

Westland Monitor Farm Project

Weekly Update – 30 September 2009

General Comments

Growth rates continued to rise in all regions except Westport this week. The general growth rate trend is very similar to this time last year. The Kotuku farm is struggling with growth rates and has the biggest deficit in the feed wedge. In a similar manner to last season the Ikamatua farm is consistently growing more grass than the other farms. This farm has applied considerably more nitrogen fertiliser and continues with 35 units of N behind the cows. There was an easing of soil temperature across the region this week. Soil temperature this week was, on average, 0.7 °C lower than this time last year.

Production is continuing to increase as more of the herd calves and the earlier calving cows approach peak lactation. Production on the Kotuku, Westport and Kowhitirangi farms is similar but up to 0.6 kg MS/cow.day less than the Ikamatua farm.

Results from pasture samples collected last week demonstrate that the pastures on offer across the region at present are high quality. All samples tested greater than 12.5 MJ ME/kg DM. The pasture with the lowest energy concentration – 12.6 MJME/kg DM- was a paddock on the Westport farm with a mass of 4400 kg DM/ha. This is an excellent result for a paddock of such high mass. The crude protein concentrations ranged from 21 to 35.6% with NDF concentrations from 35 to 45%. In general the soluble sugar levels were higher than in the samples collected in June, however on some farms a smaller difference was observed than others.

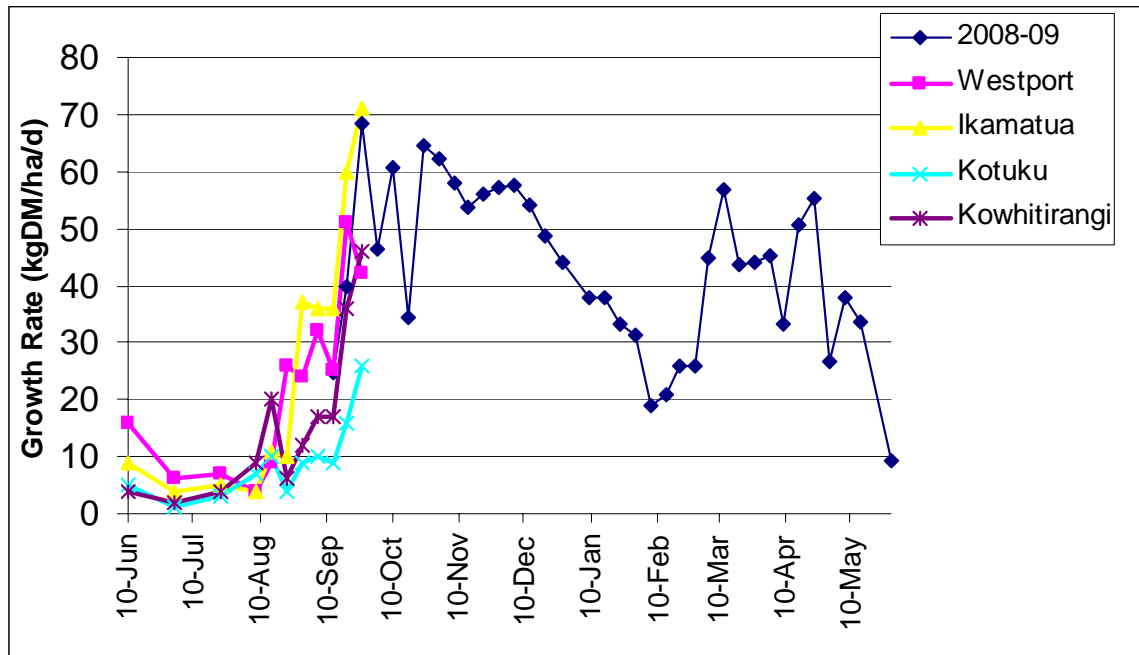
CO comment

Mating is around the corner, so it is time to put on place a good heat detection plan. Farmers who achieve good heat detection have a combination of good observation and use of heat detection aids. Take junior staff to the paddocks after milking during the pre-mating period and work in the shed to teach them what to look for in a cow on heat. Tail paint cow 35 days before mating. For more details go to www.dairynz.co.nz/incalf and access the tools and resources including the In-calf book which is free [one copy] to each DairyNZ levy payer. Utilise the services of more than 175 InCalf trained advisers throughout the country.

