

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

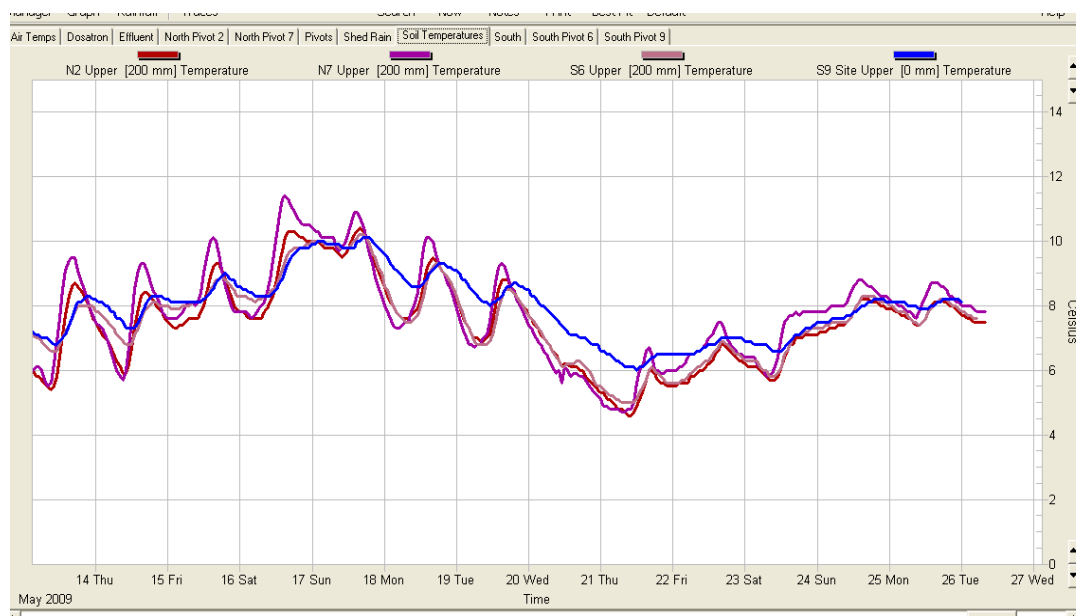
Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2009

## Critical issues for the short term

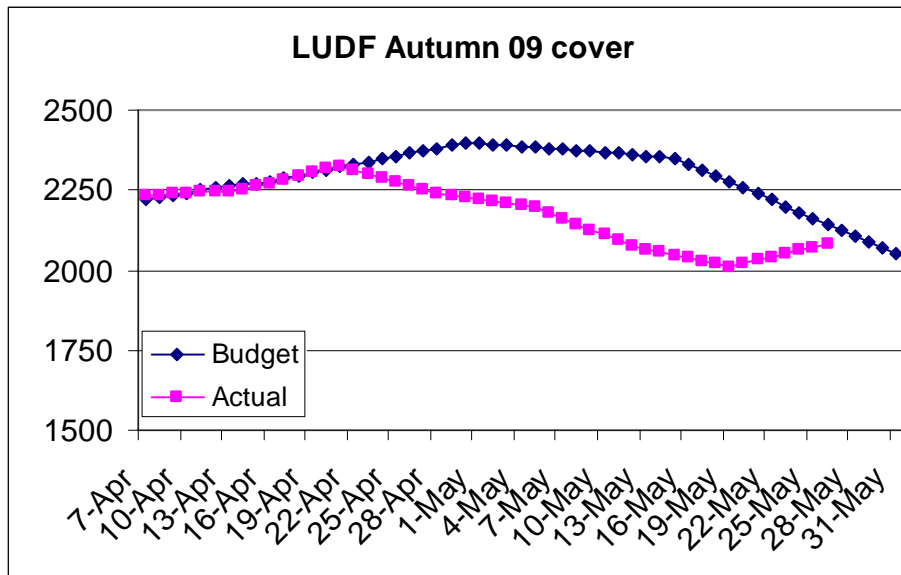
1. **Closely observe dry cows for any sign of swollen quarters and treat if found.**
2. **Avoid pasture damage on the milking platform**
3. **Maintain grazing residuals to 7 “clicks”**

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

4. Soil Temperatures at 9 am had dropped significantly at the end of last week to 4-5°C. The average for the week was about 7°C.
5. We had 85mm of rain last week (189mm for the month of May). The soils are now fully saturated. Avoiding pugging has been a major focus this week.



