

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 Rangī Trust.

5 th May 2021	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	1889	1922	1993
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/d, last 2 weeks)	34		
Rotation Length (days)	41	36	40
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	-	0.67	0.61
Cows in Milk/Peak Cows	62/78	77/88	86/88
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	-	2.10	2.69
Production - Season to date (kg MS/ha)	936	1250	1380
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	1.6 Silage	2.9 PKE 1.3 Silage	2.6 PKE 5.0 Silage
Supplement Fed - Season to date (kg DM/cow)	383 Home Grown Silage	756 PKE 276 HG Silage	768 PKE 288 DDG/SH 384 Silage
Average Body Condition Score	4.3	4.3	4.2
Proportion cows under BCS 4.0	0%	3%	3%
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	4	5	4
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	174	172	168
Milk FEI	A	B/C	B/C
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	35 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Mulching of kikuyu paddocks behind the cows has been keeping a cap on average farm pasture covers. We are back grazing paddocks that were mulched a month ago and pasture quality is very good with exceptional clover presence
- Pasture Only farm cows were dried off two weeks ago and have gained 0.3 of a condition score. A few light conditioned cows on the supplemented farms have been dried off. Remaining cows will be dried off on 14th May
- Heifers have come back from grazing and are looking good. They are grazing rough feed around fringes of the farm but are getting ad-lib PKE to make sure they don't drop any condition
- **For more information including past updates and field day handouts, go to www.nddt.nz**