

Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

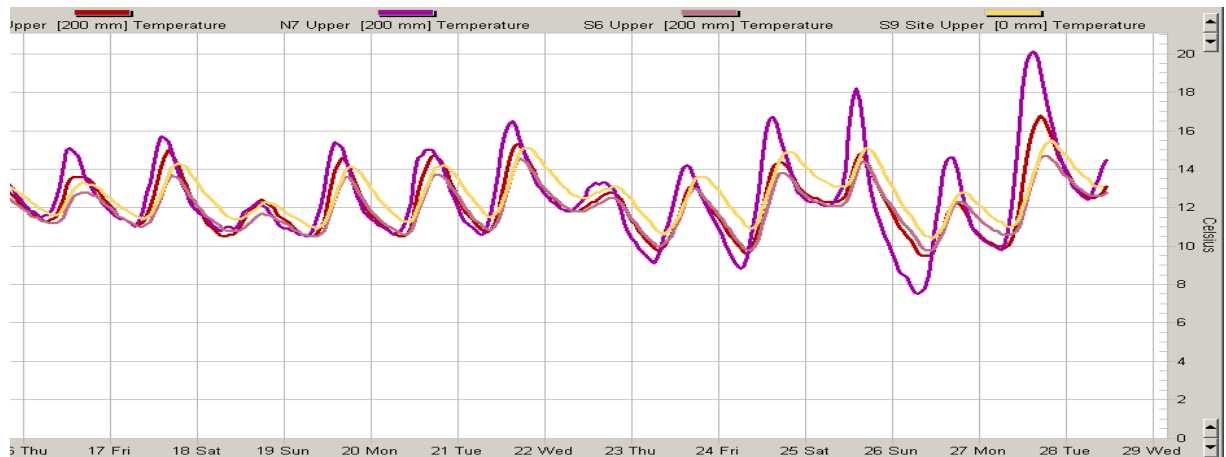
Tuesday, 28th October 2008

Critical issues for the short term

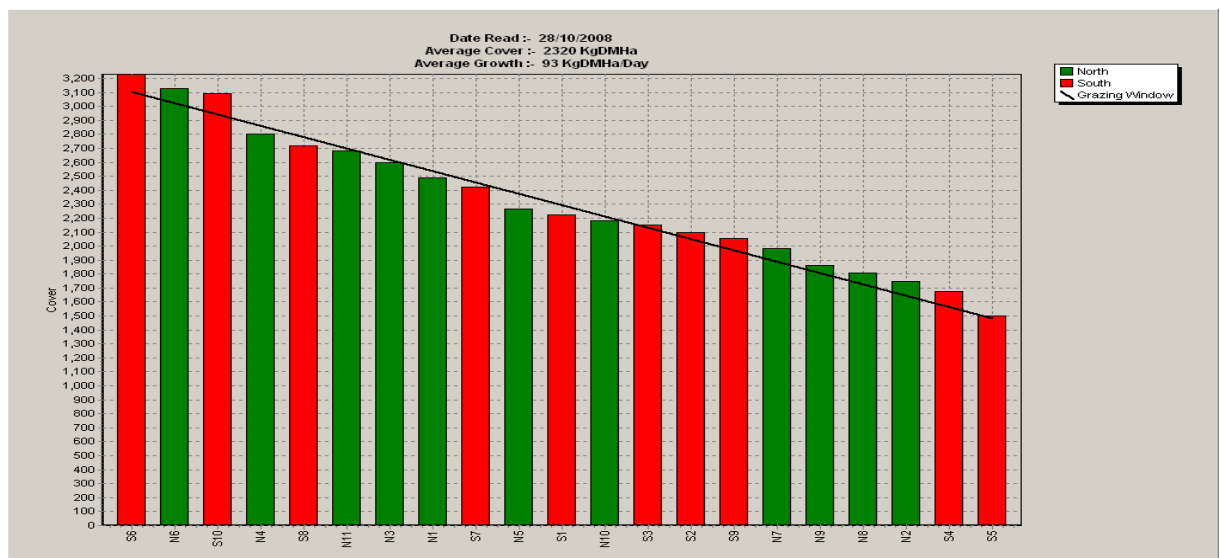
1. Maintain water supply mag chloride.
2. Get the rotation length to 21 days.
3. Observe and mate synchronised heifers.

