

Lincoln University Dairy Farm – Farm Walk notes

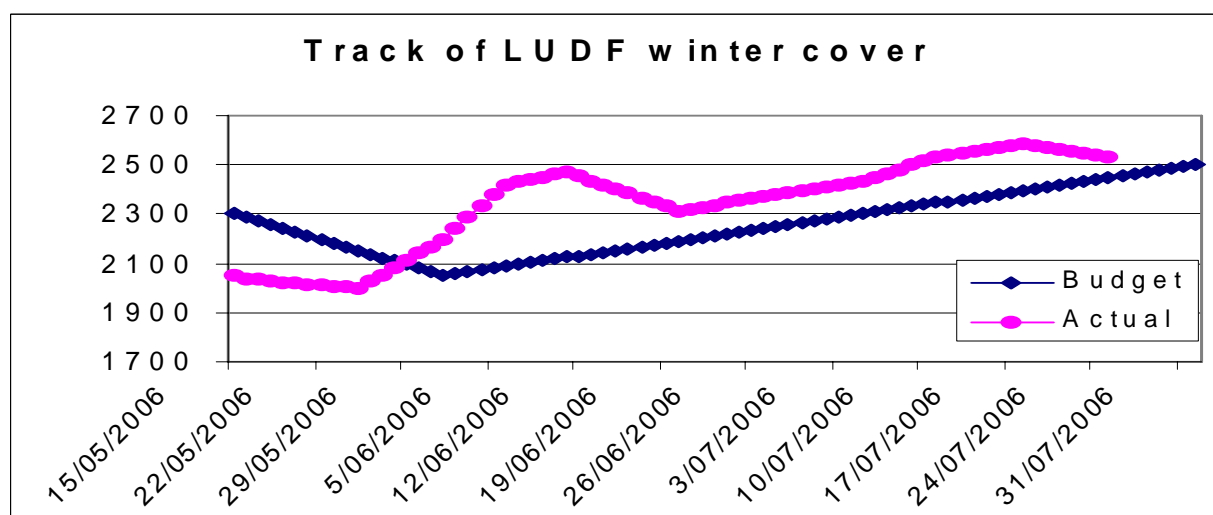
Tuesday 25th July 2006

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Avoiding soil pugging and pasture damage on milking platform.**
2. **Only apply effluent to dry paddocks on North Block**
3. **Supplementation of all cows with Magnesium including those on runoffs.**
4. **Grazing of the two paddocks where the pasture is now yellow at the base.**
5. **Training the heifers to stay behind the electric fence**

Summary of KEY INDICATORS for Grazing Management and Animal Performance

6. Some standing water has returned after the heavy rain in the weekend and grass covers in these paddocks are reducing due to rotting. Soils are firming up within a few days allowing dry cows to return to the milking platform and milker areas to be restricted.
7. PASTURE GROWTH over the last week has averaged 13 kg DM/ha. (last week 16)
8. Soil temperatures have dropped from 6.2 degrees C to 5.2 degrees C.



9. Average PASTURE COVER has dropped to 2530 kg DM/ha and is close our target for Planned Start of Calving.
10. Heifers have begun calving and dry cows are being fed to maintain condition.

