

Lincoln University Dairy Farm – Farm Walk notes

Tuesday 31st January 2006

Critical issues for the short term

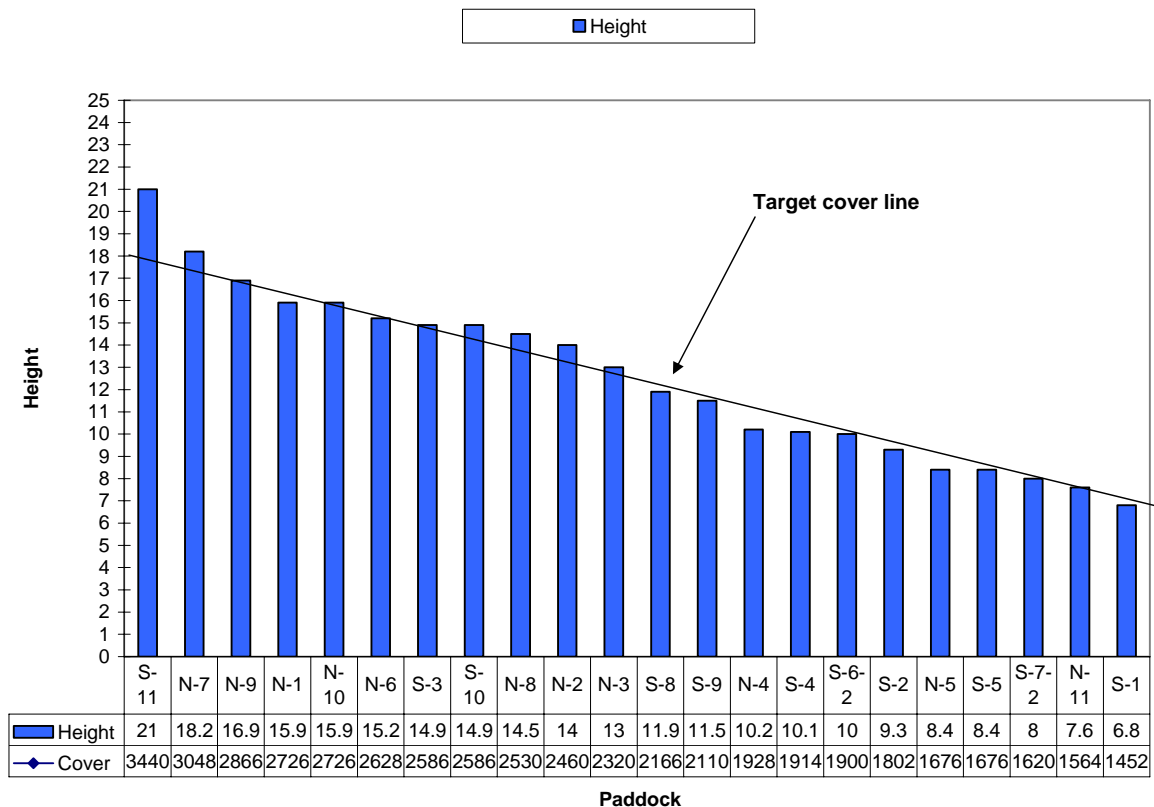
1. Keep water up to all areas, special attention to laterals and k-lines.
2. Careful allocation of pasture to hold milk production and nutrition.

Grazing Management and animal performance

3. Ave PASTURE COVER has dropped to 2260 kgDM/ha, down 50 on last weeks 2307/ha. This was mainly because one paddock (9.2ha) of surplus was taken for baleage.
4. PASTURE GROWTH estimated at 75-85 kgDM/ha for last week, above our required growth of 65. We have a temporary technical difficulty in reconciling pasture growth, and are investigating the spreadsheets further. Our intuitive guess from the farm walk is that growth was high, and the farm cover changes confirm this, but the figure the computer gave us was only 69. We disagree. Watch this space.
5. We are budgeting on growth of 70 kgDM/day for this coming week.
6. Soil Temperatures are high (20.4 °C). This and ambient (air) temps up to 30 °C are probably limiting growth on hot days. We do not have any limits on our irrigation water.
7. Grazing RESIDUALS are on target of 7 clicks or 1480 kgDM/ha., and PREGRAZING PASTURE HEIGHTS are around 3000 kgDM/ha. The silage cut last week was at the required residual height (ranged 7 to 7.5 clicks on the platometer).
8. Pasture QUALITY appears very good, with lush leafy pasture and little/no seedhead, other than some in the Italian variety paddocks (Tabu). Clover content remains strong.
9. Per cow PRODUCTION has dropped slightly to 1.65 kgs MS/cow/day and 6.6 kg MS/ha/day. This is on target.

