

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

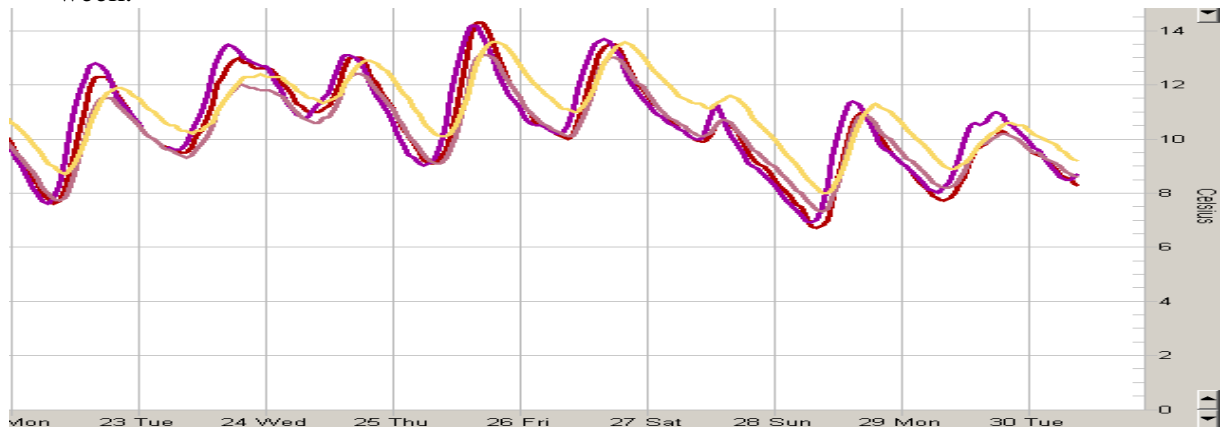
Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008

## Critical issues for the short term

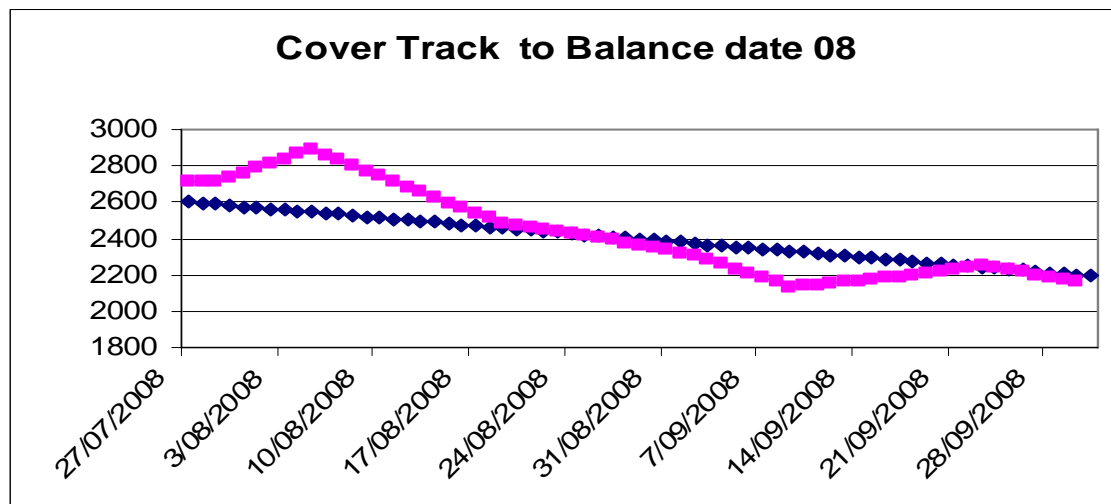
1. **Dust pastures with Caus Mag. and maintain water supply mag chloride. Also supplement milkers with calcium.**
2. **Monitor soil temperatures and if possible anticipate the arrival of any surplus grass.**

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

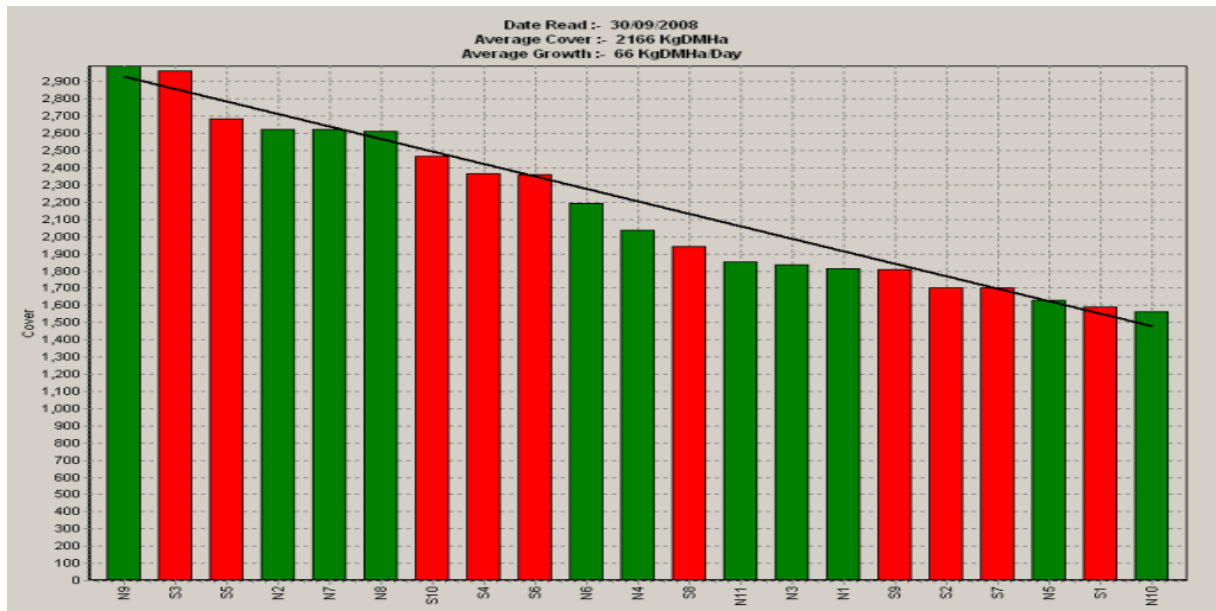
3. SOIL TEMP at 9am has been between 7°C and 11°C for the week with the average about 10°C. The weather forecast suggests that we will have a similar growth rate this week.



