



EIPWALES

Cydweithio er ffyniant gwledig
Collaborating for rural success

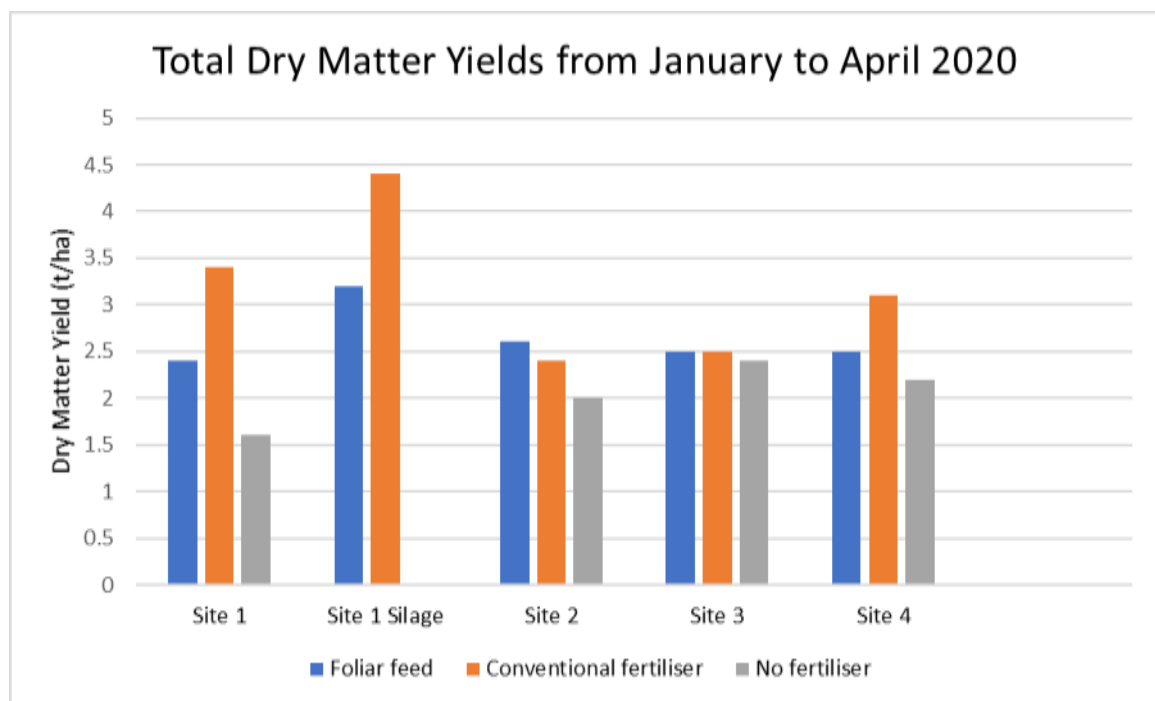


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Foliar Feed for Grassland

Are liquid foliar feeds, based on urea and humic acid, more efficient than standard prilled nitrogen fertilisers?

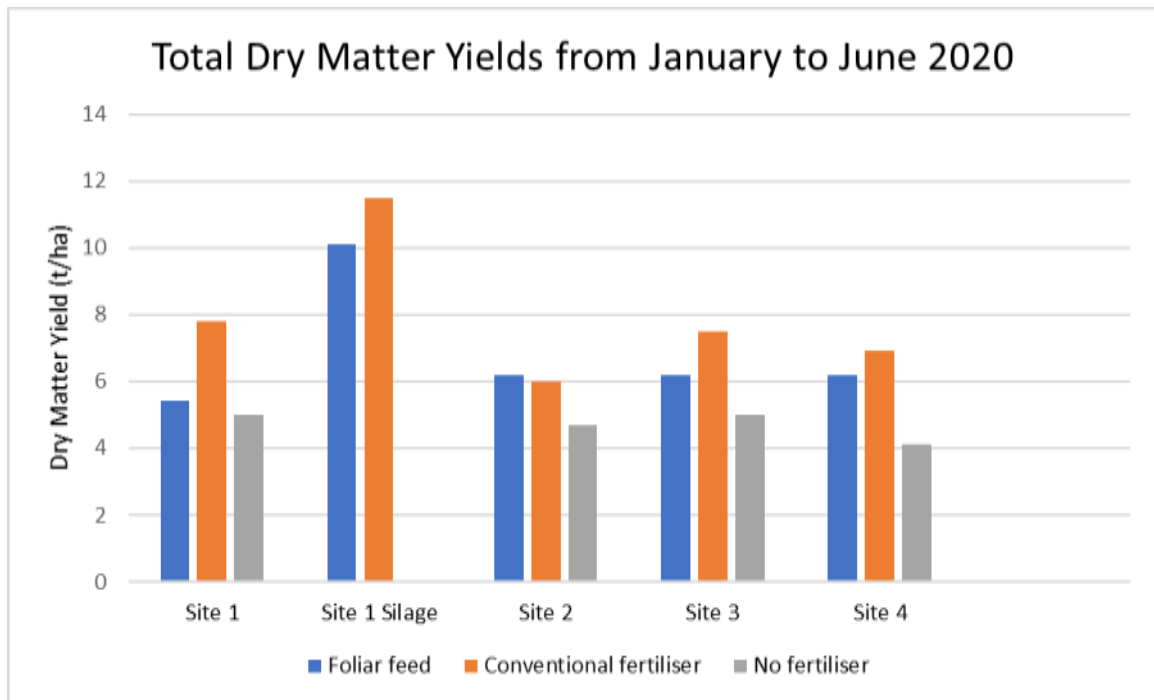
The start to the second year of the EIP Foliar Feed project has certainly been a 'mixed bag' as far as dealing with the wet winter up until early March and then a long dry spell leading to drought conditions early in the growing season.



The two sites which had the highest dry matter (DM) yields in 2019 (site 1 and 2) were 0.9 tDM/ha and 0.3 tDM/ha behind on grass growth at the same point this year. Site 3 and 4, which are more challenging sites with higher altitude and heavier soil conditions, fared better with both being 0.6 tDM/ha up on the previous year at this same point.

The foliar feed plots have responded well with good early spring growth, duplicating data we recorded in spring 2019. The data shows that the foliar feed plots grew the same as/more than the conventional plots at 2 out of the 4 sites with the no fertiliser plots growing less on all sites which is to be expected. Because foliar feed is applied directly to the grass, it does not have to rely on rain for its activation, meaning it can sustain grass growth better than conventional fertiliser in dry weather conditions.

By the end of April on the grazing plots, the conventional plots had received 61 kg/ha of nitrogen, whereas the foliar feed plots had received 18 kg/ha of nitrogen. On the silage site the conventional plots had 315 kg/ha of product compared to 60 kg/ha of product on the foliar feed plot prior to being cut in the 3rd week of April.



By the end of June, the conventional plots have had a total of 80 kgN/ha-120 kgN/ha, whereas the foliar feed plots have had 27 kgN/ha- 45 kgN/ha. It is important to remember that the foliar feed plots on average have received 84 kg/ha less nitrogen than the conventional plots whilst still producing very similar amounts of grass. By comparing the fresh grass samples and the plate meter readings from the silage site to date, it seems to show a consistent trend that the foliar feed plot grass has a higher dry matter content than the conventional by 4.5%-5%. This in turn would mean we need to increase the dry matter yield data for the foliar feed plots by 4.5%-5%, which would close the gap between the foliar and conventional plots. We will know more by the end of the season as to the validity of this trend.



One of the trial sites where electric fencing has been used to separate one large field into 3 plots.