SDF Farm Walk Notes

Wednesday, 28 January, 2008

Total Effective Ha: 295ha
Winter Crop Ha: 28ha
Area in Grass Ha: 267ha (22ha New Grass)
Cows in Milk: 709 cows

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain pasture residuals at 1500 – 1600 kg DM /ha.**
2. **Identify and remove surpluses as soon as possible.**
3. **Maintain pasture quality – mow paddocks where optimum residuals are not being met.**

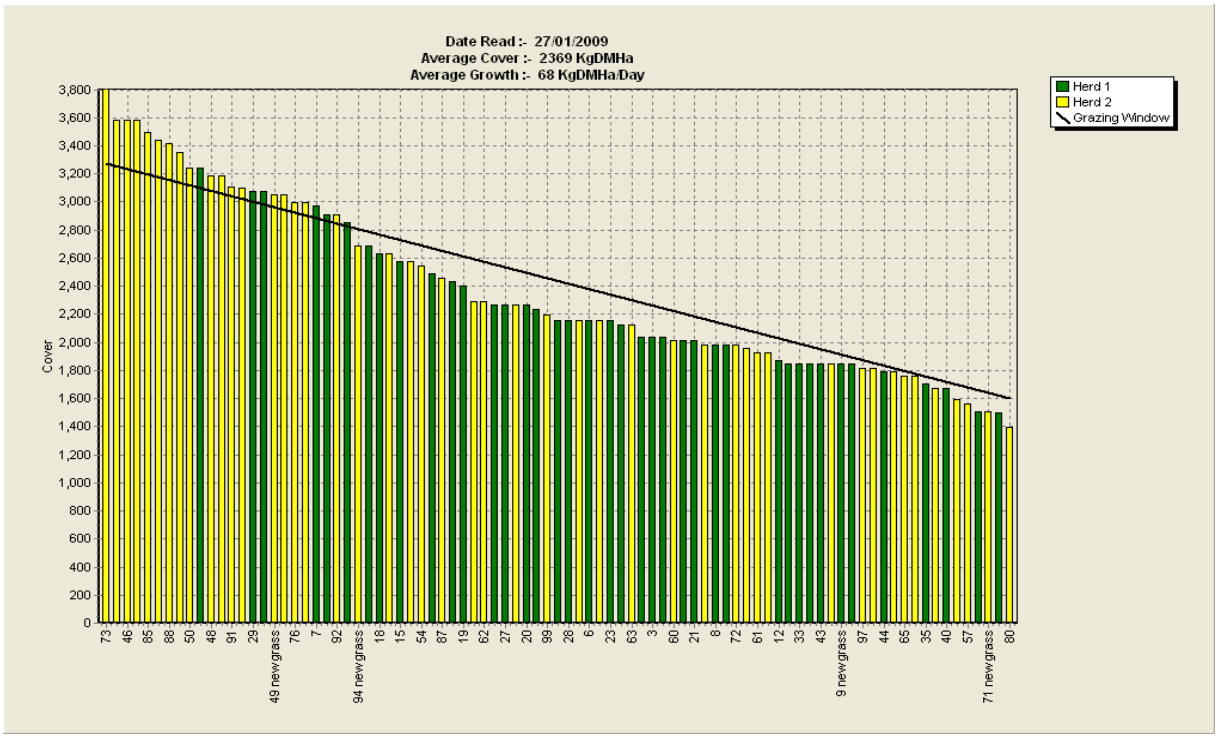
Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