4. PASTURE GROWTH was 66 kg DM/ha (last week 60).
5. Average pasture cover has dropped from 2248 kg DM/ha to 2166 kg DM/ha.



6. Last week we aimed to speed up the rotation length to 21 days and we have actually done 22.5<sup>th</sup> of the farm a day. This is because we have been getting the cows to get the residuals back down to 7 “clicks” in all the paddocks where this had not been achieved earlier in the spring because of the wet conditions. The cows are currently grazing paddock S7 (the last paddock with previous high residuals) which is still very wet and we will not be able to hit target residual again. This has happened three times in the paddock now and will need to be fixed with a mower, possibly mowed to waste or as part of conserving silage.
7. The target line is at the average cover for our budgets for today which is 2200 kg DM/ha on the milking platform and our actual is 2166 kg Dm/ha.



8. The wedge now has a target line that reflects the pre-grazing target for a 21 day rotation, feeding an average of 16 kg DM/cow (includes springers) at a stocking rate of 4.3.  $(4.3 \times 21 \times 16) + 1480 = 2929$ . This is a slight increase in allocation. No silage has been fed this week.
9. We are good for feed for the next 10 days and then there may be a slight deficit if pasture growth rates do not lift. We are happy with this situation and if pasture growth rates increase earlier than expected we will increase the allocation to the cows by another 1 kg DM/cow/day.
10. We now have 644 cows calved and 52 left to calve. Due to less than budgeted losses so far (704 wintered) we currently have more cows than we expected at peak (680).
11. We now have 602 cows going in the vat. Production /ha continues to rise and is now 6.89 kg MS/ha/day which is ahead of this time last year. Per cow production has improved to 1.89 kg MS/cow/day.
12. The Somatic cell count has been better and was between 180,000 and 260,000, and our daily stripping of two quarters regularly finds new cases of mastitis.
13. All the damaged areas of the milking platform (1ha) have had more grass drilled into them and only the last two wet paddocks are still to be rolled.
14. Last weeks Metricheck of the herd resulted in 16 cows (less than 3%) requiring treatment with Metricure.
15. Recording of pre-mating heats is done weekly and those that have cycled have been re-painted with a different colour. Mating begins on 30 October and the R2yr heifers get their 1<sup>st</sup> PG synchrony on Thursday this week.
16. We have added bloat oil into the Dosatron mix and continue with magnesium. We will be doing some blood tests to check the magnesium, selenium and copper levels.

#### Next Focus Day – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> 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).

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

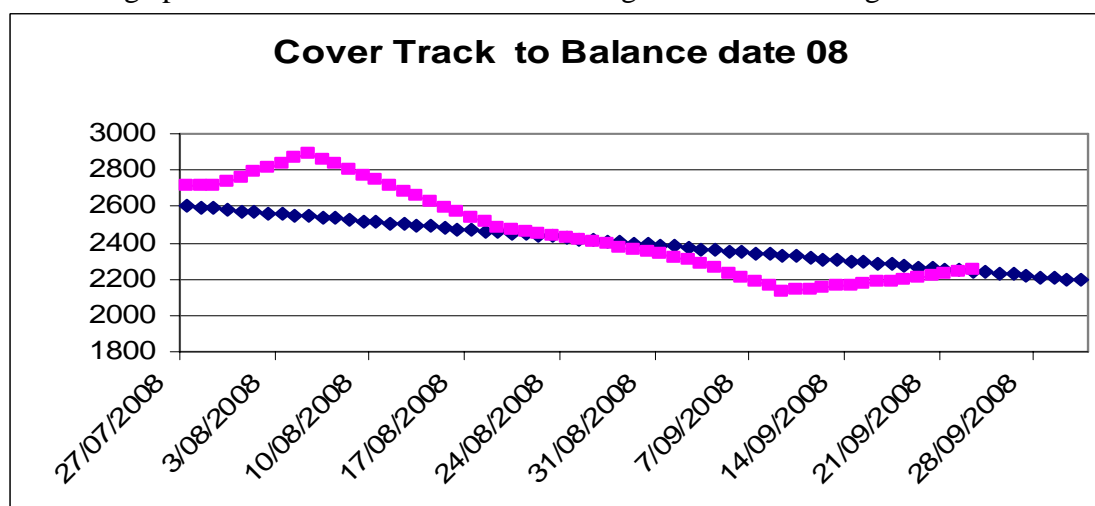
Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008

