

Macalister Demonstration Farm

Projects on the farm are funded by Sustainability Victoria, DEPI VIC, Department of Agriculture Food and Fisheries and Genetics Australia with support provided by GippsDairy.

Macalister Demonstration Farm Update 356 (Week ending July 19th , 2013)

The Macalister Demonstration Farm (MDF) is currently milking 179 cows with a total grazing area of 73 hectares, but with at least 13ha set aside for dry cow grazing, the pressure is on to keep remaining milkers tight. There are 122 dries and R2 heifers being run on the milking area and being fed 3kg/day pellets in the dairy, 4kg almond hulls and ½ ha pasture. A load of cereal and pasture hay mix has been purchased to stretch out pasture and to provide some rumen stretch leading into calving.

The daily allocation is now one 60th of the grazing area or around 1.0ha/24 hours. The cows are still on a night sacrifice system with a daily grazing on grass. The tighter allocation has allowed a slight increase in cover over the past two weeks.

The PKE blend remains at 4kg/cow/day and has proved to be successful in lifting body condition in the milkers.

Milk production per cow is declining in line with the end of lactation.. Production is now at 0.9 kg MS/cow/day or 12 litres/cow/day. Milk components are still inverted at a 3.35% fat and 4.0% protein. There is no sign of acidosis in the herd.

BMCC is holding at around 150,000.

Daily pasture consumption from the grazing area is around 360 kg DM/ ha/day with the pasture consumption per cow at 2 kg DM per cow per day. Growth rates over the last 14 days have varied between 20 and 30kg/ha/24hours, and this is exceeding consumption and therefore allowing cover to lift.

Supplementary feed includes: 6kg/cow 12MJ pellets with Rumensin, at \$355/ tonne, 4 kg of PKE blend at \$286 per tonne, 1bale lucerne hay or 2.8kgDM/cow/day.

The milk price is \$6.36/kg milk solids or 46.7c/litre.

Gross milk income per cow per day is now down to \$5.60/cow/day. Supplementary feed cost /cow/day (fodder and concentrates) is at \$4.26 per cow per day, leaving an Income Over Supplementary Feed Cost (IOSFC)/cow of \$1.34 or 3 net litres per cow or \$240/day for the farm. Cows will be dried off reasonably aggressively as the end of lactation approaches.

Matt Harms, ONFARM Consulting, 0408 311 118 or mattharms7@bigpond.com

Matt Harms
Agricultural Consultant
Onfarm Consulting Pty. Ltd.