

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.

‘Making Up for Lost Ground’ Field Day – Wednesday 24th June 2020 – 10:30am start.

NARF - 531 State Highway 12, Dargaville. SN 18379

Presentations on:

- **Managing cow condition and pasture covers when you are behind**
- **End of year profit from the three NARF farms**
- **Alternative pasture species research**

18th June 2020	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Farm Area (ha)	28	28	28
Area in Rotation (with new grass pdks out)	25	25	26
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2011	2211	2199
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	59		
Planned Rotation Length (days)	80	80	100
Cows in milk/cows calved	0/78	0/89	0/89
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	-	-	-
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	-	-	-
Production/ha – (kg MS) 2019/20 season	833	1149	1301
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	3.9 Silage	5.1 PKE	5.1 PKE
Supplement Fed 20/21 season (kg DM/cow)	60 Silage	76 PKE	87 PKE
Average Body Condition Score	4.6	5.0	4.9
Empty Rate (2019 Mating)	6%	6%	7%
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	6	3	4
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	13	13	10
Milk FEI	-	-	-
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	13 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Pasture covers have finally lifted over the last fortnight. Ryegrass has sprung to life and it has been warm enough to keep kikuyu growing. The current rain will also help - though not too much please.
- Cow condition has lifted on all farms. The PKE Only and PKE Plus cows are near to their target of 5+ by calving. The Pasture Only cows still have some way to go.
- The Pasture Only farm will continue feeding baleage for at least the next week. Getting the round out to 80+ days is the priority, so we can maximise the grass growing grass factor. Feeding baleage will help us get there. However, eating into our limited supply and fewer bales left for late winter/early spring is a concern. This is a juggle.

- The PKE supplemented farms are in a good position. With good pre-grazing pasture covers and cow condition we will stop feeding PKE to the PKE Only herd. Pre-graze pasture covers and cow condition are a bit lower on the PKE Plus farm so those cows will get 2 kg PKE for the next week or two.
- Urea is continuing to follow all herds at 80 kg/ha. Any paddocks in the bottom half of the feed wedge that have not had nitrogen in the last 4 weeks will get another dose.

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