## Critical issues for the short term

1. **Dust pastures with Caus Mag. and maintain water supply mag chloride. Also supplement milkers with calcium.**
2. **Monitor soil temperatures and if possible anticipate the arrival any surplus grass.**

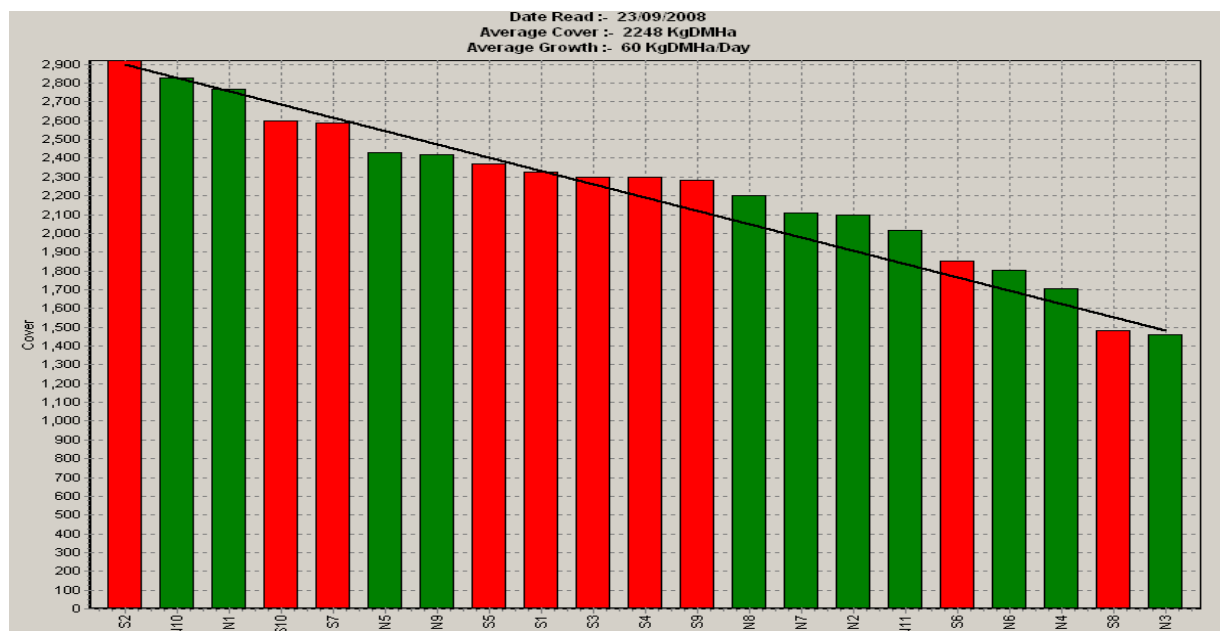
### Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. SOIL TEMP at 9am has been between an average 8.5 °C for the week.
4. PASTURE GROWTH was 60 kg DM/ha (last week 60).
5. Average pasture cover has risen from 2180 kg DM/ha to 2248 kg DM/ha.



6. We have held the rotation almost to that used for the previous three weeks and have used 38.2 ha this week which is an average of 1/30<sup>th</sup> of the farm a day. We have done this by feeding grass silage to all mobs of cows.
7. The target line is at the average cover for our budgets for today which is 2243 kg DM/ha on the milking platform and our actual is 2248 kg Dm/ha.
8. The milkers were getting an average of 3.2 kg DM/cow/day of grass silage (4.8 kg DM/day the previous week). The silage ME is now 11.2. The springers (75 cows) and colostrum cows were getting 6 kg DM/day of similar quality silage. We have fed 68 kg DM of silage /cow this spring and have 19t left in reserve.
9. We have begun the second round of nitrogen (urea) applications and this will be at a rate of 35 kg/ha and will continue at this rate for the whole of the second round. With our stocking rate of 4.3 cows/ha and high quality grass, cow intakes continue to lift and it has only been on rare occasions that we have a genuine surplus in October. Any surplus will be made immediately into silage.

## 10. This weeks pasture wedge



11. The wedge now has a target line that reflects the pre-grazing target for a 21 day rotation, feeding an average of 15.8 kg DM/cow (includes springers) at a stocking rate of 4.3.  $(4.3 \times 21 \times 15.8) + 1480 = 2906$ . We are expecting the pasture growth rate to lift above the last two weeks and be between 65 and 70 a day.
12. No more silage will be fed at this stage and the cows are getting their 24hrs worth of grass after the night milking. This means that the decision on residuals is being made when the cows are being collected for the afternoon milking.
13. We now have 615 cows calved and continue to match last year even though the start of calving was 5 days later this year.
14. We now have 567 cows going in the vat. Production /ha continues to rise and is now 6.13 kg MS/ha/day which is ahead of this time last year. Per cow production has dropped slightly to 1.81 kg MS/cow/day. This is not surprising as we have been in a deficit and were asking the cows to re-establish the residuals that were left higher than target in the wet and also feeding out lower quality silage to keep residuals at 7 clicks.
15. The Somatic cell count has continued to be above the target. With some difficult to understand fluctuations in the 200- 300,000 range.
16. Tail paint was applied on Sunday and the herd will be Metri-checked this Thursday. This sets us up for dealing to any anoestrus cows a week before the start of mating which will be 5 days later than last year (now on the 30 October). R2yr heifers will be synchronised and mated 12 days prior to the main herd.

## Next Focus Day – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 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).