Farm Feed Wedge - Week Starting

31-Jan-06



10. The FEED WEDGE for this week shows one paddock of surplus (to be cut tomorrow, Wednesday) and otherwise a strong shape. If we get continued pasture growth ABOVE our demand of 65, we can expect another paddock of surplus to be evident next week.
11. GRAZING ROTATION continues at 21-22 days. We do not anticipate changing this much while pasture growth remains high, and water is adequate, and will review weekly. We will probably look to increasing round length by a few days through the 2nd half of February, as part of our strategy to accumulate pasture for milkers as the autumn looms.
12. We will use NITROGEN only on the new grass paddocks this week, at 20 units/ha.
13. As part of our IRRIGATION monitoring, we are placing 3 rain gauges under our irrigators to check output. ie three at a time under one irrigation point, and will continue doing this for the Feb and March.
14. Mating Results: No further information to hand.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 7th February 10.00am.**

Management Group

Shaun Back, Farm Manager, Peter Gaul (SIDDC) and Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel) with support from Corrigan Sowman, Canterbury Consulting Officer (Dexcel).

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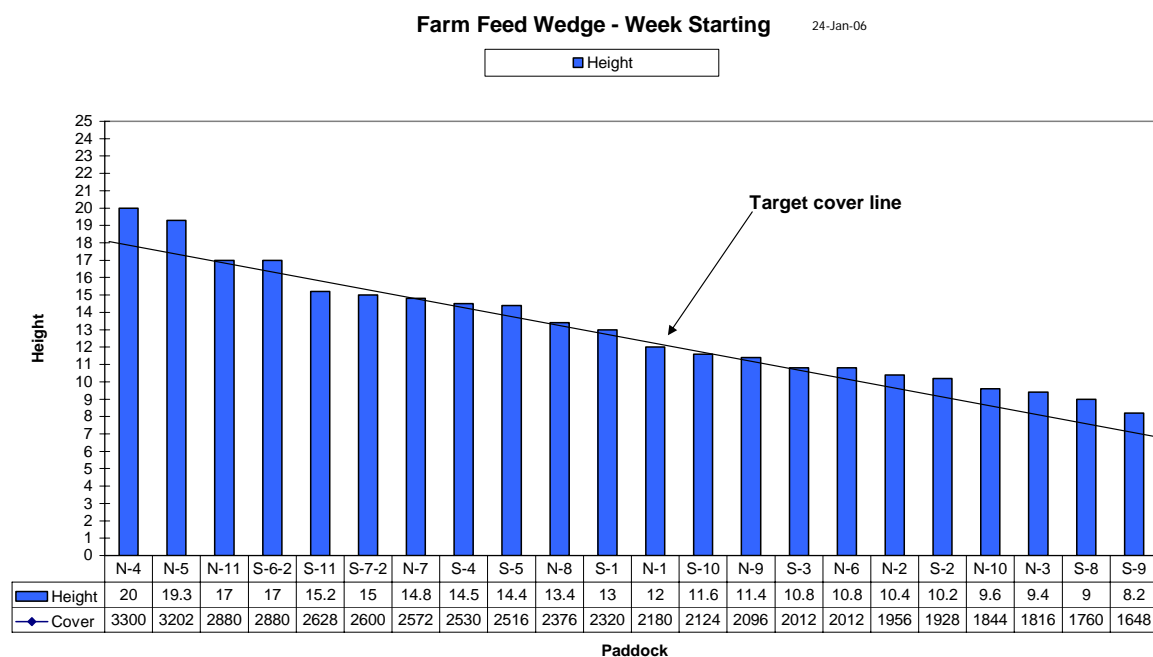
Tuesday 24th January 2006

Critical issues for the short term

1. Ensure the paddock taken for baleage is cut to the desired low height (see point 10 below)
2. Careful allocation of pasture to hold milk production and nutrition.

Grazing Management and animal performance

3. Ave PASTURE COVER has lifted to 2307 kgDM/ha, up 100 on last weeks 2202/ha.
4. PREGRAZING PASTURE HEIGHTS are within the target window of 3000 to 3200.
5. PASTURE GROWTH estimated at 88 kgDM/ha for last week, above required growth of 70. We are budgeting on growth of 80 kgDM/day for this coming week (soil temp is lifting, settled warm weather forecasted).
6. Soil Temperatures probably rising on the back of current warm weather, nor'west conditions, and warmer nights (12-14^oC) but no reading was available for the walk day.
7. Grazing RESIDUALS are on target of 7 clicks or 1480 kgDM/ha.
8. Pasture QUALITY appears back to its visible best, no residuals and lush leafy pasture. Clover content has lifted visibly in the last week, probably a result of higher soil temps.
9. Per cow production has lifted slightly to 1.7 kgs MS/cow/day and 6.9 kg MS/ha/day, almost certainly a function of the improved high M.E. grass diet. The pasture samples from the 15th Jan testing not available yet, should confirm this.



