

Macalister Demonstration Farm Update 477 (Week ending 10th August, 2018)

The feed margin is a major driver of profit on a dairy farm. The table below shows the MDF calculated feed margin, and other factors that deliver that margin over the past month.

FEED MARGIN PERFORMANCE	TEN DAYS AGO	THIS TEN DAYS	Units
Ten days to date:	31/Jul/18	10/Aug/18	
Milker graze area	60	51	ha
Milkers	100	100	head
Average graze rest time	57	60	days
Estm'd pasture consmp'n (incl cons'vd forage)	14	15	kg DM/ha/day
Pasture consum'd per cow	8.3	7.8	kg DM/cow/day
Pasture growing spend	\$1.67	\$1.67	\$/ha/day
Estm'd pasture price	\$121	\$109	\$/T DM
Conc (incl additives)supp fed/cow	5.4	5.0	kg DM/cow/day
Hay/silage supp fed/cow	0.0	0.0	kg DM/cow/day
Conc (incl additives)supp avg price	\$400	\$428	\$/T DM
Total feed intake/cow	13.5	12.6	kg DM/cow/day
Litres/cow	17.2	14.7	l/cow/day
Fat test	3.09%	3.36%	%
Protein test	4.01%	3.88%	%
Milk Solids per cow	1.22	1.06	kg/cow/day
Milk price (less levies)/kg MS	\$6.68	\$5.80	\$/kg MS
Milk price (less levies)/litre	\$0.474	\$0.420	\$ per litre
Milk income/cow	\$8.18	\$6.16	\$/cow/day
All feed cost/cow	\$3.16	\$2.97	\$/cow/day
Margin over all Feed/cow	\$5.02	\$3.19	\$/cow/day
MOAF /ha /day	\$8.37	\$6.26	\$/ha/day
Farm MOAF per DAY	\$502	\$319	\$/day
NDF Fibre in diet	29.3%	29.5%	% NDF
Feed Conversion Efficiency	89	83	kg MS/tonne DM

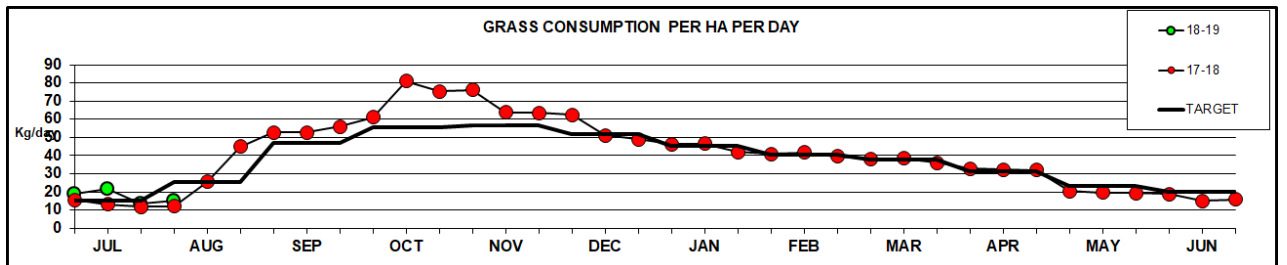
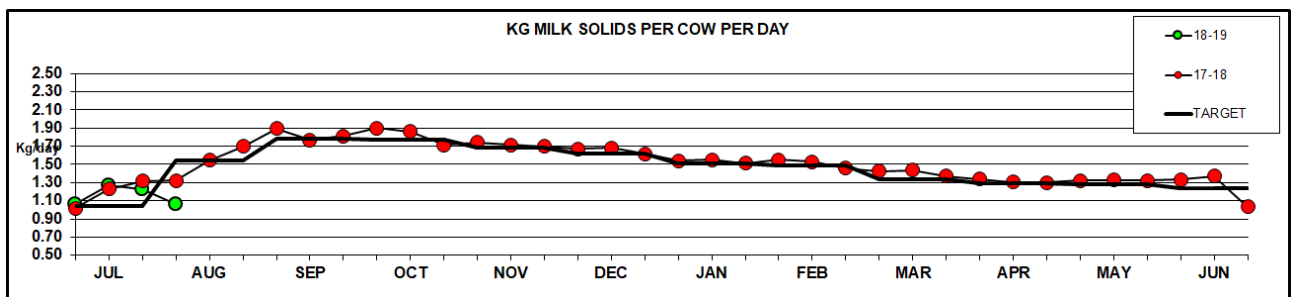
Calving is now in full swing with new cows entering the herd at the same rate as later calving cows are being dried off so herd size has remained the same. The next break to be grazed (Pdk 6), has been rested 55 days since the previous grazing, and has 900 kg DM available per hectare. This represents an average growth rate of 16 kg DM per hectare per day with 2.4 leaves re-grown, meaning an average of 22 days per leaf. This leaf appearance rate (LAR) is typical of the July-August period. Next paddock (Pdk 34) is 66 days rested, and has 3.0 leaves regrown. There is some soil moisture in the top 5cm, but below is very dry. We'll be irrigating as soon as we can in the absence of good rain.

The paddock just grazed shows that the cows are not at all hungry. The ryegrass clumps are excellent quality. The residue after grazing the clumps is a little high (above 8cm) but the cows are grazing too short between the clumps (3 cm) and this will slow paddock recovery.

Some grass is being wasted, but dry cows are cleaning up afterwards. This feeds the dry cows but also sets that paddock back.

The cows' manure is slightly firmer than last week, the calculated NDF fibre in the diet is higher than 20 days ago (was 27%) and grain fed has dropped a little, and the low fat test is now rising. A new split-herd trial has started at the MDF looking at the impact of the Phibro product Omnigen. As part of that trial we recently blood tested five animals and found that three of the five were low in phosphate, consistent with our concern about phosphorus levels in the pasture despite good Olsen-P results. We'll be following this up later in the season with further soil and tissue test to try and confirm the source of the issue. Further details of this and the Phibro project will be in upcoming newsletters.

Construction is well underway on the solar power system with the panels soon to be mounted. Watch for the field day in a couple of months once the sun comes out.



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