

Lincoln University Dairy Farm - Farm Walk notes

Tuesday, 15th May 2012

CRITICAL ISSUES FOR THE SHORT TERM

1. **Maintain the intake of the herds above 190 MJME to support milk production and generate gain in live weight and body condition score.**
2. **Maintain consistent post grazing residuals to ensure pasture quality at the next grazing targeting 7 - 8 rising plate meter height.**
3. **Monitor average pasture cover and respond to surplus or deficit.**
4. **Use back-fences on all herds whenever paddock grazing takes more than 24 hours.**
5. **Continue Mg supplementation via water system.**

Herd Management

6. There have been 548 cows milking into the silo. The composition and purpose of the small herd changed significantly on 28 April and is now 170 cows made up of non-pregnant cows being milked on until their sale dates in mid to late May and 5+ condition score pregnant cows. This small herd has been used to clean up behind the main herd five days a week with two days on fresh pasture breaks, and will be used to ensure the last grazing occurring before winter, is below 8 rising plate meter "clicks". These cows will be managed to maintain live weight, though it is expected they will lose some milk production and to date this is what is happening.

Growing Conditions

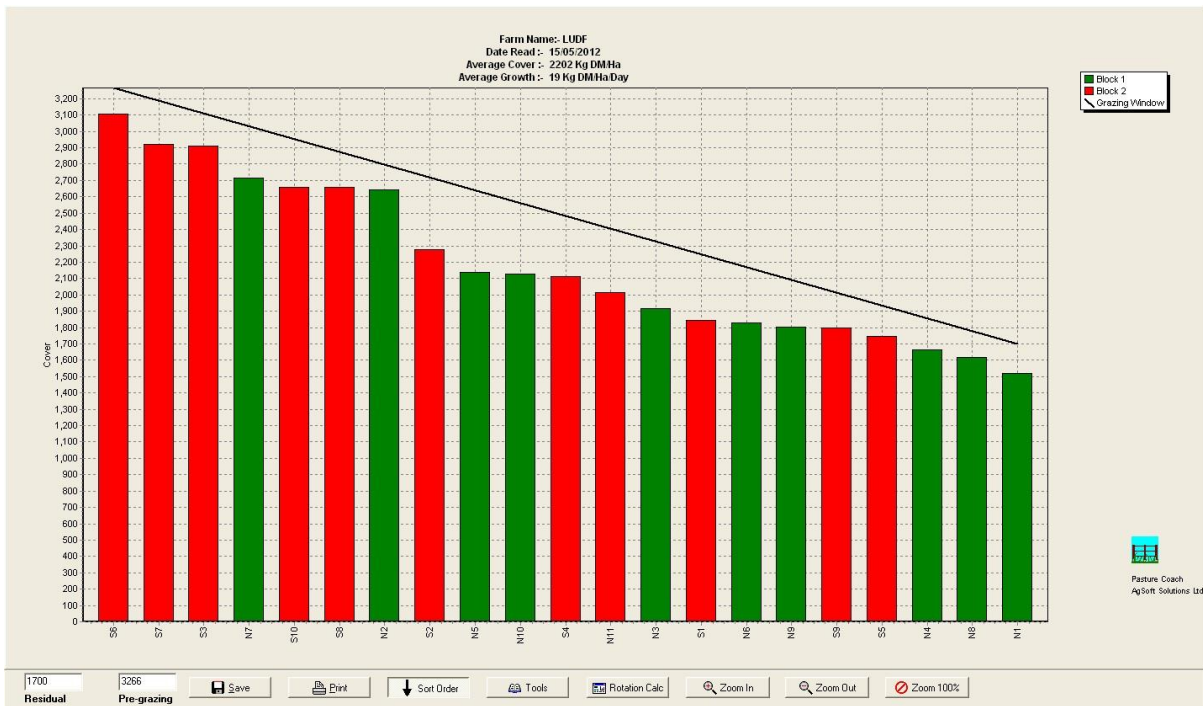
7. Pasture growth has been 19kg DM/ha day, down from the 22 kg DM/ha recorded last week, and there is a pasture deficit of 36t DM in the wedge to sustain a 36 day round.
8. Soil temperatures at 9.00am have averaged 9.9°C which is a slight rise compared to the week before. The weather has remained dry with some sunny and warm days.
9. 0.2 mm of rain this week, no irrigation (none since the 3rd week of February). The Aquaflex soil moisture meters indicate that soil moisture levels are now at 20 - 40% of field capacity. Consideration regarding irrigation is tempered by the time of year with low evapo-transpiration (ET) and the risk of adding moisture to soils that will, by late May, normally be close to field capacity. Current ground conditions are ideal with very high utilisation of pasture and silage, although in one small light soil area grass grub damage has been made worse by the current dry soil management. Our judgement is that pasture growth has been affected by being too dry.