10. The FEED WEDGE for this week indicates a small surplus, and strong regrowth for the recently grazed pastures. Paddock N-5 will be taken for baleage later this week, and if good growth continues, we can expect a similar situation next week. Remember we have negotiated a flexible arrangement with our silage contractor, our main interest is in getting the paddock back into the round asap. We also INSIST on a low cutting height, the same as our grazing residual of 7 clicks on the platometer, or 1480 kgDM/ha.
11. No nitrogen will be applied this week. We will consider it on a paddock by paddock basis next week.

12. Mating Results: No further information to hand – remember we advised last week that “As part of a research trial, LUDF did a full herd pregnancy test on 12th January. This indicated 70% in calf, compared to 57% this time last season.”
13. The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 31st January 10.00am.**

Management Group

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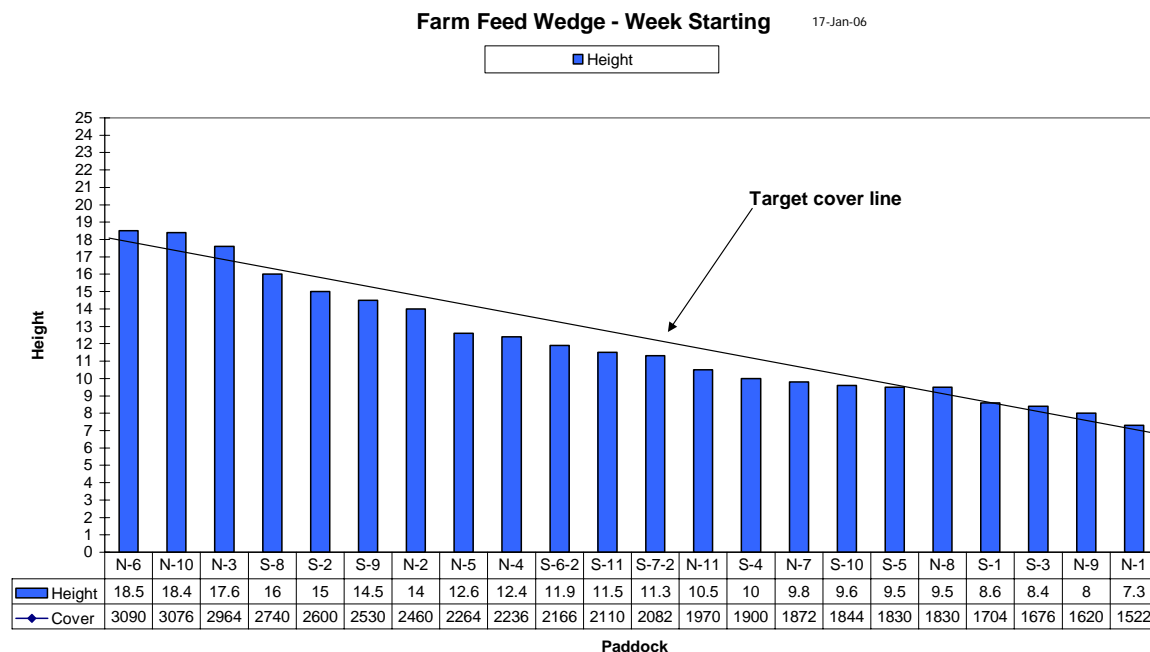
Tuesday 17th January 2006

Critical issues for the short term

1. Careful allocation of pasture to hold milk production and nutrition.
2. Ensure consistent irrigation occurs

Grazing Management and animal performance

3. Ave PASTURE COVER has improved to 2202 kgDM/ha, up marginally on last weeks 2158/ha. The longest pastures are about 3000 kgDM/ha pregrazing, and both pregrazing height and average cover are now where they should be !
4. PASTURE GROWTH estimated at 69 kgDM/ha for the week, still disappointing and below target growth. Probably a result of continued low soil temps.
5. Soil Temperatures has dropped again to 16.5 °C, but is rising again today.
6. Grazing RESIDUALS are on target of 7 clicks or 1480 kgDM/ha.
7. Pasture QUALITY appears high, no residuals and lush leafy pasture. Remember we sample on the 1st and 15th of each month, the pastures immediately in front of the milkers.
8. The pasture sampling that we did during the mowing period (we were mowing in front of the cows 2 weeks ago) show that ME's were lower, (average 11.7 ME) and we should not allow pregrazing heights of the Italian ryegrass paddocks to exceed 3000 kgDM/ha.
9. Per cow production is still holding at 1.65 kgs MS/cow/day and 6.6 kg MS/ha/day. Our Rate of Change as shown on the FencePost website is now significantly LESS than other local farms, suggesting the pasture quality is holding our production high.