4. Soil temperatures at 9 am have averaged 16.2^{o} C this week.

5. Pasture growth this week was 68 kg/DM/ha/day (last week 33).

6. Average pasture cover is 2369 kg/DM/ha, up from 2278 kg/DM/ha last week.

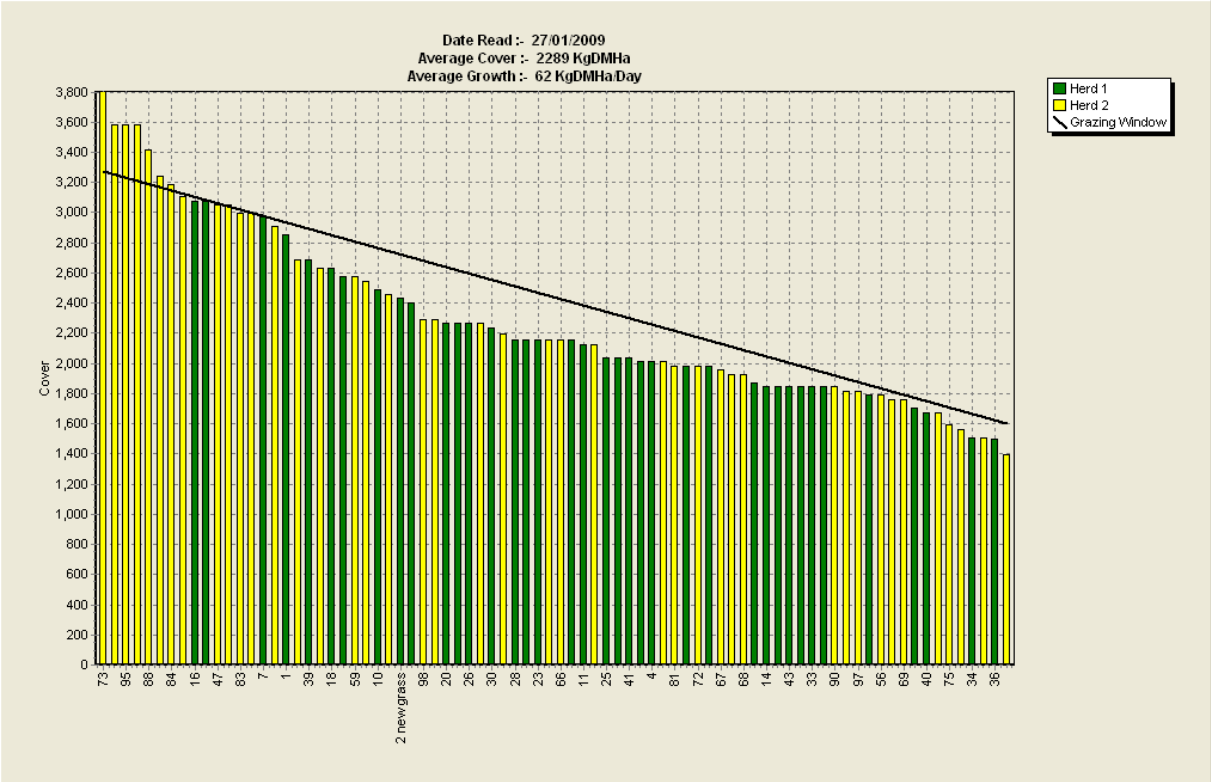
7. The 28th January pasture feed wedge is below. The green bars are paddocks grazed by herd 1, the yellow bars are grazed by herd 2.



8. The target line is based on an area of 267 ha in pasture. The stocking rate is now 2.66 cows per pasture ha and we are working on cow intakes of 18 kg DM in an endeavour to keep our residuals at acceptable levels, using the x140+500 rising plate meter equation. The pre-grazing target cover for this week is (2.66 x 35 day rotation x 18) + 1600 = 3276 kg/DM/ha. Currently growth rates of 67 kg/DM/ha/day are above our demand of 48 kg/DM/ha/day, hence the increase in pasture cover this week.

9. The round was extended last week to 1/30th of the farm grazed per day in an endeavour to meet pasture residual targets. Area allocation for the herd is constantly under review to help maintain pasture quality and this week it has been decided to extend the round further to 1/35th of the farm.

10. Seven lower quality paddocks will be made into baleage this week. Instead of taking up to another four paddocks out of the round for supplement, the decision has been made to extend the round to 35 days from 30 days last week, which lifts the pre-grazing trigger level. This will achieve two things: save costs of making more supplement and increasing grazing pressure to endeavour to meet our target residuals of 1600 kg/DM/ha. The graph below illustrates what the wedge will look like with the seven low quality paddocks taken out.



11. The graph above indicates a shortfall appearing midway through the wedge. Given the long range weather forecast and current soil moisture levels, it is expected that growth rates over the next week should continue to be above demand, so we are picking that the shortfall will not be so apparent by next week. If it is, then we still have the option to speed up the round again.

12. Production is 3.88 kg/MS/ha/day and 1.46 kg/MS/cow/day. Total production per ha to date is 660 kg/MS/ha.

13. Cow condition of the herd is generally very good. It is time to arrange for the vet to carry out another assessment of herd cow condition.

