

Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

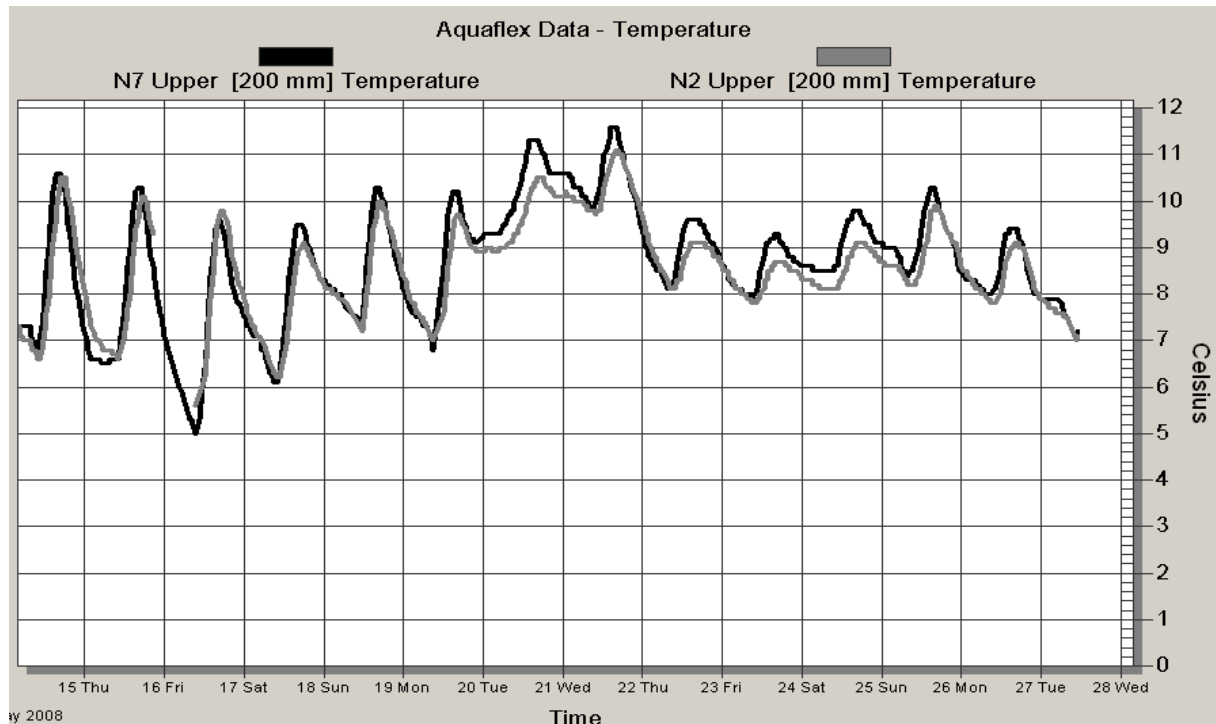
Tuesday 27th May 2008

Critical issues for the short term

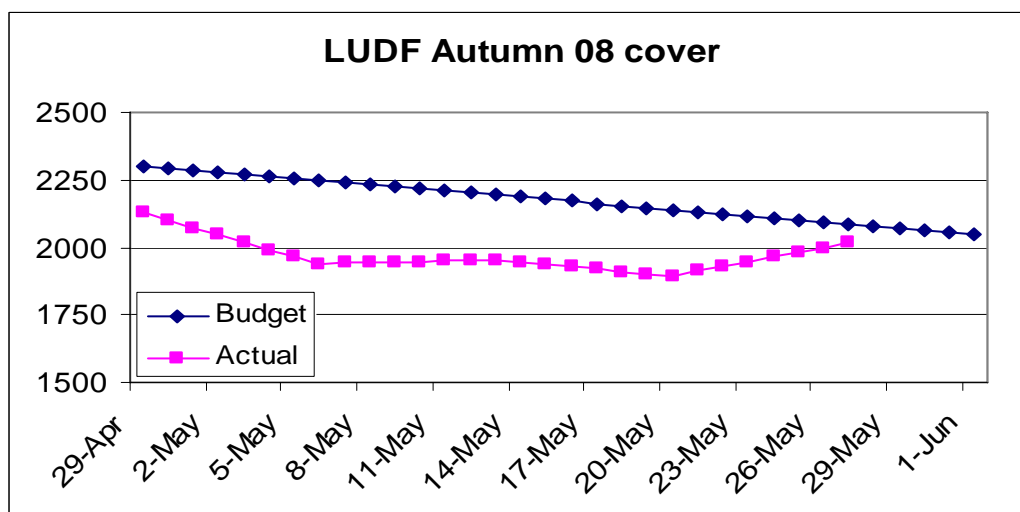
1. **Get cows into mobs of similar condition score.**
2. **Closely observe dry cows for any sign of swollen quarters and treat if found.**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. SOIL TEMP has averaged 8 degrees during the week (6.5 last week).



