

2018-2019 season

In 2018.2019 season the maize grain / barley was replaced by an in-shed blend consisting of 33 - 50 % PKE, 25 – 33% DDG, 12 – 15% Tapioca, 15% high starch pellet, & up to 15% soya hull pellet. The blend was formulated to be higher in starch during late winter and spring, and higher in protein during summer and autumn. Cost of the feed blend averaged \$440/T compared with straight PKE at \$260/T delivered. Supplements were mainly fed in early spring and late lactation to fill feed deficits, based on management decision rules (grazing residuals, targeted cow intakes).

2018-2019 season results

	Kg MS/cow	Kg MS/ha	Milk income/ha @ \$6.40 / kg MS	Supplement fed/ha (kg DM/ha)	Cost of supplement/ha	Operating profit/ha
All grass	456	1,313	\$8,943	0	0	\$4,727
PKE	472	1,553	\$10,571	1,783	\$515	\$5,270
In-shed blend	491	1,615	\$10,974	1,817	\$888	\$5,145

The PKE and in-shed blend produced more Milksolids than the grass only herd per cow and per hectare. The herd fed the in-shed blend produced more Milksolids throughout the season, especially over summer, compared with the PKE herd, but was less profitable. Again, there was no difference in reproductive performance and cow liveweight. Both the PKE and in-shed blends achieved FEI regulations.

Learnings

These trials have highlighted that pasture utilisation must be kept high, and feed price must be kept low to obtain profitable response to purchased supplements. Additionally, data from the two years, indicate that any additional Milksolids from feeding a high-starch or blended supplementary feed via an in-shed system, does not offset the greater cost of this feed.

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