

Testimonials - Pastures

1. Glen & Jen Bakewell, Taranaki.

I rang Mike McKie yesterday and visited his Skeet Rd farm where Eric is sharemilking. It was great to see some results of your work first hand. There is an abundance of grass on the farm and the cows are in great condition, with only 4 non cyclers after 4 weeks AB (I've CIDRed 20% of our herd and my return rate is huge after 5 weeks AB). Its great to see such a fast turn around as their old system was very similar to our current system with more Urea and PK every year to grow less grass, have higher empty rates and less production. The best thing about meeting Eric was seeing how relaxed he is and how much time (and money) he has on his hands now that he's not spending all day feeding out, spreading urea, treating sick cows and trying to find grass for the cows to eat tomorrow. One thing I would say though is I think he could be on a faster round, that way the cows would be eating even higher quality pasture and not having to take it as low. The size of the clovers were very impressive too.

2. Hidefumi Tsuji, Consultant Japan.

Thank you very much for your advice and kindness during my visit to you.

I was very impressed with the discussion we had and the first-hand study tour of NZ pasture farming. As a result, I gained several insights that will be helpful in furthering my job with Japanese farmers reducing their cost of milk production, even if production is reduced, because profit is higher.

3. Warren.

When to graze new pastures?

Thank you again Mr Jones. As usual, your replies has been right on the mark for my often asked beginner's questions.

4. Michael Nicholas of Piopio.

We survived the drought and the paddocks with LimeMagPlus were particularly good. Further into the winter the rest of the farm struggled with the cooler temps and not growing as much grass as we would like. I will have to wait until the spring before applying more LimeMagPlus I guess.

I replied, not if you can spread it without making a mess. The sooner it goes on the sooner you'll get the farm into a profit mode.

Applying it in wet weather saves waiting for rain to wash it in so you can graze it again sooner and rain gives a faster response. After October and November there are long dry spells so waiting to wash it in can cause a grazing shortage. Later than then until late autumn can delay more spreading, and grazing. Thank for advise Vaughan.

5. Gregg Todd, Warkworth, NZ.

The pasture sample I sent to Hills, I had taken lot of trouble to make sure every leaf was ryegrass and clean. Previously when fertiliser reps and liquid fertiliser salesmen have done pasture samples they have just grabbed a few handfuls of very mixed species and figures have varied. This backs up what you say about how important it is to analyse only one species. I enjoy reading your chapters as you write in an easy to read and easy to understand way.

6. Margaret Porteous, Ngahinapouri, NZ.

I started in 199803 with oversowing Tahora white clover with lime.

October 1998 was the first year in 10 that I had no bloat and had more grass.

Oversowed Tonic plaintain by hand and very happy with and cows like it. It germinates well even with just throwing it around.

May 2007 No Johne's for three years. Top cows producing double the bottom ones. 120 cows. Milking machine checked every year. Earthworms increasing, Soils getting better, Organic fertiliser by BoP was only 280 kg/ha which was not enough. Low in copper, cobalt, P, etc.

I can definitely see the benefits of having good organic fertiliser recommendations as, this year 1999, with Vaughan Jones as our consultant.

I've noticed that pastures are much more healthy and animal health has been very good this year . Only one case of milk fever and no penicillin used until the last 10 cows calved - I then had to treat some for mastitis and lameness. Although this spring grass growth has been very sluggish due to colder and more clouds than normal, our pastures, although not a great surplus of grass, look denser and greener compared to neighbouring properties. My neighbour even commented on how healthy our pastures are looking. The cattle too seem so much more contented.