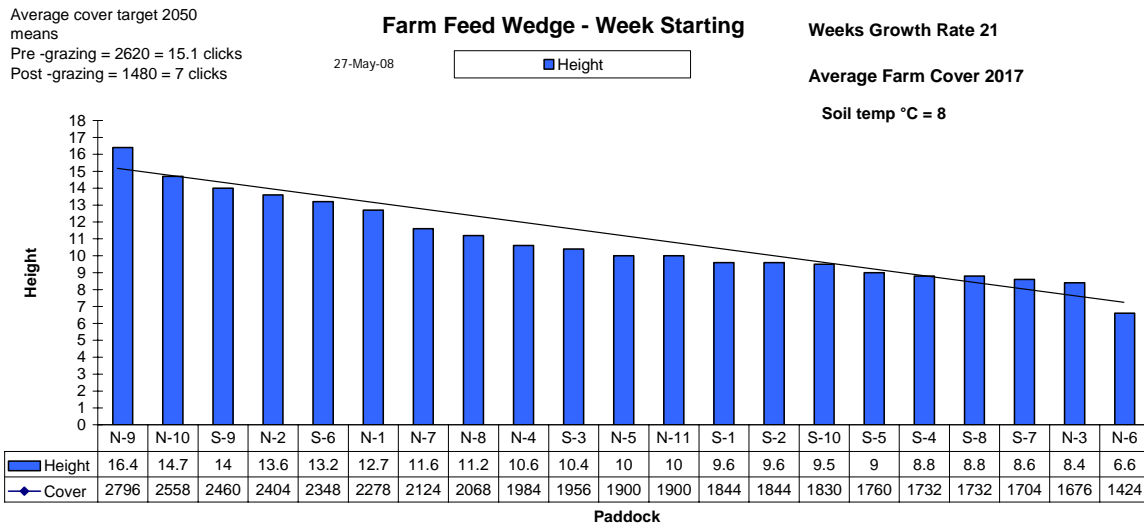
4. PASTURE GROWTH was 21 kg DM/ha (last week 19) on the milking platform. This is still lower than average for the end of May and for the current soil temperature.
5. Average pasture cover has risen from 1894 kg DM/ha to 2017 which is now close to our target of 2050 kg DM /ha at 1 June.



6. This week we found additional short term grazing for 570 cows and so were able to remove them from both the milking platform and the East block. This drastic action of removing all demand from the milking platform will achieve the result we required which was to achieve our target cover of 2050 by 1st June.

7.

This weeks pasture wedge



8. The wedge shows that we have almost achieved the target of both the average cover and the wedge shape. Ground conditions are also firm so we are now in a good position to have our target group of 120 thin young cows on the platform over the winter.

9. There will be a re-sort of the cows now that they are dried off and we will end up with 5 mobs, early calving lights, early calving fats, late calving lights, late calving fats and R2yr's. Each mob will be condition scored and some will also be weighed and we will re score each mob each fortnight. Particular attention will be taken of the recorded thin cows.

