

Special points of interest:

- Are our cows hitting their potential?
- Is the cost of land making forage too expensive?
- Should we be farming for protein?
- A feed budget should not be a taxing issue!
- Could you gain from grain?

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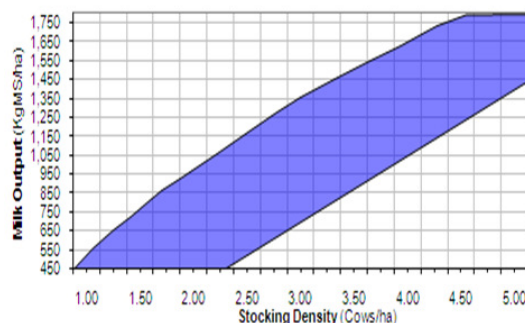
Achieving your herds potential

Is your herd achieving its genetic potential?

This is a question we asked when we surveyed over 100 farmers. The answer most farmers gave is NO. New Zealand has a long and proud history for breeding cattle with high genetic merit, and according to most farmers the potential of their cows was somewhere between 550 and 600kg's of Milk Solids. Those same farms though were only achieving 60-80% of that potential. The key factor holding cows back from their potential was feed.

Grazed grass is the basis of all our systems and where grass is grown and utilized well, is one of our best nutritional quality feeds. Where we can guarantee plentiful supply and quality of grass we can achieve a very high output of solids per hectare. However, it is not always possible to achieve this due to the weather. The chart below shows the wide variation in production per hectare for a given stocking rate. Most herds fit within the blue band. Plot yourself on the map to see where you fit.

Milk Map ©



Just as wide a variation exists in the costs of production and it is important to know how much home grown forage costs.

With the price of land in many areas of NZ now being even higher than it is in the UK, grass and forage is becoming more expensive. Unless capital gains are to be achieved and realized then we must look to add the cost of interest onto the cost of forage to compare it with purchased feeds.

For example land costing \$30,000 per hectare with a utilized grass yield of 10,000 kg'sDM per hectare and with a bank interest rate of 8% would cost 24 cents per kgDM just on interest alone. If the cash cost of fertilizer, seed and sprays cost us 6-8 cents per kgDM then grass costs 30 cents per kgDM. Some purchased feed options would be far cheaper than this.

To help our cows to achieve their potential we need to supply constant feed of the right quality and also at the right price. It is not a matter of production at any cost. We need to make the most of the ruminants ability to utilize poor quality feed and turn it into milk. We can do this by focusing on the rumen. By ensuring that the microbes within the rumen have all the energy and protein that they need to grow their numbers and that the conditions in the rumen allow them to thrive, we can use them to convert low cost feed into high value milk.



Keenan's MechFiber™ system has been developed using the most up to date scientific knowledge on how the rumen works. By presenting the diet to the cow using Keenan's unique blending and cutting system, the rumen is kept stable, complementing and increasing utilization of grass and allowing our cows to achieve their full genetic potential.

Please call the Keenan team to see how we can help you unlock your cows potential.

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Feed Pad

A feed pad is quite an investment, but can pay for itself several times in saved feed and increased output.

Trevor Green, National Sales Manager for Rakaia Engineering

has been working with dairy and beef producers looking to solve the problems that in-paddock feeding creates.

“We have been installing feed pads to fit a wide range of requirements and budgets” states Trevor “We tailor build each feed pad,

working with our specialist team to ensure that each feed pad is built to fit the needs of the cow and the operator.”

To discuss your requirements contact Trevor on 03 3027305



Dry Cows

Keenan New Zealand’s senior nutritionist James Hague urges producers to look carefully at dry cow management now, to make more profit next lactation. “If we get the dry cow period right” states Hague “she will have the capacity for high dry matter intakes at grass, beating the energy gap which restricts production and decreases empty rates. Costly calving difficulties and metabolic problems are also substantially reduced.”