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMP at 9am has been more variable this week than the previous week (between 9.0°C and 13 °C) but with a slightly higher average about 12 °C.



5. PASTURE GROWTH was 93 kg DM/ha (previous week 71).
6. Average pasture cover has increased to 2320 kg DM/ha (last week 2244 kg DM/ha).
7. Last week the rotation length was held at 19 days by feeding silage for 3 days late in the week. This amounted to 7.8t silage or 1.9 kg DM/cow average for the week (3.3 kg DM/day fed for 3 days).
8. The Pasture Wedge today.



9. The wedge now has a target line that reflects the pre-grazing target for a 21 day rotation, feeding an average of 18kg DM/cow at a stocking rate of 4.3 (4.3 X 21 X 18) + 1480 = 3104. This is a slight increase in allocation and we want to continue to increase this to about 19 kg DM/cow.
10. The average farm cover and wedge has changed enough for us to go back to a 21 day rotation without continuing to feed silage. The defining thing is how long it takes for the cows to get to the target residual of “7 clicks” or 1480 kg DM/ha.
11. The higher growth rates this week are showing through as a group of paddocks near the bottom of the wedge that are already above the target line but the weather forecast for the next week leads us to doubt that these growth rates will continue this week.
12. We will also continue with our N applications. This is now the third round and we will be applying 30 kg N/ha following the cows (with some paddocks getting it before they are grazed)
13. We now have 660 cows going in the vat. Production /ha continues to rise and is now 7.86 kg MS/ha/day. Per cow production 1.9 kg MS/cow/day.
14. The records from the walk-over weighing indicate that cows that calved in the first week of calving are holding liveweight.
15. The Somatic cell count has remained 199,000 between 287,000. We found 6 new clinical cases of mastitis each week via the quarter stripping. This level of mastitis is much higher than the farm has experienced in recent years. We are in the process of having the milking machine function rechecked as part of a search for the ongoing cause/s.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday **4th November 2008 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), George Reveley (for SIDDC), and Adrian van Bysterveldt DairyNZ).

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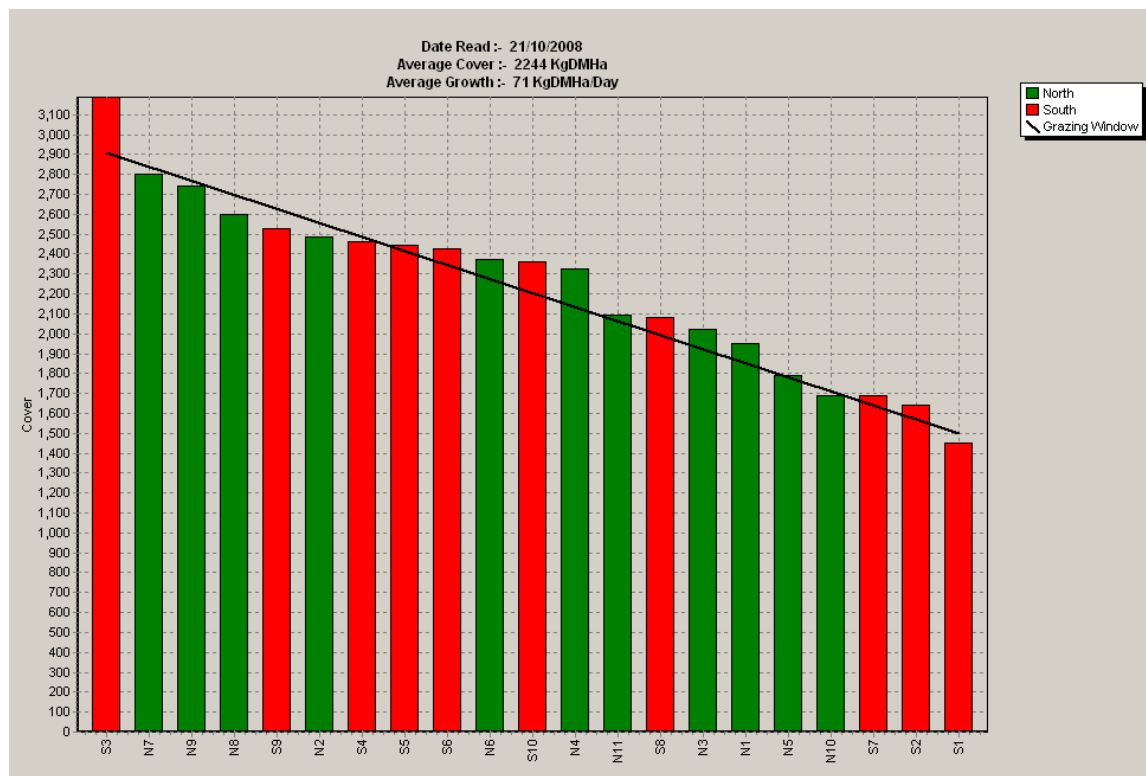
Tuesday 21st October 2008

