

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

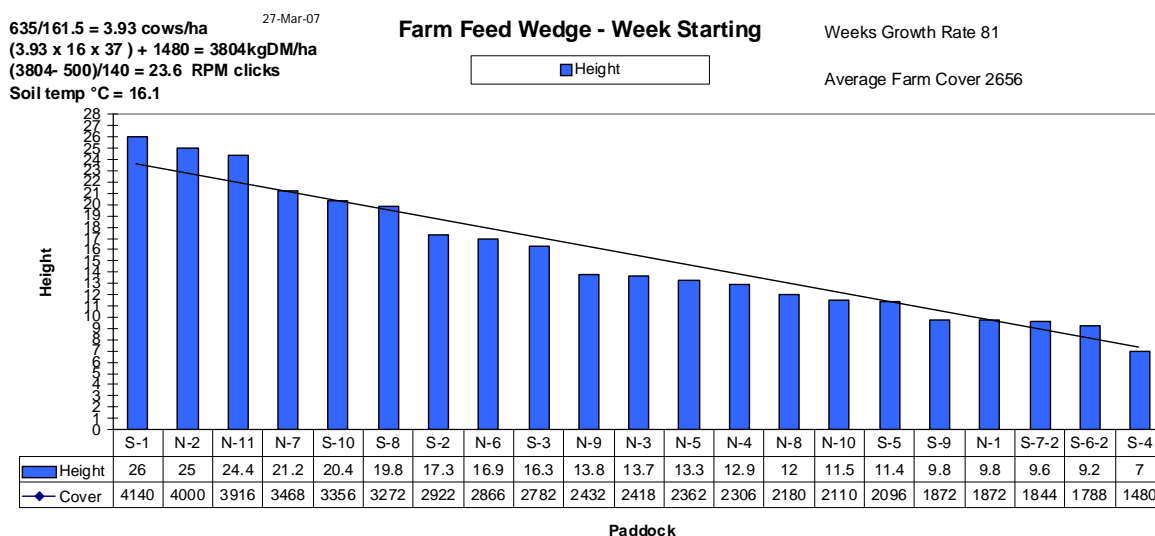
Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007

## 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 weight gain.

### Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMPS have risen to 16.1 °C.
5. PASTURE GROWTH over the last week has risen to 81 kg DM/ha (last week 64). 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 while this year we have averaged 74.
6. AVERAGE PASTURE COVER has risen 150 kgs DM/ha to 2656 as a result of the unseasonably high growth and through allocating an average of 1/40 of the farm a day. The pre-grazing covers we are running are well above what we have done on previous years. At 4000 kgs DM cover and 1/40 of the farm a day, the cows are fouling the pasture before reaching the target residual of “7 clicks”.
7. MILK PRODUCTION is holding 1.35kgs MS/cow/day and 5.11 kgs MS/ha and we are falling further behind last year. We are now 2.6% behind last season to date.
8. This weeks PASTURE FEED WEDGE is



9. The feed situation continues to look good. Paddock N7 is currently being grazed by the cows. This means that the surplus in the three longer paddocks will just cover the group of paddocks below the target in the middle of the graph. We have enough pasture to continue to hold the round for the next week by just feeding grass.

10. The target line shows that we have sufficient cover to allocate less than 1/37 of the farm a day for the next week.
11. Last week we fed out 7.7 kgs DM /cow/day in the 48 hrs while grazing a paddock of Tabu. This was done to hold the grazing round to above 35 days. In the previous week when the other Tabu paddock was grazed, the cows cleaned out the paddock in 24 hours rather than the targeted 48 hours.
12. The new grass paddocks have again been grazed. An infestation of docks and stinging nettle has appeared in the latest new grass paddock and we are currently deciding which control option to take.
13. The automatic walk over weighing once again shows that the herd is putting on weight, and the herd average weight 480 kgs.
14. The twelve cows below condition score 4.0 have been put onto OAD milking. 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.
15. The autumn feed budget was updated this week. We are using the high growth rates and pasture covers to delay when we start feeding out silage in earnest. This is working to our advantage as we have much less silage on hand than in previous autumns. The lack of silage is because a) we purchased less silage due to the increased cost and b) because we have fed out some of it in the late spring/early winter.
16. We are half 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.
17. 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. Cows found to have clinical mastitis are treated.
18. We are visiting all the winter grazing blocks today to update our winter feed budgets and grazing plans. This year some wintering will occur on Kale.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2007 10.00am.**