10. Last year we wintered 25% of the herd on grass and 75% on Kale. It is not our preferred option to have to send cows needing to put on more than 0.5 of a condition score out to winter on kale. This year we have managed to increase the % of the herd solely on grass to 50%. This means that we can be more selective about the cows going to winter on kale. Both the kale and grass supply for winter grazing is on non-irrigated land so there are always concerns with getting sufficient grown to meet our needs.

11. The pasture cover on each runoff is measured each week, and this is monitored against the pasture covers modelled in our Autumn/Winter/Spring Feed budget for each of these areas. We are currently 45t of feed short which can be explained by the fact that we have been grazing 50 R1yr heifers more that we budgeted for. These extra 50 animals are still with us because we still have not got the DNA results.

12. Currently the 18ha East Block cover is 2047 and the 33 Heifer Block cover is 2088. The target for both at the planned start of calving is 2500 kg DM/ha

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday **3rd June 2008 at 9.00am.**

Farmers or their managers are always welcome to walk with us. Please call to notify us of your intention and bring your plate meter.

Management Group

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

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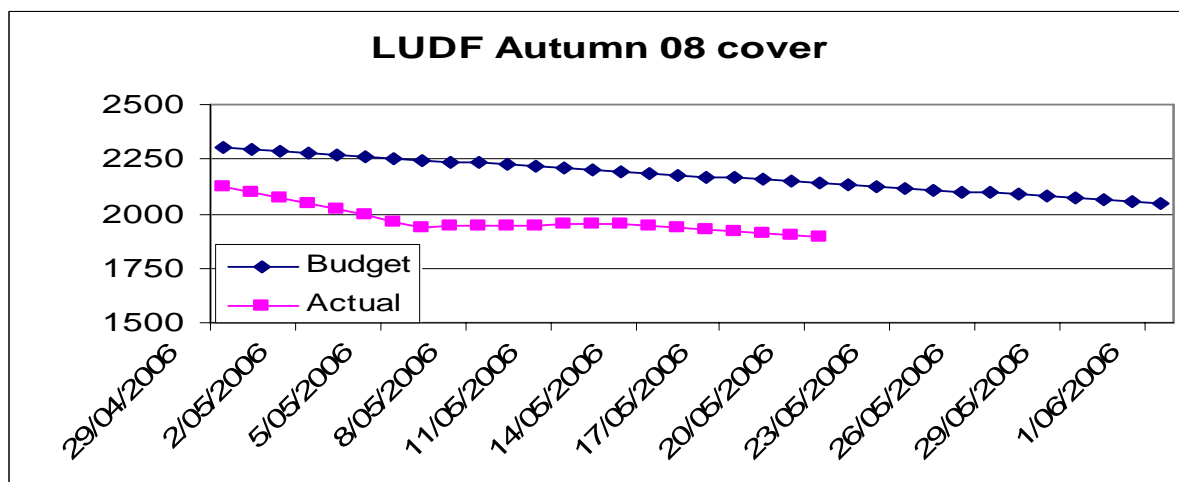
Tuesday 20th May 2008

Critical issues for the short term

1. Reduce demand on farm.

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

- SOIL TEMP has averaged only 6.5 degree during the week.
- PASTURE GROWTH was 19 kg DM/ha (last week 29) on the milking platform.
- Average pasture cover has dropped from 1953 kg DM/ha to 1894 which is below our dry off target of 2050 kg DM /ha at 1 June.



- The graph above shows that we need to continue to take some drastic actions if we were to get the farm cover back to our target for the 1 June.
- This week we had 374 cows left on the milking platform and fed them silage at 6.7 kg DM /day and used 3.4 ha per day that is 1/48th of the farm.
-

This weeks pasture wedge

SR = 374/161.5= 2.32
 (2.32 x 45 x 10) + 1480 = 2515
 (2515-500)/140 = 14.3 clicks
 10 KG GRASS
 6 KG SILAGE