14. The third herd test for the season was on Monday night / Tuesday morning.

15. With the revised payout announcement at $5.10 per kg milksolids, we are reviewing all our farm working expenses. One area that we are looking at is winter cow grazing. Our plan is to winter all mixed age cows (550 head) on the 28 ha of winter crop plus 900 bales of baleage. We will need to achieve an average crop yield of 15 t DM / ha to achieve this.

Future Management Planning

1. Autumn pasture renovation – 30 ha spray and drill into short rotation ryegrass
2. Extend round length going into autumn
3. Six-week pregnancy testing to identify conception to AB mating

The WEEKLY farm walk will be on **Wednesday, 4th February 2009.**

On behalf of the **Management Group** Matt Hart (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Sharn Edwards, Desiree Moseley (DairyNZ COs).

SDF Farm Walk Notes

Wednesday, 21st January 2009

Total Effective Ha: 295ha
Winter Crop Ha: 28ha
Area in Grass Ha: 267ha (22ha New Grass)
Cows in Milk: 726cows

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain pasture residuals at 1500 – 1600 kg DM /ha**
2. **Mg supplementation of all cows – through water supply.**
3. **Identify and remove surpluses as soon as possible.**
4. **Maintain pasture quality – mow paddocks where optimum residuals are not being met.**

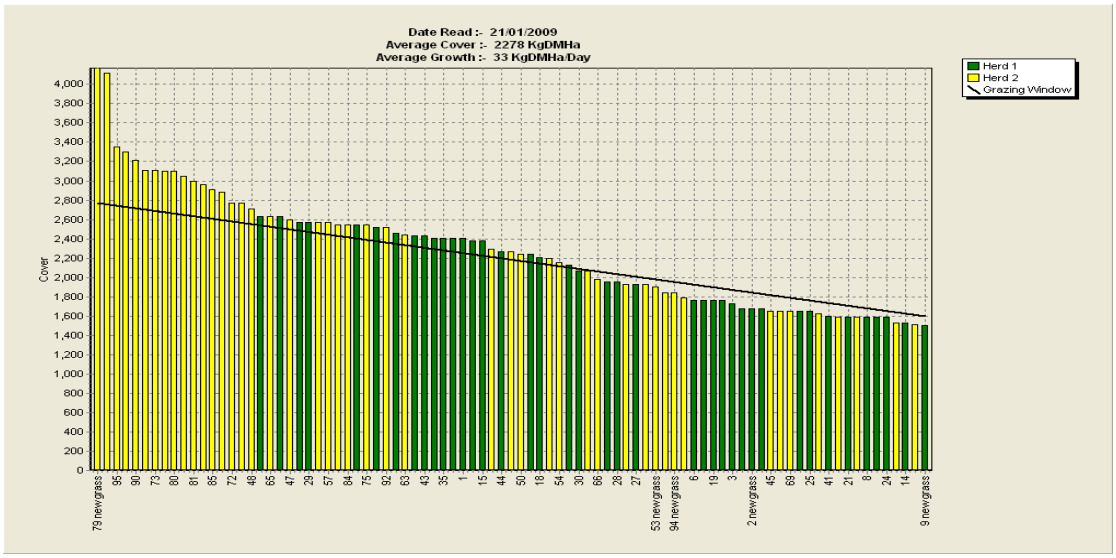
Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

5. Soil temperatures at 9 am have averaged 16.2^{o} C this week. Rainfall for the week was 48.7 mm.

6. Pasture growth this week was 33 kg DM/ha/day (last week 48).

7. Average pasture cover is 2278 kg DM/ha, down from 2333 kg DM/ha last week.

8. The 21st January pasture feed wedge is below. The green bars are paddocks grazed by herd 1, the yellow bars are grazed by herd 2.



9. The target line is now based on an area of 267 ha because the 22 ha re-sown in new pasture is back in the grazing round and we have sprayed out and cultivated the next lot (28 ha) of winter crop paddocks. The stocking rate is now 2.66 cows per pasture ha and we are working on cow intakes of 18 kg DM to keep our residuals at acceptable levels, using the x140+500 rising plate meter equation. The pre-grazing target cover is (2.66 x 25 x 18) + 1600 = 2770. Currently growth rates of 33 kg DM/ha/day are below our demand of 48 kg DM/ha/day.

10. 13 low producing cows have been dried off and will be grazing non milking areas. Culling decisions will be made after pregnancy testing.

