

Farm Walk Notes

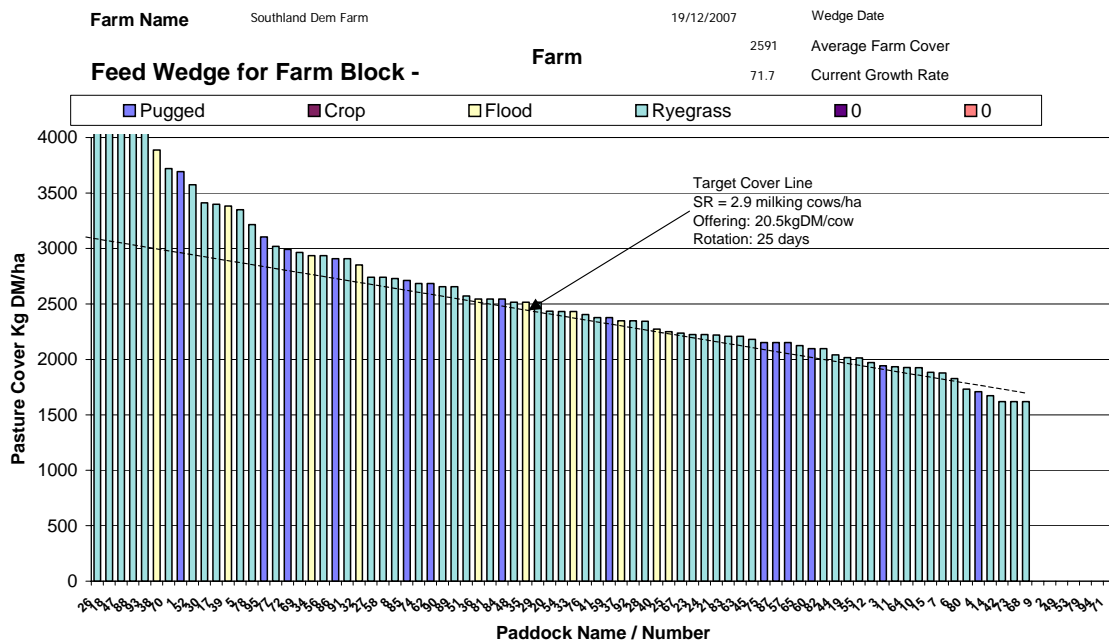
Wednesday, 19th December 2007

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain residuals to keep quality.**
2. **Keep in touch with silage contractor to harvest pasture surpluses as soon as possible to keep paddocks in the grazing round.**
3. **Pick all cycling cows and ensure that they are drafted and mated.**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance
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4. Average soil temperatures have dropped slightly from 15.9 degrees to 14.1 degrees for the past week.
5. The pasture growth rate has increased to 71.7 kg DM / ha / day from 61 last week due to good rain over last few days and Urea N in the system.
6. Average pasture cover has risen to 2591 kg DM/ha (2466 kg DM/ha last week) due to paddocks earmarked for silage not being harvested this week. With the cows being offered slightly lower pre-grazing covers than previously, the average grazing area/day has increased further from 9.42 ha /day last week to 10.7 ha /day which is 1/ 22nd of the available pasture area per day.
7. This weeks Pasture Wedge



8. The pasture wedge shows that we currently have a surplus of cover with over 12 paddocks well above the target grazing cover (9 identified last week still have not been harvested due to availability of contractor).

