

Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

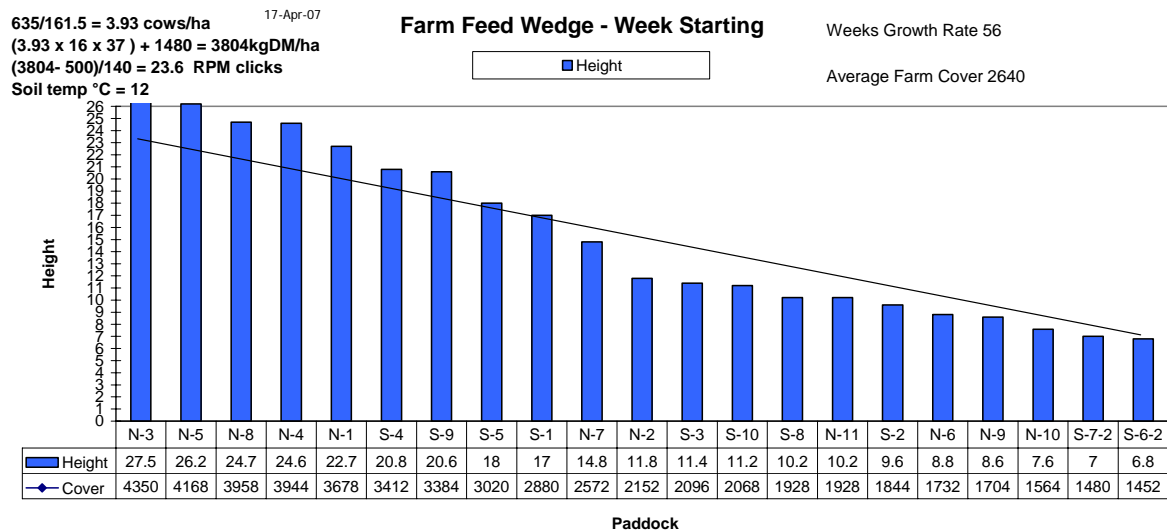
Tuesday 24th April 2007

Critical issues for the short term

1. Maintain a rotation length of between 35 and 40 days and residuals at 7 “clicks”.
2. Monitor cow condition and somatic cell count levels.

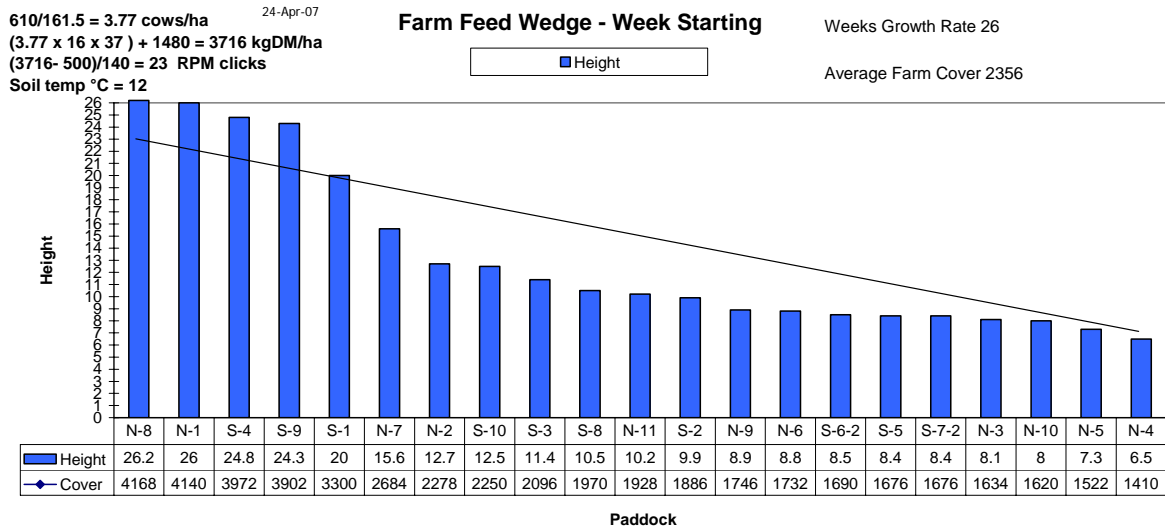
Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. SOIL TEMPS have held to 12° C.
4. PASTURE GROWTH has dropped this week to 26 kg DM/ha (last week 56). This is lower than average and seems surprising. The 5 year average for April on LUDF is 42. Growth rates for paddocks in their first week after grazing has been less than half of the average growth rate of the farm and only a quarter of the growth rate of paddocks that had a cover of over 2000 at the start of the week.
5. AVERAGE PASTURE COVER has dropped from 2640 kg DM/ha to 2356. We allocated an average of 1/40 of the farm a day for this week and did not feed out any supplements.
6. MILK PRODUCTION has dropped to 1.27 kg MS/cow/day (last week 1.30 kg MS/cow/day) and 4.78 kg MS/ha (4.89 kg MS/ha last week).
7. Last weeks Pasture Feed Wedge was