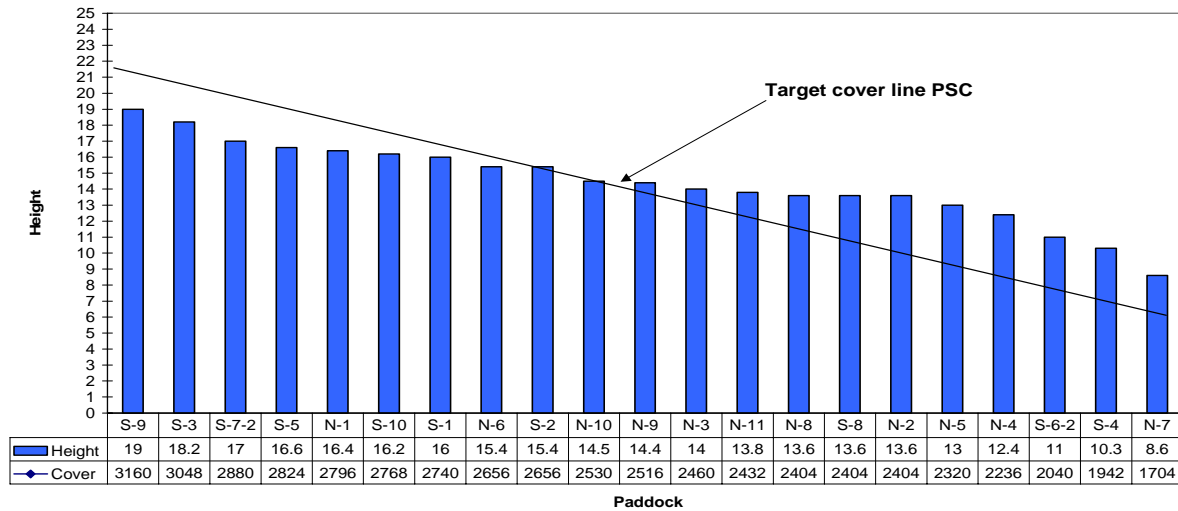
25-Jul-06

Farm Feed Wedge - Week Starting

Weeks Growth Rate **13**



Average Farm Cover **2530**



11. The cover on the farm will take some manipulation to get it to match the target line. The block of paddocks that are in the second half of the wedge and above the target line are a typical result of having all the cows off the platform for so long.
12. Now that soil conditions have improved we have brought home an early calving mob of heifers which will have cows added this week. At times we also have 250 dry cows grazing our longest paddock (S10) (when weather and soil conditions allow). As soon as it rains this last mob will return to the runoff. The springing mob is still grazing N8 and they are managing to get the residual down once the soil is dry enough to not pug.
13. After this the next paddocks that will be grazed are likely to be the two driest in the bulge of paddocks above the target line lower in the wedge eg N11. We are able to make these grazing management decisions because our actual farm cover is currently above our target farm cover.
14. Our normal policy is to time our first application of N with the mid point of calving. This should happen about the 14 August. In the past we have applied N to all the paddocks in the bottom half of the wedge. The rate has varied between 40 and 50 kgs N for paddocks in the North Block (which does not get EcoN) and 20 kgs N for the paddocks in the South Block (which gets EcoN). We are currently reviewing this because the winter has been so wet and growths are slow and because farm cover is not in a true wedge shape.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 1st August 10.00am. (Weather permitting)**

Management Group

Peter Hancox (Farm Manager) Peter Gaul (SIDDC) and Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel)