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain water supply mag chloride. Also supplement milkers with calcium.**
2. **Allow the rotation length to speed up to 19 days but no quicker.**
3. **Observe and mate synchronised heifers.**
4. **Continue with strategies to reduce SCC to below 200,000 consistently.**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

5. SOIL TEMP at 9am has been between 11.0° C and 12.5° C for the week with the average about 11.5° C.
6. PASTURE GROWTH was 71 kg/DM/ha (previous week 89).
7. Average pasture cover has decreased to 2244 kg/DM/ha (last week 2266 kg DM/ha).
8. Last week the rotation length sped up to 19 days, as one of the okay strategies for the week and fed 1.5 kg/DMSilage/cow for one day only.
9. The Pasture Wedge today.



10. The wedge now has a target line that reflects the pre-grazing target for a 19 day rotation, feeding an average of 17.5 kg/DM/cow at a stocking rate of 4.3 ($4.3 \times 19 \times 17.5$) + 1480 = 2909. This is a slight increase in allocation.

11. This is close to the position that we predicted we would be in last week. Not quite as much potential surplus as predicted as the growth rate has been a little lower than last week. The wedge this week shows the group of paddocks that were in the bottom third of the wedge now in the middle of the wedge and remaining above the line. It seems unlikely that they will generate surplus feed however. Increasing the round length back to 21 days easily “uses” all the current apparent surplus.
12. The wedge suggests that we should not need to feed out silage during the week. However, we will not go quicker than 19 days and if required silage will be fed. (19 days is the fastest round length that we believe we can manage at the 4.3cow/ha stocking rate).
13. We will also continue with our N applications. This is now the third round and we will be applying 30 kg/N/ha following the cows (with some paddocks getting it before they are grazed).
14. We now have 657 cows going in to the vat. Production/ha continues to rise and is now 7.7 kg/MS/ha/day. Per cow production 1.9 kg/MS/cow/day.
15. The records from the walk-over weighing indicate that cows that calved in the first week of calving are gaining liveweight consistently.
16. The Somatic cell count has remained 148,000 between 269,000. We continue to find 5 - 8 new clinical cases of mastitis each week via the quarter stripping. This level of mastitis is much higher than the farm has experienced in recent years. We are in the process of having the milking machine function rechecked as part of a search for the ongoing cause/s.
17. The sacrifice paddocks on the runoff have been regrassed
18. The R2 heifers have been mated to AB for three days. 88% were mated in the 3 days and they now have Jersey Bulls with them.
19. Pre-mating heat detection was carried out and 85 cows were selected as not having cycled and treated with a CIDR. These cows will be inseminated on the first day of mating for the milking herd. We have a very important target in mating every cow within the first 4 weeks of mating.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday, **28th October 2008 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.**