8. The relatively small period of future deficit last week is now a much larger looming deficit. This group of paddocks below the target line (N7 to about N10) has occurred because of slow re-growth due to a) the cold snap and b) slow recovery of some paddocks that had such high pre-grazing covers that they were yellowing at the base.
9. We will continue to hold our current rotation length for this week (without needing to feed out silage). The 5 long paddocks are enough feed for the next 9 days with the current cow numbers.

10. This weeks Pasture Feed Wedge is



11. Over this week we will be making critical decisions on how many cows to dry off and when. We have a condition score for every cow and have now identified early and late calving groups in each of the Condition Score ranges of, below 4.0, between 4.0 & 4.5, and over 4.5. Our objective is for every cow to calve at its target condition score at calving. These targets are Condition Score 5.5 for Rising 2yrs and Rising 3yrs, and Condition Score 5.0 for mature cows.
12. We will still have 60t DM of silage that can be fed out this season plus our average farm cover is about 200 kg DM /ha above our dry off target. Our last rotation length will be about 30 days. All these factors will be factored into our feed budget.
13. Pre-grazing pasture ME continues to hold at above 12 despite the high pre-grazing covers. This is driven by consistently achieving the target post grazing residual of 7 “clicks”.
14. The walk over weighing shows the herd average weight has lifted 10 kgs to 490 kgs.
15. The last N fertilizer occurred on the 4 April to bring us to our total annual of 200 kgs.
16. The bulk somatic cell count was an average of 240,000 last week and 246,000 this week.
17. Soil moisture levels are holding about mid way between field capacity and stress point. This indicates that we will not need to irrigate this week.
18. Two paddocks on the East Block were drilled with Tabu. These will need to be nipped off this week with the R1yr heifers. Pasture covers on all runoff blocks will now be measured every two weeks on the block and winter feed budgets monitored.

Next Focus Day - 3 May 10.15am to 1.15 - lunch sponsored by Ravensdown. Focus on Herd health, Reproduction and Nutrient Management

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 24th April 2007 9.00am.**

Management Group

Peter Hancox (Farm Manager), George Reveley (for SIDDC), and Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel).

Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

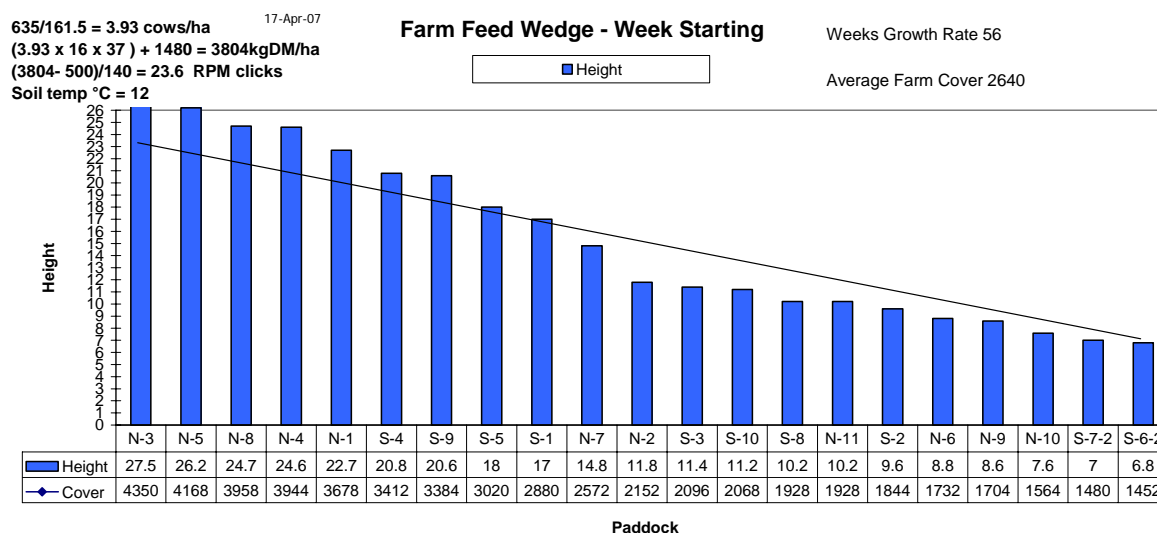
Tuesday 17th April 2007

Critical issues for the short term

1. Maintain a rotation length of between 35 and 40 days.
2. Make sure that the target residual of 7 “clicks” is reached.
3. Monitor cow condition and somatic cell count levels.