11. The round was extended last week to 1/25th of the farm grazed per day and during the middle of the week further extended to 1/30th of the farm grazed per day, for two days to ensure that residuals were being met. Area allocation for the herd is constantly under review to help maintain pasture quality and pregrazing covers. Seven lower quality paddocks, have been earmarked for hay. Although growth rates are below that required, there is a surplus on the wedge and growth rates are expected to increase over the coming week.

12. Production is 4.06 kg MS/ha/day and 1.47 kg MS/cow/day. Grazing management of the farm has been good and pasture ahead is predominantly good quality. The water issues from last week have been resolved and this is reflected in the increase of production. Total production per ha to date is 632 kg MS/ha.

13. The bulls have been removed from the herd.

14. The third herd test for the season is scheduled for the end of this month.

Future Management Planning

1. Autumn pasture renovation – 30 ha spray and drill into short rotation ryegrass
2. Extend round length going into autumn
3. Six-week pregnancy testing to identify conception to AB mating
4. Recording of grazing round to measure paddock performance alongside growth rates

The WEEKLY farm walk will be on **Wednesday 28st January 2009.**

On behalf of the **Management Group** Matt Hart (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Sharn Edwards, Desiree Moseley (Cos, DairyNZ).

SDF Farm Walk Notes

Wednesday, 14th January 2009

Total Effective Ha: 295ha
Winter Crop Ha: 28ha
Area in Grass Ha: 267ha (22ha New Grass)
Cows in Milk: 726cows

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain pasture residuals at 1500 – 1600 kg DM /ha.**
2. **Identify and remove surpluses as soon as possible.**
3. **Maintain pasture quality – mow paddocks where optimum residuals are not being met.**
4. **Mg supplementation of all cows – through water supply.**

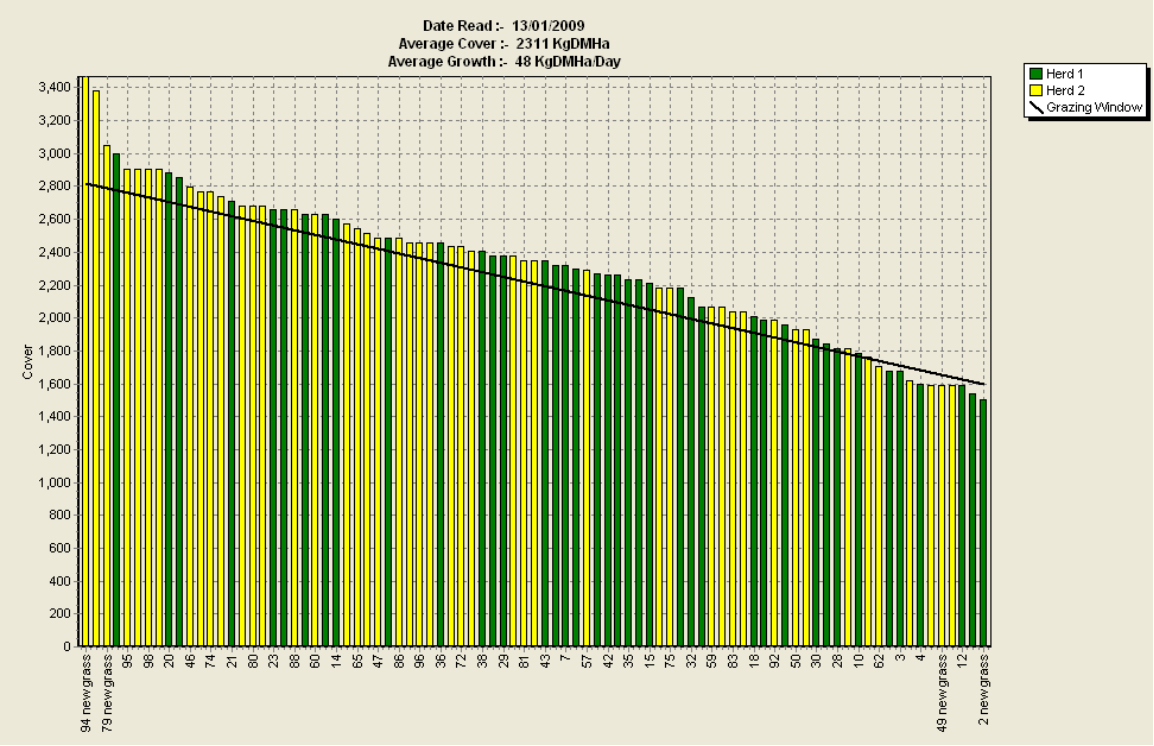
Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

5. Soil temperatures at 9 am have averaged17.9^{o} C this week. Rainfall for the week was an excellent 52.8 mm.

6. Pasture growth this week was 48 kg DM/ha/day (last week 47).

7. Average pasture cover is 2333 kg DM/ha, from 2379 kg DM/ha last week.

8. The 13th January pasture feed wedge is below. The green bars are paddocks grazed by herd 1, the yellow bars are grazed by herd 2.



