

Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

Tuesday, 16th March 2010

CRITICAL ISSUES FOR THE SHORT TERM

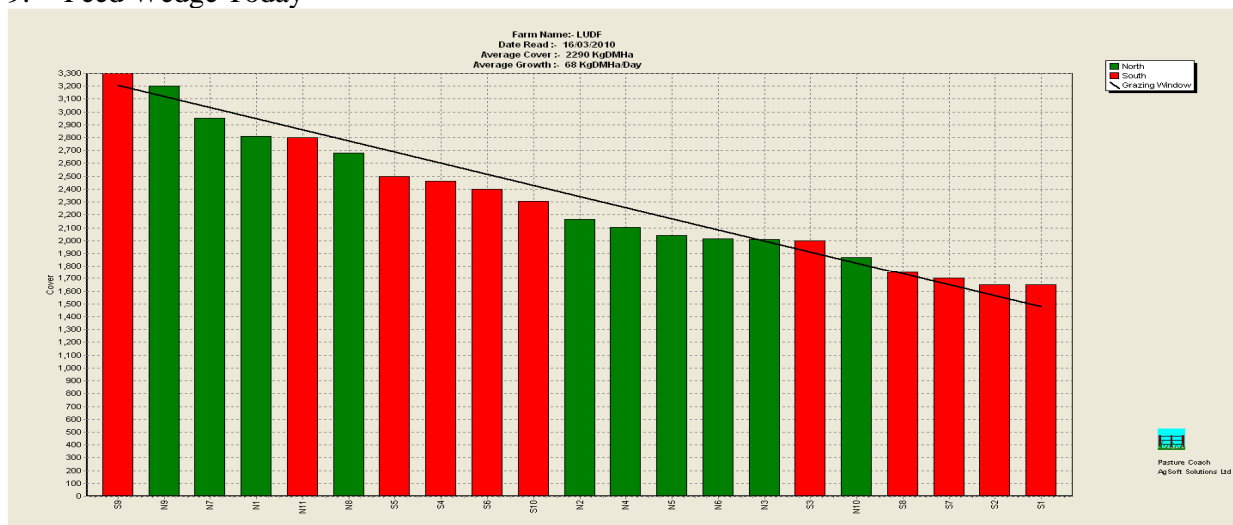
1. Maintain pasture quality by regular monitoring and making necessary changes
2. Keep grazing residuals to the desired 7 clicks
3. Closely observe milking cows for mastitis
4. Monitor cow condition to identify light cows that may need differential treatment in coming weeks
5. Round length is increasing according to targets