Feeding Management

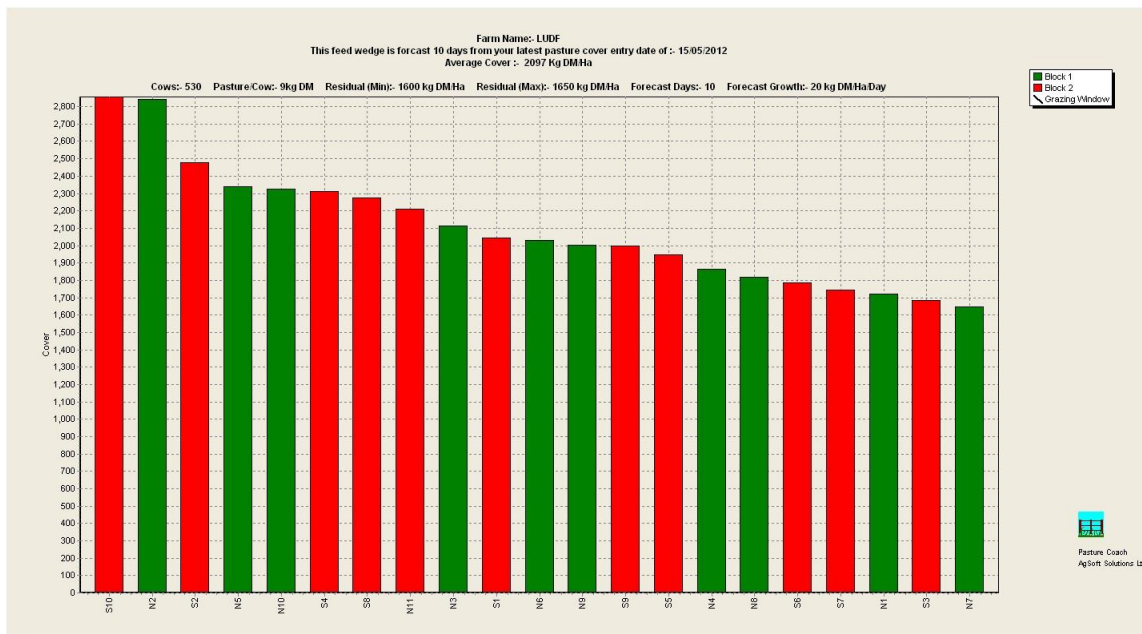
10. 19.3t DM silage has been fed to the herds, an average of 5kg DM per day over all cows. No pre mowing of pasture, the round length was 35 days [36 last week] - target was to be at 36 days.
11. The walk over weighing indicates that the whole herd has gained weight again this week, including the small herd that has been used to follow the main herd.
12. The milkers need about 180 MJME to produce 1.3 kg MS, maintain themselves, and allow for 2kg weight gain per week. This week the cows have gained around 2kg live weight, and lost 0.13kgms/day of milk solids.