Lincoln University Dairy Farm – Farm Walk notes

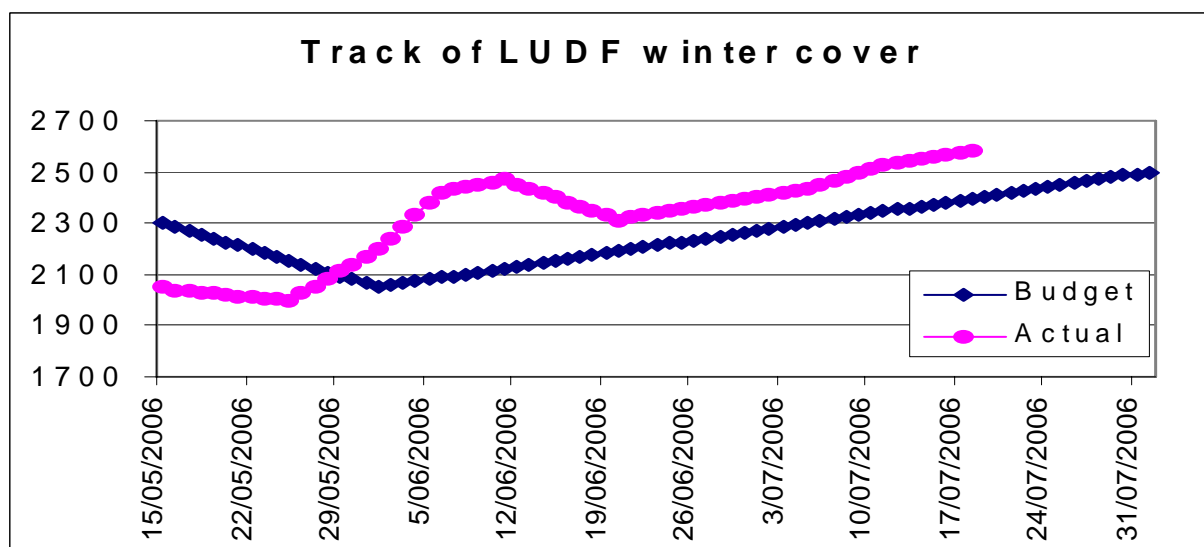
Tuesday 18th July 2006

Critical issues for the short term

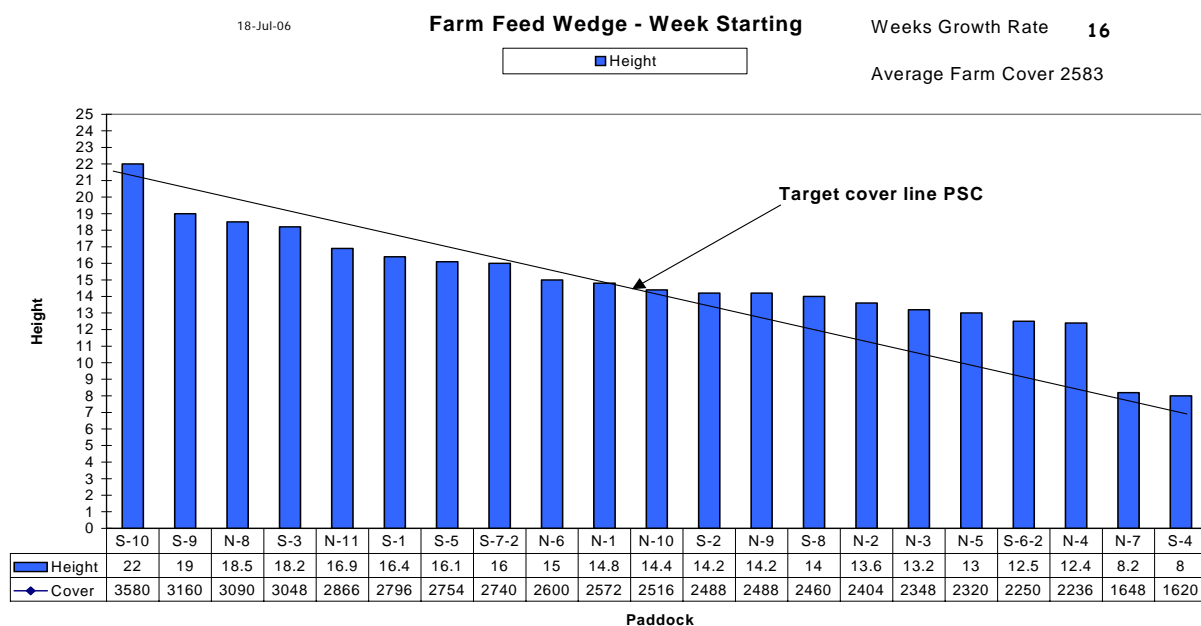
1. **Avoiding soil pugging and pasture damage on milking platform.**
2. **Restricting feed allocation of dry cows to stretch feed reserves on runoffs**
3. **Supplementation of all cows with Magnesium including those on runoffs.**
4. **Grazing of the two paddocks where the pasture is now yellow at the base.**

Summary of KEY INDICATORS for Grazing Management and Animal Performance

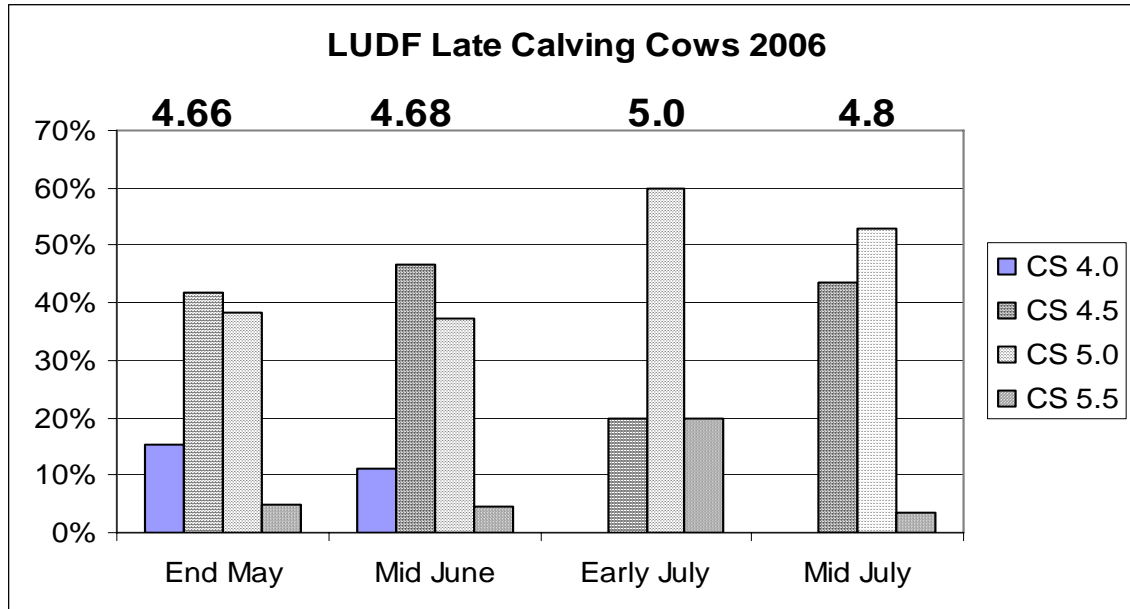
5. We have had no rain this week and one sunny day. Very little standing water remains and soils have firmed up allowing cows to return to the milking platform.
6. PASTURE GROWTH over the last week has averaged 16 kg DM/ha. (last week 17).
7. Soil temperatures have risen to 6.2 degrees C.



