



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment



FODDER FOR THE FUTURE



Winter forage trial update August 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 cereals were sown in the last week of April and the first week of June. The early sown plots were slower to emerge due to a lack of moisture versus the early June sown plots.

Currently, there is a visual colour difference at each of the different nitrogen levels within the oats and barley plots. The normalised difference vegetation index (NDVI) which is a measure of “greenness”, certainly backs up this observation.

This colour difference is not observed in the potassium or phosphorous trials, so only the results will inform the impact of phosphorous on tillering, yield and quality. More tillers in theory should result in thinner stems and potentially better-quality feed, the results will be interesting to test this.

The vetch trial is looking at different maturities, sowing dates and cutting dates. There is not much to report from these plots yet and the vetch is just starting to move now that the sun has come out.

Winter forage trial at Mitiamo



Different nitrogen treatments: Oats 20 August 2021

