

# Westland Monitor Farm Project

Weekly Update as at week ending Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019

## CO Comment

It's time to start thinking about body condition score (BCS) and how achieving the recommended BCS targets is important to optimise milk production, reproduction, health and welfare.

Energy is only partitioned to BCS when maintenance, activity, pregnancy and milk production demands are already met.

Cows need time to gain BCS. They gain almost no BCS in the month before calving and often lose BCS in the two weeks following drying off. Even well-fed cows will not gain more than 0.5 BCS unit in a month.

Lower BCS cows must be dried off earlier to reach target BCS at calving.

The main objective of management in the last third of lactation is to set the cow up for the following lactation. This requires a focus on BCS.

To optimise farm management (i.e. milk production, reproduction, health), mature cows should be BCS 5.0 at calving, with first and second calvers at 5.5 BCS.

To achieve these BCS targets, cows must:

- have sufficient feed to eat above the requirements for maintenance, milk production, pregnancy and activity, and
- have enough time to increase BCS.

The fact that cows require a certain amount of feed to gain one BCS unit is clearly understood, however the amount of time needed is often forgotten. Modern dairy cows and, in particular, the thinnest cows, do not partition much energy to BCS while milking.

These cows must be dried off early to have sufficient time dry to gain condition for optimal BCS at calving.

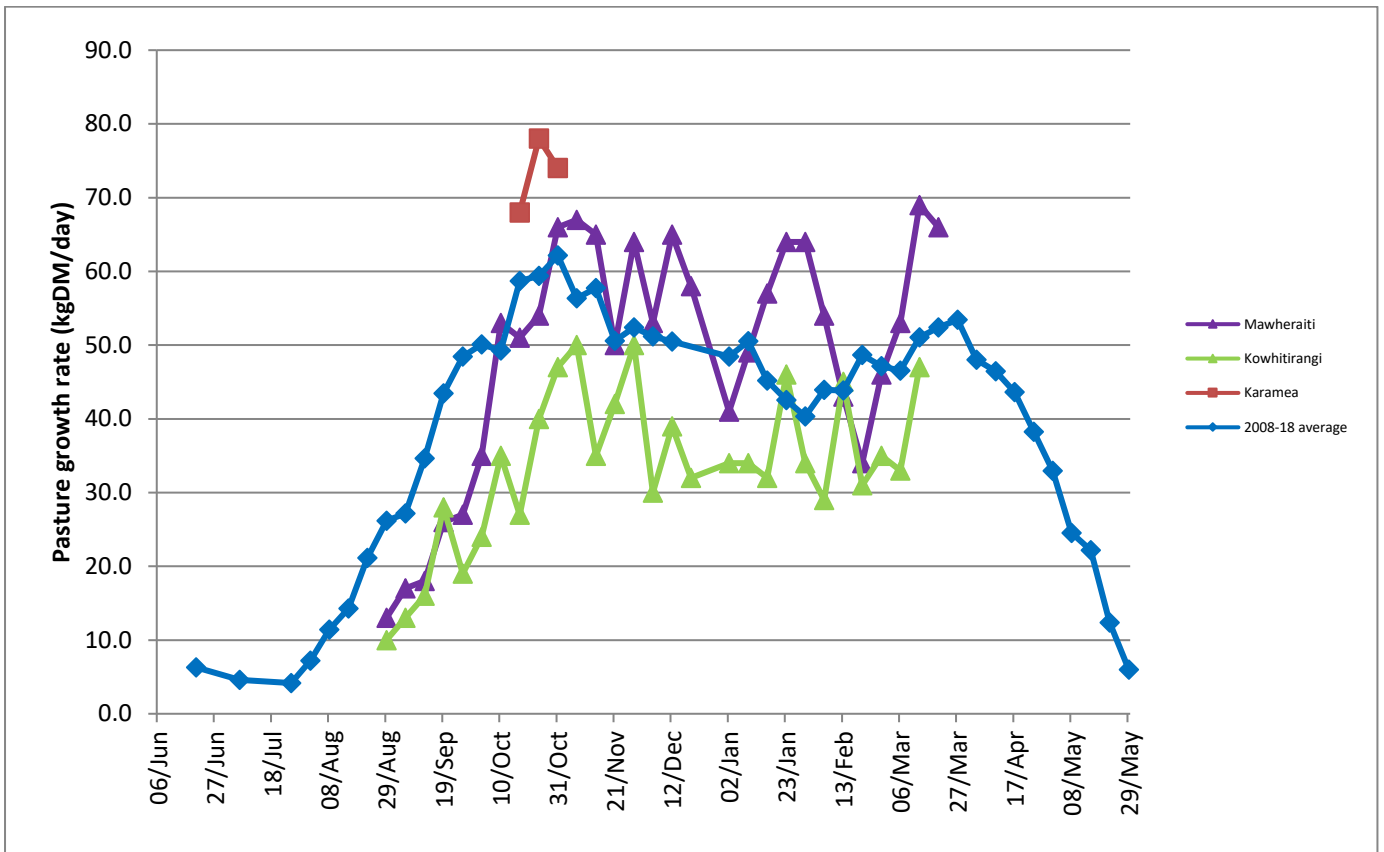
For more information on BCS strategies visit <https://www.dairynz.co.nz/animal/body-condition-scoring/bcs-strategies/>