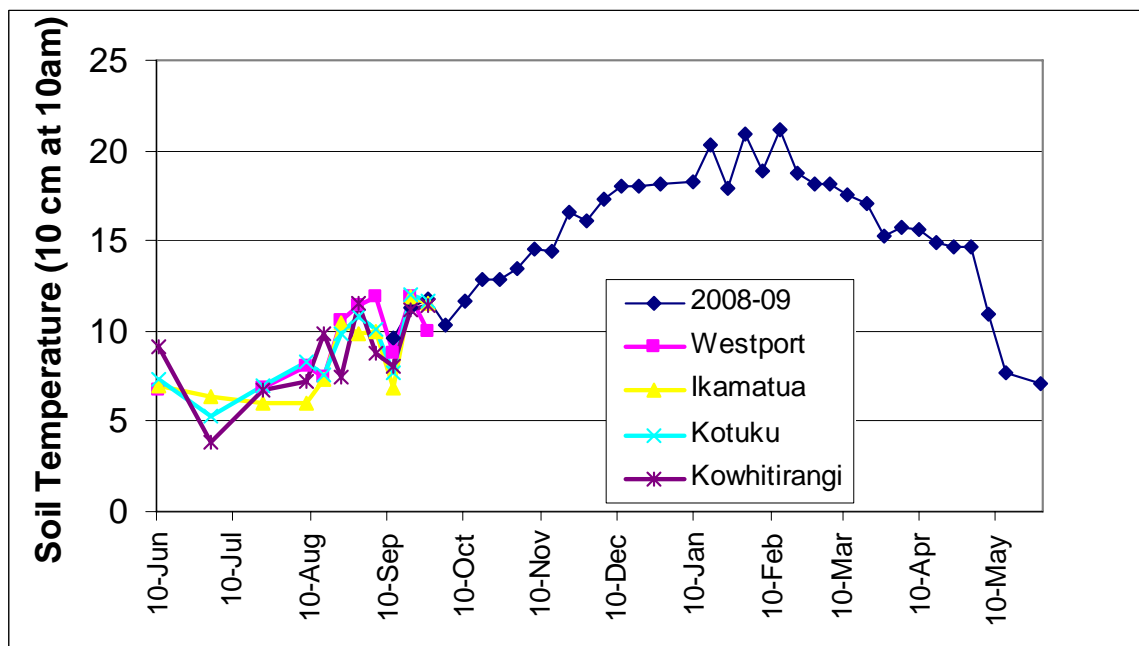
Farm Summary

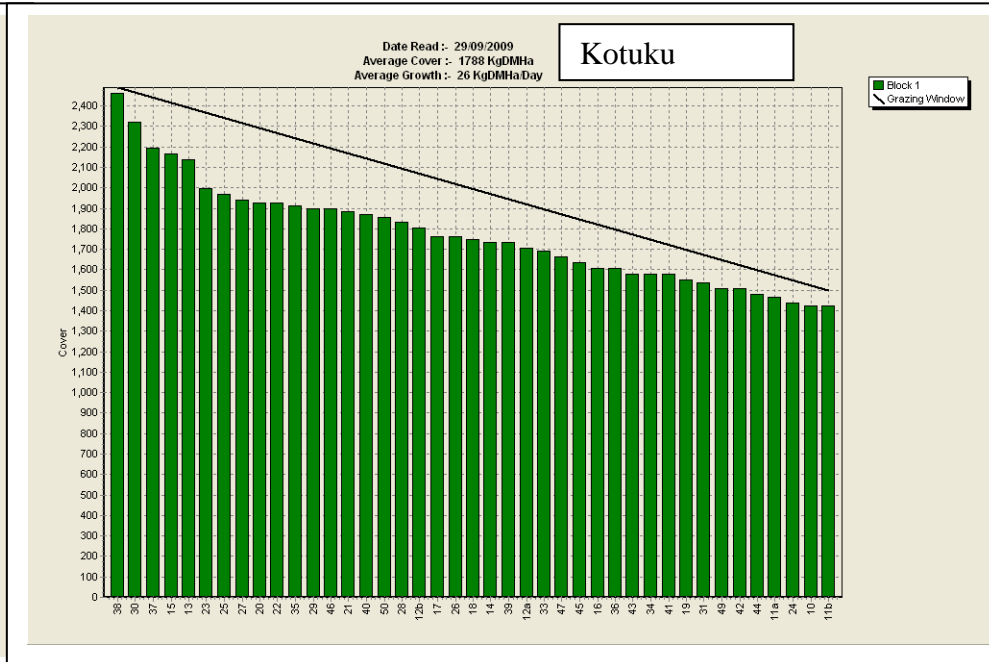
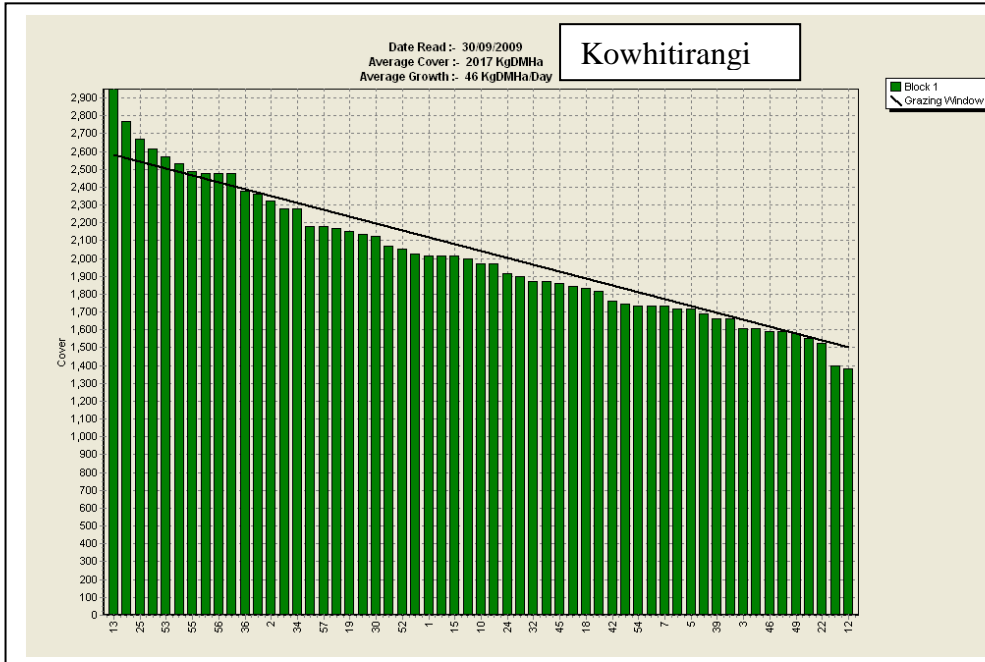
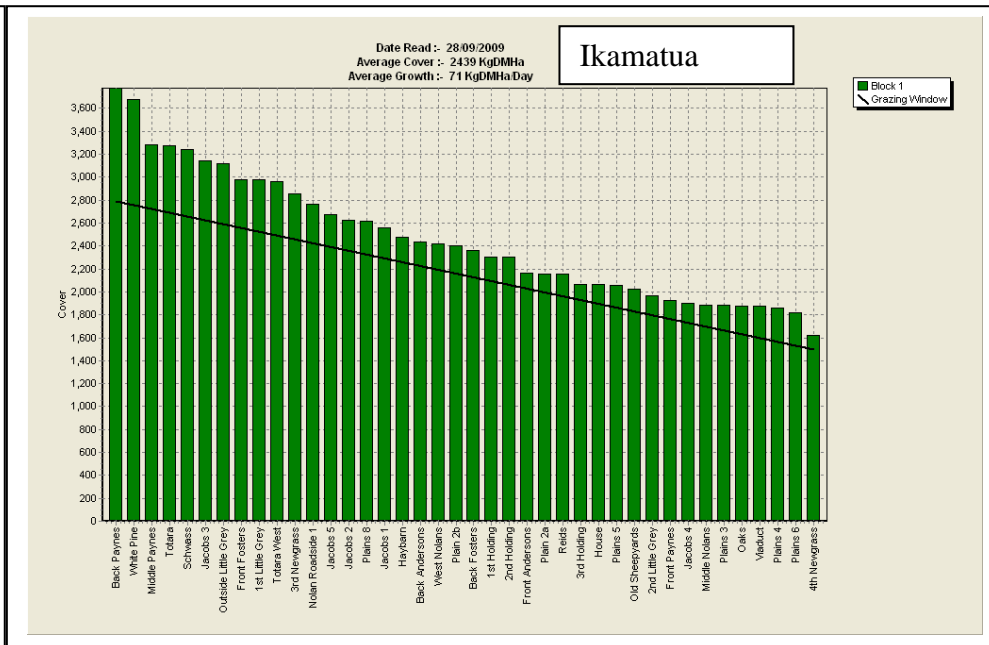
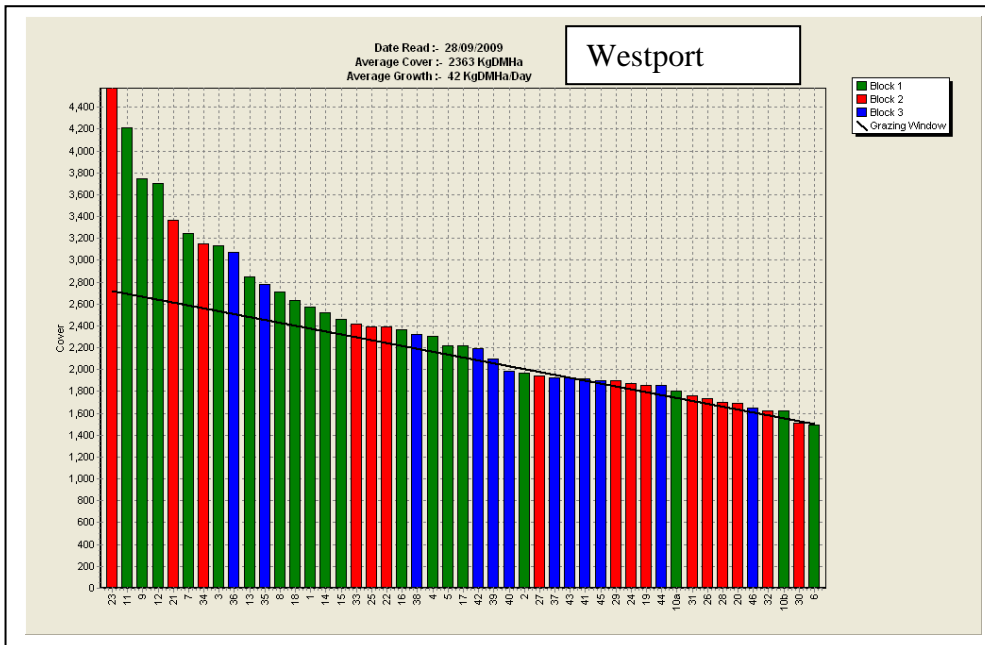
	Westport	Ikamatua	Kotuku	Kowhitirangi
Average cover (kg DM/ha)	2363	2439	1788	2017
Rotation length (days)	30	24	43	30
Stocking rate	2.7	2.9	2.0	2.4
% calved	95	98	84	85
Milksolids kg/cow	1.65	2.29	1.53	1.65
Milksolids kg/ha	4.1	6.3	3.0	3.2
N (kg/ha)	40	-	-	-
Supplement (kg/cow/day)	0	3.5	2.5	1.0
Soil temperature (°C)	10	11.5	11.6	11.4
Growth Rate (kg DM/day)	42	71	26	46
Rainfall	14	24	30	29

