

KEEP CALCIUM LEVELS UP. TACKLE CALCIUM DEFICIENCIES IN FEED WHEN IT MATTERS MOST.

“ It’s great knowing your cows are sorted and that they’re unlikely to have low calcium issues. ”



NICOLE GOODWIN

TARANAKI SHAREMILKER

CALCIMATE[®]
FINE LIMESTONE

At a Glance

Location Kaponga, Taranaki
Farm Size 120 ha
Herd Size 200 Jersey cows
Stocking Rate 2.6 cows per ha

System Grass-based. No stand-off pad but they do utilise an old factory for calving.
Feeds Pasture, molasses in spring, and 250gm per cow, per day, of Calcimate dusted on the paddocks between August and November.

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Nicole and Jesse Goodwin share milk 200 Jersey cows on a family farm on the colder, southern side of Mount Taranaki. This is the farm Jesse grew up on and his grandparents still live on the property and are valued advisors to the young couple.

Jesse Goodwin grew up hearing how his grandparents had successfully farmed this land.

With horse and cart, and deliveries of milk cans to the factory, Ian and Betty Goodwin turned creamy jersey milk in to money on a cold, wet site on the southern side of Mount Taranaki.

So, when Jesse and his wife Nicole moved home nine years ago to share milk on the 120ha farm, they decided to continue with the same 'keep it simple' philosophy the Goodwins had followed for more than five decades.

"We're not pushing production," Nicole says, "and Jerseys are very efficient."

They don't use an in-shed feeding system or stand-off pads or many of the other innovations now commonplace in dairying. They feed their cows grass, which grows thick and fast all year thanks to a rainy microclimate. They top up the cows' diet with a bit of molasses in a trough on the race in spring, and dust the paddocks with Calcimate daily between August and mid-November.

Each day during that crucial time of year, Nicole empties numerous 25kg bags of lime flour – equivalent to 250gm per cow – in to a spreader on the back of her farm bike. As she brings the cows in for afternoon milking, she dusts the night break segment of the paddock with lime flour.

"It's great knowing your cows are sorted and that they're unlikely to have low calcium issues."

Last season – their first using Calcimate – they didn't have a single milker go down with milk fever. They have achieved similar milk solids to the previous year with fewer cows. While they are not sure that the improvement is related to Calcimate they feel it has certainly been a factor in achieving the results they have seen.

Wonder Minerals rep Craig Hartley-Smith recommended Calcimate to ensure that Calcium levels in the herd are maintained.

"We gave Calcimate a go because Craig recommended it and he knows what he's talking about, so we thought: Oh, give it a go," Nicole says.

Jesse and Nicole job-share farm and family duties. They have three children, aged 2 to 7. Jesse does the morning milkings and Nicole does the afternoon. They check in with Ian and Betty regularly, drawing on their extensive experience farming this land.

The farm is recovering from a disastrous 2018 when two tornadoes ripped through the property, obliterating the farm's power supply and fences. They lost 15 cows when stock scattered and made their way in to previously-fenced creeks and drains.

But the Goodwins are rebuilding and hope to milk 220 cows next season.

With the unexpected drop in herd numbers in 2018, it's been hard to quantify the financial impact of their first year using Calcimate.

"We did see a change in the cows when they'd calved and they went on the lime flour. They were happy and keen as beans to get in and get milked."

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