8. Average PASTURE COVER has continued to increase to 2583 kg DM/ha and is above our target for Planned Start of Calving. This increase is as result of growth rates returning to normal and lack of cows on the milking platform.



9. The cover on the farm will take some manipulation to get into an even feed wedge. The block of paddocks that are in the second half of the wedge and above the target line are a typical result of having all the cows off the platform for so long.
10. Now that soil conditions have improved we have brought home an early calving mob of 110 heifers and we have 250 dry cows grazing our longest paddock (S10) while weather and soil conditions allow. As soon as it rains this last mob will return to the runoff. The springing heifers are grazing N8. N8 was half grazed in May and so while the average cover is 3090 kgs DM/ha, half the paddock is over 4000 and has become yellow at the base. This is also occurring in S10 and so these two paddocks (N8 & S10) have the highest grazing priority. We need to graze these now to get them actively growing again.
11. After this the next paddocks that will be grazed are likely to be the two driest in the bulge of paddocks above the target line lower in the wedge. This is more likely to occur if we get another rain event above 10mm. Grazing two of these paddocks will reduce this bulge and allow more time for those paddocks higher in the wedge to reach the target line. We are able to make these grazing management decisions because our actual farm cover is currently above our target farm cover.
12. Since the snow we have reduced the feed allocation to the dry cows. We did this to try to achieve two objectives, a) to accommodate the additional cows that were grazing off farm, and b) to also keep all these cows away from the grazing platform for an additional week if possible. We have achieved both of these objectives.
13. Monitoring cow condition scores has been an important part of this. Both the early calving mobs have achieved the target average Condition Score of 5.0 with little spread either side. The late calving cows have not done quite as well. They have so far been on poorer quality feed and have lost some condition in the last two weeks. Fortunately they are now going onto better quality grass and we expect that they will be able to hold condition.



The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 25th July 10.00am. (Weather permitting)**

Management Group

Peter Hancox (Farm Manager) Peter Gaul (SIDDC) and Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel).

