35 days of silage available at the current feeding rates. If pasture supply continues to drop then feed demand will need to be reduced. After pregnancy testing early Feb empty cows on these farms are likely to be sent away if we have not had rain by then
- PKE supplemented farms will continue feeding as much PKE as milk FEI will allow. DDG will continue on the PKE Plus farm
- Cricket bait will be applied next week. Zinc supplementation will commence despite facial eczema counts being low at present

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

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