10. The FEED WEDGE for this week is almost ideal. The paddocks 1 week out should be right on the line PROVIDED we achieve target growth of 75 kgDM/ha. If pasture growth is poor, we may need to feed baleage next week, will review next week.
11. In the last two weeks we have applied 20 units NITROGEN to 17 of the 21 paddocks on the farm. The remaining 4 will receive 20 units this week. We have used 114 units N to date this season.

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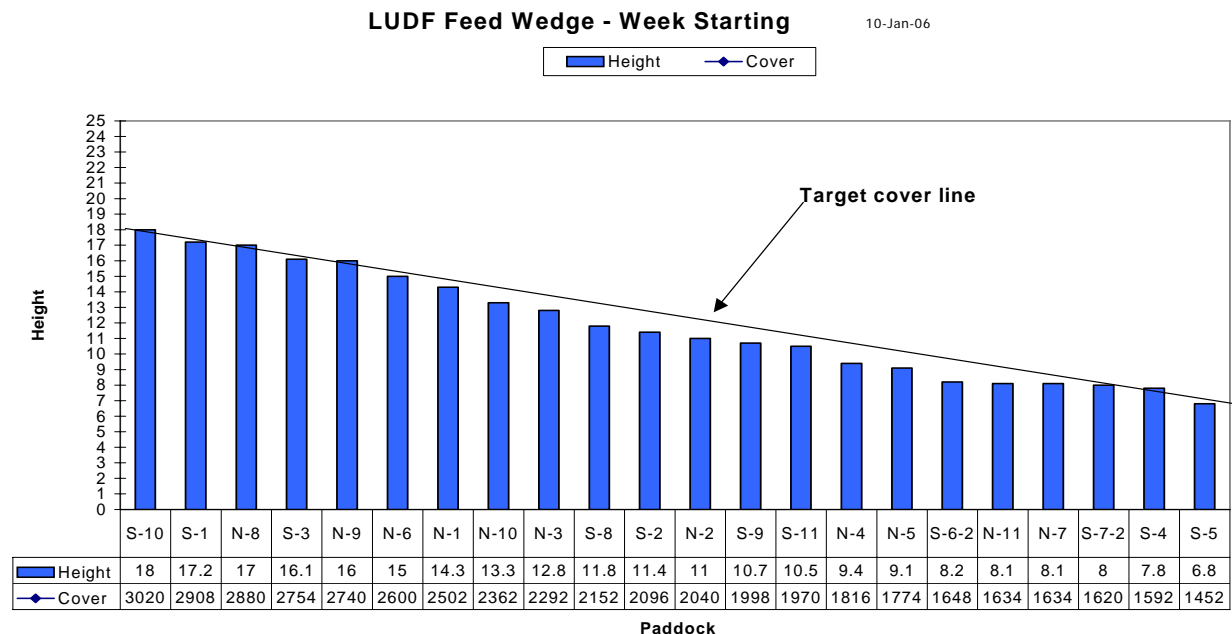
Tuesday 10th January 2006

Critical issues for the short term

- Careful allocation of pasture to hold milk production and nutrition.
- Ensure consistent irrigation occurs, with defined systems in place

Grazing Management and animal performance

- Ave PASTURE COVER has increased to 2198 kgDM/ha, up on the 3rd Jan cover of 2109/ha and the wedge is close to target except for the small possibility of a deficit in just over a weeks time which we are countering with a slightly longer round at the moment.



- The target height of 18 reflects the pre-grazing cover required to meet our intake targets of 17 kgs DM/cow/day from 7.5ha (total of 161.5ha available) i.e. a 21.5 day rotation.
- PASTURE GROWTH was measured at 66 kgDM/ha for the week. This is very close to requirements, with warm settled weather forecast for the next week, soil temperatures should remain similar to this weeks' 17.6 °C, suggesting these growth rates will continue.
- Grazing RESIDUALS are being managed to the target of 7 clicks (1480 kgDM/ha). Paddocks are no longer being mown in front of the cows as pre-grazing covers are once again in the target range where the cows have consistently grazed down to the target residual.
- Per cow production is holding at about 1.65 kgs MS/cow/day and 6.6 kg MS/ha/day. It MAY go up as pasture quality for milkers improves back to preferred levels.
- The SOIL MOISTURE probes we have in place are indicating that additional watering is required even after rain to bring applications up closer to evapo-transpiration levels.
- We will continue applying light rates (20 units N) to recently grazed paddocks on areas where effluent is not spread..
- Mating Results: A whole herd PD is planned for Thursday the 12 Jan. We will report results as they come to hand.
- The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 17rd January 10.00am.**

Management Group

Shaun Back, Farm Manager, Peter Gaul (SIDDC) and Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel) with support from Corrigan Sowman, Canterbury Consulting Officer (Dexcel).