9. Given a good amount of rain over the last ten days, and with reference to the feed wedge, the management team has confidently made the decision to remove most of the surplus paddocks as silage, which we will add to the silage stack.
10. With a change in the reporting of paddocks being grazed on the day of the farm walk where the residuals now referred to is the cover that is expected to be in the paddock when cows come out, and not the cover measured at the time of the walk while cows are still grazing the paddock, the lower residuals in the wedge are now making more sense at the “8 clicks” or 1620 kg DM per ha level.
11. The cows are not leaving “clumps” of pasture and are consistently grazing all the improved ryegrass plants down to the target residual.
12. The latest pasture quality test taken last week from samples taken from two paddocks just prior to grazing by the cows indicate that pasture quality has declined slightly from last sample taken three weeks prior but still show overall good results for this time of the year. Pasture ME has dropped to average 11.4 MJ ME/kg DM (11.6 three weeks ago), Crude protein 23% (24.5%) and Pasture DM is 15.3% (16.45%).
13. Milk solids production is around 1.70 kg MS/cow/day (1.73 kg last week). Per hectare production is now 4.70 kg MS /ha/day (4.80 kg last week).
14. We are now approaching the end of the seventh week of mating and AB will cease on the 24th of December (which will mean we have carried out AB for 7 ½ weeks). We have extended AB in order to pick up the next cycle of the cows which were treated with Ovsynch and the 3rd cycle of the original CIDR’d group of 134 cows.
15. We have 20 jersey bulls, 15 of which are currently running with the heifers off farm. We aim to have at least 1 bull running with every 20 non-pregnant cows at the start of natural mating, and believe that we have enough bulls to do this and regularly rest and rotate them. We will reassess this closer to the time.
16. Kamar heat mount detectors were attached to all in-milk cows during the fourth week of mating to assist with heat detection. Combined with tail paint, the objective is to use two good heat detection tools to ensure all bulling cows are detected and mated. Given the last three week’s experience we are happy with this two-prong approach.
17. Seven paddocks (22 ha) sown down in winter crop two weeks ago are now germinating.
18. Last season’s crop paddocks, which were sown in grass on the 12th of November, are struggling to get established due to the past dry conditions. Weed infestation is a problem, with mainly couch, spurrey (yarr), redshank, fathen, dock, and daisy being the main offenders. We expect to control most of these weeds by spraying and Andrew Miller from Ravensdown will call on the farm tomorrow to provide recommendations for this, taking into account that an objective would be to limit damage to clover seedlings.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Thursday 27th December and then Thursday 3rd January. The next **FARM WALK NOTES** will be produced on **Wednesday 9th January**.

Merry Christmas on behalf of the **Management Group** David Newport (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Adrian van Bysterveldt (DairyNZ), Brad Houghton (Herd Manager).