### **Management Group**

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

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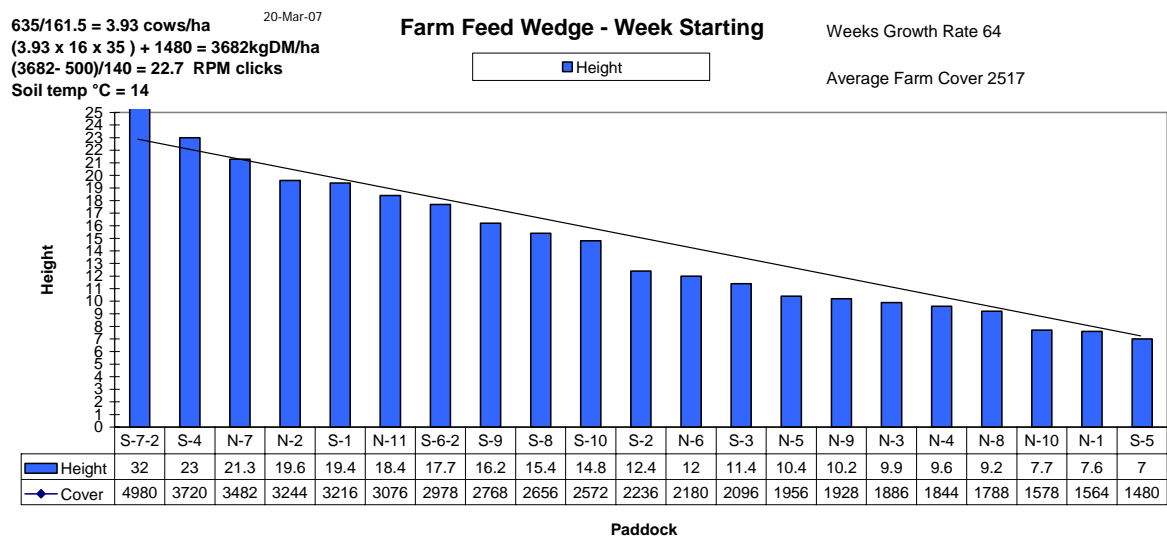
Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007

## Critical issues for the short term

1. Maintain a rotation length of over 35 days i.e. graze 1/35 of the farm each day.
2. Make sure that the target residual of 7 “clicks” is reached.

### Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. SOIL TEMPS have held at 14 ° C.
4. PASTURE GROWTH over the last 6 days has dropped to 64 kg DM/ha (last week 77).
5. AVERAGE PASTURE COVER has dropped by 90 kgs DM/ha to 2517 as a result of the slower growth and with hindsight an over estimation of the cover in the Tabu paddocks last week.
6. MILK PRODUCTION is holding 1.38kgs MS/cow/day and 5.3 kgs MS/ha and we are falling further behind last year. We are now 2.1% behind last season to date.
7. This weeks PASTURE FEED WEDGE is



8. The feed situation continues to look good. We have enough pasture to continue to hold the round for the next week by just feeding grass.
9. The target line shows that we have sufficient cover to allocate less than 1/35 of the farm a day for the next week. The very long pre-grazing cover in S 7-2 is because this paddock was too wet to graze after recent rain. The soil conditions have now improved sufficiently for it to be grazed this week.
10. We are gearing up for the possibility of starting feeding out silage next week to continue to hold the round in the future.