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMPS have dropped to 12° C (14.1 last week).
5. PASTURE GROWTH is holding at 56 kg DM/ha (last week 76). The growth rates this month have been the highest we have seen for this time of the year. The 5 year average for April on LUDF is 42.
6. AVERAGE PASTURE COVER has dropped from 2771 kg DM/ha to 2640. We allocated an average of 1/38 of the farm a day.
7. MILK PRODUCTION is holding at 1.30 kg MS/cow/day (last week 1.28 kg MS/cow/day) and 4.89 kg MS/ha and we are falling further behind last year. We are behind on a daily basis and now 4.0% behind last season to date.
8. This weeks PASTURE FEED WEDGE is



9. The unseasonably high growth has resulted in 4 paddocks above the target pre-grazing cover. Paddock S5 is currently being grazed by the cows. We will continue to hold (possibly extend) our current rotation length for this week (without needing to feed out silage) in an attempt to reduce the deficit that has appeared. This period of future deficit (where paddocks are below the target line N2 to about N9) has occurred because of slow re-growth due to a) the cold snap and b) slow recovery of some paddocks that had such high pre-grazing covers that they were yellowing at the base.

10. Pre-grazing pasture ME's continue to hold at above 12 despite the high pre-grazing covers. This is driven by consistently achieving the target post grazing residual of 7 "clicks".
11. The weeks wedge shows that it will be grazing through paddocks at about 4,000 kgs DM/ha for the next week. Our previous feed budgets for April anticipated culling/drying off a further 80 cows (13%) by mid April. Our current pasture situation means that we will continue to hold our current numbers for longer, probably until after the 25th when we will have to address the problem of some early calving cows that are currently below condition score 4.2.
12. The automatic walk over weighing is showing that the herd held its weight at 480 kgs.
13. The twelve cows below condition score 4.0 have been put onto OAD milking and after putting on 5 kgs have held over this last fortnight.
14. The last application of N fertilizer occurred on the 4 April to bring us to our total annual maximum of 200 kgs N/ha on the non-effluent areas of the milking platform of the farm.
15. The bulk somatic cell count was an average of 230,000 last week and 240 this week.
16. No irrigation this week as soil moisture levels have continues to rise after recent rain.
17. A close inspection of the nettle infestation in the new grass paddock has confirmed that it is the ordinary tap rooted annual variety and that the flowers are just forming. This will make control easy simply by mowing with not further risk of seeding.
18. Grass grub damage is again showing up but is minimal and covers about 5 ha. Areas where grass grub damage was bad last year now clearly have high infestations of weed grasses which are not growing well.
19. We will be getting liver biopsies taken from "normal" cows amongst the next group of culls.
20. Two paddocks on the East Block were drilled with Tabu. These will need to be nipped of within 10 days. Pasture covers will be measured every two weeks on the block and winter feed budgets monitored.

Next Focus Day - 3 May 10.15am to 1.15
with lunch sponsored by Ravensdown. Focus on Herd health, Reproduction
and Nutrient Management.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 24th April 2007 10.00am.**

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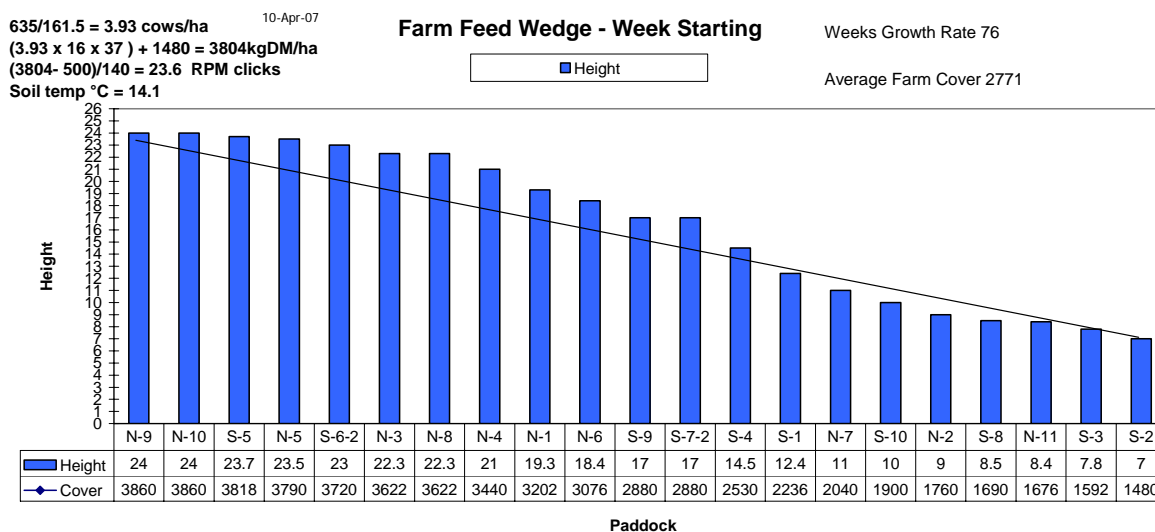
Tuesday 10th April 2007