9. The target line is now based on an area of 267 ha because the 22 ha of re-sown new pasture is back in the grazing round and we have sprayed out and cultivated the next lot (28 ha) of winter crop paddocks. The stocking rate is now 2.72 cows per pasture ha and we are working on cow

intakes of 18 kg/DM to keep our residuals at acceptable levels, using the x 140 + 500 rising plate meter equation. The pre-grazing target cover, on a revised 25-day round, is (2.72 x 25 x 18) + 1600 = 2824 kg DM/ha. Currently growth rates of 48kg DM/ha/day are matching our demand requirements.

10. This week we have made a decision to lengthen the rotation length from 1/20th of the farm grazed per day to 1/25th of the farm being grazed per day, to closer match the feed wedge with the target cover line and be in-line with our objective of lengthening round length as we approach autumn.

11. The two paddocks at the top-end of the wedge that are well over the target cover line are both young grass paddocks, and the decision has been made to keep them in the round and be grazed by cows. There are several paddocks further down the feed wedge that are lower in quality that have been earmarked to be stepped over if necessary and forecast to be made into baleage if a surplus appears next week. Even if pasture growth rates continue at current levels (at around demand – 50 kg DM/ha/day), then "Pasture Coach" forecasts a small surplus being evident by next week.

12. The management team has noted a slight discrepancy over the past three weeks between the measured pasture cover from the plate walk compared to the visual assessments of paddocks. The management team agree that the target cover line this week matches well with the measured feed wedge. The past discrepancy has been put down to the fact that all harvested paddocks (which had been noted to be over-scored by the rising plate meter just subsequent to mowing) are now well in the round, and feed quality (with less stem and more clover content) has improved.

13. Production is 3.7 kg MS/ha/day and 1.31 kg MS/cow/day. Grazing management of the farm has been good and pasture ahead is predominantly good quality. This is not being reflected in current milk production levels, which is disappointing. However, there have been constant water supply problems to the cows on the farm which has seen a consequent effect on production levels. Total production per ha to date is 609 kg MS/ha.

14. The bulls are coming out of the herd this week. This is two weeks earlier than last season, but given our no induction policy and the perception from the data that mating has progressed according to plan, we are prepared to do this with the objective of having a 10-week natural calving period next season.

15. The third herd test for the season is scheduled for the end of this month.

Future Management Planning

1. Autumn pasture renovation – 30 ha spray and drill into short rotation ryegrass
2. Extend round length going into autumn
3. Six-week pregnancy testing (late January) to identify conception to AB mating
4. Recording of grazing round to measure paddock performance alongside growth rates

The WEEKLY farm walk will continue on **Wednesday 21st January 2009.**

On behalf of the **Management Group** Matt Hart (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Sharn Edwards, Desiree Moseley (COs DairyNZ).

SDF Farm Walk Notes

Wednesday, 7th January 2009
Total Effective Ha: 295ha
Winter Crop Ha: 28ha
Area in Grass Ha: 267ha (22ha New Grass)
Cows in Milk: 726cows

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain pasture residuals at 1500 – 1600 kg DM /ha.**
2. **Identify and remove surpluses as soon as possible.**
3. **Maintain pasture quality – mow paddocks where optimum residuals are not being met.**
4. **Mg supplementation of all cows – through water supply.**