Farm Walk Notes

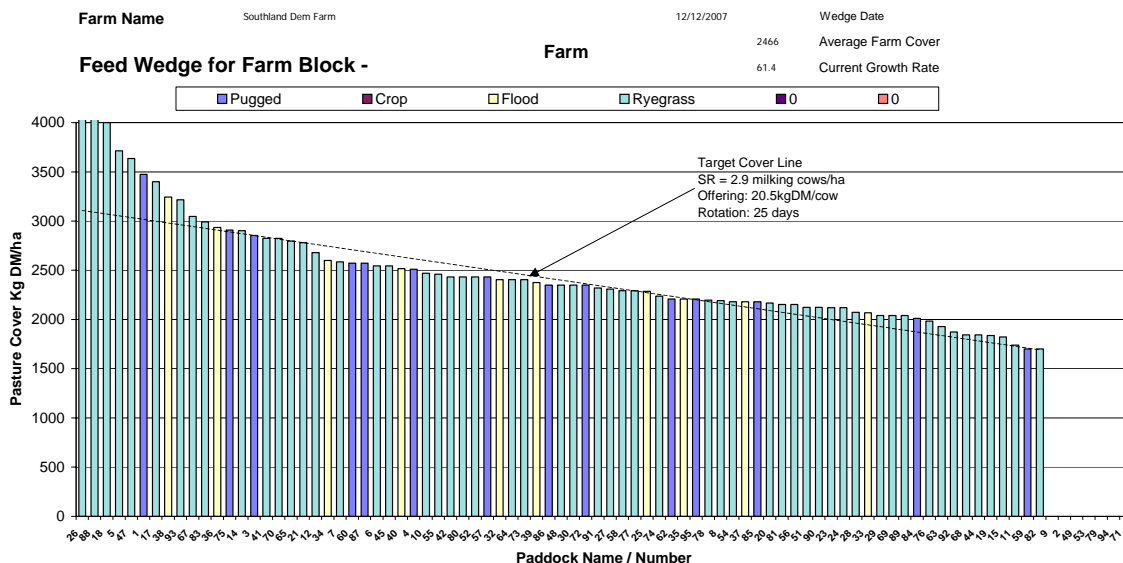
Wednesday, 12th December 2007

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain residuals to keep quality.**
2. **Identify surpluses early and remove early to keep paddocks in the grazing round.**
3. **Pick all cycling cows and ensure that they are drafted and mated.**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance
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4. Average soil temperatures have lifted slightly to 15.9 degrees for the past week.
5. The pasture growth rate has dropped to 61 kg DM / ha / day from 71.2 last week. The cause of the drop was lack of soil moisture with some parts of paddocks indicating soil moisture stress.
6. Average pasture cover has risen to 2466 kg DM/ha (2439 kg DM/ha last week). With the cows being offered slightly lower pre-grazing covers than previously, the average grazing area /day has increased from 9.1 ha /day to 9.42ha /day which is 1/25th of the farm a day.



7. This weeks Pasture Wedge
8. The pasture wedge shows that we currently have a surplus of cover with 9 paddocks well above the target grazing cover.
9. There is a period of small deficit in about a week's time, which is not expected to be an issue because after this latest rain (31mm so far), warm conditions and recent N applications, growth rates will exceed demand and this deficit will disappear. We expect things to change rapidly this week and this may require another farm walk on Friday to reassess the grazing order.

10. This leads up to the management team confidently making the decision to remove all 9 surplus paddocks as silage, which we will add to the silage stack.
11. In previous weeks, comment was made that residuals have been lifting. This has led the team to closely scrutinise what has been happening. Part of the issue has turned out to be the way paddocks being grazed the day of the farm walk have been reported. The residuals referred to were either already 24 hours old or were the actual cover in the paddocks that the cows were grazing and not the cover that would be in the paddock when the cows came out. This made the reported residual higher than actual.
12. The actual residuals have been up to 8 “clicks” or 1620. Getting below this residual will be very difficult. This is because this residual is a dense mat of weed grasses like couch, which has been going to seed. The cows are not leaving “clumps” of pasture and are consistently grazing all the improved ryegrass plants down to the target residual. This dense mat is also propping up the plate meter at a higher level and so also contributing to the higher residual reading.
13. Pasture quality has been declining. This drop in quality has two contributing factors, firstly the high proportion of weed grasses that are continually putting up seed heads, and secondly the choice of being on a conservative 26 day round. This longer round has partly been as a result of the slower growth on the paddocks particularly dominant in the weed grasses. Another round of grass samples to record feed quality will be taken this week.
14. Some of the paddocks made into silage two weeks ago had covers at cutting of over 5000 kg DM/ha while others had covers of about 3300kg DM. Over the last two weeks the re-growth rates on the paddocks over 5000 have still not reached 10 kgs DM/day while the re-growth rates on the paddocks cut at covers between 3000 and 4000 have been close to the farm average of 60 kg DM/day.
15. Milk solids production is around 1.73 kg MS/cow/day. Per hectare production is now 4.76 kg MS /ha/day.
16. We are now approaching the end of the sixth week of mating and all cows have been mated. We intend to scan cows at an appropriate time after AB finish to confirm those cows in calf to AB and then again at a later date to confirm all of the cows that are in-calf.
17. We are anticipating extending AB until the 24th of December (which will mean we have carried out AB for 7 ½ weeks) in order to pick up the next cycle of the cows which were treated with Ovsynch and the 3rd cycle of the original CIDR'd group of 134 cows.
18. We have 20 jersey bulls, 15 of which are currently running with the heifers. We aim to have at least 1 bull running with every 20 non-pregnant cows at the start of natural mating, and believe that we have enough bulls to do this and regularly rest and rotate them. We will reassess this closer to the time.
19. Kamar heat mount detectors were attached to all in-milk cows last week to assist with heat detection. Combined with tail paint, the objective is to use two good heat detection tools to ensure all bulling cows are detected and mated.