Lincoln University Dairy Farm – Farm Walk notes

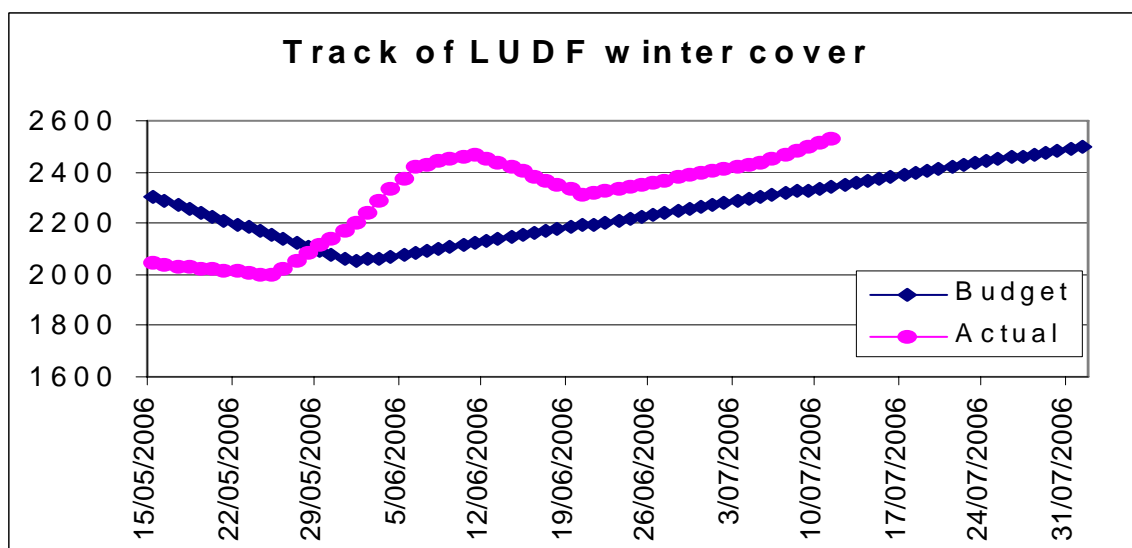
Tuesday 11th July 2006

Critical issues for the short term

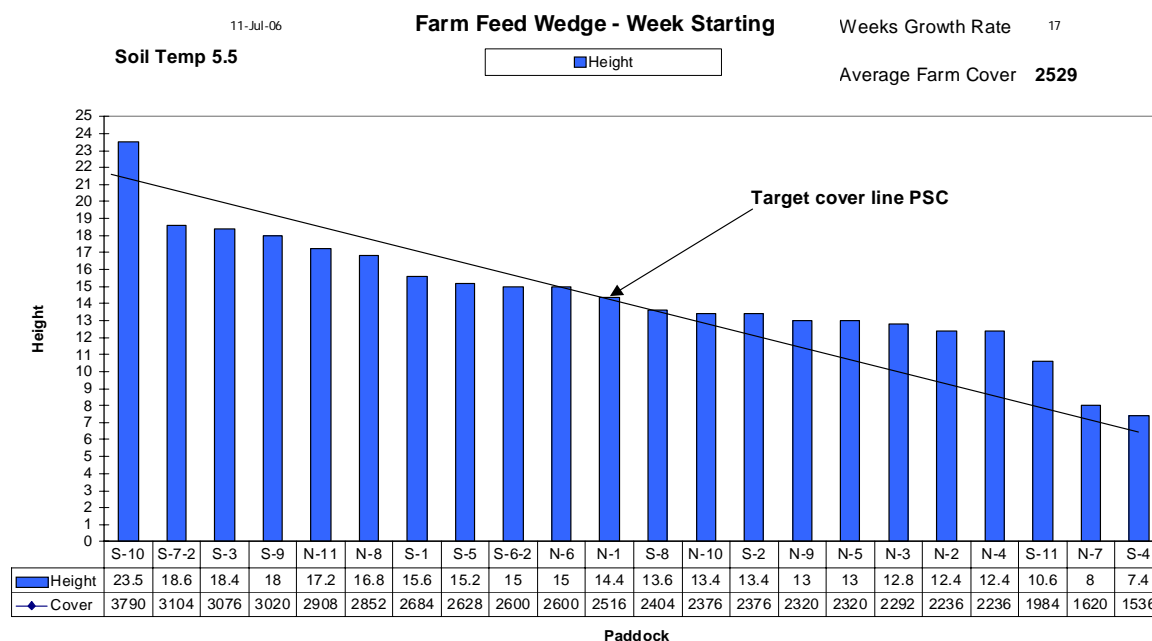
1. **Avoiding soil pugging and pasture damage on milking platform.**
2. **Restricting feed allocation of dry cows to stretch feed reserves on runoffs.**
3. **Supplementation of all cows with Magnesium.**

Summary of KEY INDICATORS for Grazing Management and Animal Performance

4. We have had much less rain this week but cloudy dull conditions mean that the farm is only slowly drying out. Most standing water has disappeared but soils are still very soft especially on the South Block.
5. PASTURE GROWTH over the last weeks has averaged 17 kg DM/ha.
6. Soil temperatures have risen to 5.5 degrees C.



7. Average PASTURE COVER has increased to 2529 kg DM/ha and is now above our target for Planned Start of Calving.



8. The cover on the farm is slowly coming into an even feed wedge. Once the soil is dry enough for us to on /off graze we will bring an early calving mob home (probably heifers) to selectively graze paddocks to enhance the shape of the wedge. This will mean grazing some paddocks that are not the longest but will be the driest as they are on the North Block.
9. We currently have 11 cows back on the farm, which consists of 5 that have calved, 5 lame cows and 1 heifer about to calve. The heifers are due to start on the 20 July and those due to calve in the first few weeks have been mobbed up and are ready to come home as soon as ground conditions are dry enough. Currently they have been shifted to the closest runoff paddock to the milking platform and farm staff are regularly checking them and walking selected animals home as they are “on the drop”.
10. As all the mobs of cows are now near their target condition scores we have reduced their grass allocations in an effort to extend their time off the milking platform. Mobs who have reached 5.0 are now getting straw as part of their intake and their total energy intake (ME) is being restricted to 20% of their 1 Dec live-weight i.e. between 90 and 100 ME.
11. The re-fencing project which has altered the fences between 4 pairs of paddocks, is almost complete. The result of this will be that all the paddocks will be of a more similar size and we expect that this will simplify our grazing management through the season.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 18th July 10.00am. (Weather permitting)**

Management Group

Peter Hancox (Farm Manager) Peter Gaul (SIDDC) and Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel)