Management Group

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

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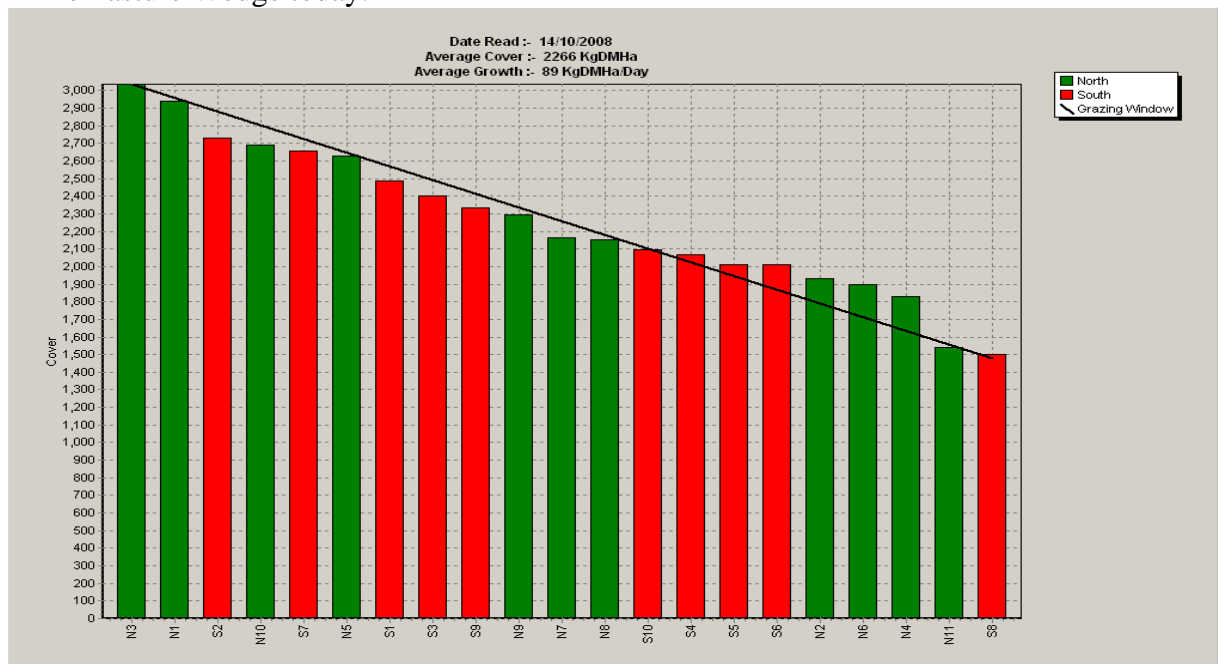
Tuesday, 14th October 2008

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Dust pastures with Caus Mag. and maintain water supply mag chloride. Also supplement milkers with calcium.**
2. **Stick to the current rotation length of 21 days.**
3. **Observe and mate synchronised heifers.**

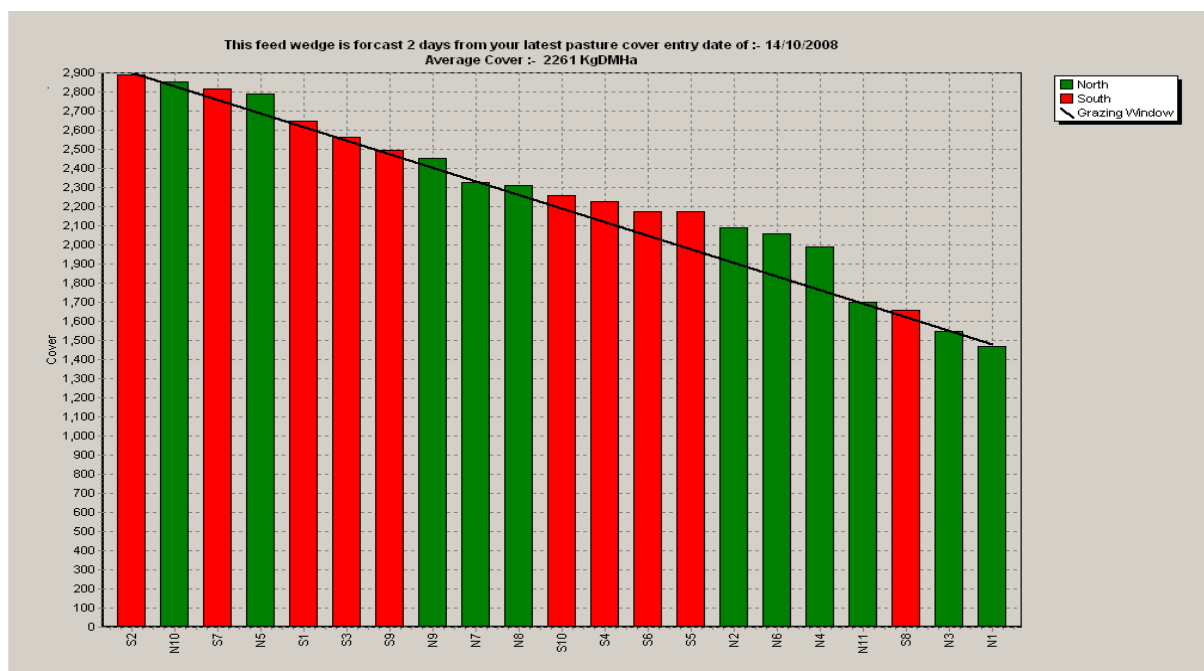
Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMP at 9am has been between 8 °C and 10.5 °C for the week with the average about 9 °C.
5. PASTURE GROWTH was 89 kg DM/ha (previous week 66).
6. Average pasture cover has increased to 2266 kg DM/ha (last week 2156 kg DM/ha).
7. Last week we held the rotation length at 23 days, two day longer than planned and fed 3.1 kg DM silage/cow/day.
8. The Pasture Wedge today.