20. Seven paddocks (22 ha) earmarked for winter crop were sown on Monday this week. Ravensdown fertiliser recommendations have been followed with 300 kg /ha of supersphosphate and Borate 46 (15kg /ha for swedes and 8 kg/ha for kale) and 300 kg /ha DAP being broadcast (no lime required) just prior to sowing. A side dressing of urea (150 kg urea / ha) will be applied 6-8 weeks after germination. We are aiming for crop yields of 15 tonnes per ha.
21. Last season's crop paddocks, which were sown in grass on the 12th of November, are struggling to get established due to the dry conditions. Weed infestation is a problem, with mainly couch, spurrey (yar), redshank, dock, and daisy being the main offenders. Once clover seedlings have established, we expect to control most of these weeds by spraying.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Wednesday, **19th December 2007 at 9.00am**

Management Group David Newport, (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Peter Macfarlane, Adrian van Bysterveldt (DairyNZ), Brad Houghton (Herd Manager).

Farm Walk Notes

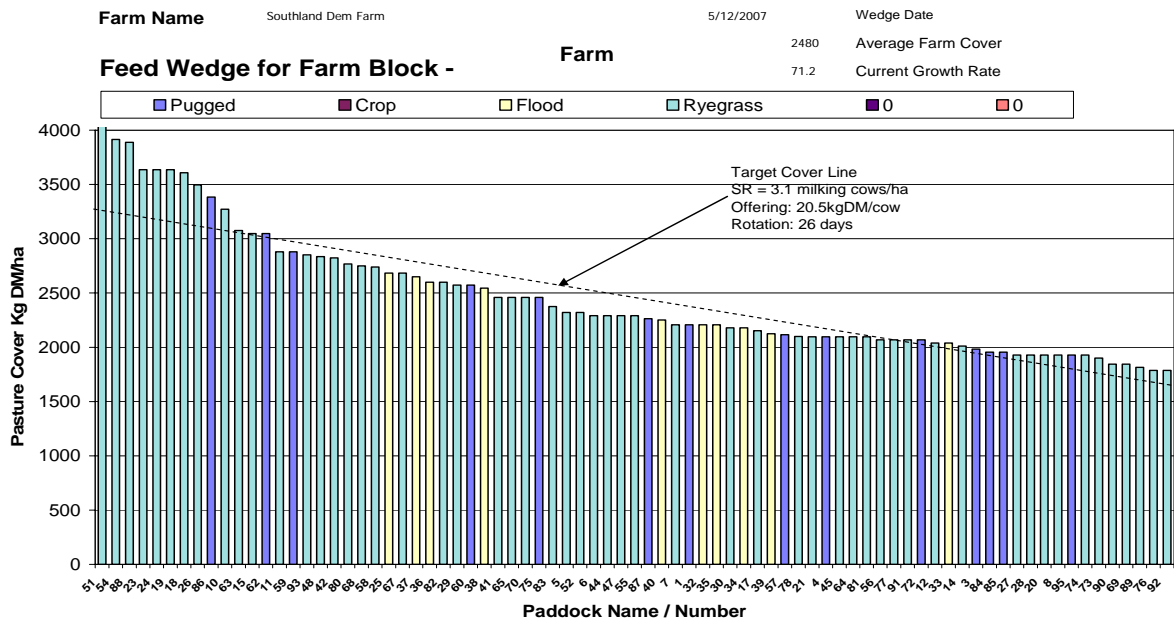
Wednesday, 5th December 2007

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain residuals to keep quality.**
2. **Plant winter crops.**
3. **Pick all cycling cows and ensure that they are drafted and mated.**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. Average soil temperatures have remained at 15.6 degrees for the past week.
5. The pasture growth rate has dropped to 71.2 kg DM / ha / day from 80.5 last week.
6. Average pasture cover has dropped by 66 kg DM/ha to 2480 kg DM/ha (2546 kg DM/ha last week) after holding the cows at an average 1/28th (9.1 ha per day) of the farm a day and offering them above residual approximately average 20.5kgDM/cow/day.
7. During the week five paddocks were cut and baled, yielding 150 bales of baleage. Another 16 paddocks (48.5 ha) were cut for stack silage yielding about 30tDM. This brings our supplements made on farm to date to 402kg DM/ha.
8. This weeks Pasture Wedge



