

Macalister Demonstration Farm

Projects on the farm are funded by Genetics Australia with support provided by GippsDairy

Macalister Demonstration Farm Update (Week ending November 22nd, 2013)

The MDF is now milking 274 cows. There are now only 6 late dry cows/springers.

The daily allocation to milkers is at around 3.25ha/24 hours (between 3.0 and 3.5ha/24 hours) and therefore the round length for milkers is at 22 days over the full farm area (except 1 ha out for springers). This is about right at this point in time. Pastures are being grazed at 2.5 leaves with leaf emergence running at around 8 days per leaf in most paddocks/areas of the farm. There is likely to be a small additional area cut for silage to keep on top of quality. At this stage will only be around 6ha and hopefully in the next few days. Topping stopped for a few days due to mechanical issues and the effects were seen immediately- poor quality residuals affecting overall pasture quality!

The cows are being fed 6.2kg/cow/day as fed Pasture Optimiser pellets (12.8MJ) and grass at a cost of \$383/t or 42.6c/kgDM. There is Magnesium and Rumensin included.

Milk production per cow has fallen slightly and is now at 26 litres and solids are at 1.9 kg MS/cow/day. Milk components are at a 4.0% fat and 3.32% protein, the same as a fortnight ago.

Daily pasture consumption from the grazing area is at 3240 kg DM /day with the milkers consuming 12kg DM per cow per day. On 72ha in the rotation, this equates to a growth rate of 45kgDM/ha/24 hours to hold cover. The growth rate in the last two weeks has been at 50-65kg/ha/day and so a little surplus has developed over the past two weeks. Additional silage is being selected from poorer grass paddocks and where quality feed is getting ahead of milkers.

The milk price on the components is \$5.44/kg milk solids or 40c/litre.

Gross milk income per cow per day is \$10.40 /cow/day, slightly lower due to the lower production. Supplementary feed cost \$2.38/cow/day (concentrates), leaving an Income Over Supplementary Feed Cost (IOSFC) of \$8.02/cow/day or 20 net litres/cow/day, or \$2197/day for the farm. With pasture consumed calculated at 14c/kgDM, the daily net margin after supplements and pasture is \$6.34/cow or \$23.80/ha.

Nitrogen is following milkers at 1kgN/ha/24 hours, as urea.

Broadleaf spraying for dock control is taking place selectively.

There is an open day on the farm, with a farm walk, a chance to meet the people, a look at the budget and a chance to see what is going on and what is planned for the MDF over the coming months, on Wednesday 27th November from 11am until 1.30pm. All welcome!

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