Critical issues for the short term

1. Maintain a rotation length of between 35 and 40 days.
2. Make sure that the target residual of 7 “clicks” is reached.
3. Monitor cow condition and somatic cell count levels.

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMPS have dropped to 14.1 ° C.
5. PASTURE GROWTH is holding at 76 kg DM/ha (last week 79). The growth rates this month have been the highest we have seen for this time of the year. The 5 year average for April on LUDF is 42.
6. AVERAGE PASTURE COVERS have risen again from 2680 to 2771 kgs DM/ha as a result of the unseasonably high growth and through allocating an average of 1/38 of the farm a day.
7. MILK PRODUCTION is holding at 1.28 kgs MS/cow/day and 4.88 kgs MS/ha and we are falling further behind last year. We are behind on a daily basis and now 3.8% behind last season to date.
8. This weeks PASTURE FEED WEDGE is



9. We again have a lot more grass on the farm than we currently require. Paddock N6 is currently being grazed by the cows. We will continue to hold (possibly extend) our current rotation length without needing to feed out silage.
10. The weeks wedge shows that we could potentially be grazing through paddocks at about 4,000 kgs DM/ha for two weeks even if growth rates drop into the 50's. This is not ideal however pasture analysis shows that the ME is holding at 12.3. Our previous feed budgets for April anticipated culling/drying off a further 80 cows (13%). Our current pasture situation means that we will continue to hold our current numbers for longer, probably until after the 20th when we will have to address the problem of some early calving cows that are currently below condition score 4.2.

11. The nettle in the new grass paddocks will be controlled by mowing after the next grazing this week.
12. The automatic walk over weighing is showing that the herd held its weight at 480 kgs.
13. The twelve cows below condition score 4.0 have been put onto OAD milking and after putting on 5 kgs have held over this last week. We have also identified by tag number 128 cows with a condition score between 4.0 and 4.2 and a further 367 cows with a condition score between 4.3 and 4.5. These groups have been set up in Protrack so that we can easily monitor these cows from now on. We will split these two groups up further using calving dates.
14. We have now applied all our N fertilizer (our maximum for the year of 200 kgs N/ha on the non-effluent areas of the milking platform of the farm).
15. We have used the herd test data two weeks ago to set up a group of cows in Protrack with Somatic cell counts over 300,000. These 34 cows are being checked for clinical mastitis at every milking. So far 5 of these cows have been found to have clinical mastitis. These 5 cows have been treated. Two other cows were also found to have clinical mastitis and have been treated. The bulk cell count has changed from 285,000 to 207,000 and now this week has been at 230,000.
16. No irrigation this week and given the current low soil moisture deficits it is very unlikely that we will irrigate again this season.
17. The R1yr replacement heifer calves were weighted on the 21 March. The average was 185 kgs (the end of March target weight was 165 kgs). The range was large, 125 kgs up to 246 kgs. There are 20 calves (out of 172) which are below 150 kgs and will not make the crossbred target weight of 165 kgs by the end of March. Most of these are late born calves or are jersey. These calves have consistently been grazing to “7 clicks” and have only been drenched twice (using faecal egg counts to decided drench timing). 46 kgs meal/calf was used this season.
18. Grass grub damage is again showing up but is minimal and covers about 5 ha. Areas where grass grub damage was bad last year now clearly have high infestations of weed grasses which are not growing well.
19. We will be getting liver biopsies taken from “normal” cows amongst the next group of culls.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 17th April 2007 10.00am.**

Management Group

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Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

