

## 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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| 15 <sup>th</sup> August 2019            | Pasture Only Farm | PKE Only Farm | PKE Plus Farm     |
|---|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)        | 2041              | 2154          | 2174              |
| Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)           | 36                | 40            | 43                |
| Rotation Length (days)                  | 44                | 45            | 41                |
| Cows in Milk                            | 65                | 71            | 72                |
| Dry Cows                                | 12                | 17            | 17                |
| Production per cow (kgMS/cow/day)       | 1.60              | 1.71          | 1.92              |
| Production per ha (kgMS/ha) (19/20)     | 3.2               | 3.6           | 4.6               |
| Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)          | 3.8 Baleage       | 3.2 PKE       | 2.8 PKE           |
| Supplement Fed 19/20 season (kg DM/cow) | 57 Baleage        | 243 PKE       | 296 PKE & Baleage |
| Average Body Condition Score (Dries)    | 4.05              | 4.25          | 4.36              |
| Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)        | 6                 | 4             | 2                 |
| Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)     | 48                | 50            | 46                |
| Milk FEI                                | A                 | A             | A                 |
| Rainfall (last 2 weeks)                 | 69 mm             |               |                   |

### **CURRENT MANAGEMENT**

- Increased rainfall and wetter soil has contributed to a drop in pasture covers and cow condition.
- Cow condition has dropped faster on the Pasture Only farm than the PKE farms. This along with lower pasture cover has increased the 'worry score', and we have increased the silage feeding to 1 bale per day or 3.5-4.0kgDM/c/day. We have 29 bales left so cannot feed more than 1 per day.
- PKE farms are both increasing PKE feeding to 4kgDM/c/day and we will monitor FEI levels
- Pasture allowance is also increasing to 90 sq.m. per cow on PKE farms and 90-100 sq.m per cow to help increase pasture intake without speeding up the rotation too quickly
- The Pasture Only herd has 10 light cows on OAD. This number may increase in the next two weeks if the herd drops further in condition. A couple of light cows in both PKE herds are on OAD.
- Ammo36 is being spread behind the cows at the higher rate of 120kg/ha to compensate for wetter conditions.

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

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