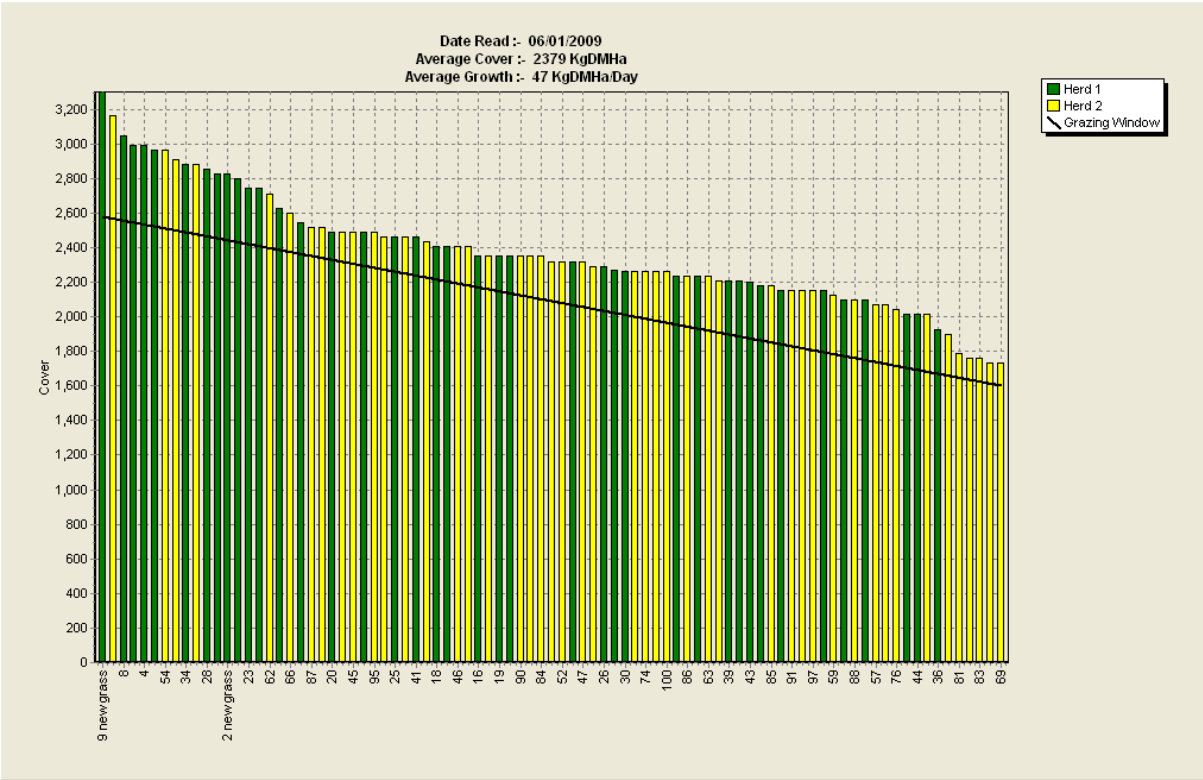
Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

5. Soil temperatures at 9 am have averaged 16.9^{o} C this week. Rainfall for the week was a very welcome 36.9 mm.

6. Pasture growth this week was 47 kg DM/ha/day (last week 50).

7. Average pasture cover is 2379 kg DM/ha, from 2360 kg DM/ha last week.

8. The 6th January pasture feed wedge is below. The green bars are paddocks grazed by herd 1, the yellow bars are grazed by herd 2.



9. The target line is now based on an increased area of 267 ha because the 22 ha of re-sown new pasture are back in the grazing round and we have sprayed out and cultivated the next lot (28 ha) of winter crop paddocks. The stocking rate is now 2.72 cows per pasture ha and we are working on cow intakes of 18 kg DM to keep our residuals at acceptable levels, using the x140+500 rising plate meter equation. The pre-grazing target cover, on a 20-day round, is (2.72 x 20 x 18) + 1600 = 2579kgDM/ha. Currently growth rates of 47kgDM/ha/day are just less than requirement of 49kgDM/ha/day.

10. The observed pasture cover from the plate walk is not aligned to the visual assessments of paddocks. Further observation over the next few weeks will be done to determine this variance.

11. Production is 4.1kg MS/ha/day and 1.45 kg MS/cow/day. Pasture ahead is predominantly good quality. Total production per ha to date is 581kgMS/ha.

Future Management Planning

1. Autumn pasture renovation
2. Late January nitrogen use and round length
3. Six week pregnancy testing (late January) to identify conception to AB mating.
4. Recording of grazing round to measure paddock performance alongside growth rates.

Actions:
Drafting out any cows doing less than 5L/cow/day on Wednesday 14th January 2009 and a printout of their BW/PW and herd test info etc to make culling and drying off decisions.

The WEEKLY farm walk will continue on **Wednesday 14th January 2009.**

On behalf of the **Management Group** Matt Hart (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Sharn Edwards, Desiree Moseley (COs DairyNZ).