9. The wedge now has a target line that reflects the pre-grazing target for a 21 day rotation, feeding an average of 17kg DM/cow (includes springers) at a stocking rate of 4.3. $(4.3 \times 21 \times 16) + 1480 = 3038$. This is a slight increase in allocation.
10. This is a better position than we predicted we would be in last week and is because pasture growth has lifted to be above demand and because we held the rotation length. Last week prediction wedge was for 14 days time and we have almost got there in a week. The interesting feature of the wedge this week is the group of paddocks in the bottom third of the wedge that are already above the target line. These have been experiencing above demand growth rates since grazing and with the current weather forecast of mild to average conditions for most of the next two weeks this group of paddocks could be our first surplus.

11. The new wedge suggests that we could stop feeding out silage at least for the next two days. This is what we will do and confirm this by observing if there is in fact enough grass for 24 hr grazing.
12. After this we are then faced with the next decision, “Do we speed up or feed out silage again?”



This wedge is for two days time. It presumes that we have continued to grow 80 kg DM/day (10% less than last week) and the target line reflects being on a 19 day round and allocating the cows 17 kg DM/day of grass. All paddocks are now at or above the target line and from the wedge we can clearly see that we should be able to feed the cows just on grass by giving them a larger area and being on a 19 day round.

13. We can now use the group of paddocks lower in the wedge (there are now 2 more than two days ago) that are above the target line to reduce the area /day and lengthen the grazing round back to our optimum of 21 to 22 days. This strategy should reduce the amount of silage that we eventually make without compromising either pasture growth rates, pasture quality or cow intakes.
14. The variable we have not considered is if the cows lift their intakes by 1kg/DM up to 18. If this happens we will need the above demand growth rates (above 80) to continue for at least two weeks for us to be able to get back to our 21 to 22 day rotation length with out feeding silage.
15. The initial strategy is a higher risk strategy and we will be monitoring soil temperatures and growth rates closely to check that things are going to plan. This may mean an additional farm walk on Friday. Growth rates could be higher or lower and in each case we will need to react quickly.
16. We will also continue with our N applications. This is now the third round and we will be applying 30 kg N/ha following the cows (with some paddocks getting it before they are grazed).