Lincoln University Dairy Farm – Farm Walk notes

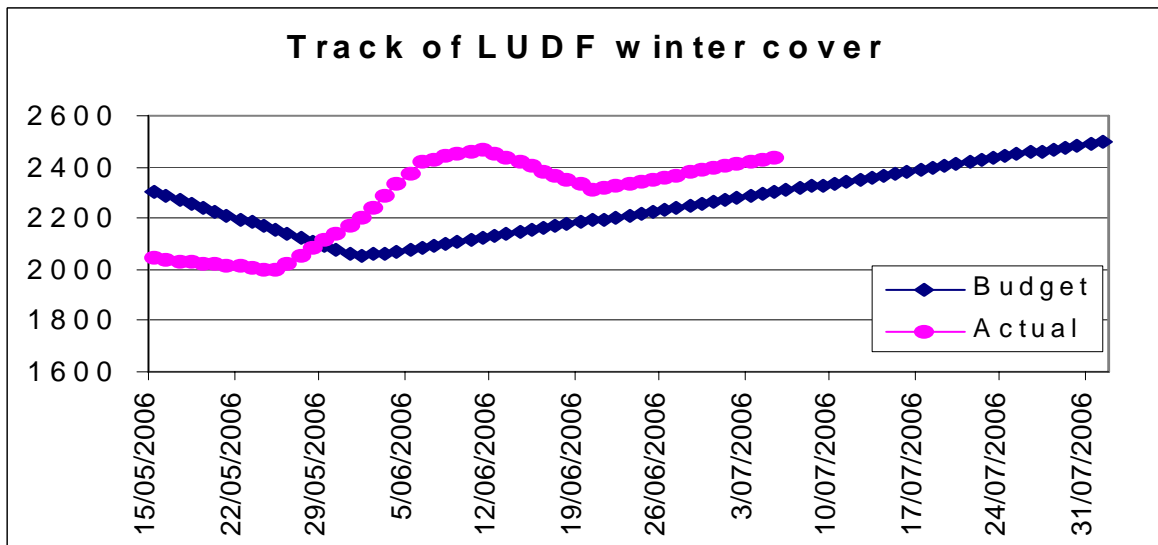
Wednesday 5th July 2006

Critical issues for the short term

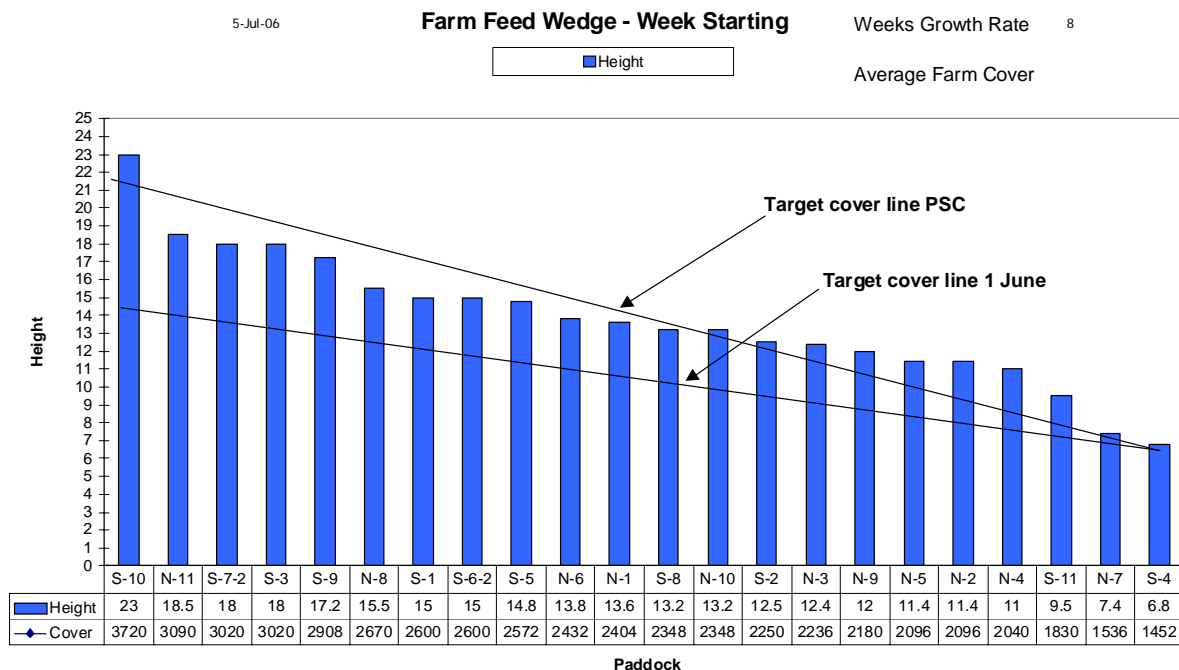
1. Avoiding soil pugging and pasture damage on milking platform.
2. Commence supplementing the early calving cows with Magnesium