Farm Feed Wedge - Week Starting

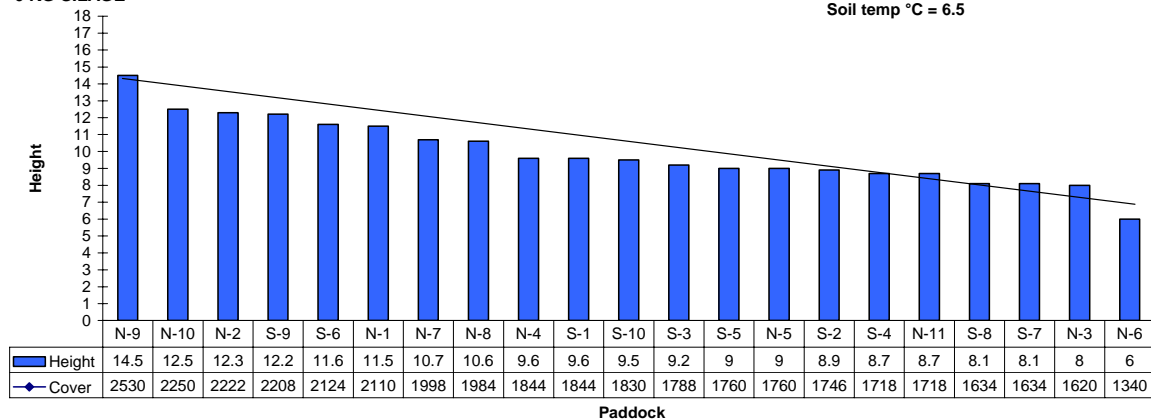
20-May-08

Height

Weeks Growth Rate 19

Average Farm Cover 1894

Soil temp °C = 6.5



8. The wedge shows that we have lost ground this week and so all the cows will be dried off tomorrow morning and the pasture allocation will be reduced and the silage allocation maintained. All cows will be treated with Dry Cow.
9. There will be a resort of the cows now that they are dried off and we will end up with 5 mobs. Early calving lights, early calving fats, late calving lights, late calving fats and R2yr's. Each mob will be condition scored and some will also be weighed and we will re score each mob each fortnight. Particular attention will be taken of the recorded thin cows.
10. The somatic cell count is held at about 250,000.
11. The pasture cover is measured on each runoff each week, and this is monitored against the pasture covers modelled in our Autumn/Winter/Spring Feed budget for each of these areas.
12. Last week we also re-assessed the feed available out at winter grazing and the situation is tighter than we would like. We are looking for more May grazing for dry cows to make sure that we "fix" this problem early.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday **27th May 2008 at 9.00am.**

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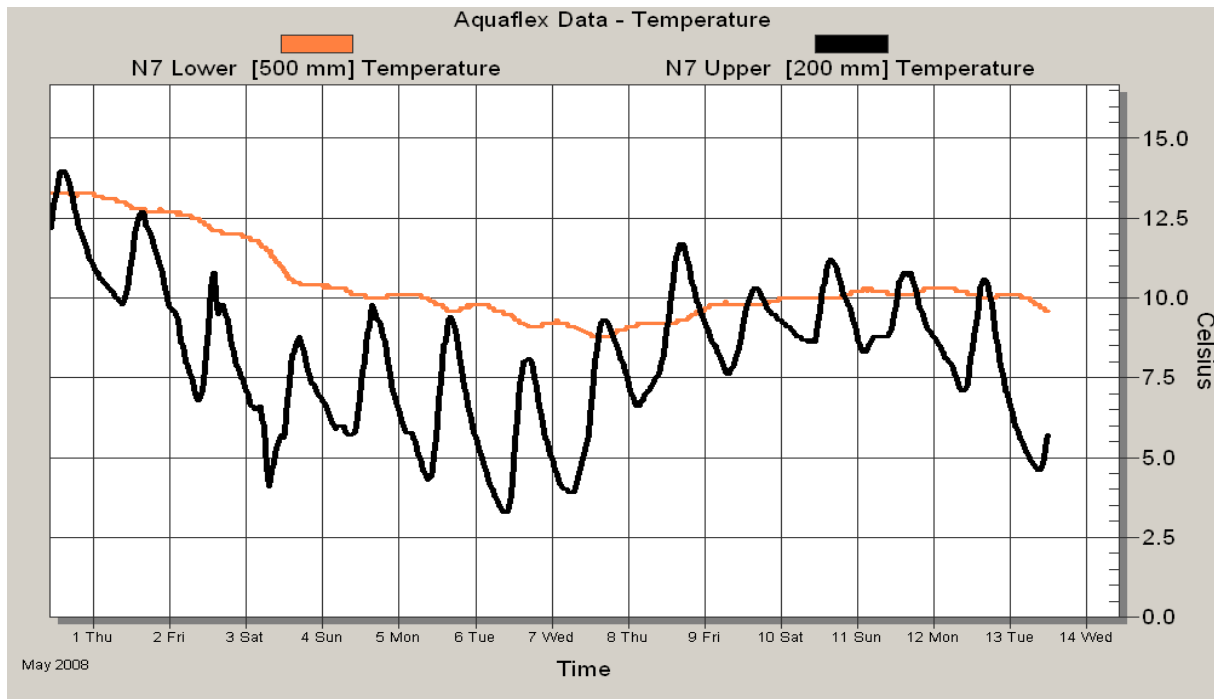
Tuesday, 13th May 2008