9. Although average pasture cover is above that required for a 26 day rotation, paddocks in the middle of the wedge are about 200kg DM/ha below target and will need to grow at 79kg DM/ha over the next 13 days in order to be at the target cover required. Growth rates from paddocks recently grazed suggests that growth rates have dropped back on paddocks grazed this week, probably as a result of the dry weather. If we continue to get dry weather then we expect growth rates may drop back to our demand of 64kg DM/day or below, which would mean that we would have to speed up to a 22

day rotation in 2 weeks time in order to meet the cows requirements on grass alone. We have therefore decided to take the conservative approach and stay on a 26 day round as opposed to speeding up and taking out surplus.

10. On a 26 day rotation (9 ha per day) means pre-grazing covers will need to be 3,269 kg DM /ha, leaving residuals of 1620 kg DM / ha.
11. Residuals have lifted this week to about 1750kgDM/ha, which is above our target of 8 clicks (1620 kg DM/ha). This is higher than we would like. It may indicate that there is more in the paddocks than the plate meter is indicating. Or it indicates that cow intakes have dropped as pasture quality has declined. This is as a result of higher pre-grazing covers from choosing to be on a conservative 26 day round.
12. We did not top any paddocks ahead of the cows this week as the mower was in use cutting silage. We will use the mower this week if necessary to assist by “bottoming” at a mower height of 50 mm (preferably in front of the cows prior to grazing) to ensure that pasture quality is not compromised.
13. When mowing, paddocks which are stalky or have a large amount of thistles will be targeted first with the objective of mowing one 12hr feed/ herd/day.
14. No urea was applied this week, but a further 5 t will be applied (at 80 kg urea per ha) to the paddocks which have been mowed for silage or baleage. One paddock which is has been grazed by calves and is poor quality will be cut for baleage this week.
15. We have recounted the herd this week, and have 721 cows in milk, 18 less cows than were originally thought. We have adjusted the data sheet to reflect this change. Cow losses (deaths and culls) to date are 8.2% of the numbers wintered including 2% culls with Johnes Disease.
16. Milk solids production is maintaining at around 1.83 kg MS/cow/day, and has remained fairly steady over the past month. Per hectare production has lifted slightly to 5.3 kg MS /ha/day.
17. We are now approaching the end of the fifth week of mating and all cows have been mated. This is a result of 100 cows that had not cycled in the first 3 weeks (including late calvers) being treated with Ovsynch. Thirty of these were mated to observed heat and the remainder blanket inseminated this past weekend.
18. We are anticipating extending AB until the 24th of December in order to pick up the next cycle of the cows which were treated with Ovsynch and the 3rd cycle of the original CIDR'd group of 134 cows.
19. We have 20 jersey bulls, 15 of which are currently running with the heifers. We aim to have at least 1 bull running with every 20 non-pregnant cows at the start of natural mating, and believe that we have enough bulls to do this and regularly rest and rotate them. We will reassess this closer to the time.
20. K-Mar heat mount detectors were attached to all in-milk cows yesterday to assist with heat detection.

21. Seven paddocks (22 ha) which were sprayed out for winter crop last Monday have been grazed or had silage removed. We are still waiting for contractors to plough these paddocks, but expect it to be done this week.
22. Last season's crop paddocks which were sown in grass on the 12th of November are only just starting to emerge. As a result we currently have 233 ha available for grazing, giving us a stocking rate of 3.1 cows/ha and a demand of 64kgDM/day (allocating 20.5kgDM/cow/day).

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Wednesday, **12th December 2007 at 9.00am**

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