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

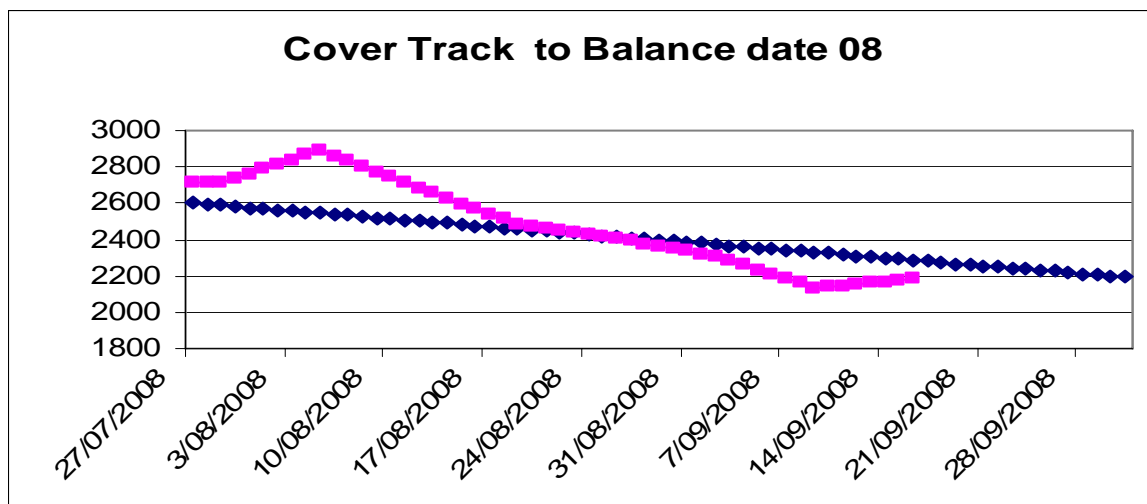
Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008

## Critical issues for the short term

1. **Dust pastures with Caus Mag. and maintain water supply mag chloride. Also supplement milkers with calcium.**
2. **Get nitrogen on no matter what the conditions if the pasture supply is tight.**
3. **Hold the round length to plan.**

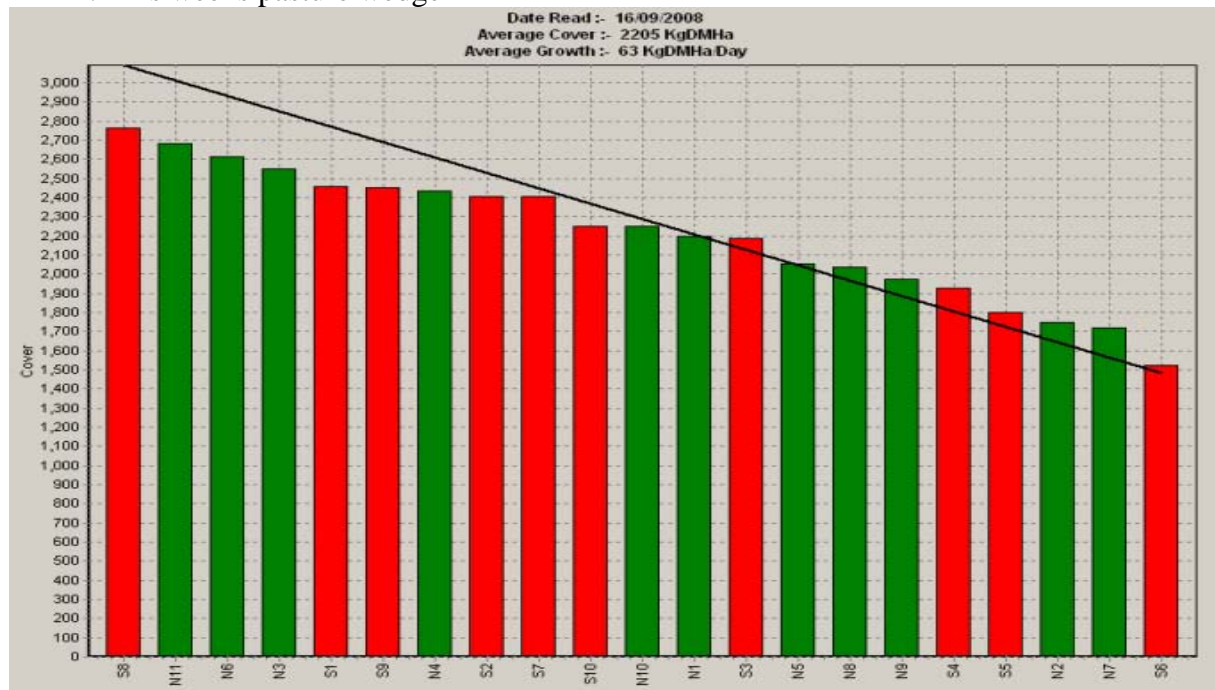
## Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. SOIL TEMP at 9am has been between an average 8.5 °C for the week.
5. PASTURE GROWTH was 60 kg DM/ha (last week 39).
6. Average pasture cover has risen from 2133 kg DM/ha to 2180 kg DM/ha.