## Farm Summary

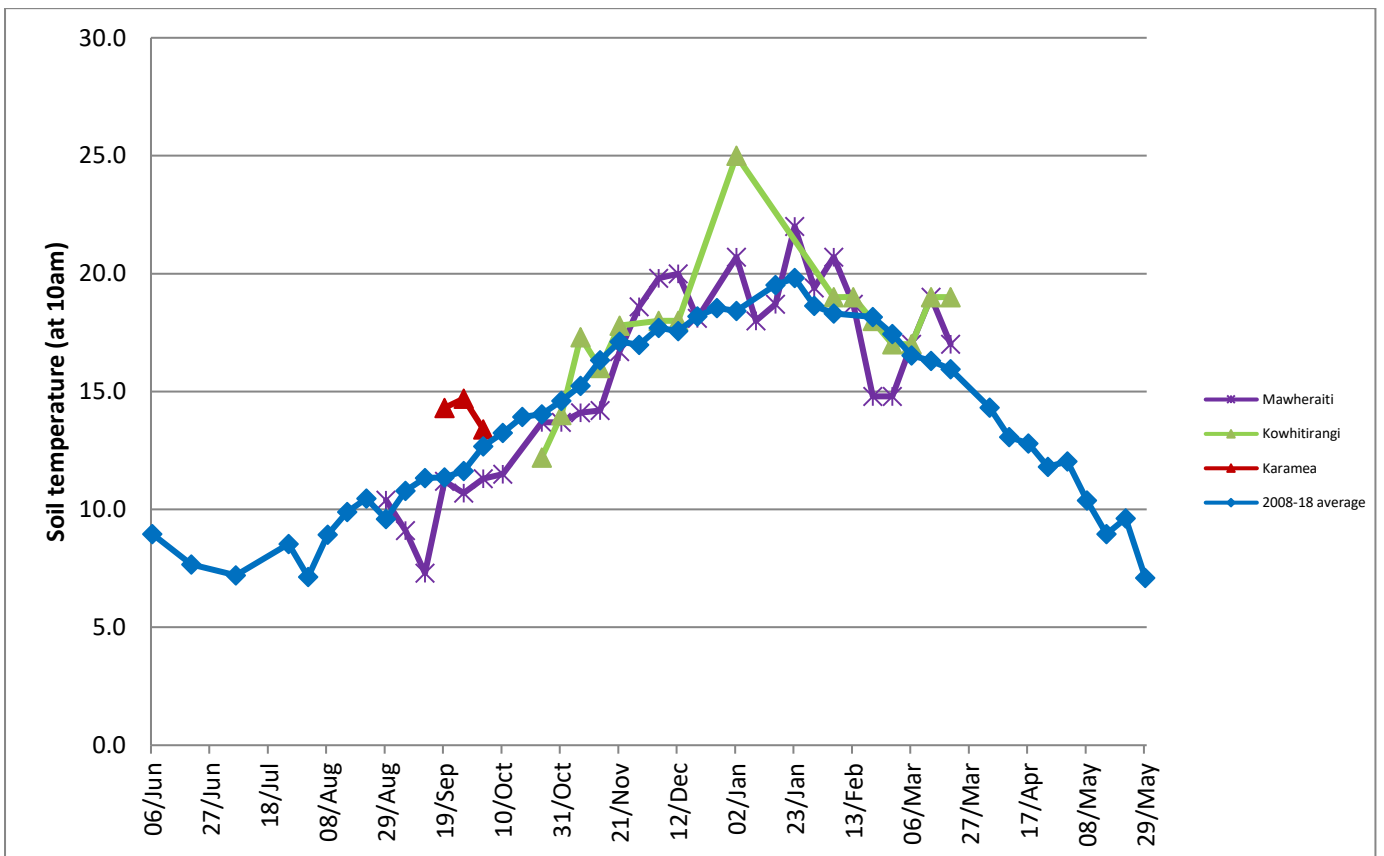
	Mawheraiti	Kowhitirangi
Average cover (kg DM/ha)	2427	-
APC (13 February)	2328	2285
Rotation length (days)	25	30
Stocking rate	2.4	2.2
Percentage in milk	100	100
Milksolids kg/cow	1.61	1.50
Milksolids kg/ha	3.6	3.0
MS/cow (season to date)	357	349
MS/ha (season to date)	897	711
N (kg/ha) year to date	121	178
Current N application rate kg N/ha	-	-