Critical issues for the short term

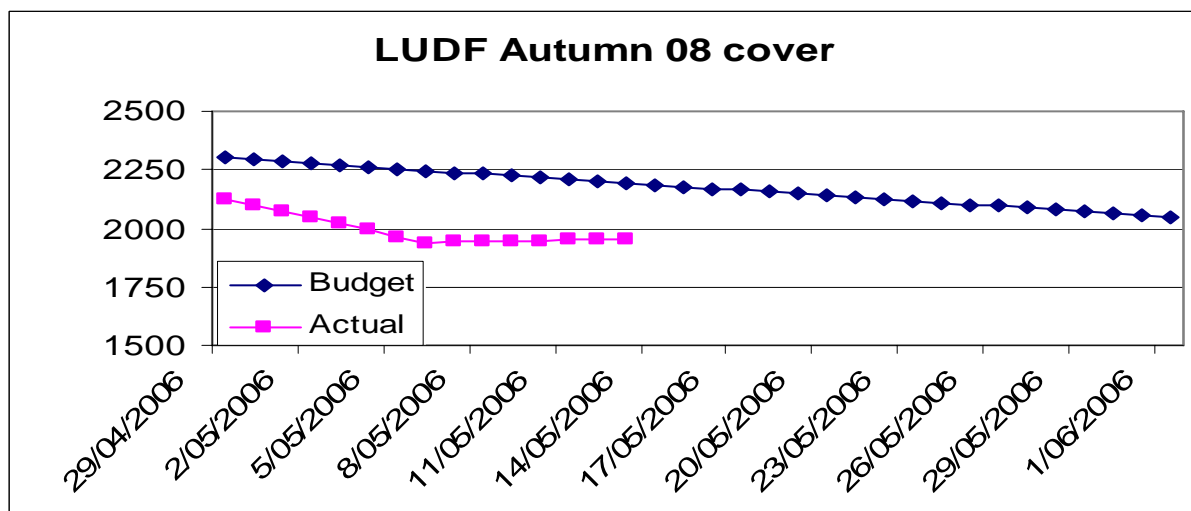
1. Average a rotation length between 40 and 45 days.
2. Maintain grazing residuals to 7 “clicks”.
3. Maintain cow dry matter intakes by also feeding out good quality grass silage.

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMP at 10am rose during the week but has dropped again this morning.

