

# Macalister Demonstration Farm

PO Box 87, MAFFRA, VIC 3860

Ph. (03) 5145 1650 Fax (03) 5145 1650

Email: [mdf@wideband.net.au](mailto:mdf@wideband.net.au) Web: <http://mdf.mistro.ag/>

## NEWSLETTER 4

Monday, June 16, 2008



The Macalister Demonstration Farm is a community resource, managed to make a profit. This newsletter shows how it is travelling towards that goal, and hopes to contribute to the discussion, by illustrating with detailed feeding analysis and performance graphs. You can visit the farm if you like. Book in for the one hour farm walk, Monday mornings, 11am; ring Frank Tyndall 0409 940 782. Your contributions and comments are welcome. Visit the website at <http://mdf.mistro.ag/>



Extension projects at the MDF are funded by Dairy Australia and the Gardiner Foundation with support from GippsDairy. You can help inform GippsDairy's priorities at a dinner meeting 7 pm, Tinamba pub, Thursday 19th June, contact Kaye on 5622 6013. There are GippsDairy Board positions available. Contact: Danielle on 5622 6014

[gippsdairy@dcsl.net.au](mailto:gippsdairy@dcsl.net.au)

Sustainability Victoria recently announced that it will provide \$190,000 to the MDF, to install and monitor 7 hectares



of "sub-surface drip" irrigation. We believe this is the first time this method of irrigating will be tried under pasture, grazed all year by dairy cows. Over the next few years, we will see if it works and let you know. The MDF

will have quite a few methods of irrigation: old flood, lasered flood, bike shift spray, fixed spray and soon, sub-surface drip.

We have had a lot of visitors in the last couple of weeks. 70 kids from Araluen Primary stood on one platform while Mike milked the cows on the other. 140 people attended the "Healthy, Wealthy Wise" day last Wednesday. And during the week we explained what we were up to, and how important the dairy industry is to the nation, state and Gippsland, to visiting politicians and would be politicians, the Federal Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Tony Bourke and Darren McCubbin, and the State Shadow Minister of Agriculture, Peter Walsh, and Gavin Chester.

### Three recent feed tests:

#### MDF neighbour's ryegrass silage 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008

Dry Matter	62.4	%
Metabolisable Energy	11.0	MJ/kg DM
Crude Protein	20.7	% of dry matter
Neutral Detergent Fibre	51.5	% of dry matter

#### Purchased Oaten Hay 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008

Dry Matter	84.7	%
Metabolisable Energy	9.0	MJ/kg DM
Crude Protein	8.8	% of dry matter
Neutral Detergent Fibre	56.5	% of dry matter

#### Ryegrass in Paddock 11, at three leaves, 3,000 kg, bit of rust 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008

Dry Matter	18.4	%
Metabolisable Energy	12.4	MJ/kg DM
Crude Protein	26.3	% of dry matter
Neutral Detergent Fibre	43.3	% of dry matter

## Drying off cows:

Mark Humphris, our vet, outlined a couple of methods to control our mastitis, as we dry off cows.

**Option 1:** Use Juraclox dry cow antibiotic (\$1.81), 6 weeks withhold, plus teat seal (\$2.72), \$18.12 per cow.

**Option 2:** Use Cepravin dry cow antibiotic (\$3.51), 8 weeks withhold, not teat seal, \$14.04 per cow.

Because we know that environmental bacteria, *Strep uberis*, is a major cause of our problem, we are doing the teat seal option. We plan to teat seal the 2 year old heifers as well, 30 days before calving.

## Young stock:

The 2 yr-olds (born Spring 06) are being reared by Mal Ingram on contract, and have been with him since weaning. Mid April, their average weight was 478 kg.

The 1 yr-olds (born Spring 07), after weaning, spent a few months on agistment at Longford. They were in very big paddocks, not wall-to-wall lush milker feed, but because of the big areas were always able get a very good green pick. It seems the sandy country did cause some issues, particularly Cobalt deficiency. We lost five but then got on top of it with Vitamin B injections. They then had a time at the Drome Rd campus of East Gippsland TAFE, looked after by Rick Cowie and the dairy students. Rick has kept the smaller ones, aiming to catch them up, and the rest now are with Mal Ingram. Mid April, their average weight was 193 kg.

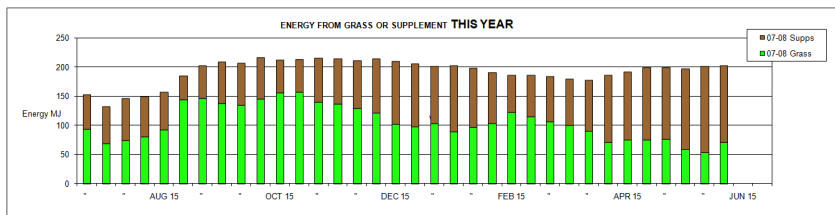
## GRAPHS AND COMMENTS

Each dot in the following graphs represents a ten day period, blue this year (07-08), red last year (06-07), and green (05-06). These graphs vary a bit from the numbers in the tables below, because the last dot is for the recent full ten day period (1<sup>st</sup> ten days of June ), whereas the tables show the most recent week.

