

Westland Monitor Farm Project

Weekly Update – 13 May 2009

General Comments

Growth rates fell across the region this week as soil temperatures continued to decline. All regions now have soil temperatures below 10 °C. Cow production also continues to decline as cooler temperatures and wet conditions take their toll. The Kowhitirangi farm commenced silage feeding this week but decided mid week to dry the herd off as the conditions on the farm are extremely wet and pasture cover is declining rapidly. The Ikamatua farm is now milking every 16 hours while Westport is still milking twice a day.

The feed wedges show that the Westport farm is still looking OK for pasture however the average pasture cover has continued to decline this week. The Ikamatua farm has 4 long paddocks above the target line at the top of the wedge but beyond this the paddocks are sitting on the target line. Both the Kowhitirangi and Kotuku farms have a large number of paddocks in the bottom half of the wedge that are below the target line.

Over the next 2 months farm walks will occur on a less frequent basis due to slower growth rates and long rotations over the winter period hence the weekly summary will only be produced in the weeks that farm walks are conducted. Below are the proposed farm walk weeks.

25/26/27th May
8/9/10th June
29/30 Jun/1st July
20/21/22nd July
3/4/5th Aug
17/18/19th Aug

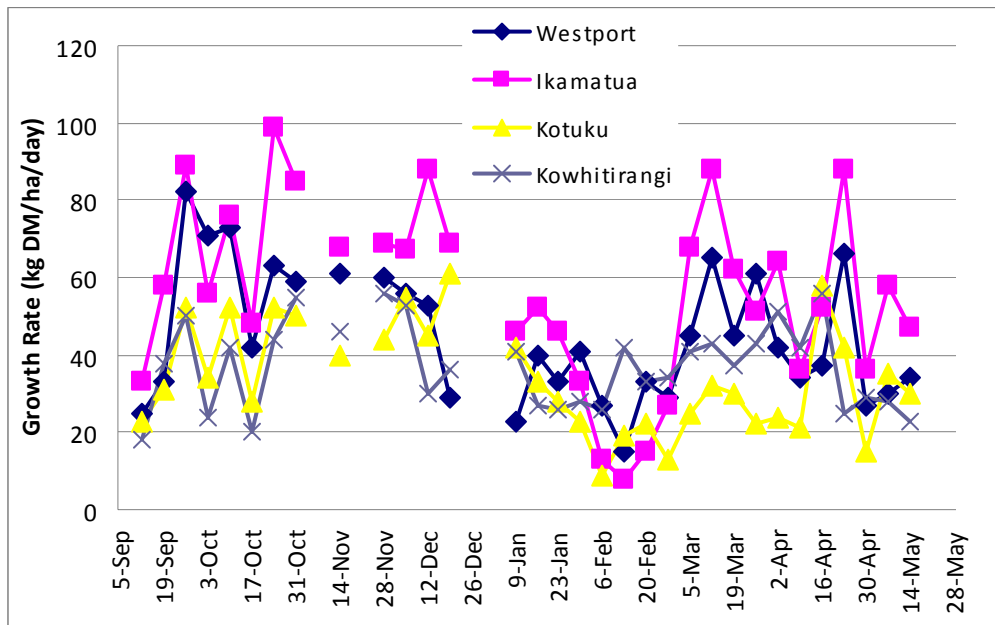
CO comment

Doing a winter feed budget is essential to determine exactly how much feed you have on hand. To calculate your silage stack volume measure the width, length and height then multiply together to get your cubic metres. One cubic metre contains 500-800 kg wet weight or 150-240 kg DM (at 30% DM). For balage, a 500 kg wet weight bale will have 150-200 kg DM (30-40%DM). For more information search for Feed Supply and Demand Information at www.dairynz.co.nz

