

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.*

30 th January 2019	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2287	2170	2186
Pasture Growth (kg DM/ha/day)	47	43	45
Rotation Length (days)	28	29	28
Production per cow (kgMS/cow/day)	1.20	1.37	1.43
Production per ha to date (kgMS/ha)	758	883	890
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	0	3.1 PKE 1.7 Silage	3.1 PKE 2.1 DDG
Supplement Fed to Date (kg DM/cow)	253 Silage	433 PKE 42 Silage	437 PKE 20 DDG 37 Silage
Average Body Condition Score	3.9	4.0	4.0
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	1	3	1
Nitrogen – Season to Date (kg N/ha)	140	138	140
Milk FEI	A	A/B	A/B
Rainfall (last 2 weeks)	4 mm		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Kikuyu has kicked into life despite the dry weather and has held up pasture cover and growth over the last fortnight. Ryegrass is wilting in the hot weather.
- The Pasture Only farm has not required silage at this stage while the two PKE farms (with a higher stocking rate) have been getting 3.1 kg DM PKE/cow/day and either silage or DDG. All three farms have silage on hand which will be fed as required to keep cows in milk.
- Milk FEI has dropped to a comfortable level around the A/B border on the two PKE farms. This drop in FEI likely a result of higher pasture supply and other supplement feeding.
- Production/cow/day has dropped on the Pasture Only farm from 1.4 to 1.2 kg MS/cow/day over the last fortnight. Production has been steady on the other farms with a small advantage to the PKE Plus farm, likely due to DDG. A few light conditioned heifers are on once a day.

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

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