11. The new grass paddock has responded well to the nip off last week and has tillered and re-grown rapidly. This paddock is now in the normal grazing round, and with cover now over 3000 kgs DM we will graze it again this week.
12. The rain over the last two days has been sufficient to lift soil moisture levels and so we have stopped irrigating with the both the centre pivots and also the corner sprinklers on both blocks.
13. The automatic walk over weighing continues to show that the herd was steadily putting on weight until this last week, but they have lost 3 kgs /cow over the week.
14. The whole herd were conditioned scored on Monday morning and 2% were found to be under a condition score 4. These cows have been put onto OAD milking. If they are also early calvers they will be dried off in early April. A further 59% of the herd were between condition score 4.0 and 4.5. These will be monitored closely and a dry off plan based on expected calving date will be implemented. The average herd condition score is 4.4.
15. We will be updating and re-doing out autumn feed budget this week in the light of our higher average farm cover and the lower than budgeted amount of autumn supplement remaining.
16. We are starting our last round of N applications. The amount will be decided after a final audit of our N applications to date. We will not exceed 200 kgs N/ha on the non-effluent area of the milking platform.
17. The yearlings will be getting weighed again this week and another worm drench. This is only their second worm drench.
18. Somatic cell counts have jumped to 280 (last year 170). We will be using today's herd test information to select and treat high somatic cell count animals.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007 10.00am.**

### **Management Group**

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

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

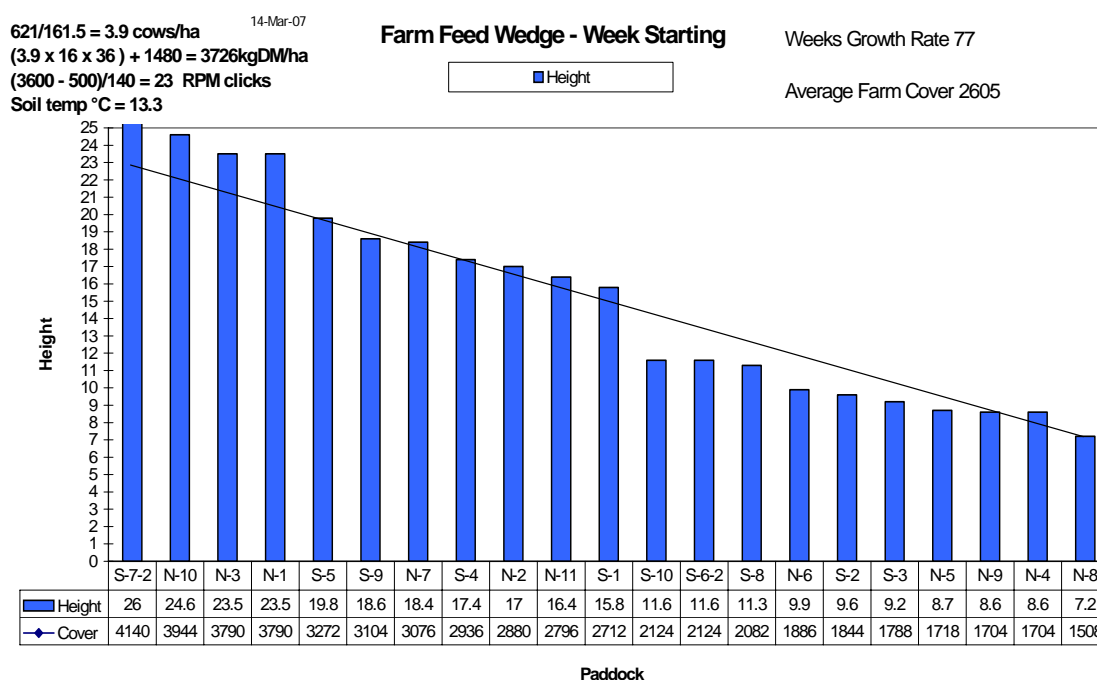
Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007

## Critical issues for the short term

1. Maintain a rotation length of over 35 days i.e. graze 1/34 of the farm each day.
2. Make sure that the target residual of 7 “clicks” is reached and any surpluses are used to extend the rotation.

### Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. SOIL TEMPS have dropped from 17.5° C to 13.3° C.
4. PASTURE GROWTH over the last 8 days has continued at 77 kg DM/ha (last week 74). Break even is 58 so this continuing growth rate in the 70's has resulted in a lift in average farm cover and a lengthening of the rotation length without the use of supplements.
5. AVERAGE PASTURE COVER has lifted by over 140 kgs DM/ha to 2605 as a result of holding the rotation length at 1/34 of the farm. This means that the cows are currently going into pre-grazing covers of over 4,000 kg DM/ha. These pastures are still green to the base and re-growth rates in the first week are close to the weekly average.
6. A surplus of grass on the East block was also used as a single day-time grazing, with an allocation of 6 kgs DM/cow. This has been accounted for as supplements.
7. MILK PRODUCTION is now 1.36kgs MS/cow/day and 5.22 kgs MS/ha and we are falling further behind last year. The cows took a big drop over the weekend when air temperatures reached 28 degrees.
8. This weeks PASTURE FEED WEDGE is



9. The feed situation continues to look good. We have enough pasture to continue lengthening the round while feeding the cows just grass.
10. The target line shows that we have sufficient cover to allocate less than 1/36 of the farm a day for the next week. The pre-grazing covers are now at about 4000 kgs DM/ha and at these covers the plate meter is known to under read the actual cover because some of the pasture is bent over. Normally these covers would be a problem but with the cold weather that has just arrived these covers will be a short term event and we will be eating into this cover over the next 6 days as we expect growth rates to fall back to average or below.
11. The new grass paddock has responded well to the nip off last week and has tillered and re-grown rapidly. This paddock is now back in the normal grazing round.
12. The rain over the last two days has been sufficient to lift soil moisture levels and so we have stopped irrigating with both the centre pivots and also the corner sprinklers on South Block (clay).
13. The automatic walk over weighing continues to show that the herd has maintained there weight over the last two weeks.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007 10.00am.**

### **Management Group**

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

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

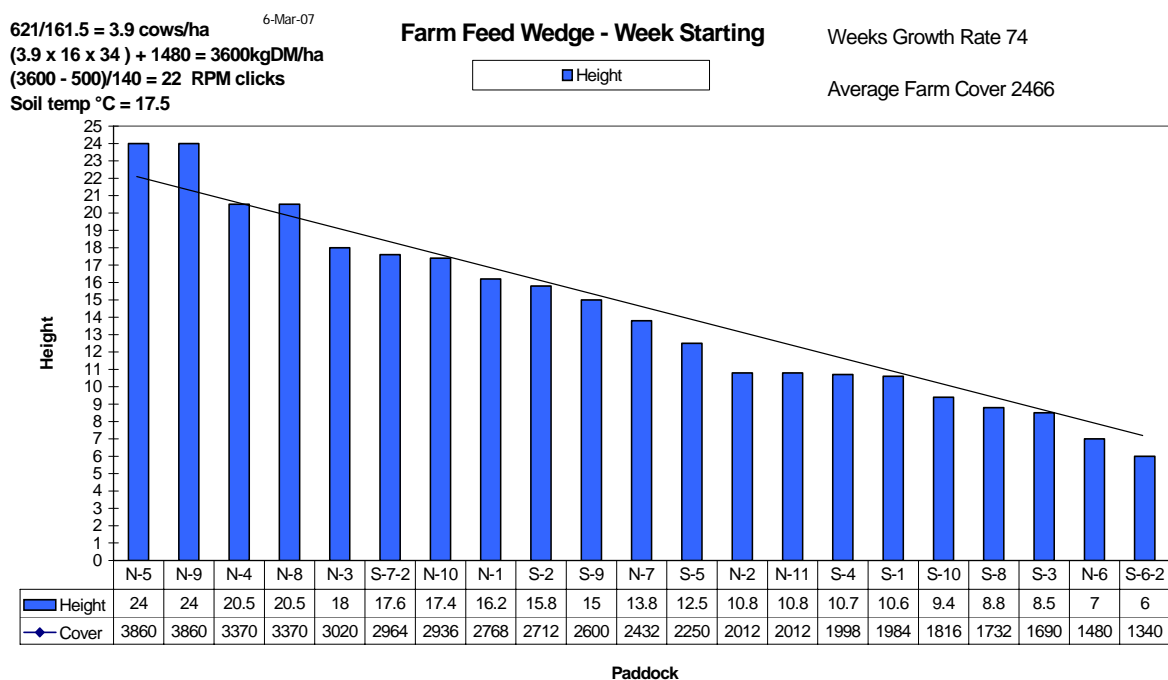
Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2007