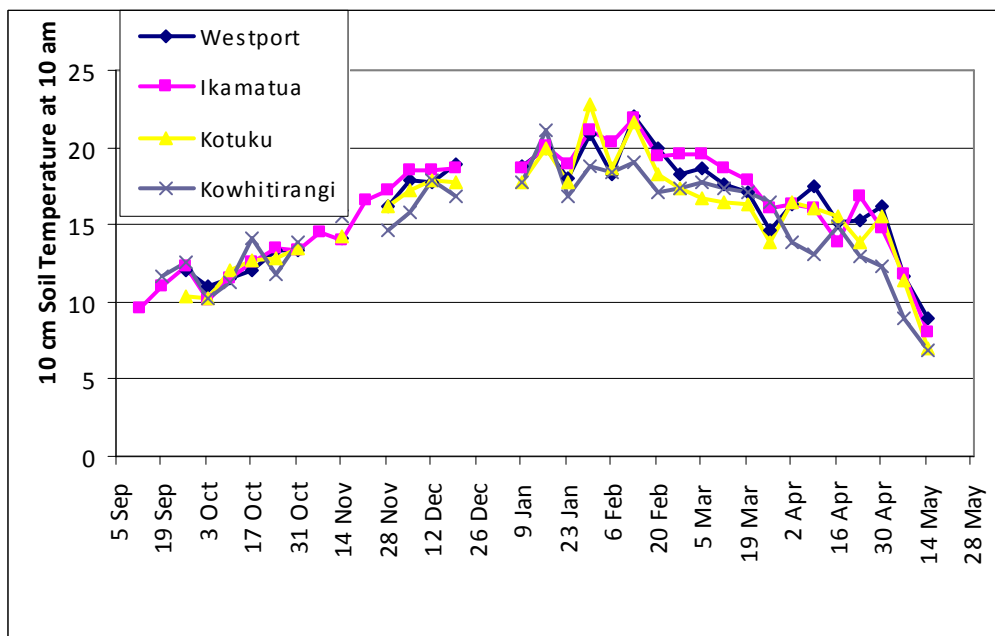
Farm Summary

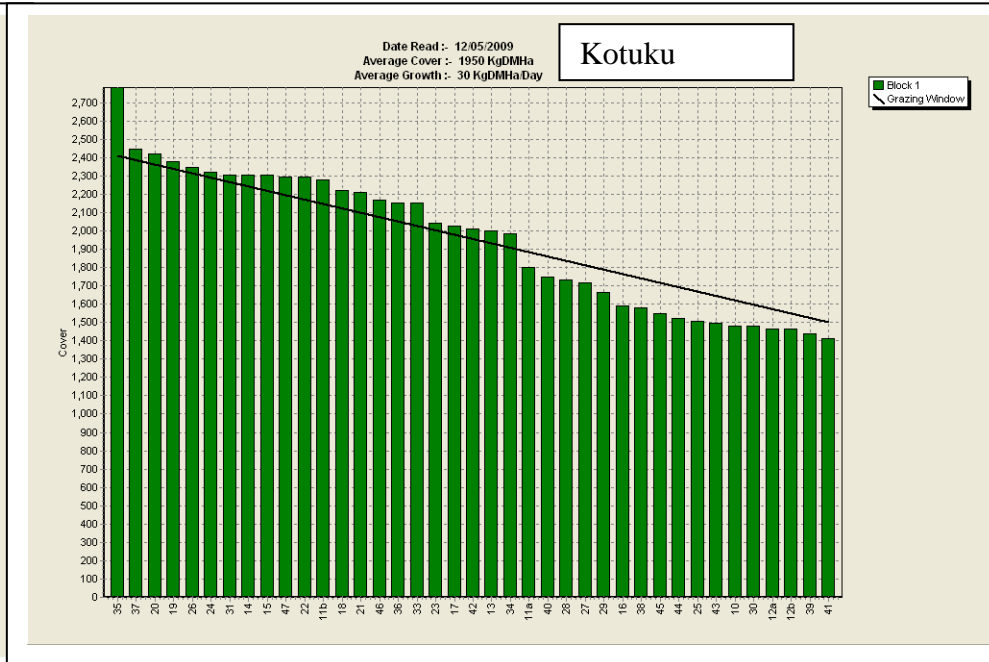
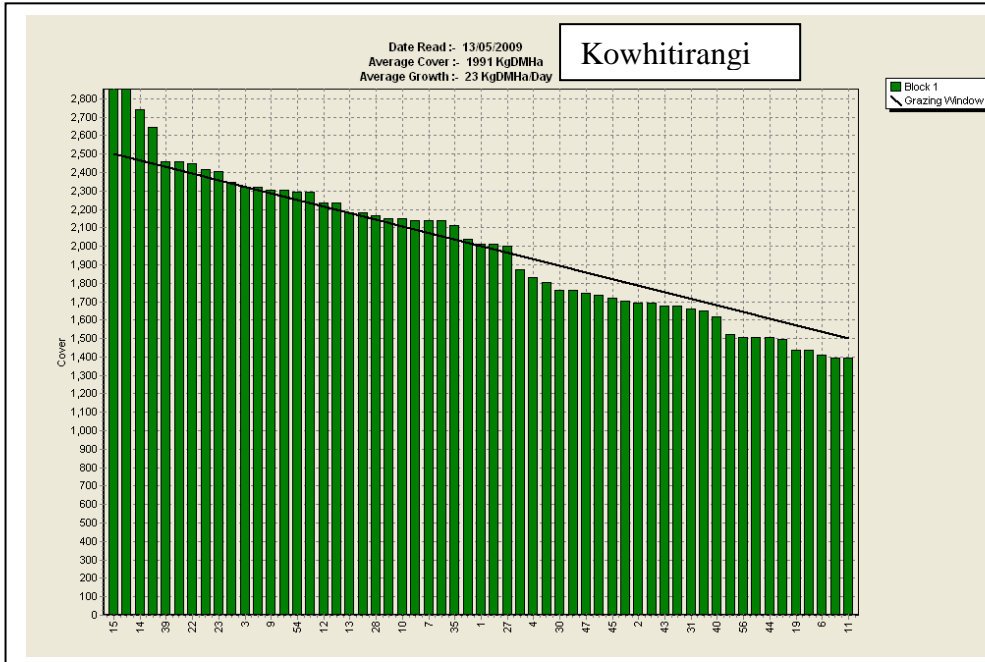
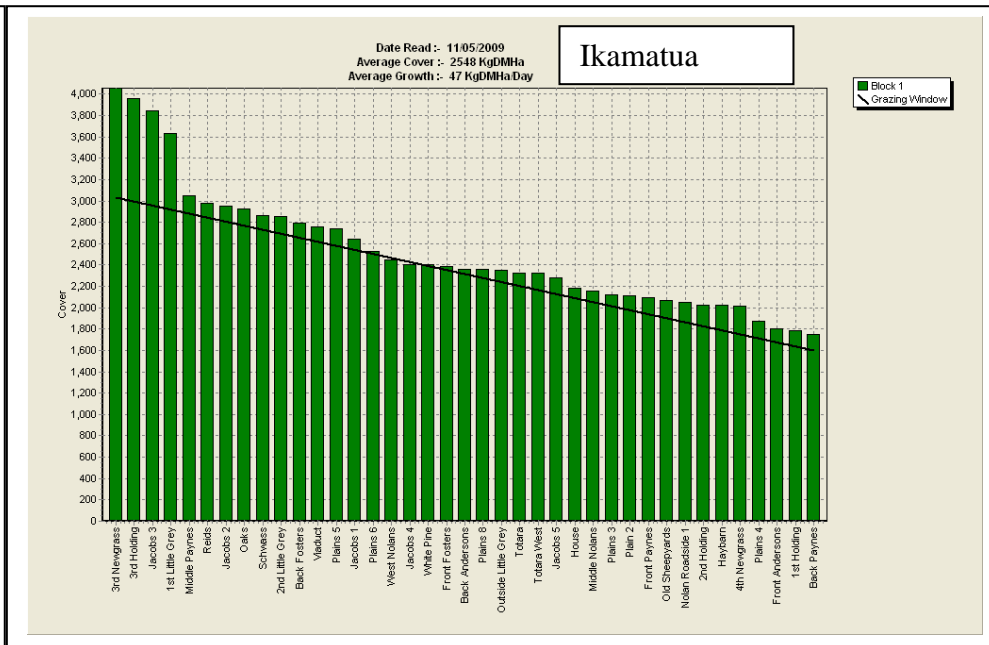
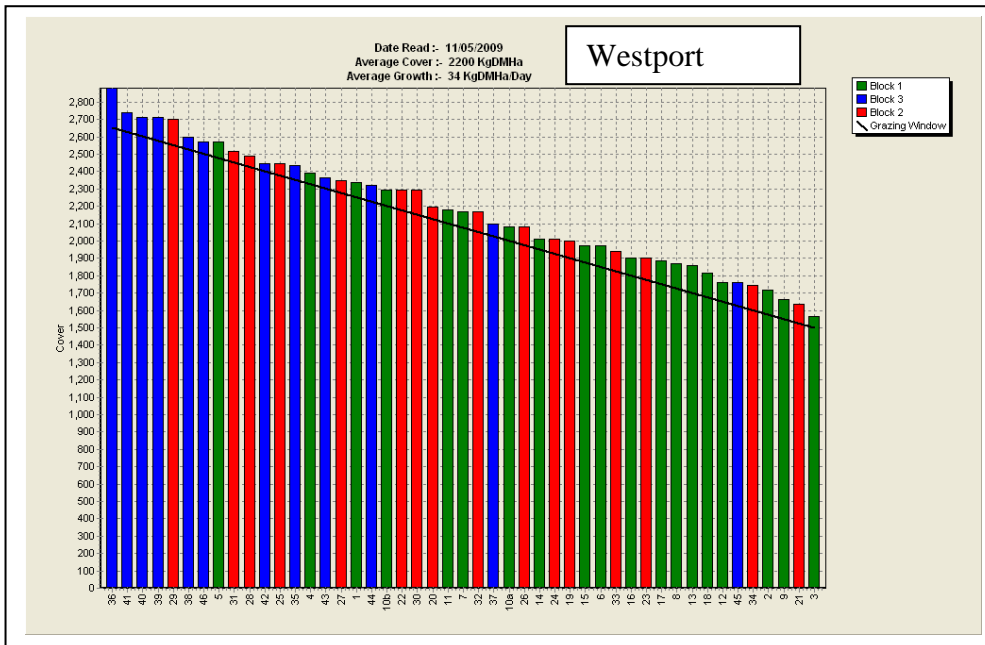
	Westport	Ikamatua	Kotuku	Kowhitirangi
Average cover (kg DM/ha)	2200	2548	19550	1991
Rotation length (days)	37	34	32	40
Stocking rate	2.52	2.62	2.39	2.25
Milksolids kg/cow	1.14	1.35	0.67	0.9
Milksolids kg/ha	2.9	3.5	1.6	2.0
% of peak cows milking	90	85	55	94
N (kg/ha)	92	245	270	107
Supplement (kg/cow/day)	1.8	2	1	2
Soil temperature (°C)	8.9	8.0	7.0	6.9
Growth Rate (kg DM/day)	34	47	30	23
Rainfall	32	37	52	34

