

PeopleSmart Example

Farm Policy Manual

Farm name: Ngauruhoe Farms

Property description:

This farming operation utilises the following assets to operate the farming business:

- 160ha of flat, sand-based, free draining land
- Land is subdivided into 50 paddocks and water supplied to all paddocks
- The farm has a 50 bail rotary cowshed, centrally located
- The farm is 90% irrigated by centre pivot
- Approximately 600 cows are peak milked.

Farm goals:

The primary goals of the farming business are:

- To achieve the best milk production possible within the constraints of the grass grown on the farm
- To control the cost of production to achieve a system that is profitable and sustainable at all payouts
- To minimise the amount of human work required to achieve the production and the profit through allowing the cows to harvest the feed and only making supplements where pasture quality is being seriously compromised
- To allow flexibility for the farm owners to take time away from the farm as needed to meet family obligations and lifestyle goals.

Feeding policy:

The farm operates on a policy of maximising grass growth and harvesting feed grown. To achieve this the following happens:

Spring:

- Follow the spring rotation planner
- Conserve surplus water when pasture residual is greater than 2000kg DM/ha.
- Summer/Autumn
- Grazing round to be at 40 days by 15 February.

Winter:

- Grazing round to be at 120 days by 1 June
- 60% of the cows are grazed off-farm for six weeks from 1 June
- Cows on farm are on-off grazed using stand-off pad
- No supplement is purchased
- Calves are grazed off-farm from 1 December and return as in-calf heifers on 30 April, 22 months later.

Culling policy:

Culls are identified in the following manner:

- Cows are pregnancy tested 6 weeks after bull removal
- Empty cows are sold as soon as possible after identification
- The number of empties will determine how much culling can be done for other reasons.

Priorities for culling are:

- (i) Somatic cell count
- (ii) Udder

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- (iii) Health problems
- (iv) Production
- (v) Age
- (vi) Temperament.

Weed policy:

The weed policy is designed to integrate weed control with other jobs to minimise time requirements.

- Weeds are sprayed with a motorbike mounted sprayer
- Weeds are sprayed when cows are brought out of the paddock for each milking by the person getting the cows in, while the cows walk to the shed
- Weeds are sprayed with MCPA from April to October and with Tordon Gold from November to March
- Gloves, goggles, gumboots and overalls are to be worn when mixing and spraying.

Fertiliser policy:

The fertiliser programme is designed on the following:

Maintenance fertiliser

- Soil tests and pasture tests are done annually and fertiliser requirements are derived from this
- Recommendations are taken from two companies
- The aim is to achieve a least cost mixture
- Copper, cobalt and selenium are added where pasture tests indicate the need
- No trace elements are used as these are supplied direct to cows.

Nitrogen fertiliser

- Nitrogen is applied behind the cows from calving to mid-December
- Rates are:
 - 50kgN/ha calving until mid-September
 - 30kgN/ha from mid-September until mid-December
- Nitrogen is spread weekly by contractors with applications made to all paddocks grazed since the previous application.

Herd recording policy:

- Mating records are kept by the AB technician
- Bull matings are not recorded
- Calving records are recorded in MINDA-Pro, using the Palm Pilot.

Mating policy:

Mating is managed in the following way:

- Four weeks prior to the planned start of mating (PSM) tail paint the herd
- One week prior to calving, separate the non-cyclers for vet inspection and CIDRing if required
- Start mating on the 15 October (to calve 20 July)
- AB carried out for 4 weeks
- Jersey bulls used to tail off herd (12 bulls at a ratio of 1:20)
- One third of the bulls rotated weekly
- Bulls removed 23 December, giving 10 week mating period to avoid inductions
- Yearlings are run with Jersey bulls (for easy calving) for 6 weeks, from 10 October.

Animal health policy:

This animal health policy has been designed with an emphasis on prevention and avoiding animal suffering.

- Identify causes of lameness or ill health and fix where possible
- Remove cows from herd at first sign of lameness or ill health

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- Sick cows to be grazed close to shed with access to water and full allowances of feed (ie. residuals
- >2,200kgDM/ha) and to be milked once per day
- In all cases, primary assistance is administered by farmers. Vets are used when the outlook is positive and profitable. Where the likelihood of recovery is poor, animals will be destroyed rather than prolong suffering.

Treatments to be administered by farm staff include:

- Worm treatments to calves only up to 15 months
- Lice treatments if required
- 5-in-1 vaccine to calves
- Mastitis treatments including dry cow antibiotics
- Antibiotics for lameness and inflammation
- Milk fever treatments intravenously and subcutaneously.

Calf rearing policy and bobby calf management:

The calves reared are the farm's future and all care will be taken to ensure quality stock are raised.

- Approximately 140 heifer calves of the best genetic merit are raised each year
- Bull calves will be sold to rearers
- All surplus female calves will go on the bobby truck
- Calves are left with their mothers for 12 hours to get at least one feed of colostrum from their mothers
- Colostrum will not be supplied to the factory
- All surplus colostrum stored and stirred daily for feeding to calves
- Calves are fed once a day from birth
- Calves will have access to hay and meal from birth.

Smoking and drug policies:

- No smoking is permitted in the farm dairy, in other buildings or around fuel supplies on farm. Smoking is permitted in open areas of the farm
- No alcohol is to be consumed during work time. Any staff member suspected to be under the influence of alcohol will be asked to leave the property and will be disciplined according to the disciplinary process outlined in their employment agreement
- No illicit drugs are permitted on the property at any time. This will be a reason for instant dismissal. Any staff member suspected to be under the influence of drugs will be asked to leave the property and will be disciplined according to the disciplinary process outlined in their employment agreement.