

Westland Monitor Farm Project

Weekly Update as at week ending Wednesday 24th June 2020

CO Comment

Here are a couple of things to think about now we have about a month to go before calving.

Well-controlled grazing management in the first 2 months after calving, sets your farm up for excellent milk production to Christmas. Plan the grazing rotation for these months now, and ensure you stay within the target pasture cover levels. Use website calculators to tailor this planning to your farm <https://www.dairynz.co.nz/feed/pasture-management/feed-wedges-and-rotation-planners/spring-rotation-planner/>

One aim of the coming months is to avoid running the average farm pasture cover down below a level where pasture growth is reduced. Staying above target cover is not a problem currently and as we go into calving, but pasture re-growth also determines the end result. Several factors could limit future re-growth; the amount of pugging should it get wet, the long grass that has already accumulated. High pasture cover is no reason for complacency about the situation in two months. Monitoring pasture re-growth at the lower end of the feed wedge will be vital for predicting any looming feed deficits. If conditions are favourable, watch out for early surplus grass at the top of the wedge and the opportunity for low reliance on supplements.

BCS is the single most important factor influencing the health, milk production and reproductive success following calving. The optimum BCS at calving for mature cows is 5. Heifers and second calvers should be 5.5 BCS at calving.

Feeding levels during the month before calving have an important effect on animal health after calving.

Cows thinner than BCS 5.0 before calving should not be restricted pre-calving.

Cows fatter than BCS 5.0 are at an increased risk of metabolic disease after calving if fed too much high-quality feed before calving.

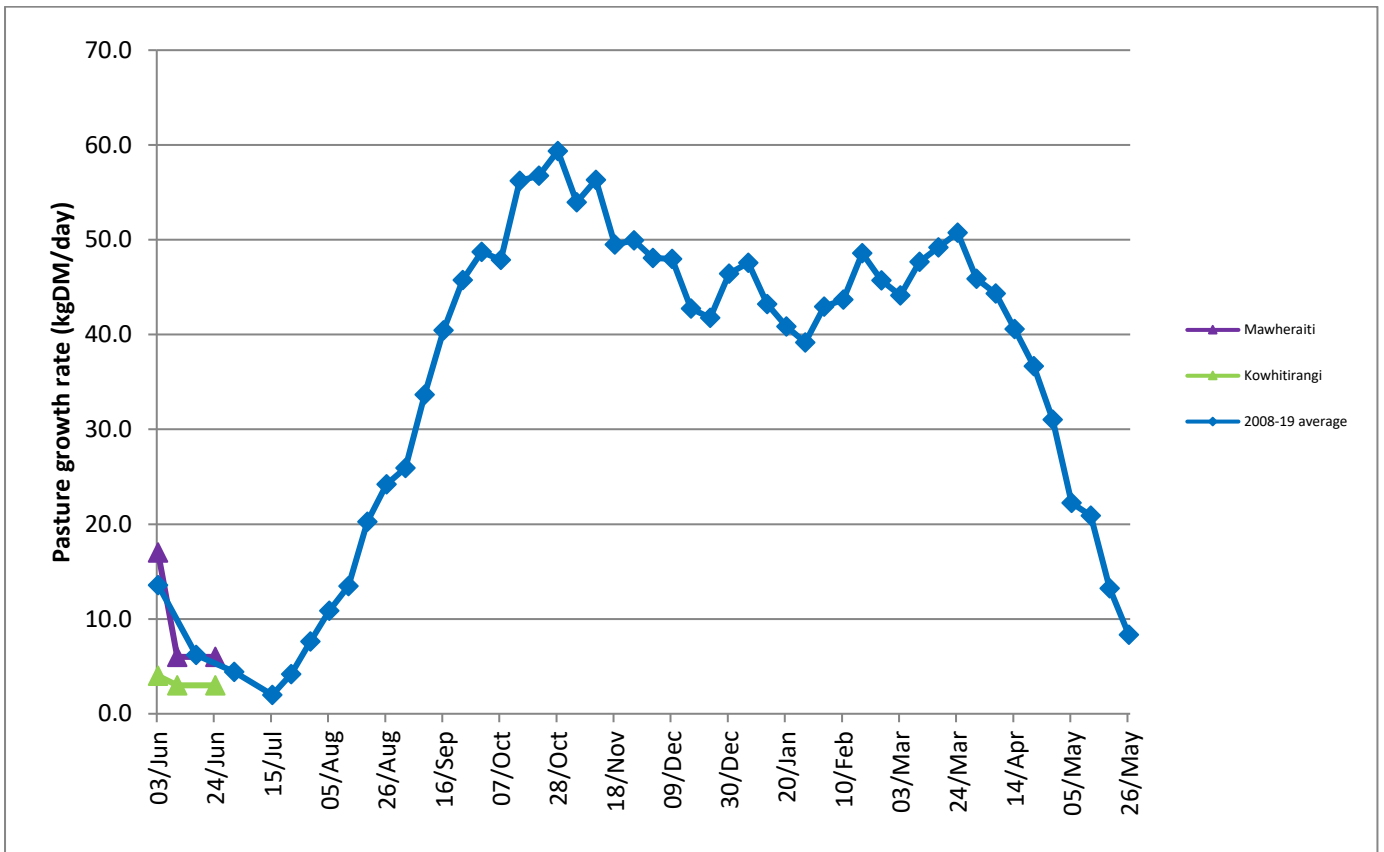
DairyNZ trial results indicate that cows were healthiest if they calved between BCS 4.5 and 5. If thinner than BCS 4.5, they had a poorer immune function and were more at risk of a uterine infection. However, if fatter than the target (i.e. BCS 5.5), there was an increased risk of ketosis and other metabolic diseases, particularly if they were being fed high-quality feed during the weeks before calving. These metabolic diseases also increase the risk of uterine infections and mastitis.