Pasture Growth Rates



Soil Temperature





Westland Monitor Farm Project

Weekly Update – 6 May 2009

General Comments

Growth rates bounced back this week after a drop last week with the range from 28 to 58 kg DM/ha/day. It is unlikely however that this growth rate will be sustained as soil temperatures plummeted by 3 °C. The Kowhitirangi farm recorded soil temperatures below 10 °C. Soil temperatures levels are now approaching those recorded when we first started monitoring in early September 2008. All regions that recorded rainfall received in excess of 100 mm in the last 7 day period. For Kowhitirangi farm the 111 mm recorded this week comes on top of the 158 mm recorded in the previous 7 day period.

Results from pasture samples collected last week indicate that pasture quality is remaining high. All the samples collected contained more than 12 MJME/kg DM. Crude protein concentrations in all samples were also high with the lowest recorded value being 28%. A somewhat surprising result was that all samples had high NDF concentrations, however this has not had a negative effect on energy concentration.

The Kotuku and Kowhitirangi farms are now milking OAD. The Kowhitirangi farm continues to have the tightest feed wedge although a deficit appears to be developing at the bottom of the Kotuku wedge. Both the Ikamatua and Westport farms are in a comfortable pasture position.

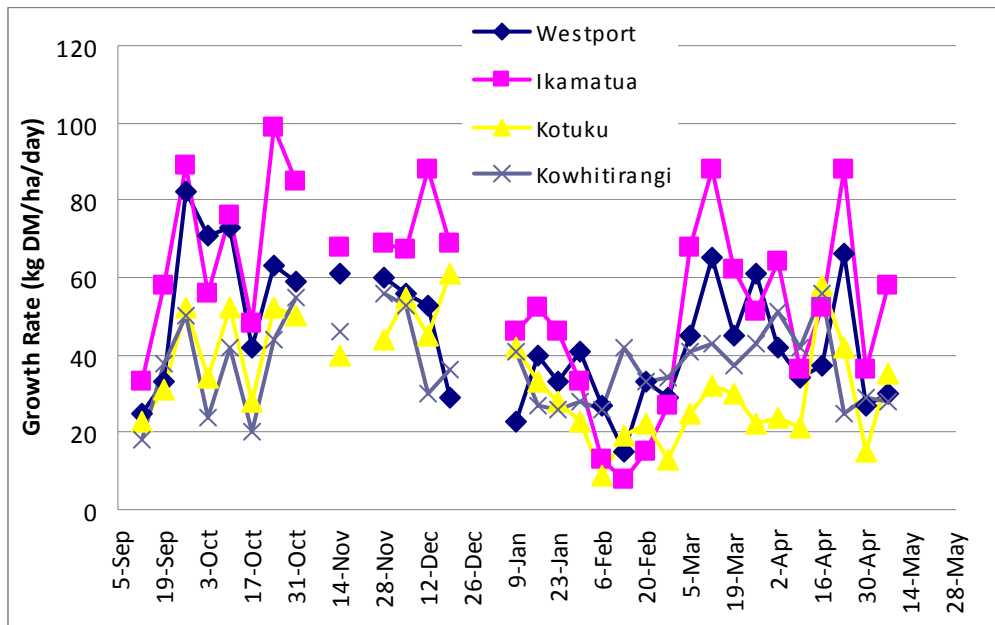
CO comment

May is a month of variable growth so continue to monitor pasture cover. Make sure you have a plan for drying off the herd and have revised your autumn feed budget with actual growth rates. Discuss dry cow therapy options with your veterinarian. Give priority to drying off earlier calving cows as they have less time to put on condition. It is one thing to have enough supplements in your feed budget but do you have enough time for cows to physically gain weight?

Farm Summary

	Westport	Ikamatua	Kotuku	Kowhitirangi
Average cover (kg DM/ha)	2181	2615	2029	2028
Rotation length (days)	30	30	31	40
Stocking rate	2.52	2.63	2.43	2.26
Milksolids kg/cow	1.14	1.53	0.72	1.07
Milksolids kg/ha	2.9	4.0	1.7	2.4
% of peak cows milking	90	86	90	94
N (kg/ha)	92	245	270	107
Supplement (kg/cow/day)	1.3	2	0	0
Soil temperature (°C)	11.6	11.8	11.4	8.9
Growth Rate (kg DM/day)	30	58	35	28
Rainfall	102	136	-	111

Pasture Growth Rates



Soil Temperature