Pasture Production and Management

This weeks wedge is printed below. This wedge shows the total demand from the herds. The deficit will be made up with pasture balage as part of the normal autumn plan.

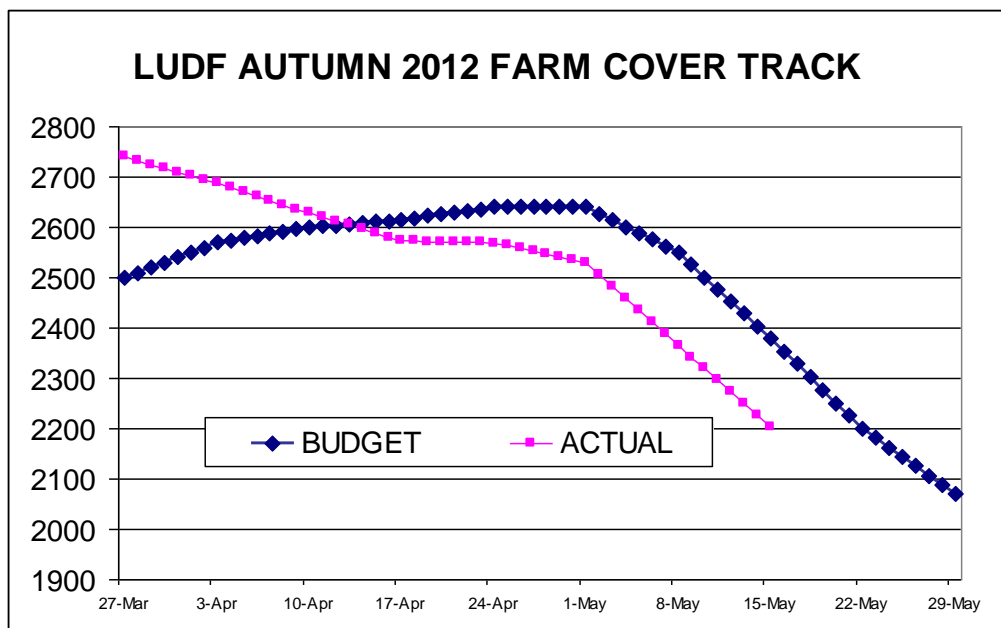


- Feed Wedge for this week shows an expected deficit. We intend to keep pre-grazing levels below 3600kg DM/ha to maintain the excellent quality that we are observing in our pastures. This will facilitate good pasture utilisation with cows readily achieving low even residuals. We intend to stay at 36 day rounds for the remainder of the season and will continue to feed sufficient silage to achieve this. We will also cull cows as needed to stay on track [see points 22 - 23].
- Average cover of 2202kg DM/ha, a decline from last week. This decline is greater than ideal but there is enough pasture available at current growth rates to dry off at or above the 2050kgDM/ha target. The predicted wedge is printed below.



- The average pasture cover targets for the remainder of the autumn are shown in the graphic below. Cover is lower than the target as less silage has been used than budgeted so far. The difference, representing about 36t DM, is not of concern. The current strategy is to allow the

average pasture cover to decline in a controlled way for a 2050kg DM average cover at the end of May.



16. 197.2ha has been mowed either in front [162.1ha] or behind [35ha] of the herds so far this season.
17. 25kg urea applied to 36ha.
18. No more GA will be applied this season.
19. The whole farm has had one round of eco-n, and another round began this week with an application to 24ha.
20. 5.6% of the herd remained below body condition score of 4.0 when assessed last week [up from 4.4% 2 weeks previously]. 32 August calvers were dried off yesterday, and there are very few additional cows to dry off because of light condition before the whole herd is dried off.
21. The dry off sequence will begin next Sunday 20th with 40 works culls and Monday with 60 empty cows sold for further farming.