Pasture Growth Rates



Soil Temperature





Westland Monitor Farm Project

Weekly Update – 23 September 2009

General Comments

Pasture growth is following a very similar pattern to last season. Due to the 2 week period between farm walks it was more difficult to calculate an accurate growth rate as many paddocks grazed at the beginning of the 2 week period had experienced significant growth during the intervening period. The growth from these paddocks was not included in the farm average. Soil temperatures have continued to rise with all farms recording temperatures between 11 and 12 °C.

Supplements continue to be offered on the Ikamatua, Kotuku and Kowhitirangi farms. Now that a significant proportion of all herds have calved we will start putting the target line on the wedge to enable the identification of impending deficits and surpluses. The Westport and Ikamatua farms already have a significant number of paddocks above the target line at the top of the wedge suggesting that these farms have passed balance date. Things are a little tighter on the Kotuku and Kowhitirangi farms.

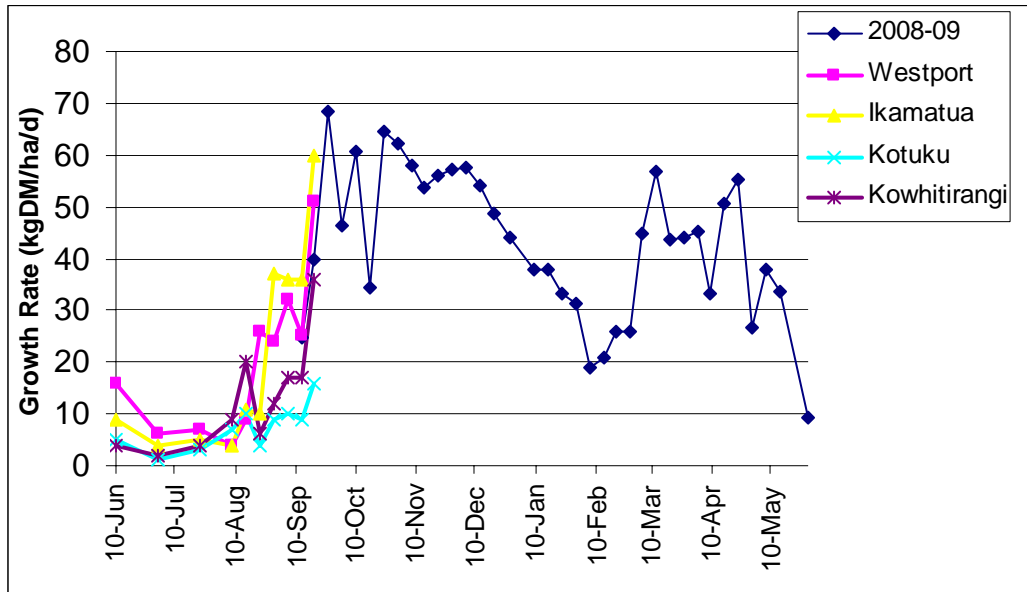
CO comment

Continue to monitor pastures through regular farm walks to ensure you are achieving a consistent even residual (7-8 clicks on the rising plate meter or 1500-1600 kgDM/ha). Achieving target residuals now will increase the chances of offering high quality pasture in the next round. Calculate the pre-grazing target for your farm using the formula: (stocking rate x intake x round length) + target residual kg DM/ha. Avoid grazing paddocks greater than 3200 kg DM/ha to keep quality high. Continue Mg supplementation (dusting paddocks and trough treatments).