7. We have held the rotation almost to that used for the previous two weeks and have used 35.8 ha this week which is an average of 1/31<sup>st</sup> of the farm a day. We have done this by feeding grass silage to all mobs of cows. We will continue with a similar strategy until we reach the target line, which should be by the end of the week.
8. The milkers were getting an average of 4.8 kg DM/day of grass silage that has an ME range of 11.2 to 11.8. The last of the springers (110 cows) were getting 6 kg DM/day of similar quality silage.
9. Soil conditions are much firmer and there is no longer a risk of pugging. However, springs are actively running in paddocks on our south block as well as in the main road underpass.
10. We have begun the second round of nitrogen (urea) applications and this will be at a rate of 35 kg/ha.
11. The target line is at the average cover for our budgets for today which is 2286 kg DM/ha on the milking platform, our actual is 2180 kg DM/ha, and the deficit is now 12 ton.

## 12. This weeks pasture wedge



13. We will continue to feed high quality grass silage (ME 11.5+) to the milkers but will reduce this to about 4 kg DM/cow/day and reduce the average rotation length of the week from 1/31<sup>st</sup> of the farm a day to 1.27<sup>th</sup> of the farm a day. At this stage we are not confident to go to a 22 day round although conditions are looking favourable.
14. We will continue to feed grass silage to the colostrum and springer mobs.
15. We now have 588 cows calved and continue to match last year even though the start of calving was 5 days later this year. Only four heifers to calve.
16. We now have 526 cows going in the vat. Production/ha continues to rise and is now 5.8 kg MS/ha/day which is the same as this time last year. Per cow production has dropped slightly to 1.88 after getting to 2 kg/MS/cow/day for several days earlier this week.
17. The Somatic cell count has improved with continued checking of fore milk and has dropped and is now between 185,000 and 229,000.
18. Tail paint is going on next Monday and the herd will be Metri checked next week. This sets us up for dealing to any anoestrus cows a week before the start of mating. R2yr heifers have also had copper bullets, B12 plus selenium, as well as treated for parasites.

## Next Focus Day – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 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).

# Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

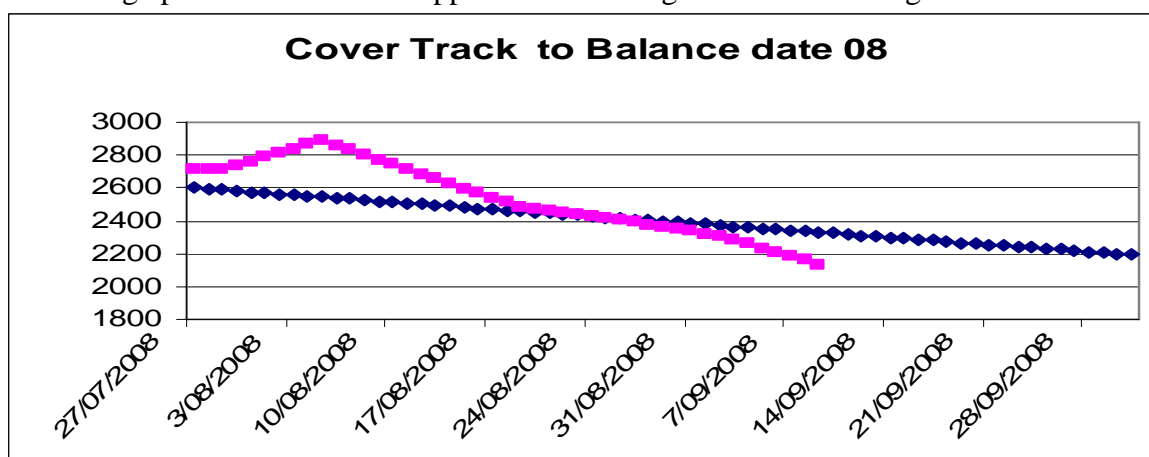
Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2008

## Critical issues for the short term

1. **Dust pastures with Caus Mag. and maintain water supply mag chloride. Also supplement milkers with calcium.**
2. **Roll paddocks during the short time when the soil is firm enough for the tractor and will still be levelled by the roller.**
3. **Get nitrogen on no matter what the conditions if the pasture supply is tight.**
4. **Hold the round length.**

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

5. SOIL TEMP at 9am has been between 5 and 9 °C for the week.
6. Since the end of July our soil moisture levels have been above Field Capacity.
7. PASTURE GROWTH was 39 kg DM/ha (last week 43)
8. Average pasture cover has dropped from 2308 kg DM/ha to 2133 kg DM/ha.



9. We are now well below the target cover for the farm for this week. Frustrating as this is, it actually makes decisions easier. We will feed enough silage to fill the deficit and hold the rotation length. We have 60t of grass silage left after having fed out 17.3t this week
10. We have used 33.8 ha this week which is an average of 1/33<sup>rd</sup> of the farm a day. This is the same as last week and we have done this by feeding silage. The target this week was 29.5 ha which would have been 1/38<sup>th</sup> of the farm a day.