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

6. Soil temperatures dropped to 14.6°C this week from 16.6°C the previous week.

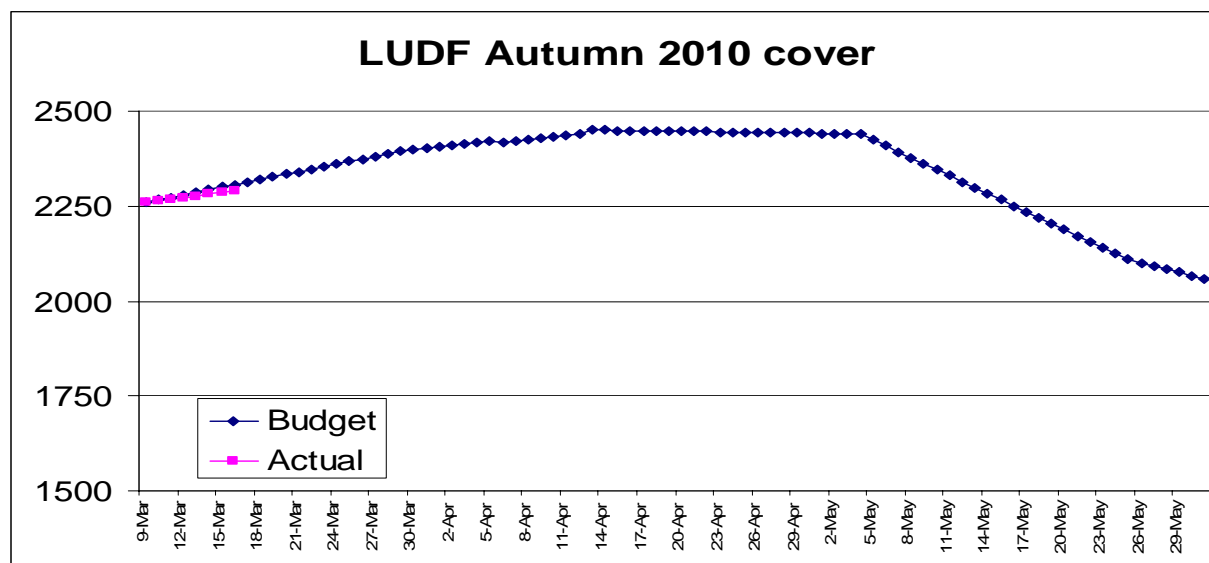


7. We had 10.2 mm of rain over last week.
8. PASTURE GROWTH this week was 68 kg DM/ha, a bit lower than the 73 kg DM/ha grown the previous week. Average Pasture Cover this week is 2290 kg DM/ha (a small increase from 2260 kg DM/ha last week). Pasture grazing residuals have been maintained at 7 rising plate meter “clicks”.
9. Feed Wedge Today



The target line in the wedge reflects the pre-grazing target of 3,204 kg DM/ha and a post grazing of 1,480 kg DM/ha, which is the pre-grazing needed to feed the cows considering the stocking rate of 3.90 cows/ha (620 cows/159 ha)), cows eating 17 kg DM/cow/day and a rotation length of 26 days. The feed wedge has a deficit of 6.6 t DM.

10. Last week the herd grazed on average 6.0 ha per day. Round length of 26.5 days.
11. Silage was fed last week at 3.5kg DM/cow/day (total 15.6 t DM silage fed for the week).
12. Nitrogen application has continued at rate of 40 kg N. This was applied to 43.5 ha this week.
13. The feed budget for the remainder of the season has a target average pasture cover as shown in the graphic below. The principle being to increase cover by the end of April and then use the feed to make milk as demand increasingly goes above supply in May. Our target is 2,050 pasture cover at May 31st.



14. Key management decisions to think about this week:
 - Use of Nitrogen going forward. We will continue a complete round of N at 40 kg N/ha. This will leave room for a last application before the end of the season and stay within budget).When to get rid of Cull cows and drying off plan: 28 low producing empty and cull cows have been dried off during the last 3 weeks and another 10 cows were dried off this week. From this total of 38 cows there are 6 cows that are likely to stay in the herd. Average farm cover targets, herd condition and the feed budget will be used to help decide if that is enough in the mean time. We are milking 631 until today and it will be 621 next week.
 - When and how to extend the round: Round length has been extending in the recent fortnight as planned. We are happy to stay on 26 day round for another week.
 - Use of Silage: We will keep feeding the silage at about 2 kg DM/cow/day so the 26 day round is maintained and cover continues to increase.
15. Paddock S3 was roller drilled on the 28th of January with Bealey Ryegrass, Weka and Kotare white clover. This paddock has the same weed mix striking as the others have had in the South block. It was sprayed with Preside three weeks ago, and was grazed last Tuesday.
16. We are using the soil moisture deficit information from our 4 Aquaflex sites around the farm to schedule our irrigation. 1.5 days of irrigation was applied last week.
17. Cows will continue to be offered enough grass to achieve their potential intake and will be moved on when grazing residual targets are achieved.
18. We had one new case of mastitis this week. SCC has been between 179,000 - 198, 000. This has dropped to the level we were at 2 weeks ago.

19. There were 5 new lame cows this week. These cows are being milked once per day while they recover from the injury.
20. 631 cows are milking into the silo. Cows are producing 1.39 kg MS/cow/day (up from last week at 1.31) and 5.47 kg MS/ha/day (5.17 last week).

Next farm walk will be on **Tuesday, 23rd March 2010, at 9.00 am.**

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), Virginia Serra (DairyNZ).