Farm Summary

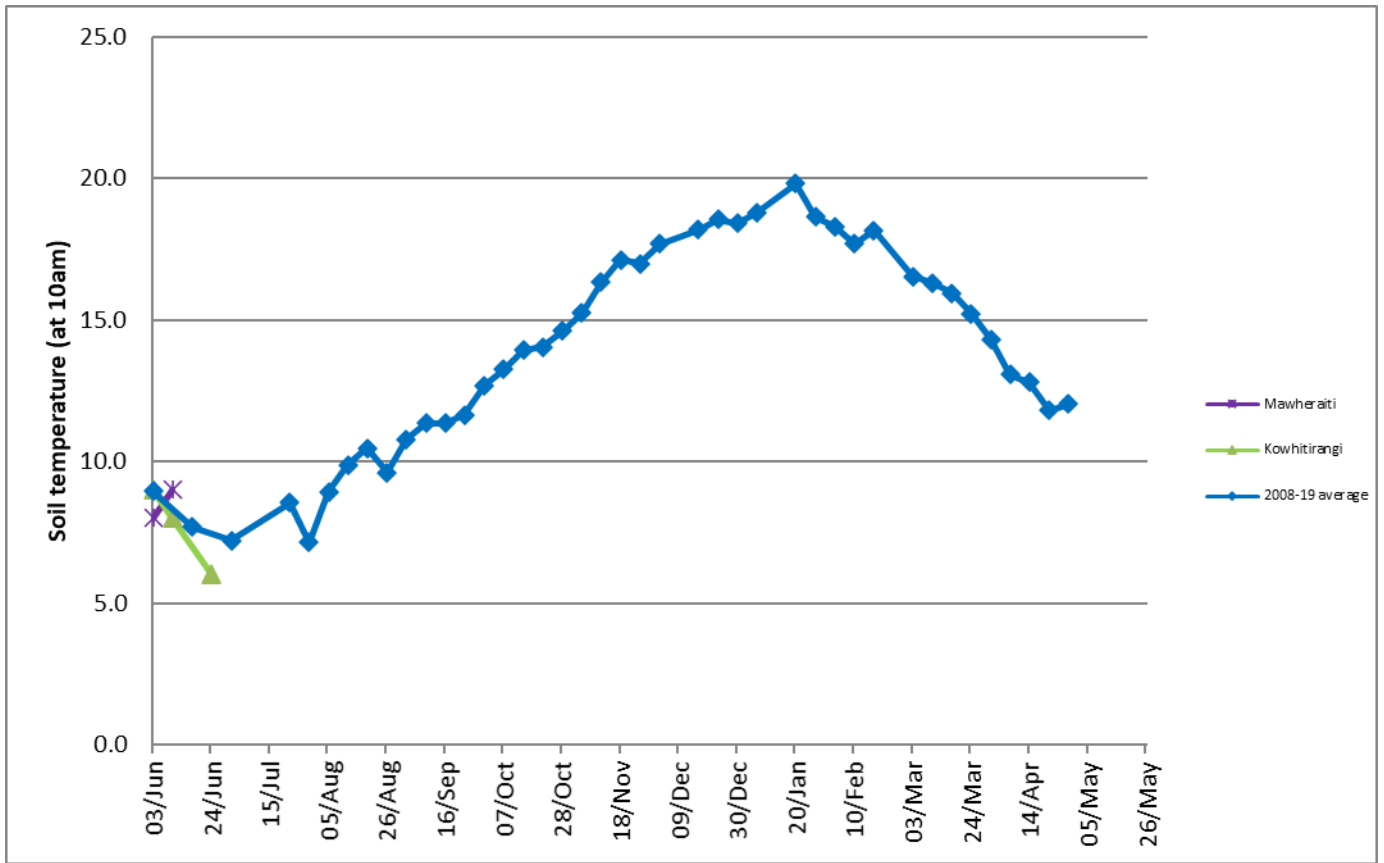
	Mawheraiti	Kowhitirangi
Average cover (kg DM/ha)	2071	1876
APC (10 June)	1983	1865
Rotation length (days)		90
Stocking rate		
Percentage in milk	0	0
Milksolids kg/cow	-	-
Milksolids kg/ha	-	-
MS/cow (season to date)	6	-
MS/ha (season to date)	16	-
N (kg/ha) year to date	25	0
Current N application rate kg N/ha	-	-
	8 Jun	10 Jun
DM%	12.8	13.6
Pasture ME	12.7	12.9
Pasture NDF	41.5	33.6
Pasture CP	26.1	28.3
Target Intake (kg DM/cow/d)		13
Supplement (kg/cow/day)		7.6
Soil temperature (°C)		6
Growth Rate (kg DM/day)	6	3
Rainfall		85
Conditions for farmwalk		