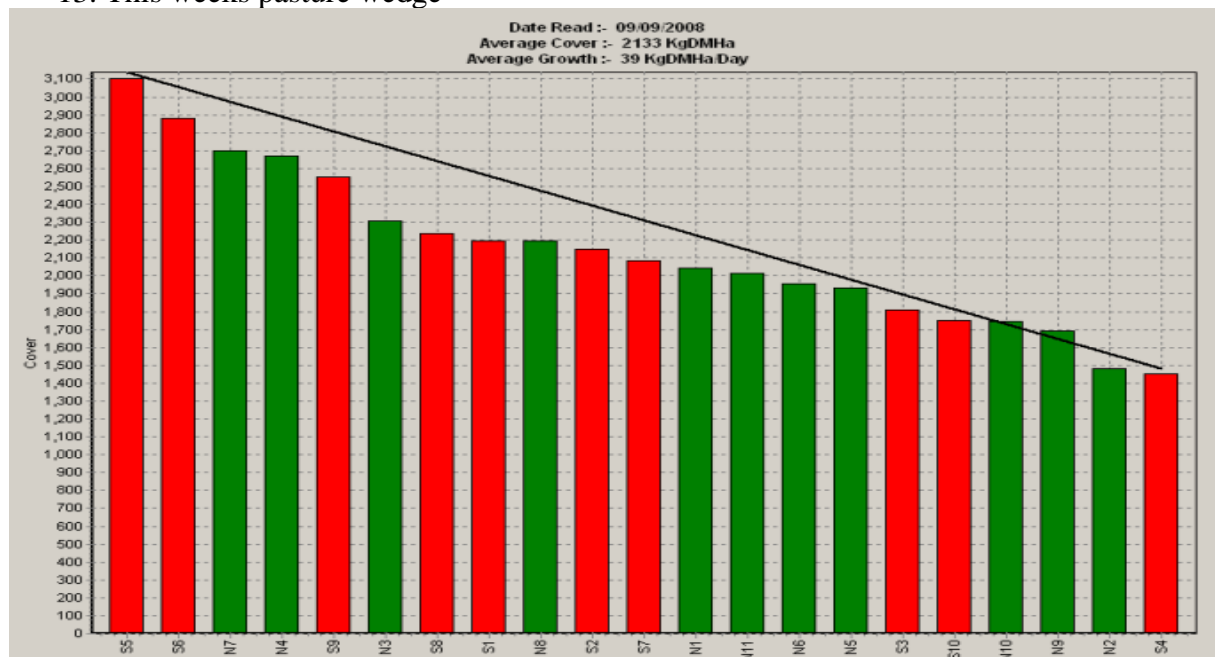
### Spring Rotation Plan

| Week           | Plan | Actual |
|----------------|------|--------|
| Week to 12 Aug | 14.5 | 18     |
| Week to 19 Aug | 17.4 | 21     |
| Week to 26 Aug | 21   | 24.5   |
| Week to 2 Sept | 27   | 33.8   |
| Week to 9 Sept | 29.5 | 33.8   |

11. We have finished the first round.

12. Soil conditions were very wet again by the weekend.

13. This weeks pasture wedge



14. The target line is at the average cover for our budgets for today, which is 2329 kg DM/ha on the milking platform and our actual is 2133 kg DM/ha, and the deficit has increased since last week.

15. We will continue to feed high quality grass silage (ME 11.5+) to the milkers at between 4 and 5 kg DM/cow/day. Feeding this silage has been a challenge on the wet ground so we get around this by always spreading the silage out thinly on the new break before the cows get there. This way we get much less damage from cows either chasing a wagon or standing in groups around lumps of silage.

16. We are also feeding grass silage to the colostrum and springer mobs.

17. We now have 550 cows calved compared with 551 last year on the 9 September. However the start of calving was 5 days later this year so calving has been faster.

18. We now have 458 cows going in the vat. Production is 5.42 kg MS/ha/day and 1.95 kg MS/cow/day.

19. The Somatic cell count continues to be a problem even though we have removed 20 cows from the milking herd after checking it using the Rapid Mastitis Test. The cell count dropped to 220 but is again nearly back to 300,000 so the whole herd will have a quarter stripped at every milking and if this does not reduce somatic cells we will use the rapid mastitis test again.

