

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.

8 th October 2019	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2394	2267	2398
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	76	73	73
Rotation Length (days)	29	30	29
Cows in Milk	71	88	88
Dry Cows	0	0	0
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	1.65	1.96	2.18
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	4.14	6.17	6.84
Production/ha season to date (kg MS)	253	366	409
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	0	3.1 PKE	3.1 PKE
Supplement Fed 19/20 season (kg DM/cow)	162 Silage	466 PKE	469 PKE 105 Silage 23 DDG
Average Body Condition Score (Milkers)	4.1	4.3	4.2
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	2	2	2
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	95	102	101
Milk FEI	A	B	B
Rainfall (last 2 weeks)			

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Pasture covers have jumped over the last 2 weeks and with a bit of warm rain we are expecting them to lift further. Pre-graze covers are generally >3,000 kg DM/ha. Residuals are starting to rise. Between 2 – 4 paddocks will be dropped out of the rotation on each farm for silage, maybe more as we get into next week.
- All farms at NARF have a pasture first approach. With residuals rising and surplus feed on all farms, PKE will be phased out over the next 4 days on both of the PKE farms. The PKE Plus herd was also receiving 1 kg DM/cow DDG, but this was stopped last week.
- The Pasture Only cows have responded well to going back on twice a day milking with production bouncing back. Pleasing to see body condition has bounced also.
- Mating started 1st October, going well with 37% submission in the first 8 days.
- **For more information including past updates and field day handouts, go to www.nddt.nz**

The Northland Dairy Development Trust thanks our sponsors:

Farm Source & Fonterra / Ballance Agri-Nutrients / Avoca Lime / GEA-FIL / Cashmanager RURAL online