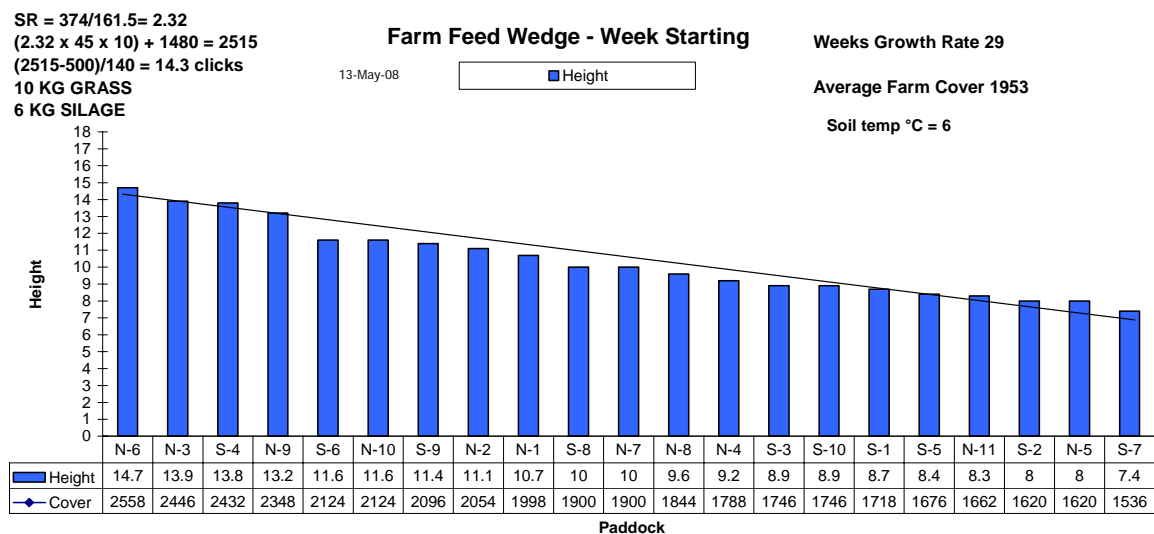


5. PASTURE GROWTH was 29 kg DM/ha (last week 17) on the milking platform.
6. Average pasture cover has risen slightly from 1939 kg DM/ha to 1953 which is below our dry off target of 2050 kg DM /ha at 1 June.



7. The graph above shows that we needed to take some drastic actions if we were to get the farm cover back to our target for the 1 June. We did not have enough pasture and silage on hand to continue to milk the 550 cows we had milking two weeks ago.
8. This week we have got rid of the empty cows, dried off all the 3yr olds, high somatic cell count, lame and mastitis cows and removed them all from the milking platform. The empty cows have been sold or sent to the works and the rest are on our runoffs getting silage and grass. We dried the cows off by reducing intakes and then skipping one milking before we blanket treated them with Dry Cow and removed them off the platform. They have been getting 8 kgs DM /cow but this will now lift to up to 12 kgs for those cows needing to put on more than half a condition score.
9. As a result we only have 374 cows left on the milking platform and enough silage on hand to feed them at 6 kg DM /day for 38 days. This would see us through into June and allow us to achieve the target cover of 2050 on 1 June. We have reduced the amount of grass allocated to the cows by lengthening the rotation. We used an average of 3.4 ha per day that is 1/47th of the farm and have been feeding an average of 6 kg DM of grass silage /cow/day to achieve this round.
10. The new target line presumes the 374 cows (2.3 cows/ha) are eating 10 kg DM of grass and 6 kg DM of silage on a rotation of no less than 40 days. Normally we do not calculate the target line assuming that we are going to feed silage but during this autumn we are planning to feed an average of 6 kg of silage every day. This means we only need 10 kg DM of grass a day and so we require a pre-grazing cover of 2515 DM/ha.

11. This weeks pasture wedge



12. The wedge shows that if we can hold this rotation at about the 40 days and feed 10 kg DM /cow/day as grass then with our expected growth rate of between 25 and 30 kg DM /ha /day we will continue to be able to milk on for at least another week.
13. Over the next weeks any cows that get lame will be treated and dried off immediately. Any cows that get mastitis will be treated and then dried off once the mastitis is cured.
14. A continuing watch will be kept on cow condition score both on the cows still milking and on those dried off. As soon as the dried off cows have been sorted into their wintering mobs a condition score profile will be done for each mob and the numbers of the thinnest cows recorded. Each mob will be condition scored on a fortnightly basis and particular attention will be taken of the recorded thin cows.

