

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.

5 th December 2018	Pasture Only Farm	PKE Only Farm	PKE Plus Farm
Pasture Growth Rate (kg DM/ha/day)	81	80	82
Average Pasture Cover (kg DM/ha)	2579	2592	2490
Rotation Length (days)	27	29	28
Pasture Demand (kg DM/ha/day)	54	54	55
Production per cow (kgMS/cow/day)	1.56	1.71	1.66
Production per ha to date (kgMS/ha)	547	650	656
Supplement Fed (kg DM/cow/day)	0	0	0
Supplement Fed to Date (kg DM/cow)	253 baleage	364 PKE	373 PKE & DDG
Average Body Condition Score	4.0	4.1	4.1
Worry Score (1 = Low, 10 = High)	3	3	2
Nitrogen - Season to Date (kg N/ha)	133	134	136
Rainfall (last 2 weeks)	65		

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

- Pasture has rocketed away with the recent rain. Average pasture cover has increased around 300 kg DM/ha over the last 2 weeks and with good soil moisture there is more to come.
- Supplements have stopped so all farms are on a pasture only diet again. Have not seen a drop in production yet from stopping PKE feeding, likely a reflection of increased leaf within the pasture.
- Paddocks will be dropped out for silage on all farms as residuals and pre-graze covers are starting to rise. Targeting to cut the silage in around 10 days.
- Nitrogen use will likely stop in the next week.

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

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