

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 May 2019	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha) (1 May)	2071	1947	1908
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	30	28	25
Rotation Length (days)	55	34	32
Cows in Milk	0	63	67
Dry Cows	60	7	4
Production per cow (kgMS/cow/day)	-	1.08	1.09
Production per ha to date (kgMS/ha)	1012	1202	1279
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)		3.1 PKE	2.8 PKE
Average Body Condition Score	4.0	4.1	4.1
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	3	3	2
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	140	138	140
Milk FEI	-	A/B	A/B
Rainfall (last 2 weeks)	8 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Pasture growth rates and covers have dropped in the last fortnight due to drier weather and mulching kikuyu paddocks behind the cows
- To ensure we reach target cow condition (5+ by calving) and target pasture cover (>2400 kg DM/ha), all cows on the Pasture Only farm are now dried off and culls gone. Pasture Only farm cows are getting pasture only, though some baleage is available should it be needed
- All culls have now gone on the two PKE farms and a few light and early calving cows have been dried off. Cows with condition score below 4.0 and cows calving in the first two weeks of July will be dried off next week. The remainder of the cows will be milked for another 10 days
- Milkers on both PKE farms are getting around 3 kg DM PKE/cow/day. The dries are following behind with 4 kg PKE/cow/day. PKE Plus farm milkers will start getting baleage until they are dried off
- Mulching of kikuyu continues behind the cows with Italian ryegrass and slug bait spread ahead of the mulcher

NARF field day - Thursday 20th June 2019. Guest speakers Paul Bird and Jane Kay.

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

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