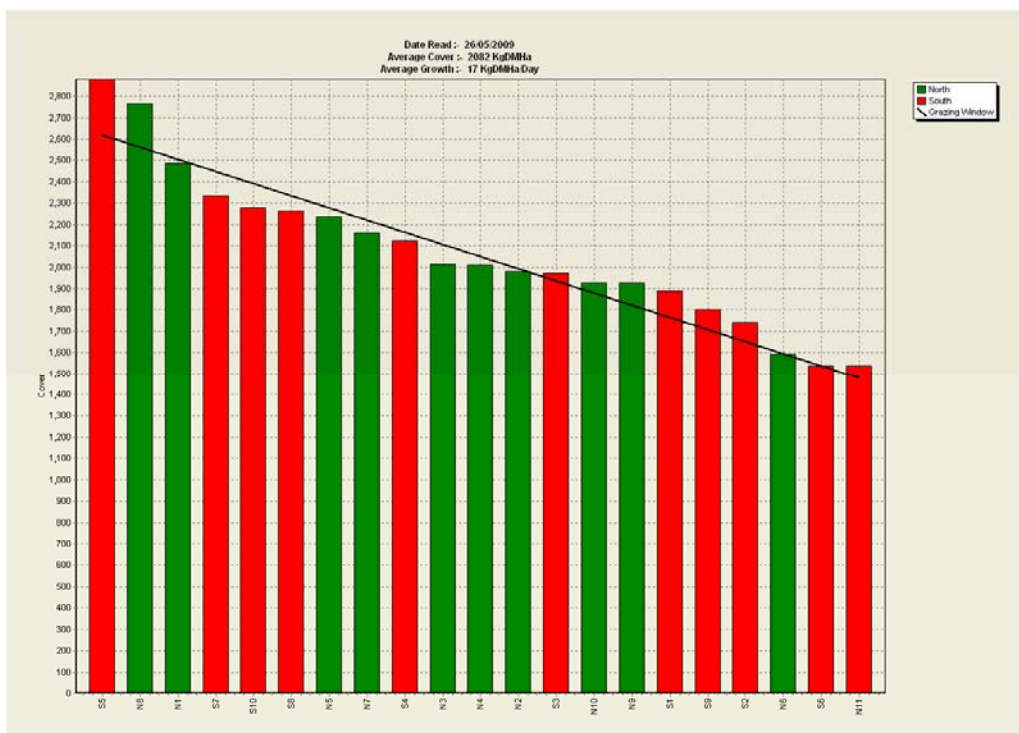
6. The weather forecast for next week is for fine weather for a few days with more rain and cold southerlies over the weekend.
7. PASTURE GROWTH was 17 kg DM/ha, which is exactly the same as last week.
8. Average pasture cover has come back up to 2082 kg DM/ha, from 2010 kg DM/ha last week. The average pasture cover at the moment is meeting the target line (the blue line on the graph below) necessary to achieve our targeted of 2,050 – 2,100 pasture cover at May 31<sup>st</sup>.
9. To help achieve target cover and avoid serious pugging, all the cows not away on winter grazing (250 early calving cows) were fed pasture and silage on a nearby farm. These cows will be back on farm for 4 days this week.



10. We fed 2.3 tonne silage DM during the week, which represents 6.4 kg DM/cow.

11. The Feed Wedge Today

The target line in the wedge below reflects the pre-grazing target of 2620 kg DM/ha and a post grazing of 1480 kg DM./ha which gives us the average pasture cover that we want for the end of May of 2050 kg DM/ha.



12. The whole herd was dried off on Thursday. Total production for the season 1645 kg MS/ha and 385 kg MS/cow. Total silage used for the season was 406 kg DM/cow (including 68 kg DM/cow of silage cut on farm), which means 337 kg DM/cow was purchased off-farm.

13. Last week 230 cows, the cows calving after the 25<sup>th</sup> of August, left farm for winter grazing. This grazing is near Hororata (half an hour away) and will be kale and straw. Another 150 cows will be taken to winter grazing on 1 June [near Springston, 4-5km from the LUDF]. This feed will initially be pasture, followed by Kale for a few weeks, then again with pasture to complete the winter.
14. 100 of our thinnest early calving cows will be on the milking platform over winter to graze the pastures to 7 clicks. It is very important that these cows do not graze lower than this because we have found it takes too long for pastures to recover sufficiently to supply adequate pre grazing pasture heights by early September.
15. All cows were treated with Dry Cow antibiotics at drying off. The 230 cows which went by truck to Hororata grazing were treated with teat seal as well.
16. The cows that are at Springston will be visited every day as our team has responsibility to manage the break fences there. The cows at Hororata will be visited once or twice a week by the team. We will be monitoring cow condition and if targets are not being met actions will be taken to improve the situation, e.g. cows on kale not putting on condition may be brought back to the farm to grass.
17. The eco-n for the autumn is being applied to the grazed paddocks as planned and it is close to completion.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009 at 9.00am.

**Farmers or their managers and staff are always welcome to walk with us. Please call to notify us of your intention and bring your plate meter. Phone SIDDC – 03 325 3629**

### **Management Group**

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Peter Hancox (Farm Manager), Neil Jones (Herd Manager), Virginia Serra (DairyNZ), George Reveley (for SIDDC).

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

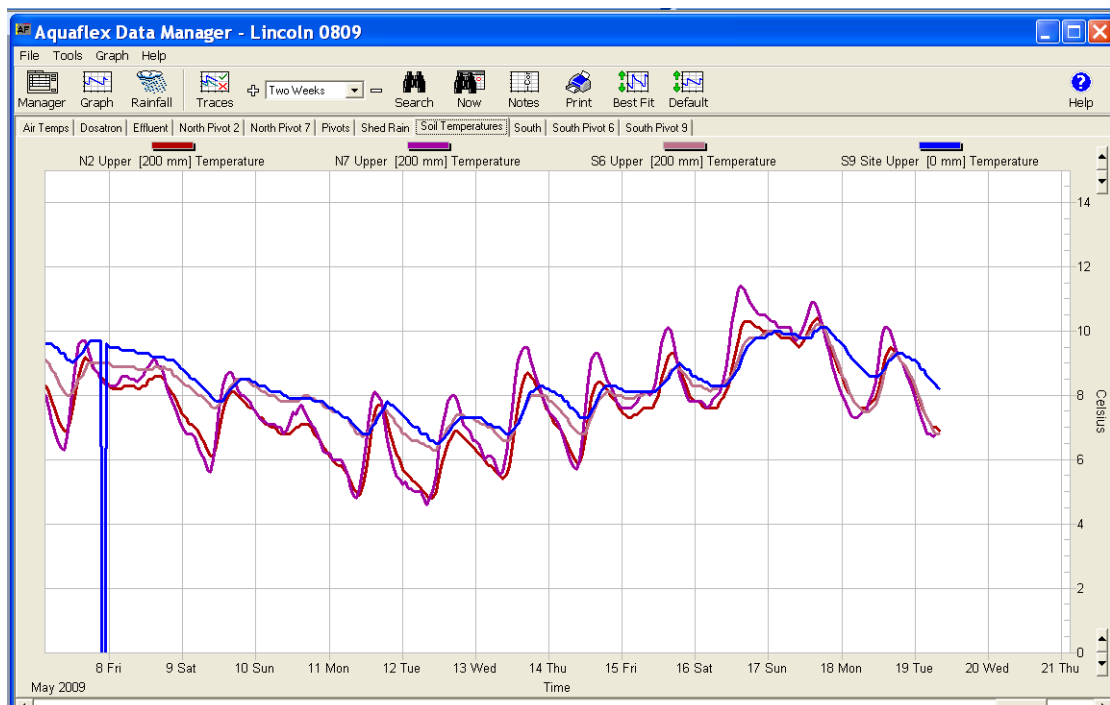
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009