## Next Focus Day – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October

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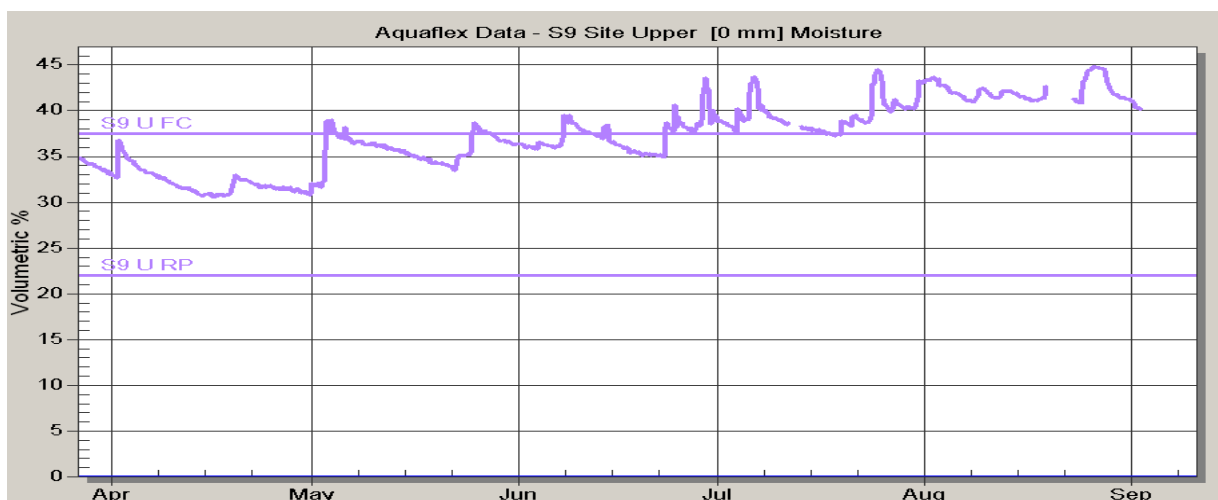
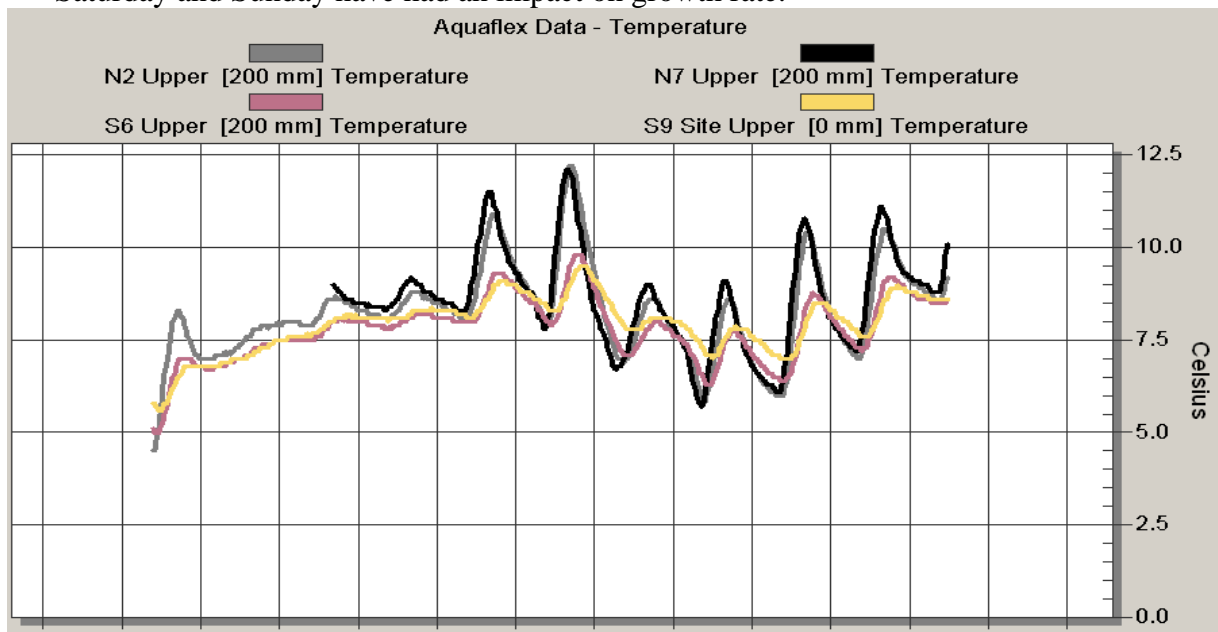
Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2008

## Critical issues for the short term

1. Dust pastures with Caus Mag. and maintain water supply mag chloride. Also supplement milkers with calcium.
2. Roll paddocks during the short time when the soil is firm enough for the tractor and will still be levelled by the roller.
3. Get nitrogen on no matter what the conditions if the pasture supply is tight.
4. Hold the round length.

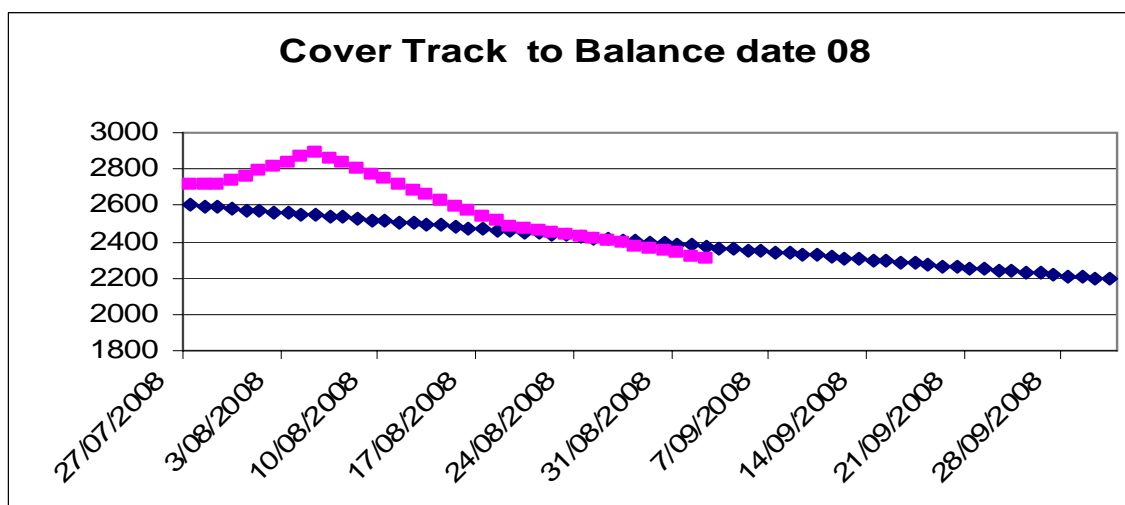
## Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

5. SOIL TEMP at 9am has averaged over 7.5 °C for the week but the 3 frosts on Friday, Saturday and Sunday have had an impact on growth rate.



6. Since the end of July our soil moisture levels have been above Field Capacity but over the last few days things have finally been on the improve.

7. PASTURE GROWTH was 43 kg DM/ha same as last week.
8. Average pasture cover has dropped from 2405 kg DM/ha to 2308 kg DM/ha.