NB: pasture quality data are for 1 sample collected from each farm

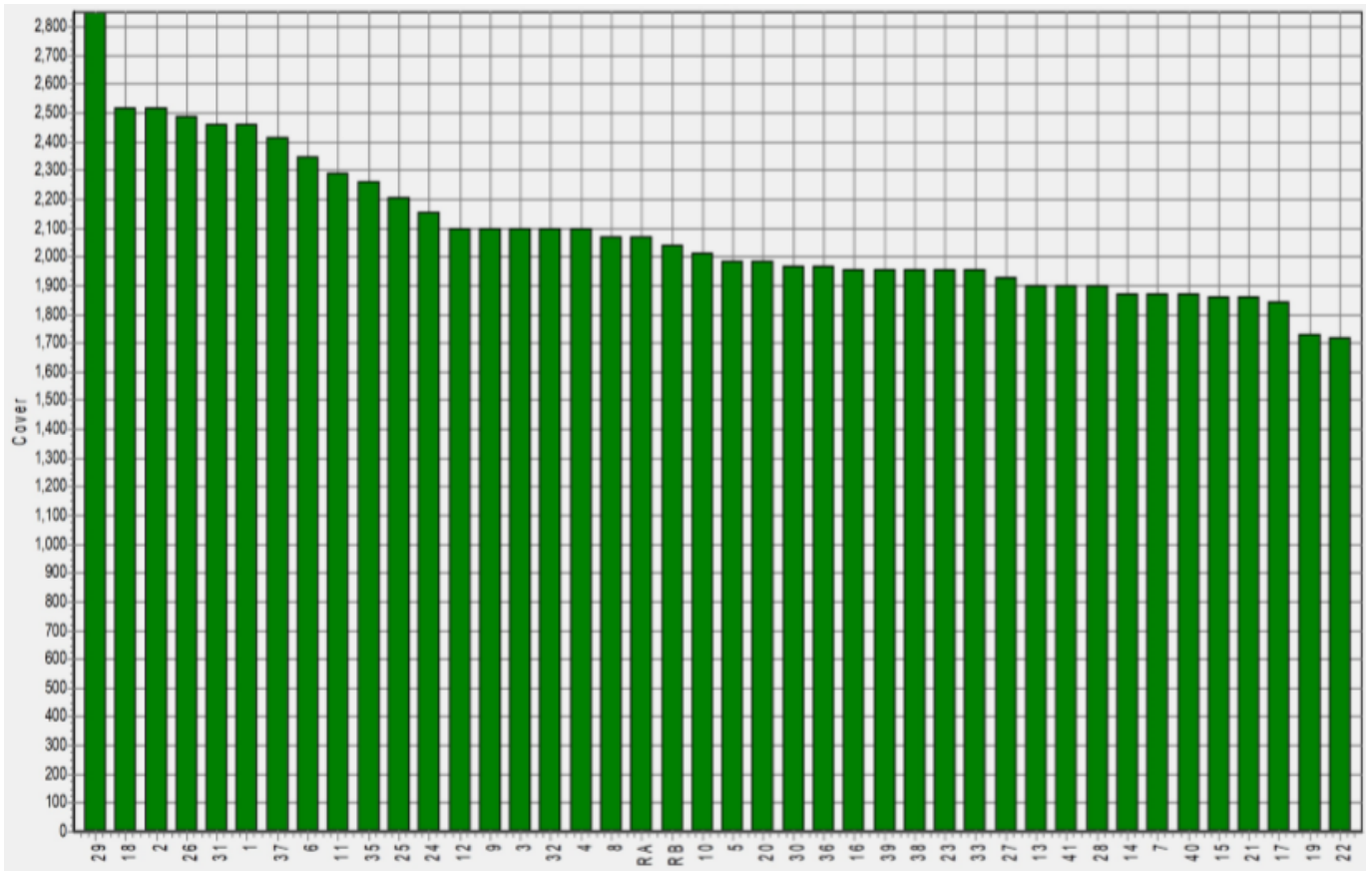
Weekly Pasture Growth Rates



Weekly Soil Temperature



Mawheraiti



Kowhitirangi

