

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.

25th April 2019	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha) (16 Apr)	2227	2094	2079
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	55	41	42
Rotation Length (days)	29	29	31
Cows in Milk	75	75	86
Production per cow (kgMS/cow/day)	0.96	1.15	1.21
Production per ha to date (kgMS/ha)	996	1164	1234
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)		3.0 PKE	2.6 PKE 1.6 DDG
Average Body Condition Score	3.9	4.0	4.1
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	3	3	1
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	140	138	140
Milk FEI	A	A	A
Rainfall (last 2 weeks)	55 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Growth rates have risen slightly but pasture covers may drop with the mulching programme in full swing. Regrowth on mulched paddocks is top quality though.
- The Pasture Only herd has lost some weight so all cows under 4.0 BCS (21% of herd) are drying off tomorrow and the balance will milk once-a-day until 9th May, when they will all dry off and culls will go. There are 48 bales available for this herd before 1st July, and a further 50b available for spring.
- The PKE Only herd will stay on TAD milking until 9th May when the cows will start being dried off on calving date (60 days prior to calving). They will continue getting 3.0kgDM/c/d PKE.
- The PKE Plus herd will also continue on TAD until cows begin drying off on calving dates from 9th May. They will continue getting 2.6kgDM PKE and 1.6kgDM DDG until the DDG in the silo runs out in the next month.
- DCT will be given to cows with any herd test SCC over 200,000 and Teat Seal to the rest.
- Kikuyu areas are still being mulched behind the cows. Italian ryegrass and slug bait are spread ahead of the mulcher. The regrowth in these paddocks is excellent quality.
- Eczema spore levels are still around this week so zinc continues to be added to water.

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

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