Managing the rumen is one of the key to success of the MechFibre dry cow strategy. A healthy rumen that is kept active and large allows the freshly calved cow to achieve higher dry matter intakes quickly. Keenan advocate the feeding of high levels of straw during this stage. “The cow

does not need much energy at this stage” comments Hague “but we do need to keep intakes up to around 10-12kg’s.” Often it’s difficult to get large amounts of poor quality forage into cows, but the company states that with its MechFibre technology the processing action of the wagon, combined with the use of water and palatable feeds ensures that this is achievable on cows on high straw rations. The gentle mixing and cutting action of the Keenan feeder has been specifically designed to ensure that stock are presented with a homogeneous ration that is kind on the rumen.

It is the close up period that is critical in ensuring a smooth transition back into milk. “Real problems arise where cows are grazed on paddocks high on potash (especially on effluent areas)

as this makes the diet too alkaline.”States Hague. “To avoid metabolic problems at calving we need the diet to be mildly acidic. This helps the cow mobilize more calcium when she is freshly calved.” Cows on restricted grazing suffer from reduced intakes after calving, so using the MechFibre system helps cows hit the ground running. Hague also urges caution in trying to put too much condition on cows through the dry period. This can lead to metabolic and calving problems. Where cows are thin at drying off, Keenan’s nutritionists adjusted diets to account for liveweight gain, but this needs to be controlled. Downer cows and difficult calvings are costly in both time and money, so ensuring that the diet is well balanced and designed specifically for the dry cow is money well spent.

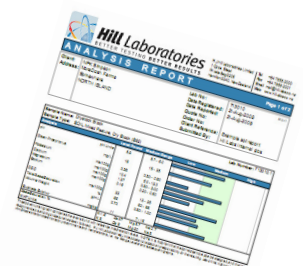
Soil

Without doubt good animal nutrition starts in the soil.

Often, problems seen on farm are soil borne, whether they be from high iron levels through to low calcium. Keenan’s nutritionists are experienced at

reviewing soil tests to help build a picture on how to best help achieve your targets.

Discuss with our Nutritionists about how your soils could be affecting your herds production.



“Managing the rumen is one of the keys to success”

“Often problems seen on farm are soil borne”

Feed Budgeting

Failing to achieve your planned output is extremely costly to the business and running short on feed is one of the main culprits.

Drawing up an annual feed budget should bring you a number of benefits:

- Identify feed needs ahead of market demand. Feed can then be bought forward at lower cost.
- Avoid liveweight losses which cost energy to regain liveweight.
- Manage grazing and silage making to achieve high quality and avoid over/under grazing.
- Sketch out the ration each month.

Keenan New Zealand have developed a unique feed budgeting system which allows physical and financial planning of cost effective feed strategies.

The plan covers milk production per month and the dry matter, energy and protein requirements to achieve that output.

This service is offered as part of our on-farm consultancy service for clients already with Keenan Mech-fiber machines. It is also available to those who are working towards adopting the benefits that the Keenan system can bring to their farm.

Contact us for more information on

0800 4 KEENAN—option 3

Dairy Manager	Name	A Farm Farm Anywhere											
		July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Stocking	Cows in herd	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450
	Calving	450											
	Dry/Calves	234	123	234	93								123
	Cows in milk	0	123	157	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	123
	Cows Dry	450	127	93	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	123
	Cow liveweight	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
	Stocking rate	2.60	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha	483 kg/ha
Production	Total Milk Output	215,524	2,212	4,712	18,442	29,952	32,256	29,208	25,832	21,312	16,960	12,672	8,264
	Average milk 500kg per day		0.00	1.24	1.72	2.15	2.39	2.12	1.84	1.49	1.22	0.93	0.65
Feed Inputs	kg/ha (Dry Matter)	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
	Supplement 1	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Supplement 2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
	Supplement 3	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Supplement 4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Supplement 5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Supplement 6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Energy	1185	1185	1185	1185	1185	1185	1185	1185	1185	1185	1185	1185
	Protein	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18
	Days Feeding	0.0	6.6	8.3	10.3	12.2	13.5	15.6	14.0	13.3	7.0	7.0	12.814
	Days grazing	30	30	30	31	30	31	31	28	31	30	31	30
	Grass Growth Rate	30	30	40	60	62	59	52	54	45	39	32	18
	Actual Grass Growth Rate	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
	Opening cover	1,800											
	Reserves available	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Requirement	0	29,320	104,781	168,888	193,765	205,197	204,448	230,704	229,384	211,442	114,882	80,788
	Residual feed	225,000	302,500	381,480	426,499	499,311	519,046	502,474	443,400	491,697	346,088	280,897	290,014
	Average Grass Cover	kgDM/ha	2,420	3,052	3,414	3,922	4,232	4,820	3,547	3,214	2,769	2,247	2,154