DM%	11.8	13.1
Pasture ME	12.9	11.8
Pasture NDF	53.5	50.9
Pasture CP	29.2	26.1
Target Intake (kg DM/cow/d)	20	18
Supplement (kg/cow/day)	0	1.5
Soil temperature (°C)	17	19
Growth Rate (kg DM/day)	66	-
Rainfall	0	-
Conditions for farmwalk	Hot and sunny	Unable to do farm walk due to flooding
Comments		

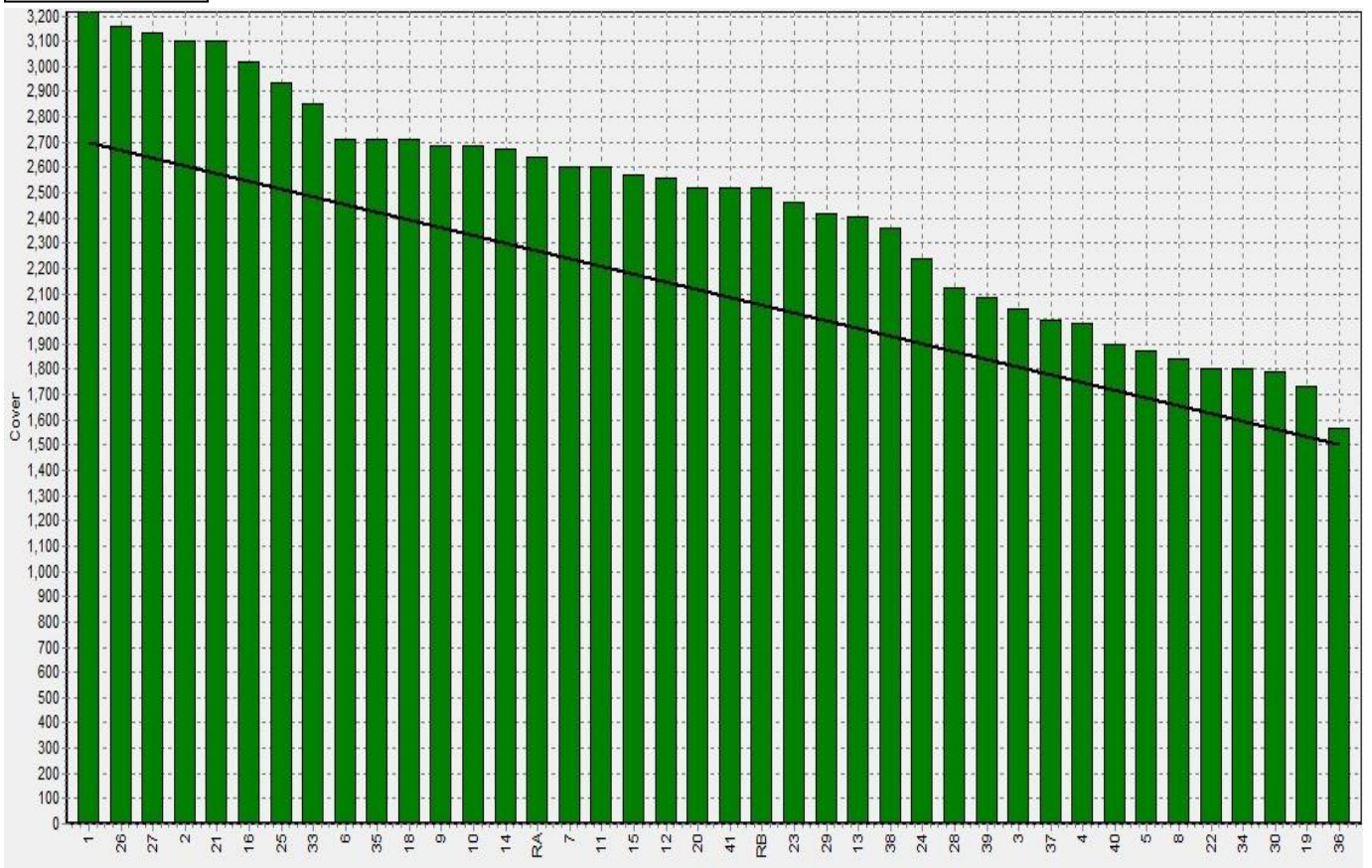
## Weekly Pasture Growth Rates



## Weekly Soil Temperature



### Mawheraiti



### Kowhitirangi

**Not available due to flooding**



