

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

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

5 th December 2019	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Farm Area (ha)	28	28	28
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2627	2429	2377
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	60		
Rotation Length (days)	25	30	30
Cows in milk/cows calved	69/77	88/89	88/89
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	1.52	1.64	1.55
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	3.74	5.16	4.88
Production/ha season to date (kg MS)	472	666	711
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	0	3.1 PKE	3.1 PKE
Supplement Fed 19/20 season (kg DM/cow)	162 Silage	562 PKE	552 PKE 105 Silage 23 DDG
Average Body Condition Score	4.1	4.1	4.1
3 week submission rate	90%	83%	81%
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	2	2	3
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	120	123	126
Milk FEI	A	B	B
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	21		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Pasture cover has risen on all farms due to good growth and silage paddocks back in the rotation. The Pasture Only farm has another 5ha shut which is due to be harvested for silage tomorrow.
- We are now on 30d rotation for the PKE farms, and will be on 30d on the Pasture Only farm when the silage paddocks come back in after harvest.
- Both PKE herds have lost some condition and residuals are low so we will increase PKE to 4kg/cow (3.6kgDM). We will watch FEI closely and drop PKE and/or feed silage if needed. All farms have around 50b silage available each.
- Ready to apply nitrogen as Sustain at 60kg/ha if we get rain.
- Bulls will come out of all herds on 20th Dec (12 weeks mating). Dargaville vets booked in for PD early January to date our AB cows.

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

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