

## 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

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12 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2220	2228	2284
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	52	57	47
Rotation Length (days)	39	40	41
Cows in Milk	75	85	87
Dry Cows	2	3	2
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	1.23 OAD	1.89	1.88
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	3.09	5.25	5.41
Production/ha season to date (kg MS)	152	200	224
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	3.5 Silage	3.7 PKE	4.3 PKE 3.1 Silage
Supplement Fed 19/20 season (kg DM/cow)	156 Silage	356 PKE	361 PKE & 85 Sil
Average Body Condition Score (Milkers)	3.75	4.1	4.0
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	7	5	3
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	89	86	86
Milk FEI	A	B	B
Rainfall (last 2 weeks)	56 mm		

### **CURRENT MANAGEMENT**

- Pasture cover has held but utilisation has dropped off with the wet weather. Residuals look low but it is difficult to see wasted pasture and we have been needing to take cows off paddocks around lunchtime each day.
- Cow condition has dropped further on all three farms. The PKE farms are feeding maximum amounts of PKE without grading on FEI. The PKE Plus farm is also feeding baleage this week and will feed DDG plus PKE in the next week or two. The Pasture Only farm ran out of silage today.
- The Pasture Only farmlet is also showing an upcoming drop in pregrazing covers which we cannot fill with supplements on this self-contained farm. The herd is already on OAD milking so we made the decision to destock the farm by 10%. We had 6 cows which are under BCS 3.5 so we removed these cows from the farm, and dried them off. They will not return to the farm until next season.
- Rotation length has sped up to 30 days on all farms as we are anticipating good growth in the next two weeks. This will give the Pasture Only cows around 140sq.m/c and the PKE farms 100 sq.m./c.
- The whole farm has had 100kg/ha Ammo36 in the last 2 weeks.

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

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