

**Macalister Demonstration Farm, Dairy Australia, Extension Project Projects on the farm are funded by Dairy Australia, the Gardiner Foundation, Sustainability Victoria, DPI VIC, Department of Agriculture Food and Fisheries, Genetics Australia with support provided by GippsDairy**

### **Macalister Demonstration Farm Update 350 (Week ending May 31st, 2013)**

The Macalister Demonstration Farm (MDF) is milking 223 cows with a grazing area of 60 hectares, and an effective stocking rate of 3.7 cows per hectare. Some milking area is now forming part of the sacrifice grazing system and others are designated dry cow paddocks, and are therefore out of the round. The daily allocation is one 40th of the grazing area or around 1.5ha/24 hours. The cows are on a night sacrifice system with a daily grazing on grass. The night feed involves feeding lucerne hay and now with a blend of PKE/DDG/Almond meal/Chocmalt.

Milk production per cow is holding, at 1.45 kg MS/cow/day. Litres/cow/day are slightly down from 16.0 to 15.7. Milk fat test continues to rise from 4.92% to 5.14% and protein test is up from 3.98% to 4.07%.

Daily pasture consumption from the grazing area is down to 600 kg DM/ ha/day. The pasture consumption per cow is down from 7.5 to 4 kg DM per cow per day reflecting a tight pasture allocation and limited pasture in front of cows. The aim is to build a wedge in front of cows, despite the herd being dried off shortly, in order to have some feed over winter and a bank of pasture for dry cows, due to limited fodder availability.

Around 13ha was direct drilled with Crusader to bulk up thin paddocks on 2/5/13. They were lightly grazed just on seedling emergence to prevent shading. They will be re-grazed in around 30 days time, so essentially they have not missed a grazing. Around 4ha of this drilling was on an area with poor ryegrass content but with high couch content. It was not sprayed out due to the timing, but it is aimed to test the response of a resow without spraying prior to drilling.

Supplementary feed includes 5.4 kg DM per cow of a 13MJ pellet containing minerals and Rumensin, at a price of \$407 per DM tonne, 1.8 kg DM of PKE blend at a price of \$344 per DM tonne, and a bale and a half of lucerne hay or 3.3kgDM/cow/day. It is aimed that the dairy pellets will become a 12MJ, 12% protein pellet shortly to reduce cost in late lactation.

The Bulk Milk Cell Count for the week was 140,000. This is holding well despite the night sacrifice regime and late lactation cows.

The milk price (less compulsory levies) the MDF anticipates receiving for the week's milk is \$5.89 per kg milk solids, or 52.5 cents per litre.

Milk income per cow per day is down holding at around \$8.54/cow/day.

Supplementary feed cost /cow/day (fodder and concentrates) is up from \$3.82 to \$4.01 per cow per day, leaving an Income Over Supplementary Feed Cost (IOSFC)/cow of \$4.53, similar to last week, due to slightly higher income but slightly more inputs. The IOSFC/hectare is \$673. The whole farm feed margin is \$1010, down from \$1102 per day due to fewer cows being milked.

Dry cows will be grazed on the milking area, and are likely to be fed Almond Hulls (2.7kg DM), cereal hay (2.7kgDM), minimal grain (1.8kg DM) and a small allocation of pasture (0.5ha/24 hours), at a cost per day of \$1.89/cow/day plus grass cost. This cost is equivalent to around 3.5 litres or 0.3kgMS, so cows will be milked until production is lower than 5 litres or their minimum dry period is reached, whichever comes first.

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