## Critical issues for the short term

1. Average rotation length between 40-45 days
2. Maintain grazing residuals to 7 “clicks”
3. Continue monitoring cow condition to achieve the targets at calving

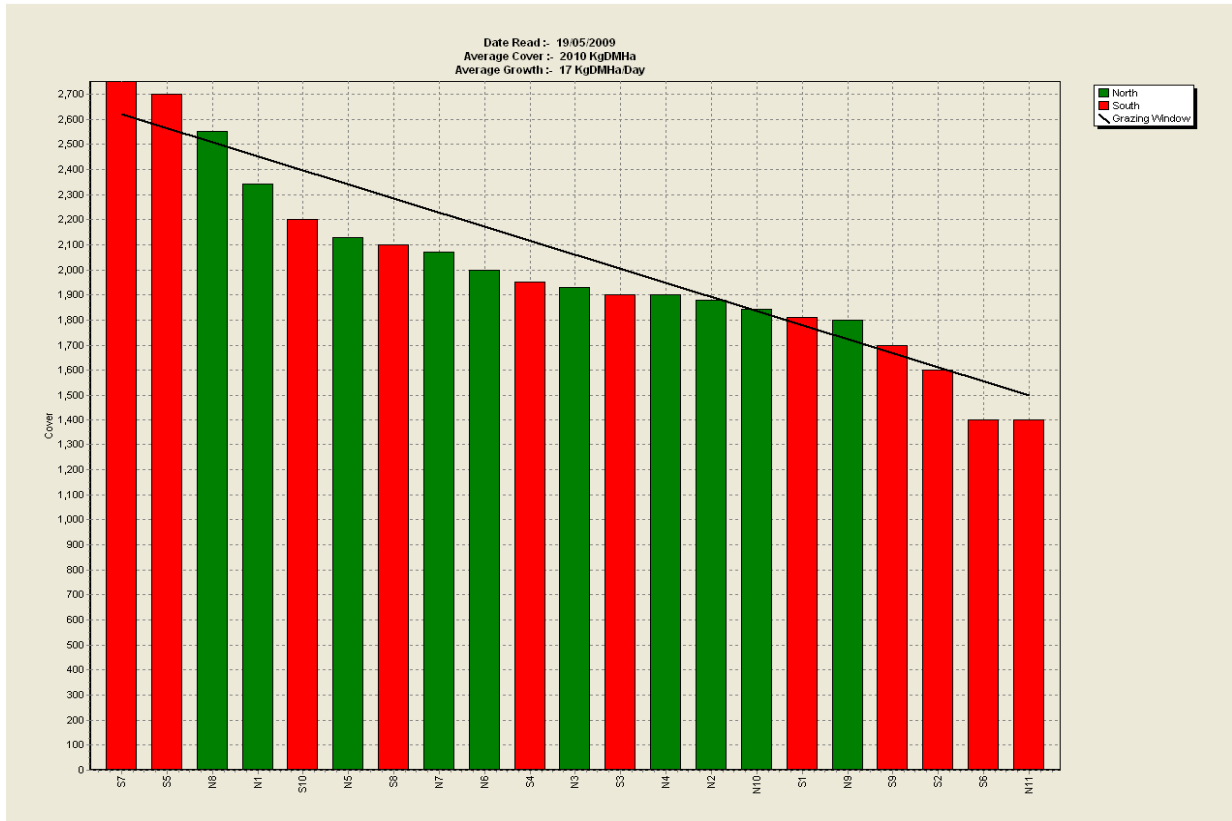
## Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. Soil Temperatures at 9 am have been a bit higher than last week, and the average for the week is about 8°C. We did not have any significant rain last week (1 mm). Despite having higher soil temperatures it was not reflected in the growth rates recorded for the week as can be seen in the Feed Wedge below.