15. Milk production per cow has held at 1.3 kg /MS/cow/day but with less cows per ha production has dropped to 3.1 kg MS/ha/day.
16. The somatic cell count is currently back to 240,000 after drying off some high somatic cell count cows.
17. All cows, R2 and R1's have been Lepto vaccinated.
18. The pasture cover is measured on each runoff each week, and this is monitored against the pasture covers modelled in our Autumn/Winter/Spring Feed budget for each of these areas.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday **20th May 2008 at 9.00am.**

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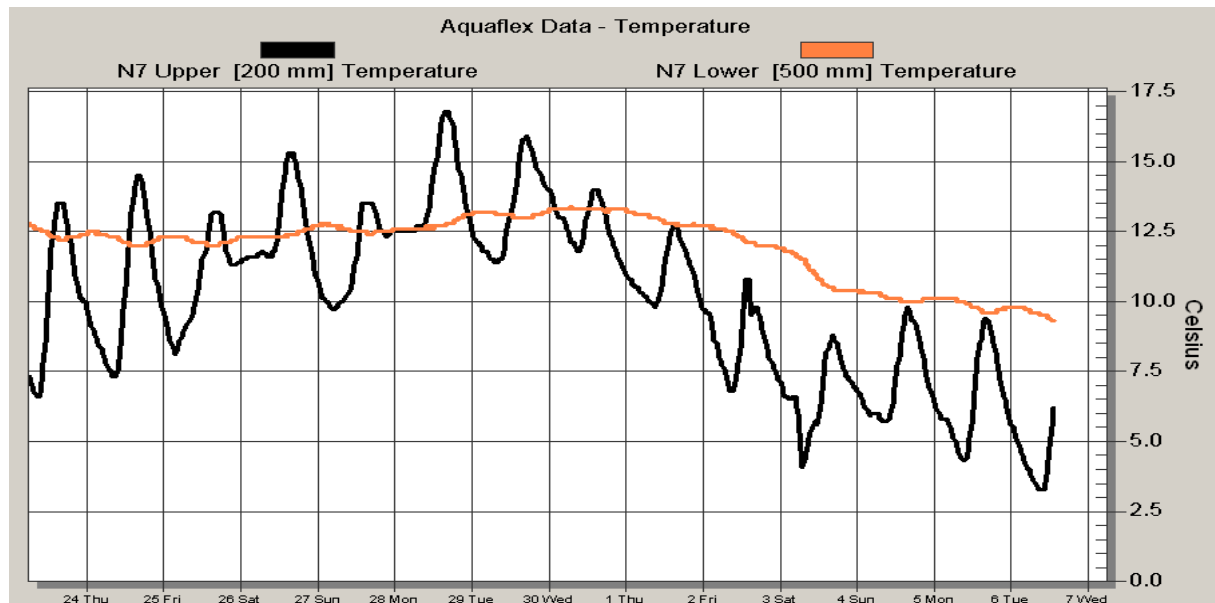
Tuesday, 6th May 2008

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Average a rotation length between 30 and 35 days.**
2. **Maintain grazing residuals to 7 “clicks”**
3. **Maintain cow dry matter intakes by also feeding out high quality grass silage.**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMP at 10am has dropped in the second half of the week to 7.5 deg (12.5 last week). The sudden drop in soil temperature is typical for May and often occurs earlier in April. So far every time we have seen the lower soil temperature warmer than the surface soil temperature, we have seen temperatures in the surface soil layers warm up by several degrees. This will only make a difference in the short term and we are expecting further cold weather this weekend.



5. PASTURE GROWTH was 17 kg DM/ha (last week 46) on the milking platform. This growth rate is well below the May average but is typical for April or May when soil temperatures drop this low.
6. Average pasture cover has dropped from 2126kg DM/ha to 1927 which is below our dry off target of 2050 kg DM /ha at 1 June.
7. We used an average of 5.12 ha per day that is 1/31st of the farm and have been feeding an average of 4.5 kg DM of grass silage /cow/day to hold this round.

