

## 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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29 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Farm Area (ha)	28	28	28
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2293	2311	2296
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	34		
Rotation Length (days)	50	59	49
Cows in milk/cows calved	55/78	53/89	60/89
Production/cow/day (kg MS)	1.53	1.84	1.97
Production/ha/day (kg MS)	1.99	2.03	2.91
Production/ha season to date (kg MS)	26	24	35
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	0 silage	0 - 2.1 PKE	0 PKE
Supplement Fed 20/21 season (kg DM/cow)	90 Silage	103 PKE	107 PKE
Average Body Condition Score	Milkers 4.2	Milkers 4.5	Milkers 4.4
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	6	4	4
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	34	27	23
Milk FEI	A	A	A
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	85 mm		

### CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Average of farm pasture covers have dropped. Though pre-graze pasture covers are good now the feed wedge shows we are likely to have a shortage of grass in two weeks time. Rotation length has been a bit faster than planned due a faster than expected calving on the Pasture Only and PKE Plus farms.
- To help resolve the expected drop in pre-graze pasture covers from mid August on, all paddocks to be grazed in 3 – 6 weeks time will receive an additional dose of nitrogen. Paddocks to be grazed in 3 – 4 weeks time will also be sprayed with ProGibb asap.
- Dry cows continue to get 40 m<sup>2</sup>/cow/day and milkers 80 m<sup>2</sup>/cow/day. Relatively good pasture utilisation and high pre-graze pasture covers has meant very little supplement has been required. This will change as our pre-graze covers drop over the next fortnight.
- The Pasture Only cows are in lighter condition than the other farms. Light conditioned cows are being put on once-a-day milking. We are holding off feeding our limited supply of baleage on this farm until we really need it.
- Urea will continue behind the cows at 80 kg urea/ha.

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

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