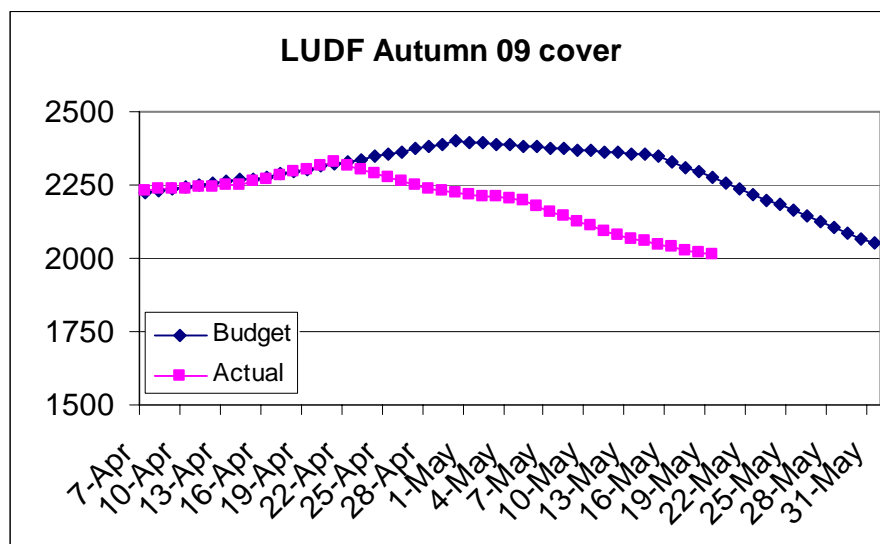
5. The weather forecast for next week is for cold weather.
6. PASTURE GROWTH was 17 kg DM/ha, which is lower than last week at 25 kg DM/ha.
7. Average pasture cover has dropped to 2010 kg DM/ha, from 2076 kg DM/ha last week.
8. We use an average of 3.32 ha/day, i.e. 1/48<sup>th</sup> of the farm, and have been feeding an average of 7 kg/DM of grass silage/cow/day to achieve this round. The total amount of silage fed was 16.8 Tonne DM of silage to milkers, similar to the 17 tonne DM fed last week. We managed to extend the grazing round because we were able to take advantage of the dryer weather and soil conditions this week. The previous week with very wet weather the grazing round was shorter than we were targeting. The quality of the silage we are feeding at the moment is the lowest quality we have (10.8 MJME/KgDM) because we are preparing the cows to be dried off.

## 9. The Feed Wedge Today



The target line in the wedge above reflects the pre-grazing target of 2620 kg DM/ha and a post grazing of 1480 kg DM/ha, which gives us the average pasture cover that we want for the end of May of 2050 kg DM/ha.

10. Cows milked last week was averaged 368. 13 cows that were pregnant at February PD and lost their pregnancies by the PD in May were sent to slaughter, and 8 light cows were dried off.
11. The average pasture cover is below the target line to achieve our target of 2,050 – 2,100 pasture cover at May 31<sup>st</sup>. We are confident, however, that the target will be achieved by the end of May as we plan to i) dry off the whole herd by the 21<sup>st</sup> May, and ii) send 230 cows away to winter grazing tomorrow.



12. We are in the process of drying off the cows. Tomorrow morning 230 cows due to calve after the 25<sup>th</sup> of August, will be leaving the farm to their winter grazing. Another 150 cows will be going to the winter block on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. This will leave us 100 of our thinnest cows on the milking platform over winter.
13. All cows will receive blanket dry cow. The 230 cows being trucked to their winter grazing will be treated with teat seal as well.
14. We have stopped nitrogen applications for the season now, having applied 245 Kg N/ha on the non effluent area of the farm.
15. Per hectare production was 2.76 kg MS/ha/day, last week 3.34. Per cow production was 1.19 kg, slightly lower than 1.24 kg MS/cow/day last week.
16. The Somatic Cell count ranged from 329 – 361. We cannot explain why, after drying off the 40 highest SCC cows from herd test results, the bulk SCC has not dropped. There were 2 cows treated for mastitis this week. We are currently stripping 2 quarters every milking to locate any with clinical mastitis.
17. There has not been any case of lame cows this week.
18. The eco-n for the autumn is being applied to the grazed paddocks as planned.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday **26<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 9.00am.**

**Farmers or their managers and staff are always welcome to walk with us. Please call to notify us of your intention and bring your plate meter. Phone SIDDC – 03 325 3629**

#### **Management Group**

Peter Hancox (Farm Manager), Neil Jones (Herd Manager), Virginia Serra (DairyNZ), George Reveley (for SIDDC).

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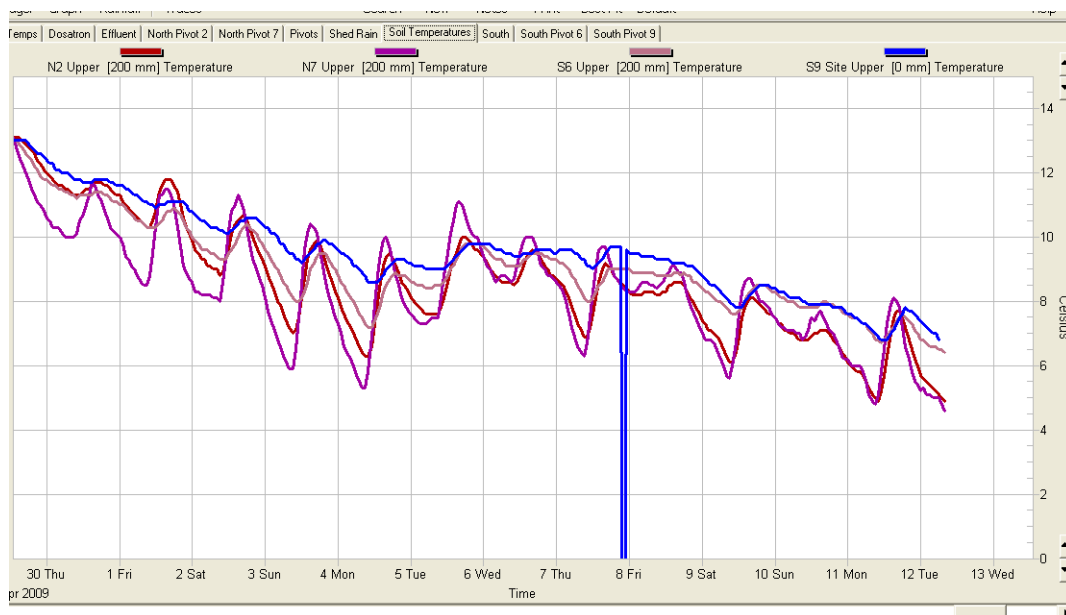
Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009

## Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain the round length above 35 days**
2. **Maintain grazing residuals to 7 “clicks”**
3. **Continue monitoring cow condition to achieve the targets at calving**

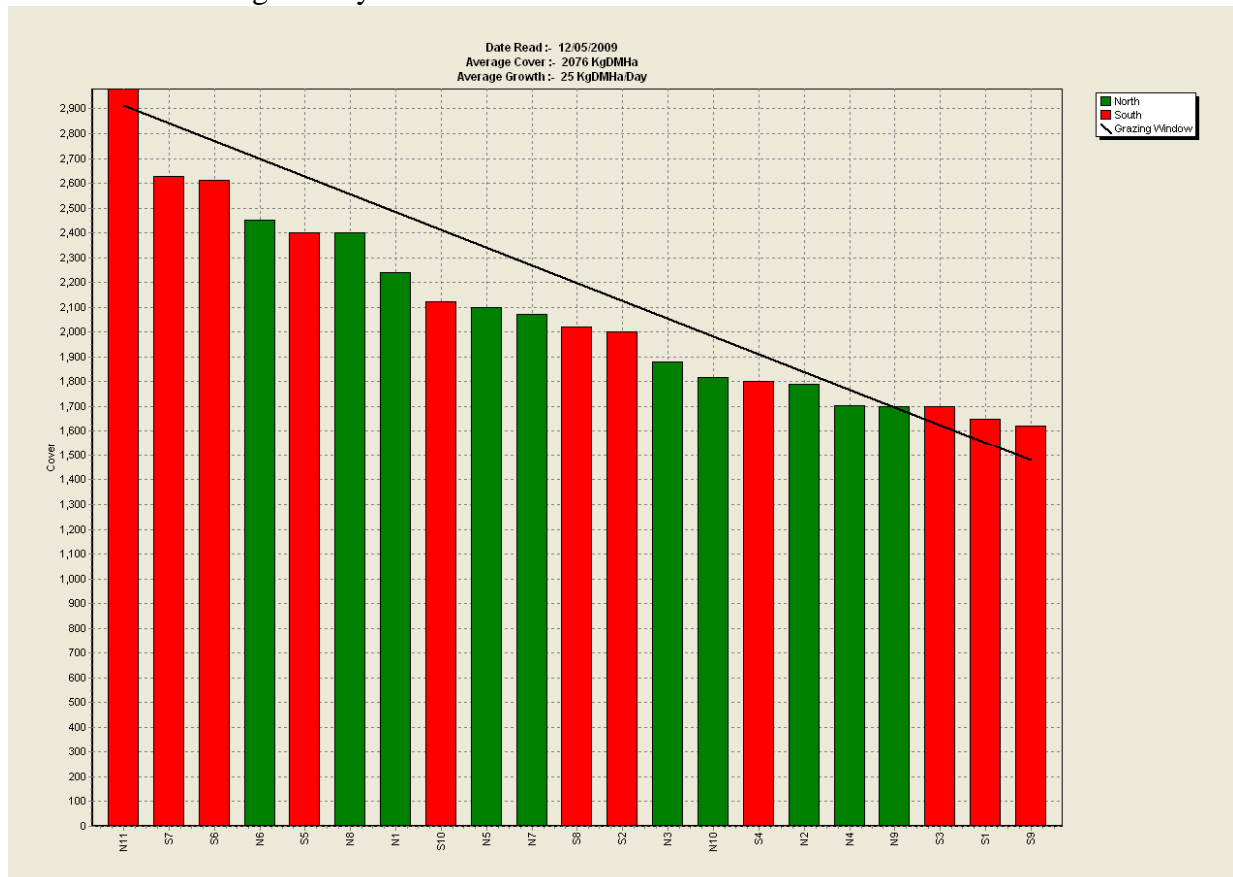
## Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. Soil Temperatures at 9.00 am have dropped as shown in the graph below, reaching 5°C in the last few days. The weather has been wet and bitterly cold.

