

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.

9 th April 2020	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Farm Area (ha)	28	28	28
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	1715	1545	1608
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	25		
Rotation Length (days)	32	26	32
Cows in milk/cows calved	52/77	40/89	78/89
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	0.75	0.96	0.99
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	1.39	1.37	2.75
Production/ha season to date (kg MS)	791	1,102	1,212
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	Nil	M 4.5 PKE D 2.7 PKE	4.0 PKE 1.7 DDG
Supplement Fed 19/20 season (kg DM/cow)	404 Silage	865 PKE 181 Silage	907 PKE 181 DDG 263 Silage
Average Body Condition Score	4.05 (M)	4.1 (M)	4.2
Empty Rate	6%	6%	7%
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	4	3	3
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	139	140	142
Milk FEI	A	B/C	A/B
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	6 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Despite little rain strong kikuyu growth is lifting pasture covers and residuals, and showers are continuing
- All milkers and dries are being adequately fed and pregrazing covers are lifting so we have not dried any more cows off, except for a couple of high SCC cows
- Both PKE herds are being fed as much PKE as we can within FEI limits. DDG will be dropped out of the PKE Plus herd as pasture intakes rise and FEI drops
- Dry cows are following milkers on highest kikuyu residuals to help control trash when mulching
- Mulching and undersowing Italians is in full swing now. We expect regrowth to be better on mulched paddocks than unmulched
- Zinc treatment for eczema will continue until early May

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

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