Summary of KEY INDICATORS for Grazing Management and Animal Performance

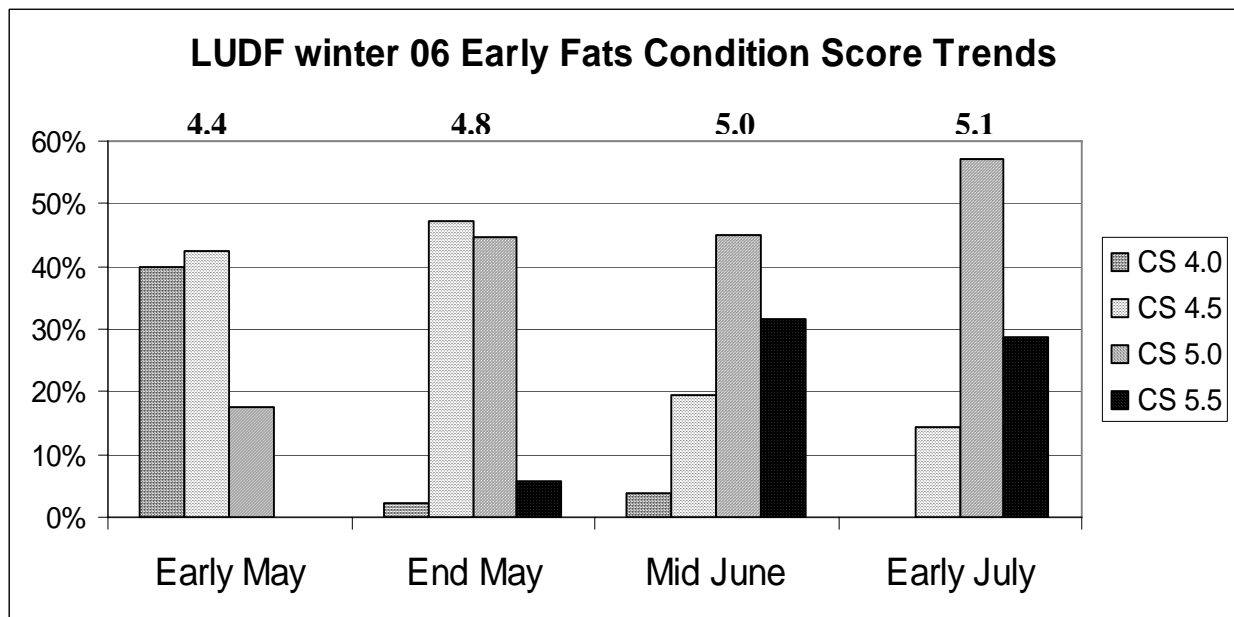
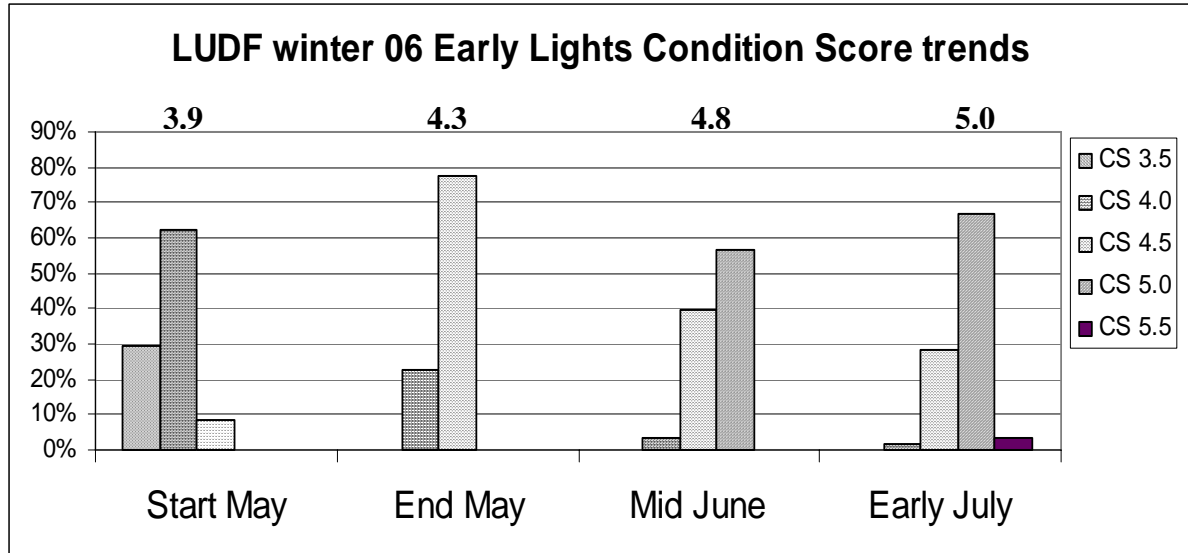
3. Heavy rain again this Tuesday prevented a meaningful farm walk. PASTURE GROWTH over the last 2 weeks has averaged 8 kg DM/ha. This is a half of what was budgeted.
4. Soil moisture levels continue to be very high with standing water in many paddocks so we have kept all stock of the farm except for three heifers that have calved.
5. Soil temperatures have risen to 5.8.