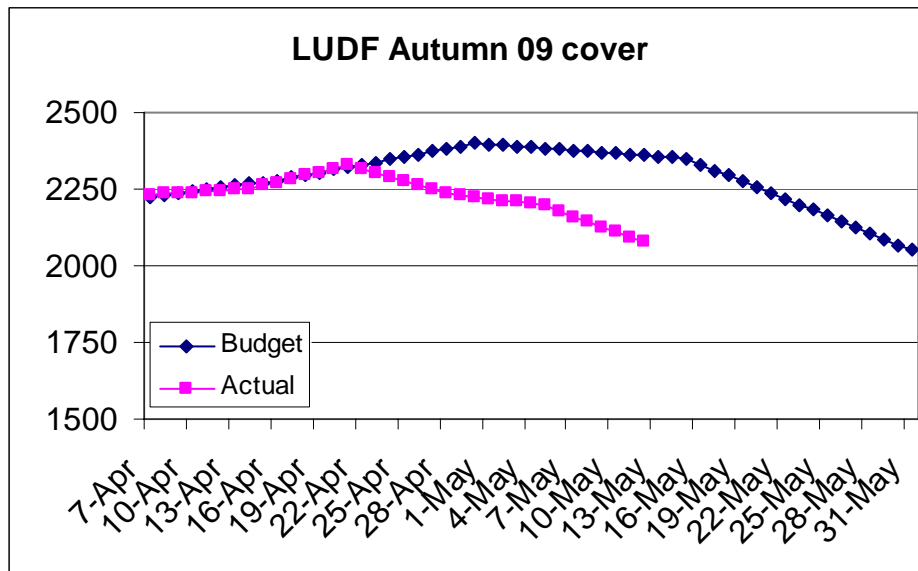


5. The forecast for next week is looking better with sunny and cold weather expected for most of the week.
6. PASTURE GROWTH was 25 kg DM/ha, lower than last week at 34 kg DM/ha, (this is not unexpected in light of the soil temperatures for the week). We also had 83 mm of rain.
7. Average pasture cover has dropped to 2076 kg DM/ha, from 2195 kg DM/ha last week.
8. Last week the overall rotation length was 28 days on 159.1 ha. We achieved this round length by feeding 17.4 Tonne DM of silage, similar to last week. This represents 6.1 kg DM/cow/day. The area used had to be increased to avoid pasture damage and to feed the cows on farm.

## 9. The Feed Wedge Today



10. The target line in the wedge above reflects the pre-grazing target for a 35 day rotation, offering 13 kg DM/grass/cow at a stocking rate of 3.14 cows/ha  
 $(3.14 \times 35 \times 13) + 1480 = 2914$  kg DM/ha. High quality pasture baleage (tested at 11.4 and 11.7 MJME/kgDM) will be offered at 4-6 kg DM/cow/day as needed to maintain cows' intake, round length and residuals in the agreed zones.
11. Cows milked last week averaged 429. All early calving cows and 3 year olds with a condition score below 4.25 were dried off last week. We have also dried off high SCC cows and low producers. We are milking 389 cows to date. Cows have been on once a day milking for 5 weeks.
12. The whole herd was condition scored on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April and the average score was 4.3. There were 117 cows below 4.25 and 72 of these have been dried off.
13. The average pasture cover is below the target line but we are taking actions to make sure we achieve our target of 2,050 – 2,100 pasture cover at May 31<sup>st</sup>.



14. We are planning now to have the remaining 389 cows in milk dried off by the 20<sup>th</sup> of May. At that date, or very soon afterwards, 230 cows will leave the platform. The feed budget suggests that these changes will be enough to achieve a cover of 2050kgDM/ha by 31<sup>st</sup> May. If the wet and cold weather continues the dry off date will be brought forward.
15. 245 Kg N/ha has been applied to the non effluent area of the farm for the season. No further applications will be made.
16. Production per ha was 3.34 kg MS/day, last week 3.54. Production per cow was 1.24 kg/MS/day, slightly up on 1.13 kg MS/cow/day last week.
17. The Somatic Cell count ranged from 336 – 370. 4 cows treated for mastitis this week. We are currently stripping 2 quarters every milking to get the cell count down to an acceptable level. After herd testing last week we have dried off all high SCC cows.
18. The number of lame cows treated this week was 1. All lame cows are being dried off.
19. Discussion with our winter graziers has not been easy in a very volatile market. Most of the details are decided now with some negotiation still around starting dates.
20. Eco-n for the autumn is being applied to the grazed paddocks as planned.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday, **19<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 9.00am.**

**Farmers or their managers and staff are always welcome to walk with us. Please call to notify us of your intention, and bring your plate meter. Phone SIDDC – 03 325 3629.**

