



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment



FODDER FOR THE FUTURE



Winter forage trial update October 2021

Murray Dairy has partnered with Birchip Cropping Group through the Fodder for the Future project to conduct a number of winter forage demonstration trials at Mitiamo.

These trials are designed to demonstrate a range of crop varieties and management strategies that optimise the yield and quality of forages specifically for use in dairy cow diets.

What are we measuring?

- Six oat varieties, two barley varieties, four vetch varieties, and four mixed species (field pea and vetch, vetch and oats, oats and canola, vetch and canola).
- The effect of two different sowing dates on final yield and quality.
- Additional treatments looking at two different sowing rates and three different cutting times.

The early sown oat harvest is nearly complete and commenced at the start of October. The later sown and longer oat varieties are expected to be harvested in the middle of October.

Visual observations are that the oats will probably yield just under 5 t/ha which is average for the area. The nitrogen plots have certainly responded well with additional yield and the phosphorous plots have grown additional tillers. The impact on quality for both of these responses are unknown until the samples have been analysed.

There is nothing obvious to the eye in regards to the potassium response but we need to wait until the quality results come back.

The vetch trial unfortunately had to be terminated in the middle of September due to a herbicide contamination issue, so there will be no results.

In the mixed species trials the field pea and vetch plots are looking the best from a yield and harvestability point of view. They were cut in early October and we await the results.

The other combinations have been mixed due to the late start of the season and therefore the different species have matured out of sync for hay cuts – they could have been ok for silage cuts. For next season better matches will be considered for a shorter season environment.

Winter forage trial at Mitiamo



Different nitrogen treatments: Oats late Sept 2021