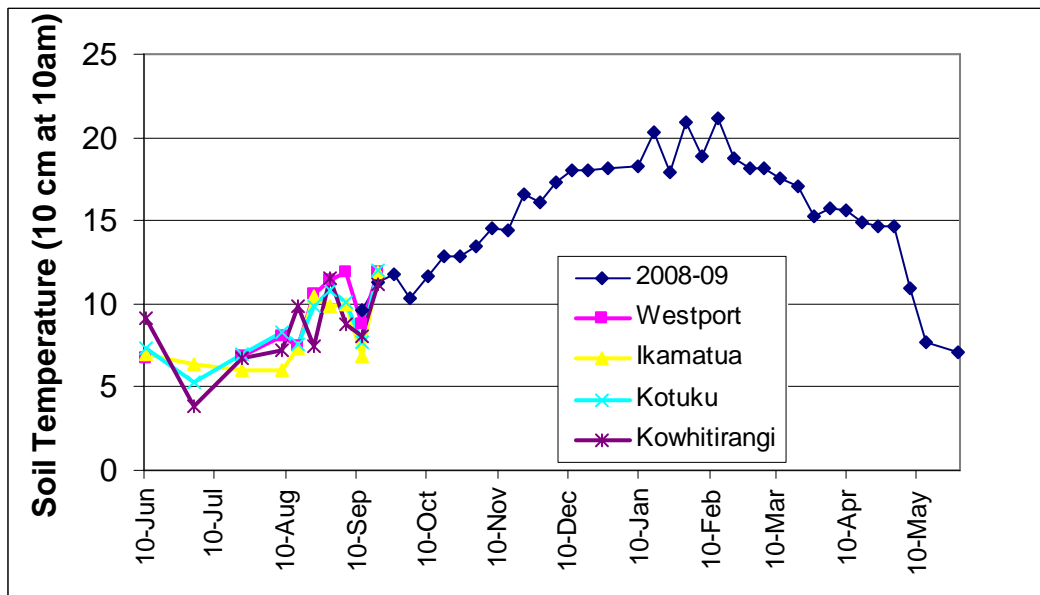
Farm Summary

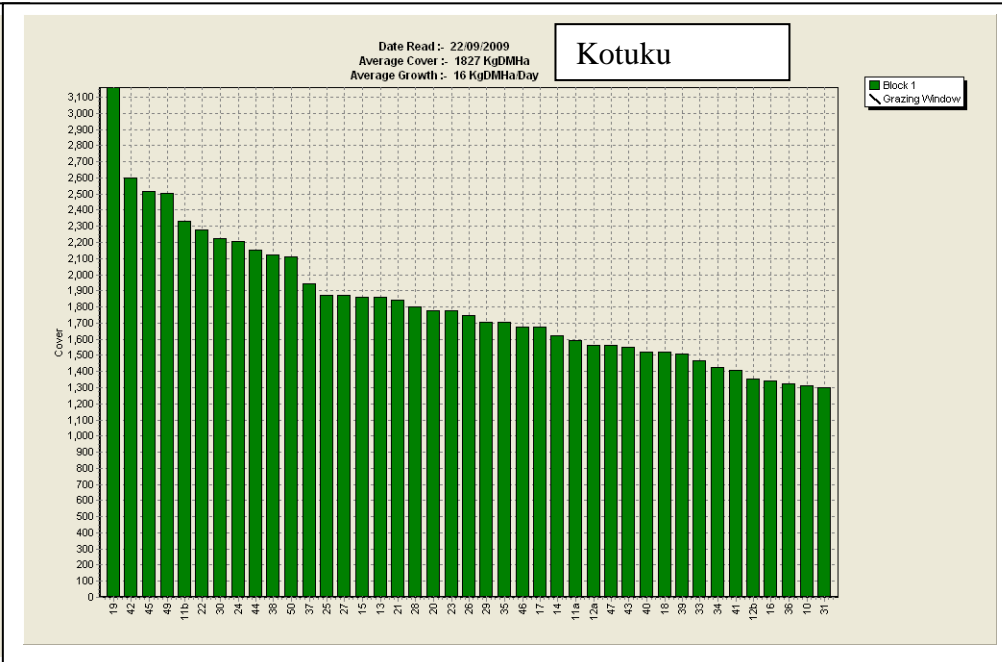
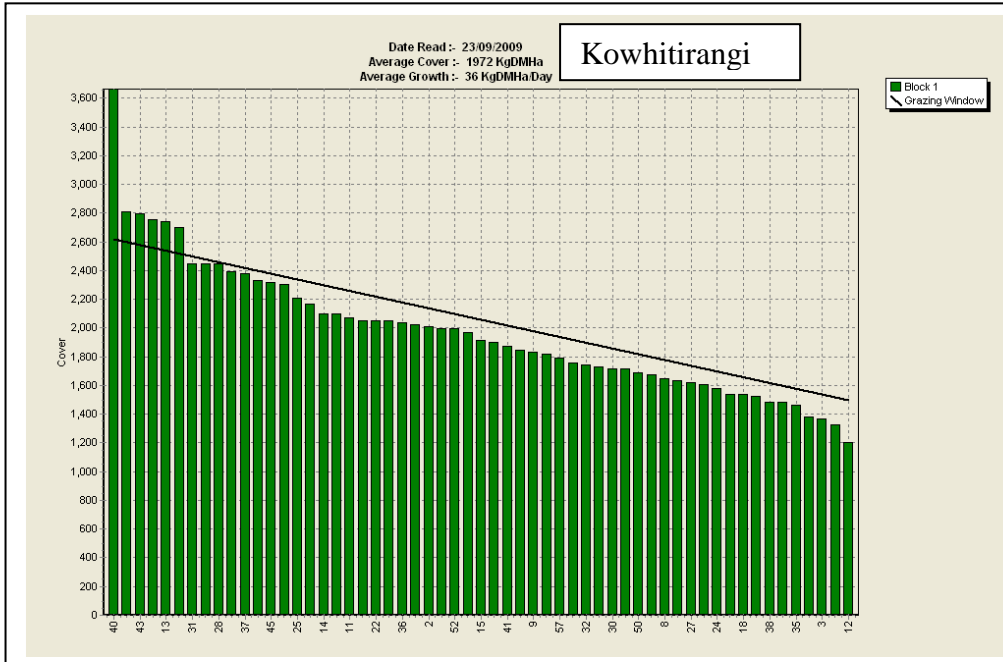
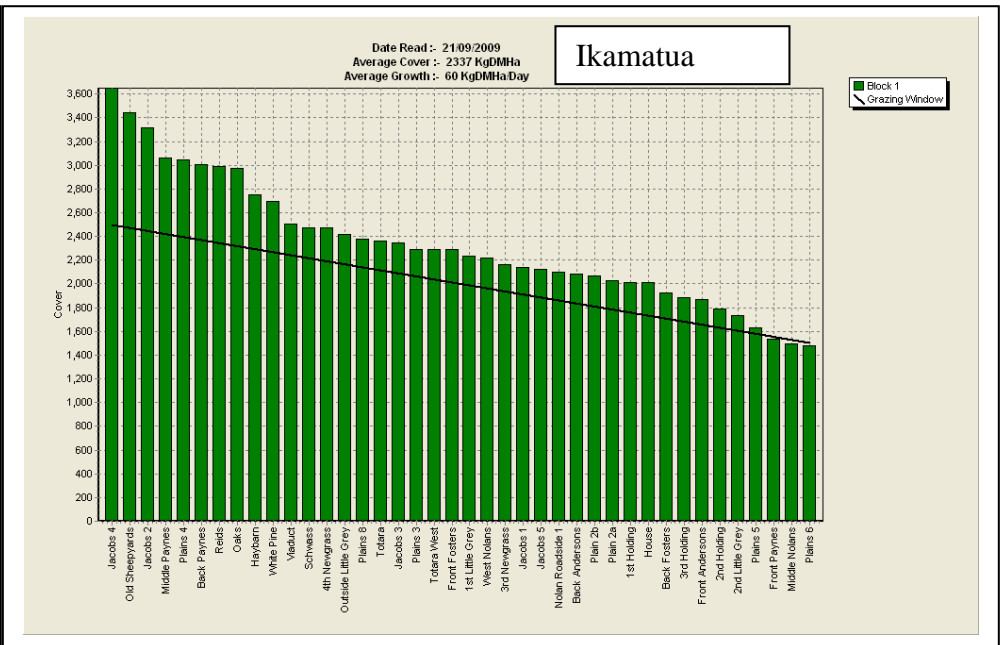
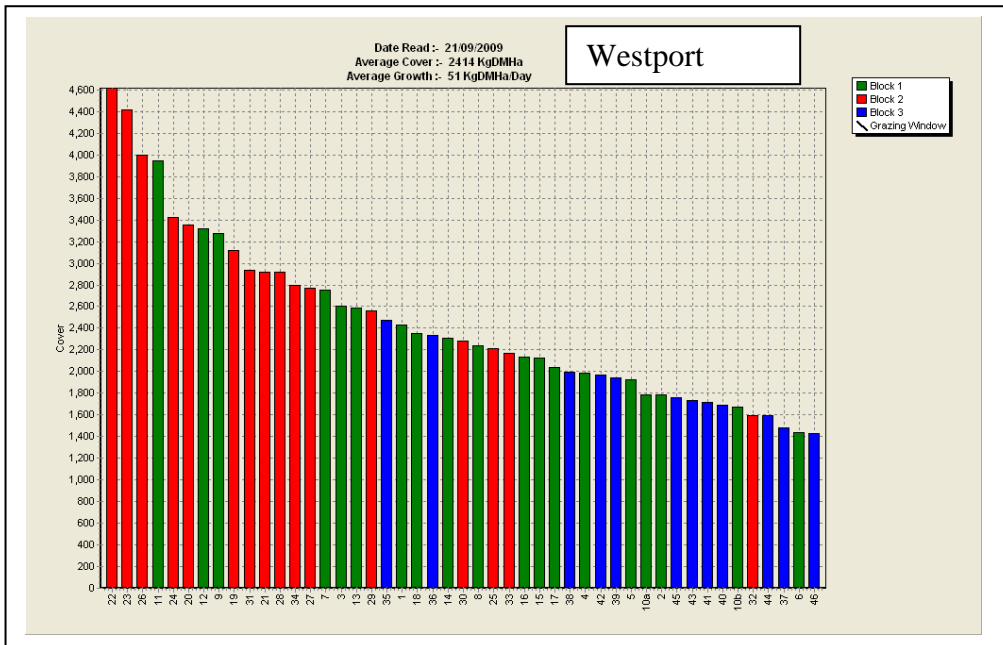
	Westport	Ikamatua	Kotuku	Kowhitirangi
Average cover (kg DM/ha)	2414	2337	1827	1972
Rotation length (days)	30	24	64	31
Stocking rate	2.3	2.8	1.8	2.4
% calved	90	96	-	74
Milksolids kg/cow	1.40	2.28	1.40	1.64
Milksolids kg/ha	3.2	5.6	2.5	2.8
N (kg/ha)	40			
Supplement (kg/cow/day)	0	2.5	3.5	1.0
Soil temperature (°C)	11.9	11.9	12.0	11.2
Growth Rate (kg DM/day)	51	60	16	36
Rainfall	32	19	49	75

Pasture Growth Rates



Soil Temperature





Westland Monitor Farm Project

Weekly Update – 9 September 2009

General Comments

Growth rates across the region have plateaued this week. The Westport and Ikamatua farms recorded significantly higher growth rates than Kowhitirangi and Kotuku. Growth in the latter 2 regions is significantly lower than the average recorded across all the farms this time last season. Soil temperatures fell in all regions and again these are lower than those recorded in September 2008.

