

Macalister Demonstration Farm

Macalister Demonstration Farm Update 466 (Week ending February 9th, 2018)

What's been going on at the MDF?

MACALISTER DEMONSTRATION FARM	Farm Location: Maffra		
Description: The MDF is located at Maffra in Gippsland Victoria in the Macalister Irrigation District. The farm has a milking area of 73 ha and is fully irrigated.	Last fortnight	9/2/18	
<u>Production</u>			
Cow numbers (herd and vat)	313 cows in herd and vat	314 cows in herd and 312 vat	
Cow production/day	20.1	20.2	litres
Fat %	4.2	4.55	%
Protein %	3.32	3.43	%
Kg milk solids/cow /day	1.51	1.61	kgMS
BMCC	170,000	220,000	
<u>Grazing and Feeding</u>			
Concentrates	6.3	6.3	kgDM/day
Cost of concentrate (wheat)	\$0.308	\$0.308	c/kg DM
Additive (Performer ME-125 with virginiamycin momensin plus Calciprill and high Zinc)	0.32c	0.32	c/cow
Cost of hay	0	0	c/kgDM
Silage	0	0	kgDM/day
Cost of silage	17	17	c/kgDM
Pasture demand (milkers)	9.4	9.4	kg DM/cow/day
Pasture demand (kgDM/ha/day) (all stock on farm)	45.3	43	kg DM/ha/day
Area in rotation (ha)	65	68	ha
Rotation length (days)	32	30	days
Grazing Area (ha per 24 hours)	2.0	2.25	ha
<u>Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)</u>			
Milk Price (on current tests)	\$4.90	\$5.29	\$/kg milk solids
Milk Price	37.3	42.2	c/litre
**Income/cow	\$7.40	\$8.51	\$/cow/day
Supplementary Feed Cost/cow	\$2.28	\$2.28	\$/cow/day
IOSFC/cow	\$5.12	\$6.23	\$/cow/day
IOSFC/milking ha	\$21.95	\$28.40	\$/ha/day
Net litres/cow	13.7	14.8	Litres/day
Irrigated pasture cost	\$1.13	\$1.13	\$/cow/day
Irrigated pasture cost per kg	\$0.12	\$0.12	c/kg DM
Net margin after supplements and irrigated pasture	\$3.99	\$5.10	\$/cow/day

Cows are being fed 7kg wheat and additive pellet with Zinc for FE. There are no grounds to lower this grain, and FE pellet certainly needs to remain in the diet.

Allocation is 2-2.5ha/24 hours or around a 30 day round. This remains the right round length to balance quantity and quality of pasture. Pasture quality has increased considerably over the last two weeks as a result of topping and regular N applications, to keep summer grasses at bay. Where topping had not yet taken place, summer grasses were out of control and are most likely the cause of the production slump through late December and January. This appears to have been reversed.

Back calculation says that the cows are consuming 9.4kgDM pasture, or 2900kgDM/24 hours. This equates to a pasture harvest of 1300kgDM/ha/day or a growth rate required to hold cover of 43kgDM/ha/day. Paddock 3 was observed to have grown 47kg/ha/day over the 15 days post-grazing.

Round length should remain on 25-30 days through Feb and first half of March and then slow to 30-40 days from the start of March to the end of March. This will require fodder to enable feed availability to be adequate. With only 130 silage rolls, or around 40tDM, this only allows for 5kgDM for 300 cows for around a month. Consideration will be given to the purchase of some quality silage at the right price or lowering of cow numbers to better match growth rates.

The first pregnancy test on 6th February has shown 84% are in calf from six weeks of AI and eight weeks of bulls. We are happy with this result and are hoping that of the 49 non-detected around 50% will be in calf, hopefully taking our empty rate to around 8-10%. The bulls are now out (this week) and the second test will be in April.

My preference would be to see unwanted cows sold in mid-April based on the second preg test results, with total cow numbers falling around that time to 280, depending on total number of cows and heifers in calf for the 18/19 season. This will also give a good cash injection to the business to fund resowing and the purchase of springer and dry cow hay.

Note the figures for last fortnight were based on a milk price that was incorrect for January. This was due to the switch over from MG Farm to MG Milkroom and the incorrect price given via MG Farm. Apologies for recording a lower than actual milk price.

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