17. We now have 643 cows going in the vat. Production /ha continues to rise and is now 7.6 kg MS/ha/day. Per cow production has risen again 1.92 kg MS/cow/day.
18. The Somatic cell count has dropped to between 180,000 and 222,000 as a result of using the herd test somatic cell count tests back and checking the 60 cows with high counts using the RMT test and treating any cows with mastitis.
19. The sacrifice paddocks on the runoff are currently being cultivated ready for re-grassing.
20. The R2 heifers have had their 2nd PG jab yesterday and AB mating of this group will begin tomorrow and continue on observed heats for three days. They will then be joined by jersey bulls.
21. Pre-mating heats detection is occurring in the milking herd and anoestrus cows will be identified in a weeks' time. This will mean that they can be treated with a CIDR and be inseminated on the first day of mating for the milking herd. We have a very important target in mating every cow within the first 4 weeks of mating.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday 21st October 2008 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.**

Management Group

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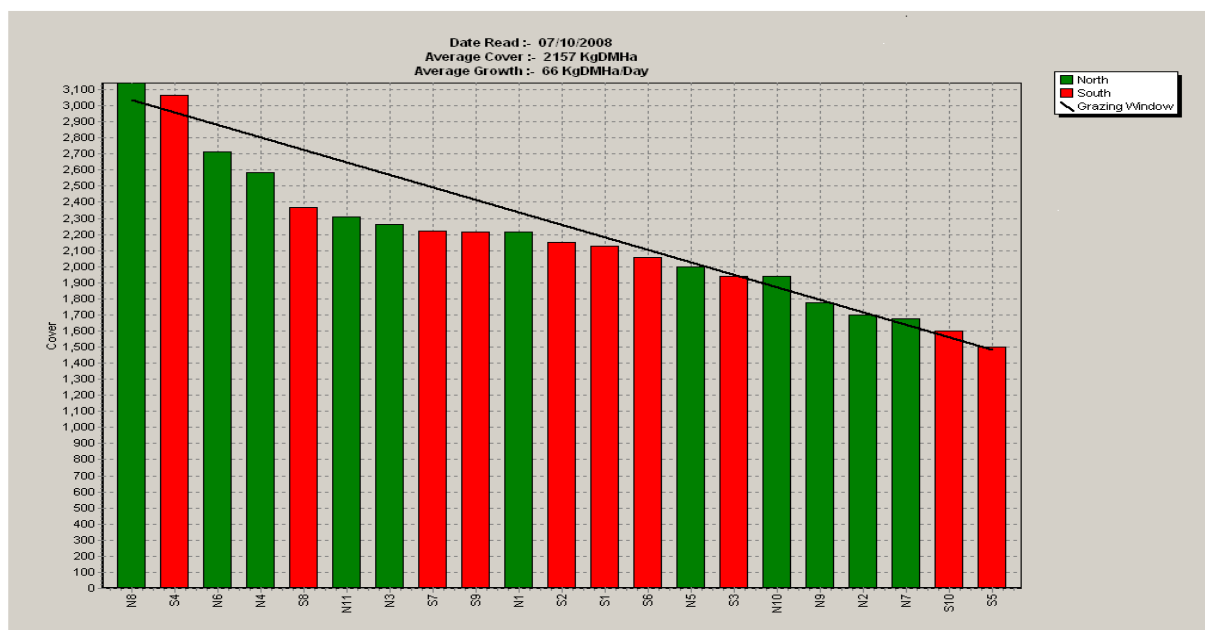
Tuesday, 7th October 2008