LUDF Weekly Report	24-Apr-12	1-May-12	8-May-12	15-May-12
Farm grazing ha (available to milkers)	160	160	160	160
Dry Cows on farm / East blk / other	0/0/32	1/0/32	2/0/32	0/0/62
Culls (Includes culls put down & empties)	2	0	0	0
Culls total to date	30	30	30	30
Deaths (Includes cows put down)	0	0	0	0
Deaths total to date	10	10	10	10
Calved Cows available (Peak Number 632...)	617	584	583	550
Treatment / Sick mob total	1	2	2	2
Mastitis clinical treatment	0	2	0	2
Mastitis clinical YTD (tgt below 64 yr end)	75	77	77	79
Bulk milk SCC (tgt Ave below 150)	165	158	161	177
Lame new cases	6	11	6	1
Lame year-to-date [ytd]	167	178	184	185
Lame days ytd (Tgt below 1000 year end)	1872	1949	1991	2033
Other/Colostrum	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
Milking twice a day into vat	603	571	575	542
Milking once a day into vat	13	11	6	6
Small herd	214	177	174	170
Main Herd	402	394	401	372

MS/cow/day (Actual kg / Cows into vat only)	1.52	1.47	1.43	1.30
MS/cow to date (total kgs / Peak Cows 632)	434	445	453	462
	24-Apr-12	1-May-12	8-May-12	15-May-12
MS/ha/day (total kgs / ha used)	5.84	5.33	5.19	4.46
Herd Average Cond'n Score	0.00	4.30	4.40	0.00
Monitor grp LW kg WOW 157 early MA calvers	503	506	508	513
Soil Temp Ave Aquaflex	11.0	10.9	9.3	9.9
Growth Rate (kgDM/ha/day)	66	49	22	19
Plate meter height - ave half-cms	14.8	14.5	13.3	12.2
Ave Pasture Cover (x140 + 500)	2569	2529	2366	2202
Surplus/[deficit] on feed wedge- tonnes	4.9	[18]	[35.6]	[35]
Pre Grazing cover (ave for week)	3291	3308	3317	3047
Post Grazing cover (ave for week)	1750	1750	1650	1650
Highest pre-grazing cover	3510	3900	3566	3315
Area grazed / day (ave for week)	5.50	4.42	4.40	4.54
Grazing Interval	29	36	36	35
Milkers Offered/grazed kg DM pasture	11.0	12.1	11.1	9.5
Estimated intake pasture MJME	135	151	138	118
Milkers offered kg DM Grass silage	7	5	5	5
Silage MJME/cow offered	76	52	58	55
Estimated intake Silage MJME	65	44	52	50
Estimated total intake MJME	200	195	190	180
Tgt total MJME Offered/eaten (incl 6% waste)	200	195	190	173
Pasture ME (pre grazing sample)	12.3	12.7	12.6	12.5
Pasture % Protein	20.9	21.5	22.0	27.0
Pasture % DM - Concern below 16%	17.3	17.8	18.7	18.6
Pasture % NDF Concern < 33	36.3	35.4	34.2	36.7
Mowed pre or post grazing YTD	197.2	197.2	197.2	197.2
Total area mowed YTD	242.8	242.8	242.8	242.8
Supplements fed to date kg per cow (632 peak)	376.3	408.0	442.0	472.5
Supplements Made Kg DM / ha cumulative	609	609	609	609
Units N applied/ha and % of farm	25units/24%	25units/26%	0	25units/22%
Kgs N to Date (whole farm)	342	348	348	354
Rainfall (mm)	0	208	0.2	0.2
Aquaflex topsoil relative to fill point tgt 60-80%	30-60	20-50	20-40	20-40

The next weekly farm walk will be on **22nd May, at 9.00 am.**

Winter Farm Walks will be 5th, 19th of June 3rd July and weekly from the 17th July.

Next Focus Day is on Thursday, 12th July, at the Lincoln Events Centre.

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), Steve Lee (DairyNZ).