The Ikamatua farm recorded the highest rainfall this week. The Kowhitirangi had a reprieve with only 8 mm of rain being recorded.

Supplements are being offered to the milkers on all the farms with the highest amount being offered at Kotuku. Rotation lengths are slowly declining as more cows calve and the area allocated to milkers increases. Rotation lengths range from 32 to 49 days.

40 units of N has been applied to all the Ikamatua farm and the Kotuku farm has also commenced nitrogen applications.

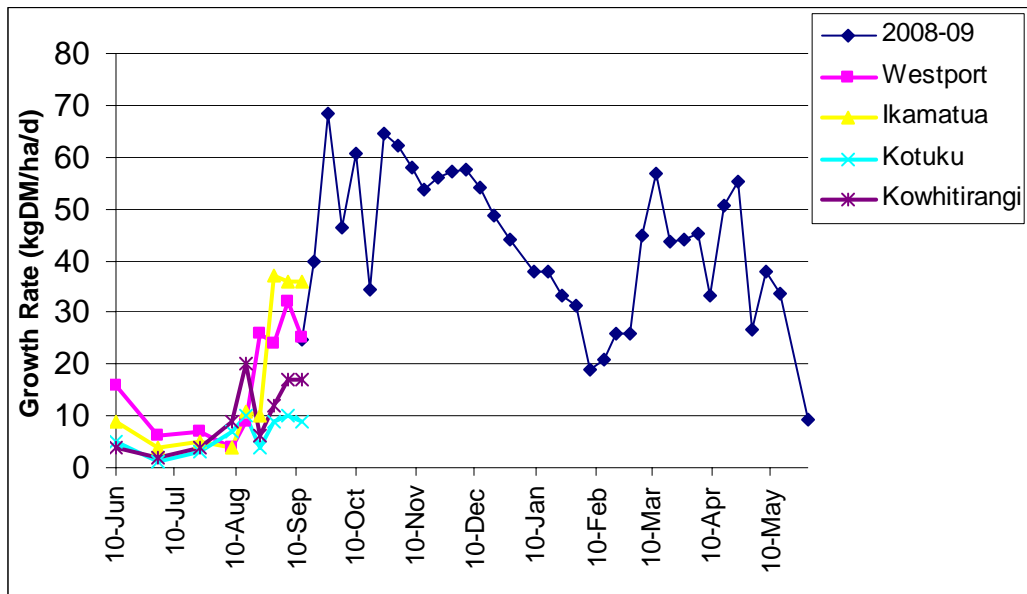
CO comment

Finally the sun is out in the West Coast. Pasture Growth should start to increase. Maintain regular pasture walks and modify round length and supplementary feed to ensure you meet your average pasture cover targets. Take advantage of the dry weather and graze to the desired residual (7 clicks or 1,500kgDM/ha). Continue Mg supplementation (dusting paddocks and trough treatments). Closely observe milking cows for mastitis.