Critical issues for the short term

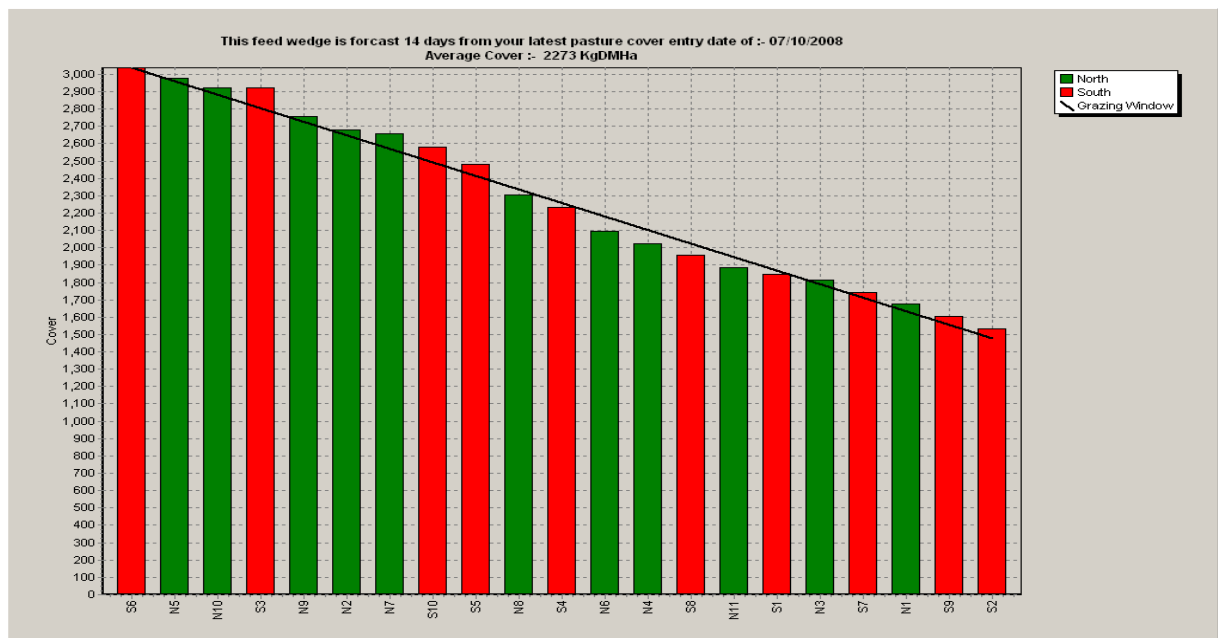
1. **Dust pastures with Caus Mag. and maintain water supply mag chloride. Also supplement milkers with calcium.**
2. **Stick to the current rotation length of 21 days.**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. SOIL TEMP at 9am has been between 7° C and 11° C for the week with the average about 10° C. This is the same as last week.
4. PASTURE GROWTH was 66 kg DM/ha (last week 66).
5. Average pasture cover has held at 2156 kg DM/ha (last week 2166 kg DM/ha).
6. Last week we held the rotation length at 21 days as planned with no silage fed.
7. The Pasture Wedge today.



8. The wedge now has a target line that reflects the pre-grazing target for a 21 day rotation, feeding an average of 17kg DM/cow (includes springers) at a stocking rate of 4.3. $(4.3 \times 21 \times 16) + 1480 = 3038$. This is a slight increase in allocation.
9. We are in the position that we predicted last week although grass growth has not lifted as we had judged it would. We now have 2 more good days of grazing with the two paddocks that are at the top of the wedge and then we are in a deficit that will require silage to be fed.
10. If we feed 4 kgs of silage /cow/day and have a slight lift in growth rate to 70 a day for the next 14 days the pasture wedge should look as follows. This growth rate is about average for this time of the year.



This suggests that we are on the right track by feeding 4 kg of silage/cow/day but that we may only need it for about 10 days as there is a lift in cover of nearly 100 kgs over the 14 days. We will require about 38t DM if silage and at current costs this will cost us between \$11,500 and \$15,000. If pasture growth rates increase higher than 70 a day we will need to pull out silage earlier.

11. We now have 631 cows going in the vat. Production /ha continues to rise and is now 7.16 kg MS/ha/day which is ahead of this time last year. Per cow production has dropped slightly to 1.85 kg MS/cow/day as a result of getting the cows to re-establish the residuals in three paddocks in the last 5 days. There is still one paddock that is too wet to fix this problem.
12. The Somatic cell count is again 236,000 and 268,000 and we have just got our herd test somatic cell count tests back and there are 30 cows with a count above 2 million and 30 have already been checked using the RMT test. Ten cows have been removed for treatment. We will continue to test all the cows with a herd test cell count above 750,000 with the RMT test.
13. Blood tests were taken from 19 cows that had been calved over a month to check the magnesium, selenium and copper levels. All were in the high side of normal.
14. New areas have been fenced off as set aside for shelter planting. This has reduced the grazing area of the farm to 159ha and we will be using this number for all our per ha calculations in the future.

Next Focus Day – Thursday 9th October

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday, 14th October 2008 at 9.00am.

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