

Macalister Demonstration Farm

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

Macalister Demonstration Farm Update 370 (Week ending February 1st , 2014)

The MDF is milking 275 cows with 271 in the vat.

The daily allocation to milkers remains at 3ha/24 hours with the round length for milkers at 24 days over the full farm. The extreme heat has put milk production and protein % constantly under pressure, but the increased feed inputs have helped stabilise production as best as possible.

The cows are being fed 6kg/cow/day as fed Pasture Optimiser pellets (12.8MJ), two bales Vetch hay at a cost of \$370/t or 31.8/kgDM and grass (estimated 7.5kgDM/cow/day). The vetch seems to have helped to stabilise the milk protein %, with it having dropped to as low as 3.18% around mid-January.

Milk production per cow is at 22.1 litres and solids remain at 1.67 kg MS/cow/day. Milk components are at a 4.2% fat and 3.38% protein. BMCC has climbed, putting the farm at risk of slipping into Premium 2. This needs to be addressed to prevent any lowering of milk price.

Daily pasture consumption from the grazing area is now at 2062 kg DM /day with the milkers consuming 7.5kg DM per cow per day. On 73ha in the rotation, this equates to a growth rate of 28kgDM/ha/24 hours to hold cover. The extreme heat and the need for very short watering intervals has led to reduced growth rate across the farm. The area under fixed spray irrigation has performed well due to the application of around 16mm every 2-3 days depending on the temperature.

The milk price on the components is \$6.10/kg milk solids or 46.2 c/litre.

Gross milk income per cow per day is \$10.21 /cow/day. Supplementary feed cost \$3.24/cow/day (concentrates and Vetch), leaving an Income Over Supplementary Feed Cost (IOSFC) of \$6.97/cow/day or 15 net litres/cow/day, or \$1889/day for the farm. With pasture consumed calculated at 14c/kgDM, the daily net margin after supplements and pasture is \$5.92/cow, slightly lower than a fortnight ago despite higher milk price due to slightly less pasture intake and slightly higher vetch feeding.

Nitrogen is following milkers at 1.1kgN/ha/24 hours, as 100kg/ha urea.

Bulls will now be taken out around 12th February, about 3 weeks later than planned.

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