We have kept the target line the same as last week even though we are in the process of reducing demand further by drying off cows. Not all the cows targeted for drying off last week have left the farm. The target line should still be an average of demand and presumes the 550 cows (3.46 cows/ha) are eating 16 kg DM and on a rotation of no less than 30 days. This requires a pre-grazing cover of 3112 kg DM/ha.

8. This weeks pasture wedge

SR = 550/161.5 = 3.4
 (3.4 x 30 x 16) + 1480 = 3112
 (3112-500)/140 = 18.7 clicks

Farm Feed Wedge - Week Starting

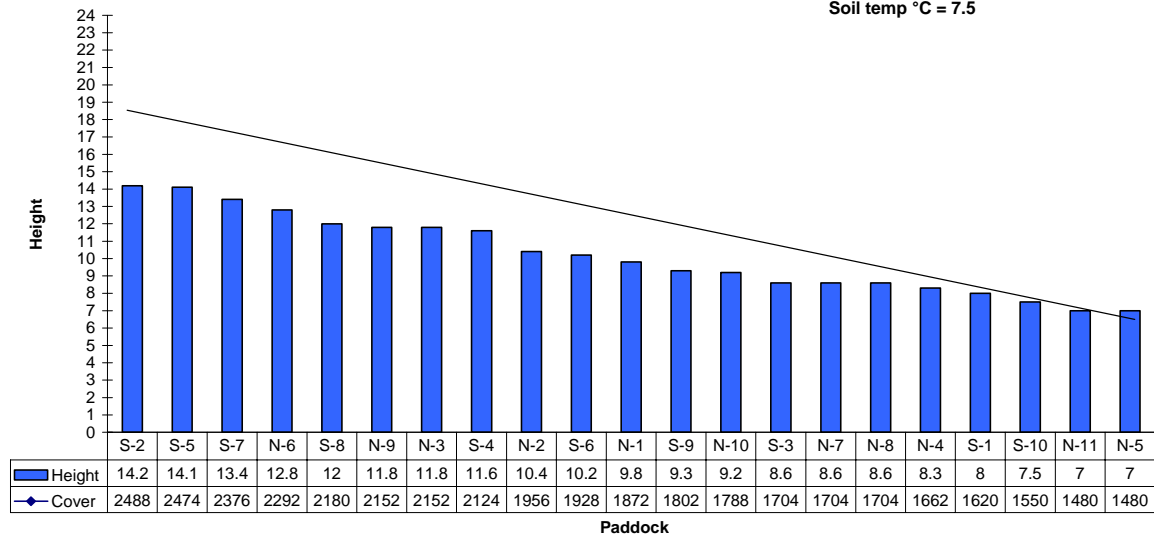
Weeks Growth Rate 17

6-May-08

■ Height

Average Farm Cover 1939

Soil temp °C = 7.5



9. The wedge shows that we have a very big deficit which means that we will have to increase the amount of silage feed out. Even if we allow for some improvement in the soil temperatures we are no longer expecting growth to exceed 30 and so have redone our feed budgets with an average May growth rate of 25. When we do this we find that we do not have enough pasture cover and enough silage to continue to milk the current number of cows until the end of the month and still achieve our target pasture cover at 1 June. So we are now going to continue to dry off more cows.
10. The next groups to be dried off will be all the R3yrs, plus any cows under condition score 4.5, plus any lame cows.
11. If we can find some additional off farm grazing for the dried off cows we will be able to continue to milk some cows on until the end of May. If we can't find this extra grazing then we will be drying off all the herd over the next two weeks and hold them on the milking platform by using our remaining silage.
12. Milk production per cow has dropped from 1.3 kg /MS/cow/day to 1.25 kg MS/cow/day, and per ha production is also dropped to 4.73 kg MS/ha/day.
13. The somatic cell count has risen to 250,000 and we have found more new mastitis cases.
14. Our R2yr heifers are finishing cleaning up the last extra long paddocks on the Heifer runoff and will be going away to their winter grazing. The R1yr heifers will remain on the Heifer block.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday **13th May 2008 at 9.00am.**

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