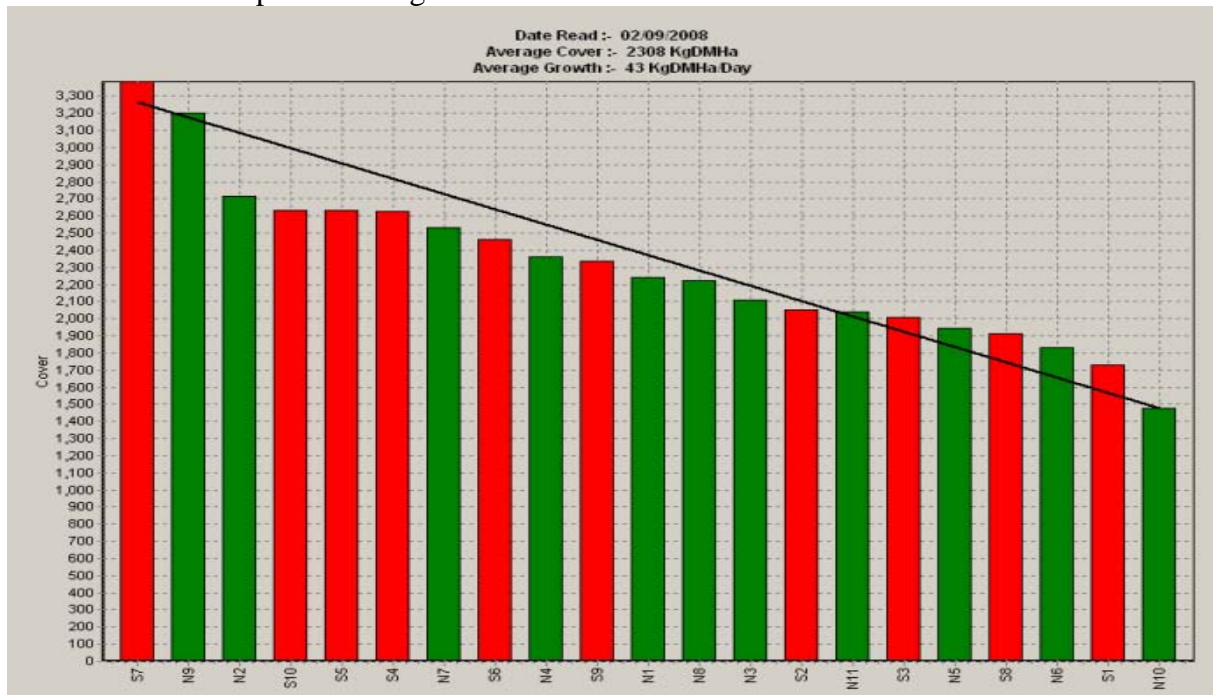
9. We are now just below the target cover for the farm for this week. The question now is whether we play it safe or take a risk.
10. We have used 33.8 ha this week which is an average of 1/33<sup>rd</sup> of the farm a day. The target this week was 27 ha which would have been 1/42<sup>nd</sup> of the farm a day. This is four weeks in a row that we have eaten more area than we had planned. The effect of this is to shorten our first round, and it now will end about the 5 September.

#### Spring Rotation Plan

| Week           | Plan | Actual |
|----------------|------|--------|
| Week to 12 Aug | 14.5 | 18     |
| Week to 19 Aug | 17.4 | 21     |
| Week to 26 Aug | 21   | 24.5   |
| Week to 2 Sept | 27   | 33.8   |

11. The main reasons for this blow out have been that the last 200 dry cows have been at home rather than still out at winter grazing and that the remaining long paddocks were all on the wet part of the farm. We have left higher residuals behind at the time but we are recovering some of that now as the colostrum cows are cleaning up one of these paddocks.
12. The current growth rate of 43 is average for the beginning of September and this on average has lifted to 55 by the end of the month though the range between the highest and the lowest for a week is a difference of over 70 kg DM/ha/day.
13. Current demand is 59 kg DM/day and we still have 200 cows to calve so this will continue to lift to 66 kg a day by the end of the month. Demand will continue to exceed average growth until into October and will result in a drop of cover of about 90 kg Dm/ha/week. It is not time to speed up yet.
14. Soil conditions were very wet at the start of the week but have dried up nicely by the end of the week and currently residuals of between 6 and 8 clicks have been achieved.

15. This weeks pasture wedge



16. The target line is at the average cover for our budgets for today is for 2378 kg DM/ha on the milking platform and actual is 2308 kg Dm/ha. There is now a small deficit that we need to deal with either now or in a couple of days time.

17. We have chosen to feed some very high quality silage to the milkers as the ground conditions are dry enough to get very good utilisation and we judge that some silage will be needed during September. Feeding silage now will help to hold the round length and may also result in less silage needing to be fed out this month.

18. We now have 424 cows going in the vat. Production is 4.45 kg MS/ha/day and 1.87 kg MS/cow/day.

19. We are milking the main herd TAD and during the week the Somatic cell count has been between 325,000 to 365,000. Just pulling out cows with visual signs of mastitis is not lowering the count so we are now going to use the Rapid mastitis Test.

20. The incidence of Milk Fever cases is lower this week 2 from 53 calved this better than it has been in recent weeks but remains higher than we have achieved in the past.

21. We still have 6 paddocks to do to complete the spring round of EcoN.

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