6. Average PASTURE COVER has increased to 2434 kg DM/ha and as the graph above show we continue to track above budget.

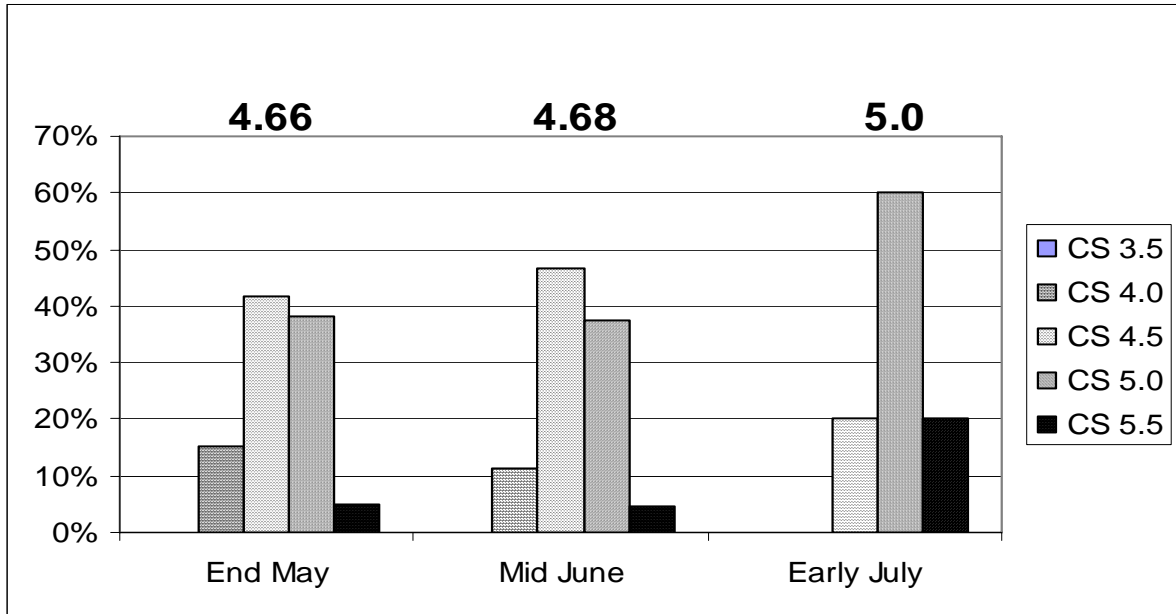


7. The two target lines on the feed wedge as there to show the shape of the wedge we were targeting for 1 June and where we want to get to by the Planned Start of Calving.
8. The cover on the farm is slowly coming into an even feed wedge. Once the soil is dry enough for us to on /off graze we will bring an early calving mob home (probably heifers) to selectively graze paddocks to enhance the shape of the wedge. This will mean grazing some paddocks that are not the longest but may be the driest.
9. Pasture growth rates are likely to be significantly depressed for several more weeks but we are now confident of achieving the target cover at Planned Start of Calving.



10. All the mobs of cows are lifting in average condition score and the proportion of the cows in each mob in the lowest Condition Score group is reducing.
11. As all the mobs of cows are now near their target condition scores we have reduced their grass allocations in an effort to extend their time off the milking platform. Mobs who have reached 5.0 are now getting straw as part of their intake.
12. Young stock have been visited this week to collect faecal samples for checking worm burdens and also to check their condition and feeding levels.

Condition Score trend of late calving cows



The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 11th July 10.00am. (Weather permitting)**

NEXT LUDF FOCUS DAY THURSDAY 6TH JULY

Management Group

Peter Hancox (Farm Manager) Peter Gaul (SIDDC) and Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel)