High input system

Mayfield Dairy Partnership

Bart Luijten and Martina Lips

Farm Details
253ha milking platform 78 ha runoff nearby
Located in Heddon Bush area Braxton soils

Cow Numbers
810 winter
790 peak milk

Production
530 kgms/cow
1650kgms/hectare

Stocking Rate
3.15

Breed
Friesian and Crossbred cows

Fertiliser
soil test levels
pH 5.8 - 6.0
P 25– 35
Capital fertiliser applied per Ravensdown recommendations

Nitrogen
between 180 and 200 units per year.

Supplements Fed
up to 1500 kg dm per cow of concentrates and silage

Staff
3 Permanent and 2 partime

Why the high input system and what makes it work.

- Dilution of costs thru higher production for example wintering cost are the same for a
cow doing 420 solids as a cow doing 520

- Making the most of an high value asset farm was converted in 2008 at a time of high
land prices

- Enjoy the challenges in the system like nutrition

- Keeping the cows fully fed makes it easier to achieve BCS, in-calf and animal health
targets
• Pasture management as important as for all grass systems pasture utilized main driver of profit per ha

• Target intake of 4%DM/liveweight feeding concentrates on top of grass intake rather then replacing one with the other

• Having good forward contracts in place so no need to go on spot market where prices can be high

• Replacing silage with pke where possible as cheaper feed down the cows throat

• Keeping things simple with most of the feed being fed thru in-shed feeder

• High production per ha and low cost structure creates plenty opportunity

• More options when in a feed deficit situation

**Downsides of the high input system**

• Lack of knowledge within the New Zealand dairy industry about high input systems

• More/different knowledge required

• Feeding supplements can be addictive for cow and farmer

• Relying on feed companies to have feed there when you need it

• More labour intensive at times

• Feed contracts made on higher expectations of payout (can also go the other way)

• More udder breakdown when pushing per cow production