



## 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.*

<b>10<sup>th</sup> October 2018</b>	<b>Pasture Only Farm</b>	<b>PKE Only Farm</b>	<b>PKE Plus Farm</b>
Pasture Growth Rate (kg DM/ha/day)	66	61	63
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2356	2274	2344
Rotation Length (days)	21	24	25
Area out of rotation (silage)	21%	4%	0%
Production per cow (kgMS/cow/day)	1.66	1.82	1.67
Production per ha to date (kgMS/ha)	314	369	376
Cows in Milk	75	86	86
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day, milkers)	0	0	0
Supplement Fed to Date (kg DM/cow)	237 (baleage)	282 (PKE)	266 (PKE)
Average Body Condition Score	3.8	4.0	3.9
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	5	4	4
Nitrogen - Season to Date (kg N/ha)	98	98	97
Rainfall (last 2 weeks)	15		

### **CURRENT MANAGEMENT**

- The farm has dried up nicely in the last two weeks. Measures of pugging damage show that 55% of the soil surface has suffered some damage over the winter. This is better than last season but worse than the 2015 & 2016 winters.
- Pasture covers have remained steady on all farms. Around 21% of the Pasture Only farm is shut up for silage. The other farms are likely to shut up some area in the next week.
- Pasture quality is variable with some paddocks having a significant proportion of Poa annua which has gone to seed. The odd paddock will be topped behind the cows to tidy it up for the next round.
- Mating is going well with 40% – 53% of cows submitted to AI on the three farms. Between 15% – 30% of cows have been on Once a Day milking, being light conditioned cows and heifers that are not cycling. These are now starting to come back on Twice a Day milking which may lift overall production. Production on all farms is well ahead of last season.
- Nitrogen continues behind the cows in the form of Sustain.

**Book the date in – 4<sup>th</sup> December NDDT/NARF field day at Tomarata.**

**For more information including past updates and field day handouts, go to [www.nddt.nz](http://www.nddt.nz)**

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