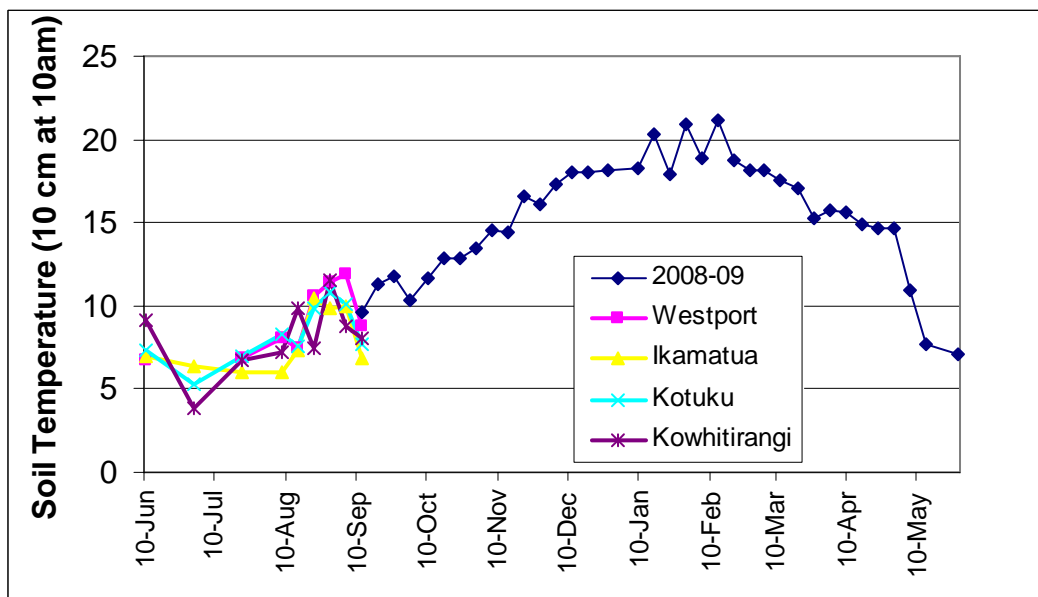
Farm Summary

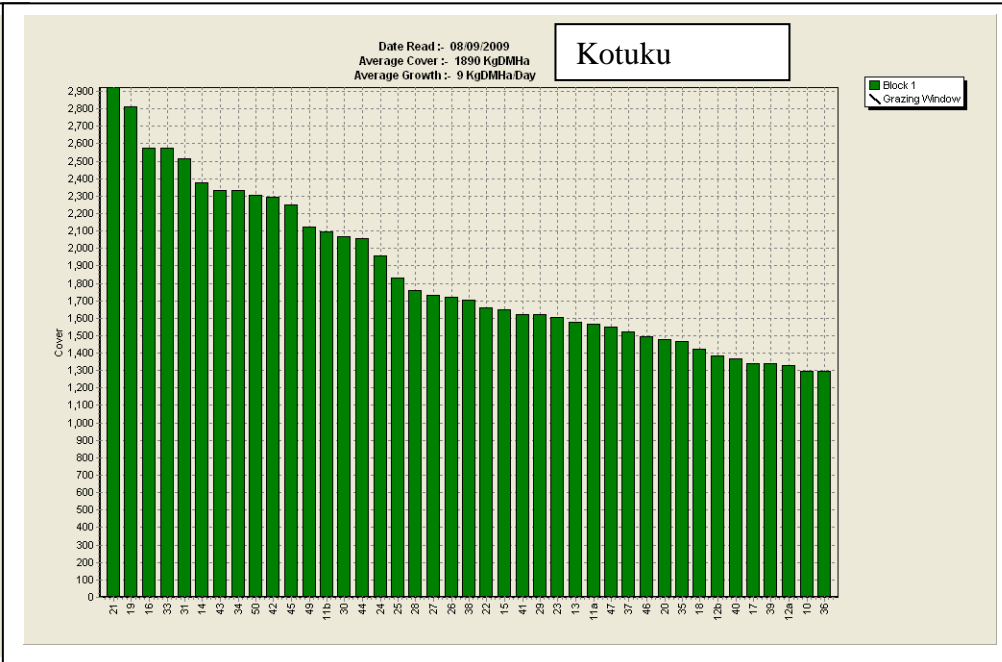
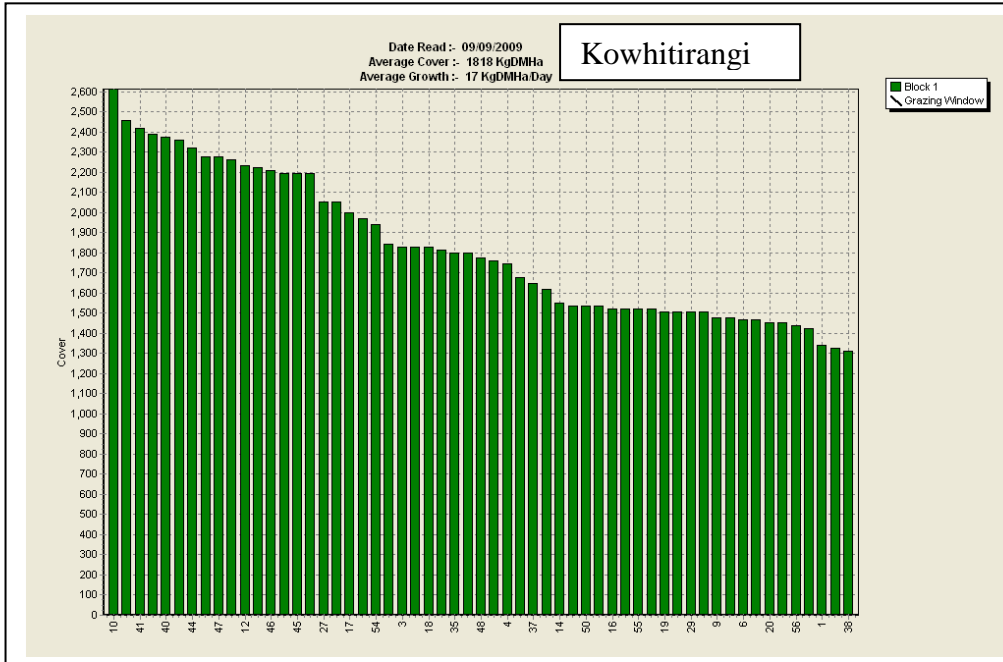
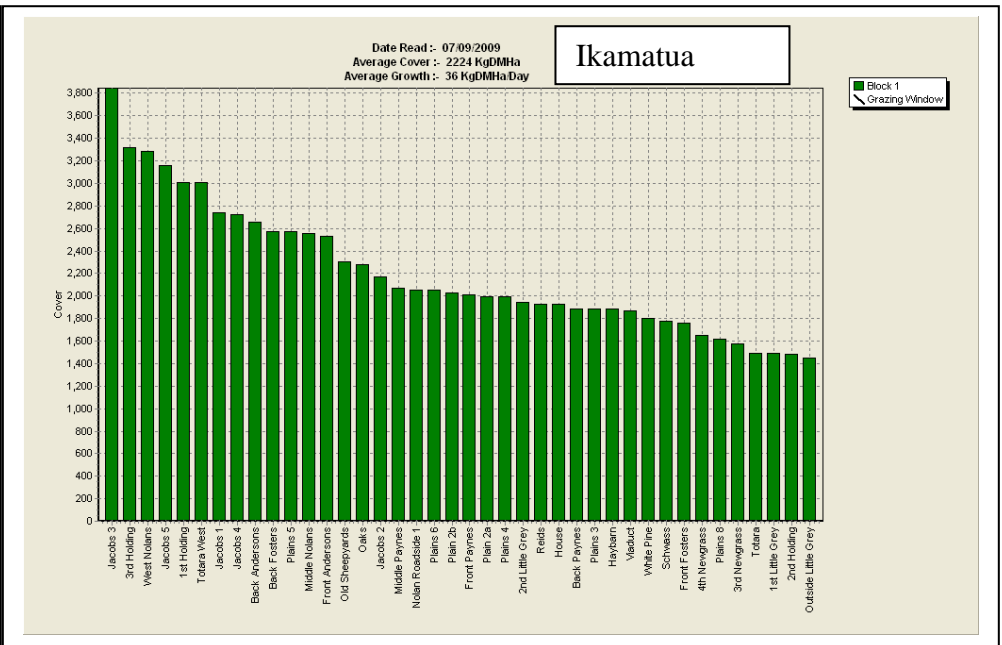
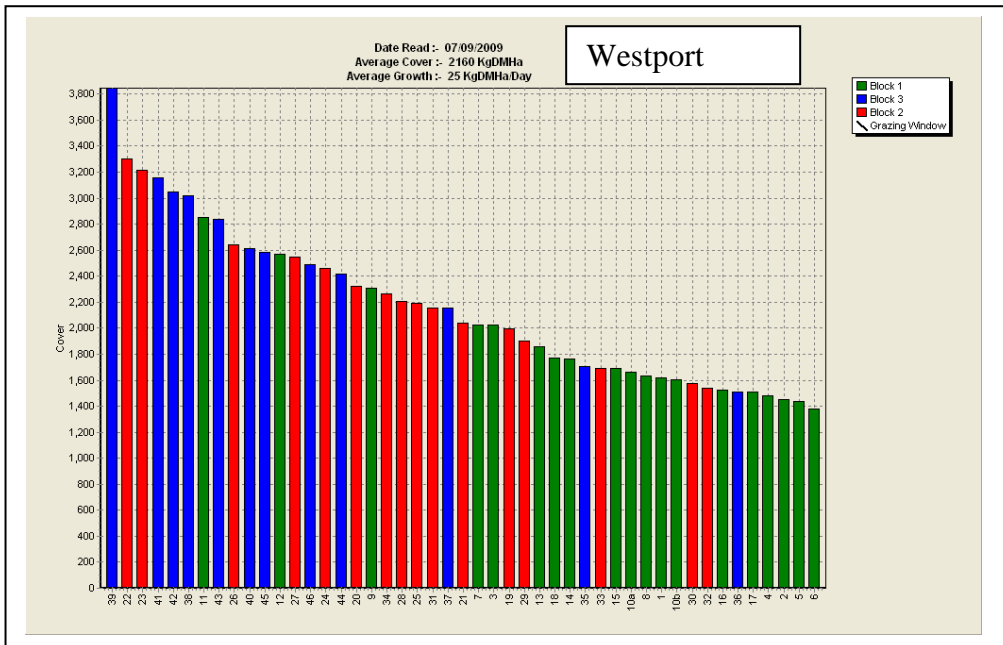
	Westport	Ikamatua	Kotuku	Kowhitirangi
Average cover (kg DM/ha)	2160	2224	1890	1818
Rotation length (days)	37	34	32	49
Stocking rate	2.1	2.1	1.5	1.4
% calved	80	83	65	63
Milksolids kg/cow	-	2.16	1.18	1.61
Milksolids kg/ha	-	4.7	1.6	2.2
N (kg/ha)	40			
Supplement (kg/cow/day)	1	2.5	6.9	4
Soil temperature (°C)	8.8	6.9	7.7	8.1
Growth Rate (kg DM/day)	25	36	9	17
Rainfall	23	62	-	8