“Planning for a feed shortfall saves time and money”

Milk Protein

There’s money to be made by increasing milk protein yield, claims Keenan New Zealand’s consultant James Hague.

With milk protein worth up to three times the value of milk fat, pushing milk protein improves income per kilo of solids and total farm income. Keenan has seen big improvements in milk protein with many of its customers. “Even small adjustments can add 10c/kgMS to the milk price” states Hague, “this is worth



over \$10,000 for the average herd.”

Hague advises producers look closely at their diets to ensure that first and foremost the diet is not limiting energy intake for the cow. “Where the cow is low in energy she will use protein within the diet as an energy source. This will reduce the amount of protein available for milk protein synthesis.”

Diets should also have adequate levels of starch. “As starch intakes increase, so does milk protein” comments Hague “Feeds high in starch are valuable in the diet and should not be compared directly on price with feeds which promote milk fat”.

One of the issues with increasing starch levels in the diet through the use of cereals can be an increased risk of acidosis. According to Hague this can be avoided by the strategic use of structural fibre within the diet to manage rumen conditions. “Increasingly large amounts of starchy feeds can be fed safely to generate large yields of milk protein, but these increases need to be matched with palatable long fibre.”

There are also a number of feed additives on the market which can assist the production of milk protein. These can be cost effective, but should be used strategically.

Soda Grain

Many Keenan owners have found the benefits of Soda Grain. Treating with Sodium Hydroxide (caustic soda) ruptures the seed coat and increases grain digestibility.

High rates can be fed compared to ground or rolled cereal as starch degradation is slower in the rumen and the feed is alkaline.

You can use grain at 18-22% moisture straight off the combine or buy dry grain and treat as needed through the season.

Up to 6.5 kg fresh per cow per day can be fed safely in all grass silage diets and 4 kg where maize is fed.

Contact your Keenan Consultant for more information.

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Keenan New Zealand
a division of Rakaia Engineering



Keenan keeps PACE with today's needs

Keenan's continual research and development programme has a number of advancements to help today's modern farmer become the farmer of the future.

PACE is an electronic management system which allows production, economic and herd health benefits to be achieved consistently and reliably by all staff. At its heart is the Keenan's Mech-fiber™ PACE control unit that links our knowledge of how to maximise the impact of Mech-fiber™ directly to your farm and your Keenan.



Based on each farm's individual ration requirements, PACE links web-based technology, farm computer and mixer to allow operators to produce the perfect Mech-iber™ ration, day in day out, through precise management of ingredient loading sequence and mixing times.

Baleblend™ is exciting new technology from Keenan that allows Mech-fiber™ feeders to be able to handle whole bales of forage with more precision and speed. In keeping with Keenan's low energy approach to keeping vital forage structures intact, Baleblend™ effortlessly incorporates big round and square bales - silage, hay or straw - into the Mech-fiber™ mix without damaging the core fibre or over-processing dry material.

Precision engineered concentric rings with a unique profile, support the heaviest of bales on the machines paddle structure, feeding material in measured quantities on to the feeder's top knife where its is drawn down into the feeders mixing chamber. From there, the castellated paddles and carbon fibre knives process the forage into exactly the right Mech-fiber™ base along with the other feed materials.



Customer parts special

25% discount on all Genuine Keenan parts through June and July

Contact 0800-4-Keenan to order your parts now.

Service special

Get your mid winter service in June and July and receive a \$50 discount off our standard rate.

Contact Stuart to book in your service now for a trouble free winter.

Contact our Sales and Nutrition team to discuss how these developments can help improve your farm performance