

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.

2 nd July 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)	2454	2577	2796
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	76		
Rotation Length (days)	75	84	91
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	816	1129	1279
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	1.3 silage	1.5 PKE	1.4 PKE
Supplement Fed 20/21 season (kg DM/cow)	90 Silage	98 PKE	107 PKE
Average Body Condition Score	4.86	5.04	5.05
% herd below 5.0	28%	12%	15%
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	3	2	3
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	17	14	12
Milk FEI	-	-	-
Rainfall (mm last 2 weeks)	106 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Record pasture growth for July has boosted pasture cover on all farms to target levels or above
- The feeding of our precious silage to the Pasture Only herd looks to have paid off with a lift in cover and BCS getting closer to target. There are only 26b left now though, or 66kgDM/cow. Rationing this over the next 2-3 months will be a balancing act
- All farms are receiving N at 70kg/ha urea following the cows. We will watch the weather and may change to Ammo if it gets cold and wet.
- The new grass paddocks on clay are coming away slowly and have good plant populations now of both fescue and clovers. They are some way off grazing yet. The new grass paddock on the sand country has had it's first grazing and is looking good. There has been lots of volunteer Italian rye come up in places and we realise there must have been plenty of seed in the ground from previous years.

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

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