Pasture Growth Rates



Soil Temperature





Westland Monitor Farm Project

Weekly Update – 3 September 2009

General Comments

Growth rates continued to increase across the region this week despite the continuation of very wet conditions in many areas. Growth is ahead of this time last year in Westport and Ikamatua but lower in Kotuku and Kowhitirangi. Extremely wet conditions were experienced during the Kotuku and Kowhitirangi farm walks so it is likely that the pasture mass recorded is an underestimate of actual cover and therefore growth rate as the wet pasture will compress more under the plate meter. Soil temperatures remained relatively constant over the week. The lowest temperature was recorded in Kowhitirangi where sleet was falling during the farm walk.

The Kowhitirangi farm received a further 200 mm rain on top of the 400 mm that has fallen in the last 2 weeks.

Supplements are being offered to the milkers on all the farms with the highest amount being offered at Ikamatua. Rotation lengths are slowing declining as more cows calve and the area allocated to milkers increases. Rotation lengths range from 40 to 75 days.

40 units of N has been applied to all the Ikamatua farm and the Kotuku farm has also commenced nitrogen applications.

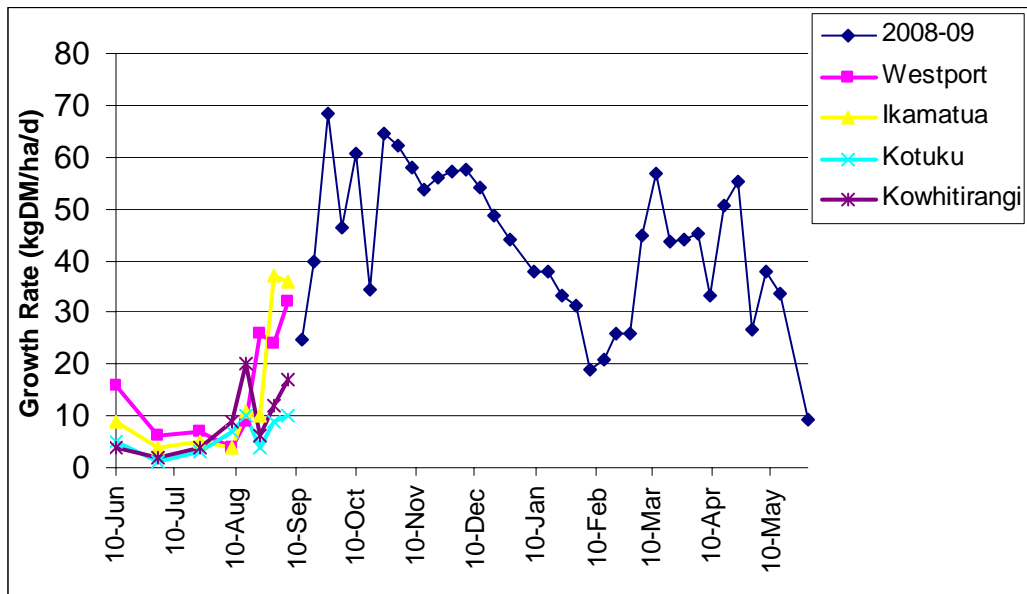
CO comment

Met Service has reported that August has been the wettest month for the West Coast for the last few years. Looking after the pastures in spring is crucial in terms of pasture quantity and quality. Avoid pugging and soil compaction by standing the cows off paddocks. Facilities such as stand off and feed pads, sacrifice paddocks, races and yards can be used to stand cows off.

Farm Summary

	Westport	Ikamatua	Kotuku	Kowhitirangi
Average cover (kg DM/ha)	2230	2323	1945	1815
Rotation length (days)	49	40	75	54
Stocking rate				
% calved	71	82	53	48
Milksolids kg/cow	-	1.90	-	1.70
Milksolids kg/ha	-	3.0	-	2.7
N (kg/ha)				
Supplement (kg/cow/day)	2	4	7.3	3.5
Soil temperature (°C)	11.9	10.0	10.1	8.8
Growth Rate (kg DM/day)	32	36	10	17
Rainfall	132	71	-	204

Pasture Growth Rates



Soil Temperature