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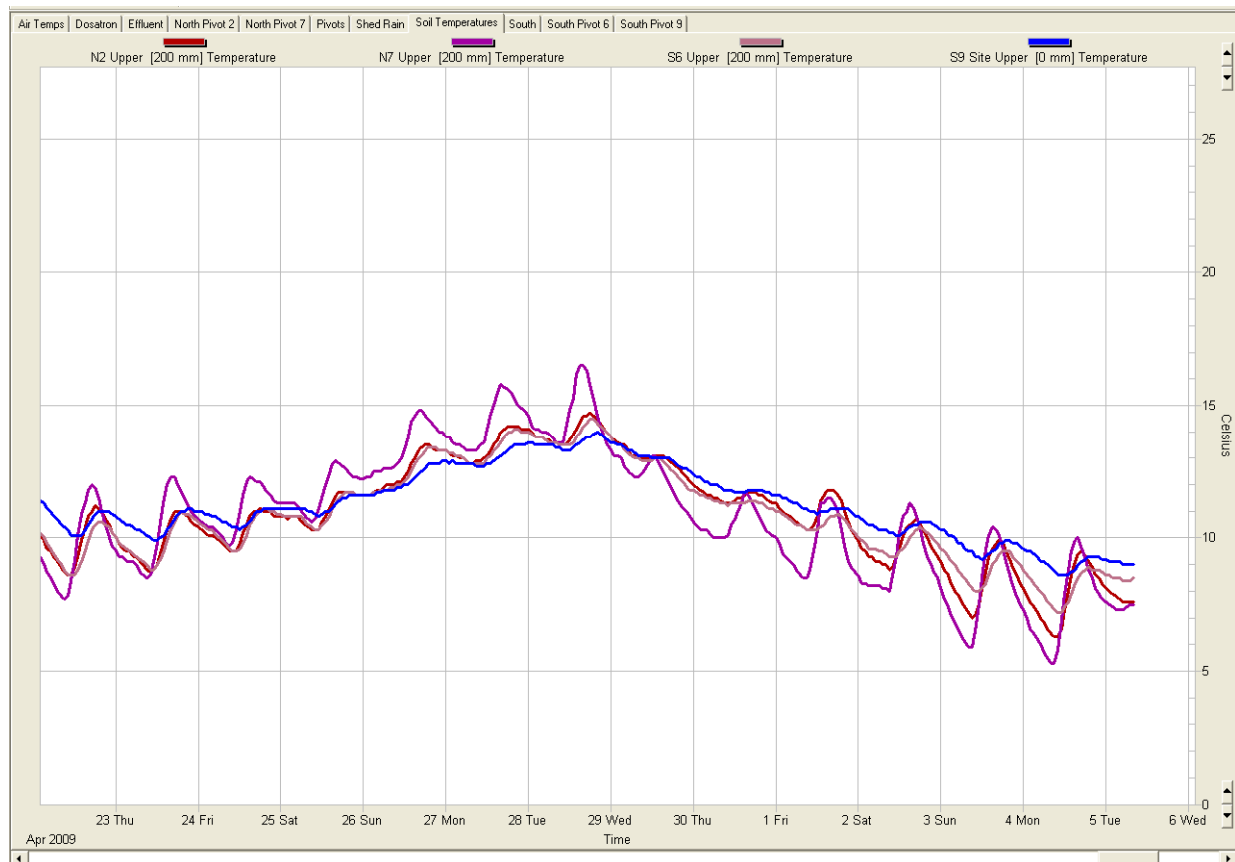
Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009

## Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain the round length above 35 days**
2. **Maintain grazing residuals to 7 “clicks”**
3. **Continue monitoring cow condition to achieve the targets at calving**

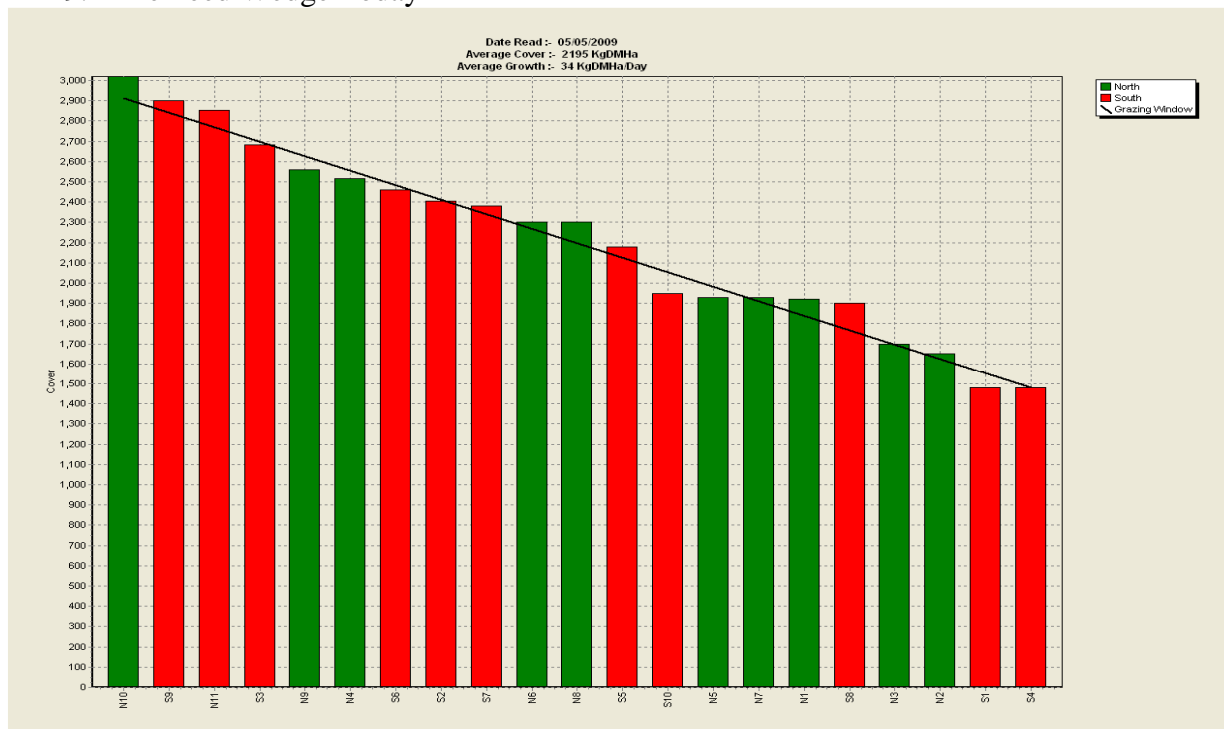
## Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. Soil Temperatures at 9.00 am have dropped significantly as shown in the graph below, and reached 6°C yesterday.