## Critical issues for the short term

1. Maintain a rotation length of over 34 days i.e. graze 1/34 of the farm each day.
2. Make sure that the target residual of 7 “clicks” is reached and any surpluses are used to extend the rotation.

### Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. SOIL TEMPS have dropped slightly to 17.5 ° C.
4. PASTURE GROWTH over the last week has dropped risen to 74 kg DM/ha (last week 72). Break even is 58 so this growth rate resulted in a lift in average farm cover.
5. AVERAGE PASTURE COVER has lifted by over 100 kgs DM/ha to 2466 as a result of holding the rotation length at 1/32 of the farm and feeding an average of 2.2 kgs of silage/ cow/day.
6. Pasture DRY MATTER % holding at 15%, which is still below the 17% more commonly seen at this time of the year. Pasture ME remains high at 12.1 despite the longer round length.
7. MILK PRODUCTION is now 1.43kgs MS/cow/day and 5.85 kgs MS/ha and we are falling further behind last year. Currently we are just over 2% behind for the season to date.
8. This weeks PASTURE FEED WEDGE is



9. The feed situation is now looking much better. We have successfully used an N application plus silage to lengthen the rotation length, and now that we have reduced cow numbers to 621 animals (680 at peak) we can feed the cows just with grass.
10. The target line shows that we have sufficient cover to allocate less than 1/34 of the farm a day for the next week. The pre-grazing covers are now at about 3800 kgs DM/ha and at these covers the plate meter is known to under-read the actual cover because some of the pasture is bent over.
11. Our autumn reserves of silage are now down to less than 150 kgs DM/cow. Our feed budgets show that having reduced cow numbers to 621 and slowed the round down to longer than 34 days, we only have to average a growth rate of 58 kgs DM/day to maintain current average farm cover.
12. We will not be feeding out silage this week.
13. We will hold off with the last of the nitrogen until later in this month. The N response from this application will last through well into May.
14. The last new grass paddock has had its first nip-off with the herd today. The cover was just over 1500 kgs DM/ha and the plants did not pull out of the ground. This early nip-off down to a residual of “6 clicks” is to encourage tillering. The paddock had another N application two days ago. The cows were sent to the paddock during afternoon milking and once milking was finished they were moved onto their normal break.
15. The latest pregnancy scan has confirmed that we have 87% of the herd in-calf after 12 weeks of mating. This is after a further 16 lost pregnancies since the last scan 3 weeks ago. (47 cows have had an early pregnancy loss i.e. 6%). The 87% in-calf at 12 weeks compares with 84% at 12 weeks last year.
16. All our old and dud cows have now been culled and in two weeks we will do another PD and be able to identify accurately any cows calving between 12 and 15 weeks after the start of calving. These cows will be sold.
17. A faecal egg count of 180 /gram in the calves indicates that we can wait longer before we drench again. We will re-test in 10 days. The current hot dry sunny weather conditions will be doing a good job of killing any intestinal worm larvae that is on the pasture.
18. We will be irrigating continuously this week as soil moisture levels are again approaching stress point.

**An Irrigation Field day is to be held next week at LUDF i.e.  
Thursday 15 March. 10.15am**

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on **TUESDAY, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2007, at 10.00am.**

### **Management Group**

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