	<p><b>Milk production</b> Drying off cows now, currently milking 200.  Yearly milk solids might just reach 160,000, just under last year's total.</p>
	<p><b>Milk production per cow</b> Milk production per cow 17.6 litres or 1.54 kg milk solids per cow. Milk per cow for the year will be very close to 7,000 litres or 520 kg milk solids.</p>
	<p><b>Grass consumption</b> Grass consumption has kicked up a bit to 28 kg DM/ha per day.</p>

### Grass and supplements

The cows are still eating 202 MJ energy per day (17.7 kg DM). Grass is 6 kg (up from 4.7kg) supplements are 11.7 kg.



## THE NUMBERS

	3 weeks ago	Last week	
To date:	<b>24-May-08</b>	<b>14-Jun-08</b>	
Milker graze area	<b>61</b>	<b>52</b>	ha
Milker nos	<b>290</b>	<b>221</b>	head
Stocking rate	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.3</b>	cows/ha
Grazing allocation 1/	<b>55</b>	<b>50</b>	th of graze area
Average graze rest time	<b>46</b>	<b>48</b>	days
Estm'd pasture consmp'n	<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>	kg DM/ha/dy
Pasture consum'd per cow	<b>3.2</b>	<b>6.5</b>	kg DM/cow/dy
Estm'd pasture price	<b>\$146</b>	<b>\$117</b>	\$/T DM

### Grazing

We have moved back to a grazing allocation of one 50th of the farm, because we were arriving at quite high covers and thought we may have moved to 55 too early. Having said that, the cows were still eating the high covers well.

### Pasture feed

The average daily pasture consumption has climbed to 27 kg dry matter per hectare per day, which from observing actual paddocks on offer, is much the same as the growth rate.

Conc supp fed/cow	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.7</b>	kg DM/cow/dy
Forage supp fed/cow	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	kg DM/cow/dy
Other supp fed/cow	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.6</b>	kg DM/cow/dy
Estm'd supp waste	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	%
Conc supp price	<b>\$573</b>	<b>\$529</b>	\$/T DM
Forage supp price	<b>\$372</b>	<b>\$0</b>	\$/T DM
Other supp price	<b>\$394</b>	<b>\$394</b>	\$/T DM
Total feed /cow	<b>17.2</b>	<b>17.1</b>	kg DM/cow/dy

### Supplements

We are no longer feeding any silage or hay. PKE is on offer ad lib at the dairy. Triticale price has dropped a bit.

Estm'd body cond't'n change	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	kg LWT/cow/dy
Litres/cow	<b>18.2</b>	<b>17.0</b>	l/cow/day
Fat test	<b>4.72%</b>	<b>4.88%</b>	%
Protein test	<b>3.90%</b>	<b>3.98%</b>	%
MS per cow	<b>1.57</b>	<b>1.51</b>	kg/cow/dy

### Milk production per cow

Fat and protein test have lifted a bit, but litres are down.

Anticipated milk price	<b>\$7.64</b>	<b>\$7.75</b>	\$/kg MS
Anticpt'd milk price	<b>\$0.658</b>	<b>\$0.687</b>	per litre
Milk income/cow	<b>\$12.00</b>	<b>\$11.68</b>	\$/cow/dy
All feed cost/cow	<b>\$7.64</b>	<b>\$6.23</b>	\$/cow/dy
Margin over all Feed/cow/day	<b>\$4.36</b>	<b>\$5.45</b>	\$/cow/dy
MOAF /ha /day	<b>\$20.74</b>	<b>\$23.17</b>	\$/ha/day
Farm MOAF per DAY	<b>\$1,265</b>	<b>\$1,205</b>	\$/day
MOAF per month	<b>\$37,945</b>	<b>\$36,145</b>	\$/month

### Feeding profitability

The feeding profitability indicators per cow milked, and per hectare being grazed by milkers, is up, mostly because more grass is in the diet. But the whole farm is down because we are milking fewer cows and using fewer hectares for milkers (because some paddocks are now being used for dry cows).

The Monday morning farm walk (see details at top) shows and explains these figures more. Frank Tyndall, MDF Project Manager 0409 940 782 [ftyndall@ozemail.com.au](mailto:ftyndall@ozemail.com.au)

**SENDER:**

Macalister Demonstration Farm  
PO Box 87 **MAFFRA** VIC 3860