5. The weather forecast for next week is not looking good with cold weather expected for most of the week.
6. PASTURE GROWTH was 34 kg DM/ha, which is lower than last week at 42kgDM/ha. (this is not unexpected looking at the soil temperature for the week).
7. Average pasture cover has dropped to 2195 kg DM/ha from 2238 kg DM/ha last week.
8. Last week the overall rotation length was 34 days on 159.1 ha. We achieved this round length by feeding 16.9 Tonne DM of silage, similar to last week. This represents 4.8 kg DM/ cow/day.

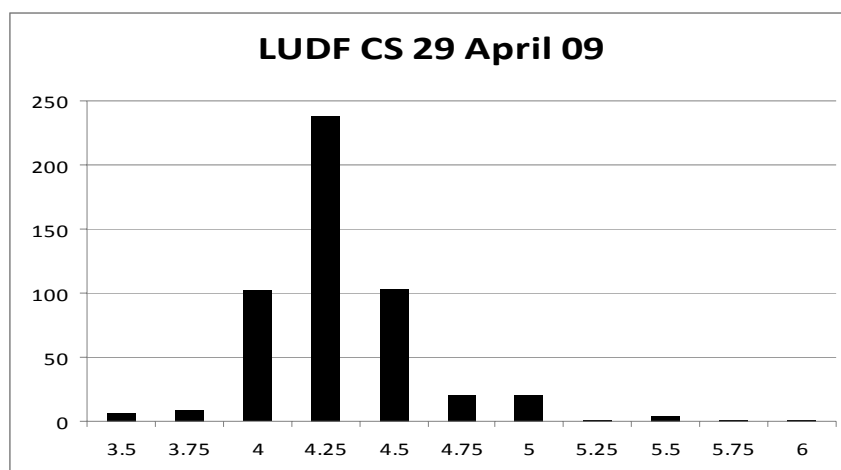
## 9. The Feed Wedge Today



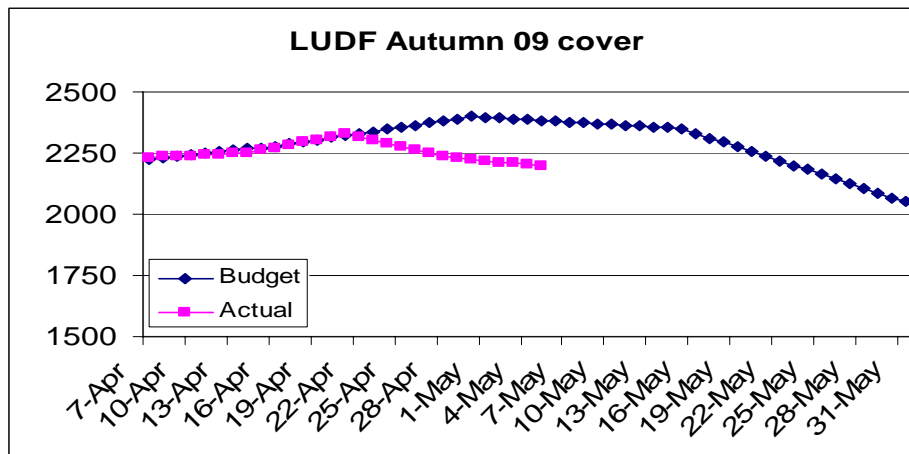
10. The target line in the wedge above reflects the pre-grazing target for a 35 day rotation, offering 13 kg DM of grass/cow at a stocking rate of 3.14 cows/ha  
 $(3.14 \times 35 \times 13) + 1480 = 2911$  kg DM/ha. High quality pasture baleage (tested at 11.4 and 11.7MJM/kgDM) will be offered at 3-4 kg DM/cow/day as needed to maintain cows' intake, round length and residuals in the agreed zones.

11. Average cows milked last week numbered 508. Cows have been on once-a-day (OAD) for 4 weeks now. The decision to put the herd on OAD milking was made because we could see that there were too many light conditioned cows needing to be dried off before the end of the milking season.

12. The whole herd was condition scored again last week and the average condition was 4.3, there were 15 cows below 4 and they are being dried off at the moment. Cow condition remains a concern and we will act accordingly to achieve the cow condition target of all August calving cows above 4.5 at the end of May. The graph below shows the numbers of cows in each condition score range. The 100 cows showing as condition score 4 will be looked at again next week and cows with an early calving date most likely all dried off.



13. Liveweight gain in the milking herd as estimated by the walk over weighing remains positive but the rate of gain has slowed.
14. The remainder of the season feed budget has target average pasture cover as shown in the graphic below. The average pasture cover is below the target line but we are still on target to achieve our target of 2,050 – 2,100 pasture cover at May 31<sup>st</sup>. The pasture cover is lower than anticipated in the original target (the blue line on the graph). Additional cows (low c.s.) will most likely be dried off next week (lowering demand). Pasture growth is also likely to be below budget. We will re-work the feed budget again next week to ensure that the end of season pasture cover is not compromised.



15. So far we have applied 245 kg N/ha on the non effluent area of the farm. Our last application for the season will be today.
16. Production/ha is 3.54 kg MS/ha/day, last week 4.07. Per cow production dropped to 1.13 kg MS/cow/day from 1.26 kg MS/cow/day.
17. The Somatic Cell count ranged from 288 to 322. There were 6 cows treated for mastitis this week. We are currently stripping 2 quarters every milking.
18. The number of lame cows was 2 this week.
19. Discussion with our winter graziers has not been easy in a very volatile market. Most of the details are decided now.
20. The eco-n for the autumn was applied this week on another 4 paddocks. So far 12 of 21 paddocks have now been treated.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday **12<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 9.00am.**

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