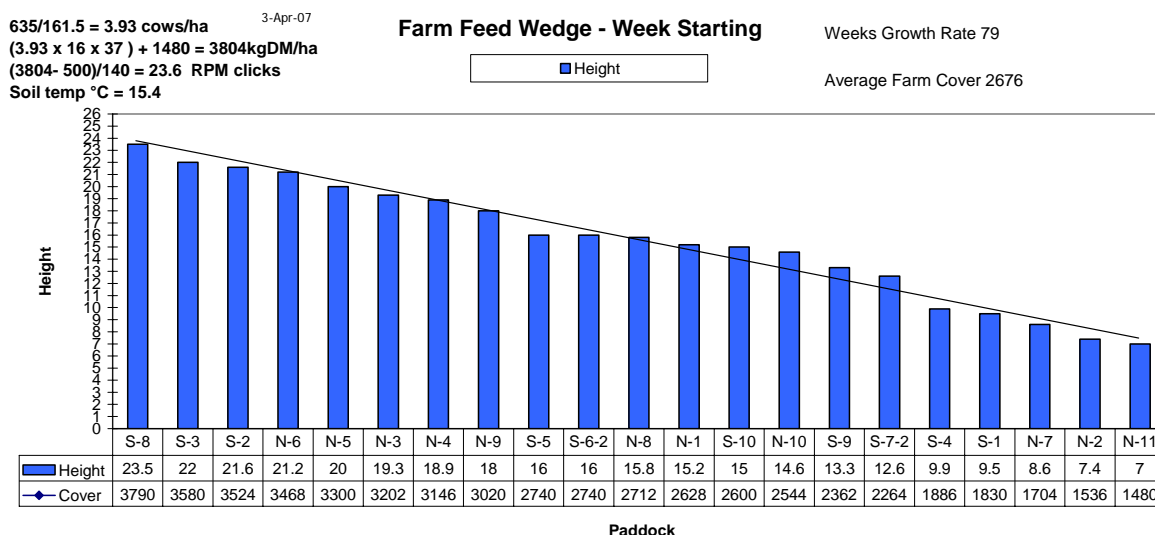
Tuesday 3rd April 2007

Critical issues for the short term

1. Maintain a rotation length of between 35 and 40 days.
2. Make sure that the target residual of 7 “clicks” is reached.
3. Monitor cow condition and somatic cell count levels.

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMPS are holding at 15.4° C which is still well above the long term average for this time of the year of 13°.
5. PASTURE GROWTH is also holding at 79 kg DM/ha (last week 81). The growth rates this month have been the highest we have seen for this time of the year. The 5 year average for March on LUDF is 55 kg DM/ha while this year we have averaged 74kg DM/ha.
6. AVERAGE PASTURE COVERS have risen another 20 kgs DM/ha to 2680 as a result of the unseasonably high growth and through allocating an average of 1/38 of the farm a day.
7. MILK PRODUCTION is holding at 1.33kgs MS/cow/day and 5.07 kgs MS/ha and we are falling further behind last year. We are behind on a daily basis and now 3.5% behind last season to date.
8. This weeks PASTURE FEED WEDGE is



9. The feed situation continues to look good. Paddock S10 is currently being grazed by the cows. The wedge has evened up nicely and we can continue at this rotation length of between 35 and 40 days for another week without additional silage. This is saving us a large amount of money (\$629 a day of silage (3.5 kgs/cow/day) plus costs of feeding it out) plus there is a big time saving. At a response of 80gms MS/kg silage the \$ return would only just cover the cost of the silage and not the cost of feeding it out.

10. The nettle in the news grass paddocks will be controlled by mowing after the next grazing in about 2 weeks.
11. The automatic walk over weighing is showing that the herd held its weight at 480 kgs.
12. The twelve cows below condition score 4.0 have been put onto OAD milking and have put on 5 kgs. We have also identified by tag number 128 cows with a condition score between 4.0 and 4.2 and a further 367 cows with a condition score between 4.3 and 4.5. These groups have been set up in Protrack so that we can easily monitor these cows from now on. We will split these two groups up further using calving dates.
13. We are 2/3 of the way through our last round of N applications. The rate is 25 kgs N/ha and this brings us up to our maximum for the year of 200 kgs N/ha on the non-effluent areas of the milking platform of the farm.
14. We have used the herd test data to set up a group of cows in Protrack with Somatic cell counts over 300,000. These 34 cows are being checked for clinical mastitis at every milking. So far 4 cows have been found to have clinical mastitis. These 4 cows have been treated. The bulk cell count has dropped from 285,000 to 207,000.
15. North Block soil moisture deficit levels are just sufficient, if it has not rained again by Thursday, we will do another round of irrigation. With soil temperatures holding at over 15 degrees another round of irrigation of 5mm will not drop soil temperatures. The heavier soils on the South block are much less likely to need another round of irrigation.
16. We are currently looking for an intermediate staff member, to start this month.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 10th April 2007 10.00am.**

Management Group

Peter Hancox (Farm Manager), George Reveley (for SIDDC), and Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel).