

# Farm Walk Notes

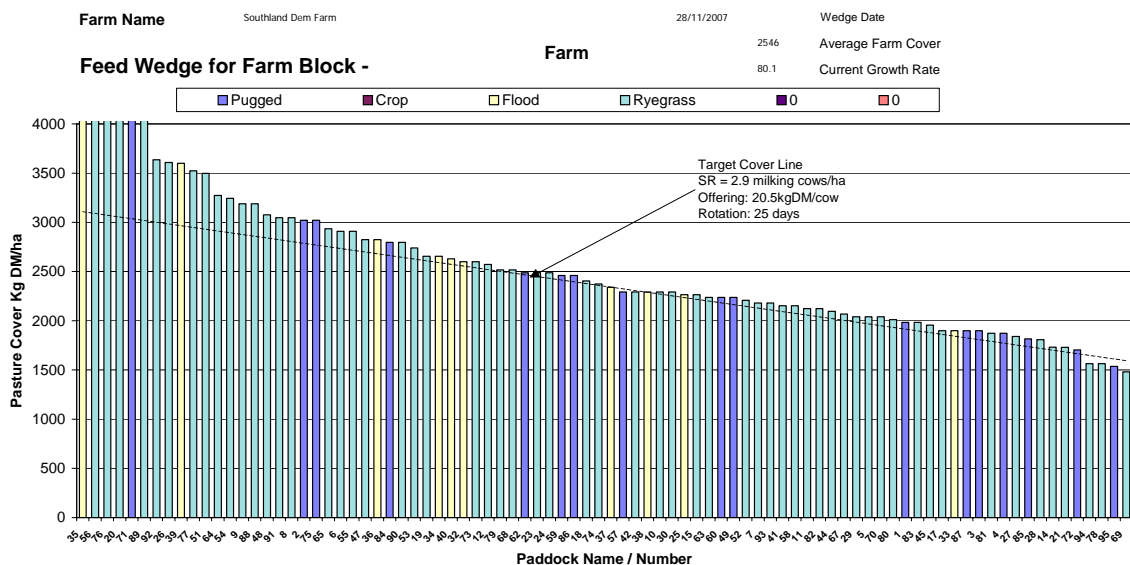
Wednesday, 28th November 2007

## Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain residuals to keep quality.**
2. **Maximise supplements harvested to meet annual feed budget requirements.**
3. **Pick all cycling cows and ensure that they are drafted and mated.**

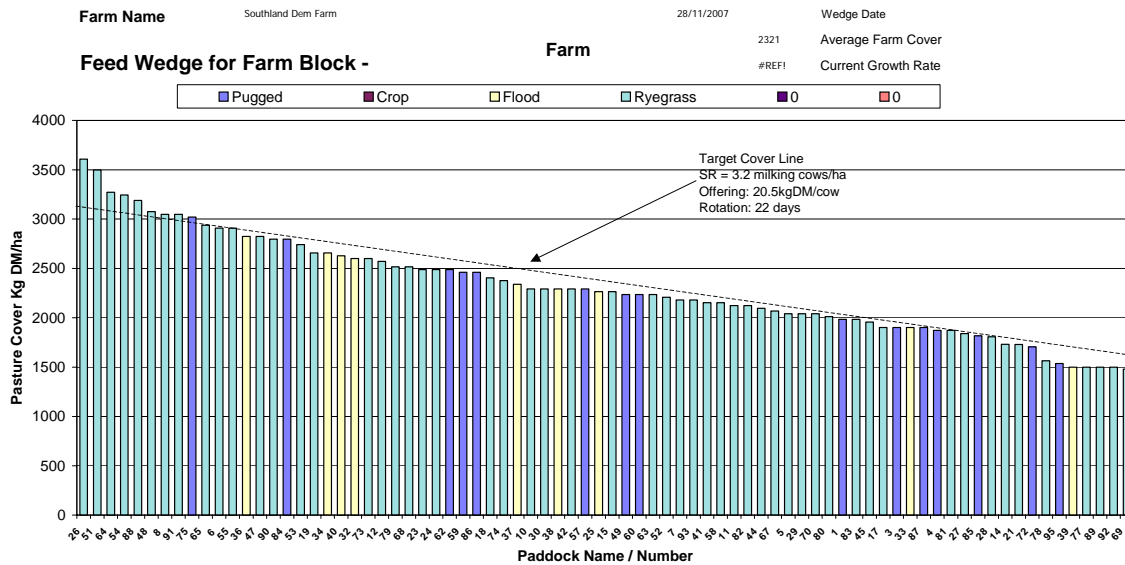
Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance
--

1. Average soil temperatures have improved to 15.6 degrees from 14.4 degrees last week, dropping slightly on a daily basis towards the end of this week
2. The pasture growth rate has decreased slightly to 80 kg DM / ha / day from 95 kgs DM / ha / day last week.
3. Average pasture cover has decreased by 17 kg DM/ha to 2546 kg DM/ha (down from 2563 kg DM/ha last week) after holding the cows at an average 1/24<sup>th</sup> (10.85 ha per day) of the farm a day (1/27<sup>th</sup> was planned) and offering them above residual approximately average 20.5kgDM/cow/day.
4. This week five paddocks were taken for baleage (cut but still to be baled).
5. This weeks Pasture Wedge



6. This week the management team reviewed the feed wedge and given that there is a pasture surplus, it has been decided to set the grazing round at 22 days this week, taking a total of 48.5 ha (16 paddocks) for silage.
7. Seven paddocks (22 ha) were sprayed out for winter crop on Monday with 5L/ha of Ravensdown 'Glyphosate 360' and 'Accelerate' penetrant in order to affect the couch grass. These paddocks will be ploughed this week.

8. This is the feed wedge after all supplement paddocks have been cut and crop paddocks removed from the rotation:



9. The average cover will be 2,221 kg DM / ha, but target is 2,341 kg DM / ha (233 ha at 3.2 cows per ha stocking rate allocating 20.5 kg DM per cow).
10. Although cover is slightly below target, the favourable 14 day weather forecast, and continuing application of urea at 80 kg / ha, we believe the farm can achieve a growth rate in excess of the daily feed demand of 65 kg DM / ha / day.
11. With 22 ha crop land out, we will target maintaining a 22 day rotation (10.6 ha per day), which means pre-grazing covers will need to be 3,060 kg DM /ha, leaving residuals of 1620 kg DM / ha.
12. The decision has been made that we are going to maintain our residuals at up to 8 clicks (1620 kg DM/ha). This is still low enough to ensure that the cows eat most of the developing seed heads as possible before they appear. We are prepared to use the mower if necessary to assist this 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. We know that a lot of production can be lost “post-peak” if we do not get residual management, and the resultant detrimental effect on pasture quality, right.
13. When using the mower, our policy will be to mow no more than 2% of the farm per day – which equates to a 24-hour grazing for one herd.
14. Our target is to feed all grass (no supplements) through the entire mating period to maximise energy intakes.
15. A further 3 t of urea has been applied to the farm at 80 kg urea per ha this week. Any pasture surplus will be taken to fill our supplement requirements.

16. We have made the decision to drop the crop area back from the original plan of 30 ha to 22 ha, due to a review of the season's feed budget indicating that we will not be able to achieve all our objectives for the season. These were to accumulate the level of supplement required for the autumn, winter and next spring, while also re-grassing (spray and drill) 30 ha of poorer producing pasture into short rotation ryegrass this autumn. This situation has come about due to the impact of the late-sowing of last winter's crop (one month late) into new pastures due to the unsettled weather through October.
17. Milk solids production is maintaining at around 1.78 kg MS/cow/day. Per hectare production is maintaining at 5.2 kg MS /ha/day.
18. Most of the herd has now been mated for 27 days (100 lease cows started 1 week later, therefore have been mated for 20 days). By today, for the farm to meet the target of 30% submission rate for each week, a total of 694 cows needed to be mated. The actual was 664 cows (this includes the 134 CIDR cows).
19. 100 cows that have not cycled in first 3 weeks (including late calvers) were treated with 'Ovsynch' on Thursday last week. Any not mated will be GnRH treated and blanket inseminated this weekend.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Wednesday, **5<sup>th</sup> December 2007 at 9.00am**

### **Management Group**

David Newport, (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant for Trust), Peter Macfarlane, Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel), Brad Houghton (Herd Manager).

# Farm Walk Notes

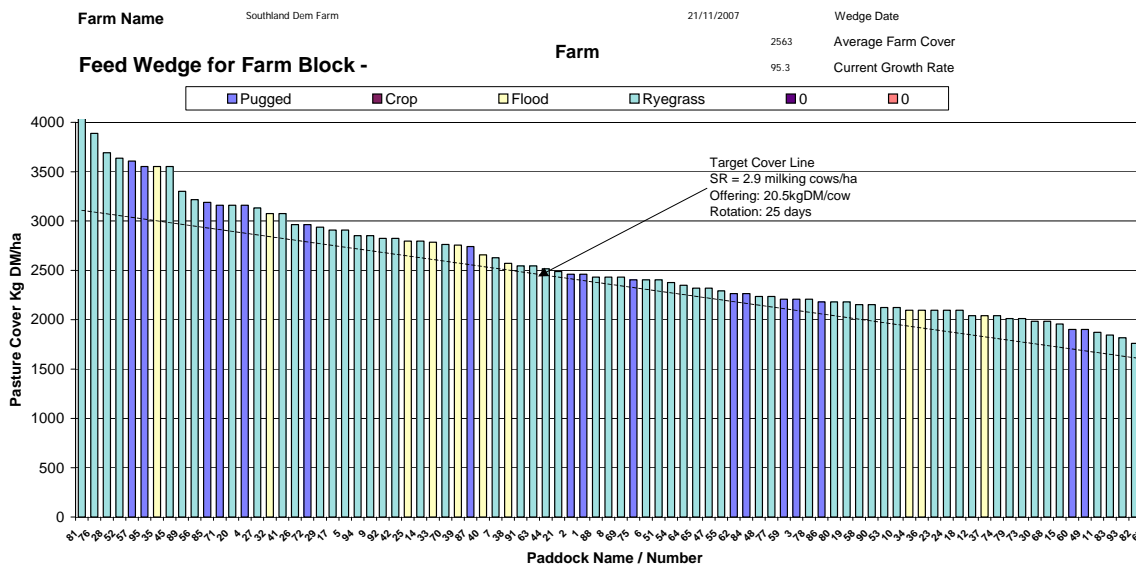
Wednesday, 21st November 2007

## Critical issues for the short term

1. Continue to lengthen round out in anticipation of winter crop ground coming out of pasture this next week
2. Maintain residuals to keep quality.
3. Pick all cycling cows and ensure that they are drafted and mated.

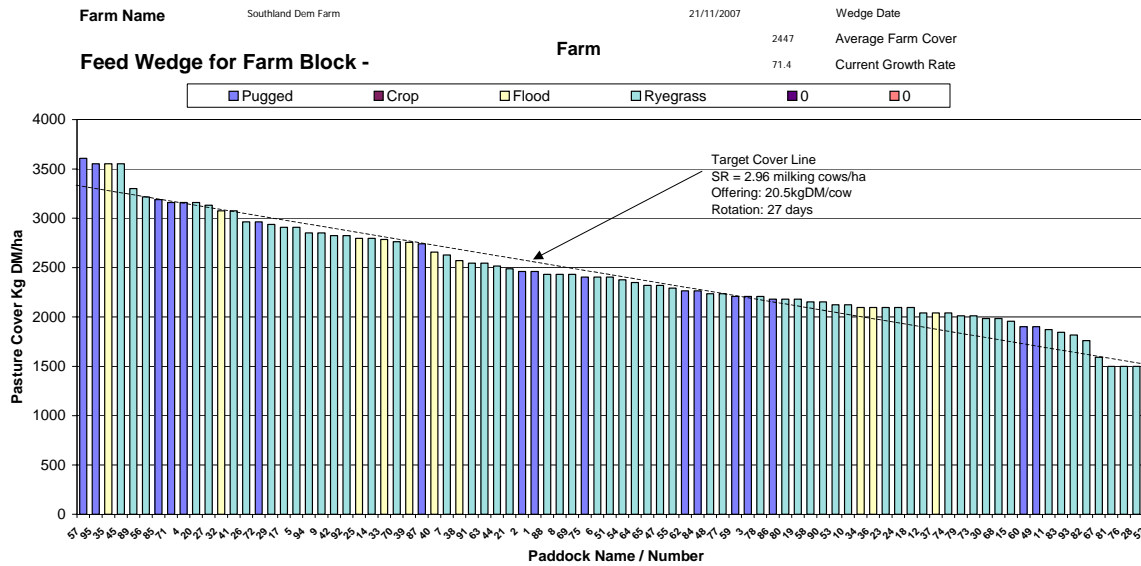
### Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

1. At last we have had some significant settled, warm weather this week which has seen positive effects on soil temperature, increasing to an average 14.4°C from last week's average of 11.6°C.
2. The pasture growth rate has increased to 95 kg DM / ha / day from 50 kgs DM / ha / day last week.
3. Average pasture cover has increased by 250 kg DM/ha to 2563 kg DM/ha (up from 2313 kg DM/ha last week) after holding the cows at an average 1/29<sup>th</sup> (8.6 ha per day) of the farm a day (1/25<sup>th</sup> was planned) and offering them above residual approximately average 20.5kgDM/cow/day. Also, this week two paddocks were taken for baleage and 26 bales were made.
4. This weeks Pasture Wedge



5. This week the management team reviewed the feed wedge and given that there is a pasture surplus and that 30 ha is to be sprayed ready to be taken out for winter crop this week, it has been decided to set the grazing round at 27 days this week, taking out a further 15 ha (4 paddocks) for baleage.

- Once the four paddocks have been mowed for silage, the feed wedge will look like:



- With the current cover, we are able to lengthen the round to 27 days in anticipation of having to take out new area for crops. We expect the 30.5 ha crop area to be sprayed and cultivated during this week. This means that until the 36 ha area (last year's winter crop ground) is back in the round we will be down to 225 ha available in pasture. This is likely to be the case until after Christmas time when the new grass, which has just been sown down, should be ready for its first grazing.
- With the area out for crop, stocking rate will increase to 3.36 cows per ha from 2.96 cows per ha. Given that we have 756 cows and we are allocating 20.5 kg DM per cow per day above residual, our feed demand will increase to 68 kg DM / ha, from existing 60 kg DM / ha.
- With 30 ha crop land out, we will target maintaining a 24 day rotation (9.4 ha per day), which means pre-grazing covers will need to increase to 3276 kg DM /ha. We have built in a safety factor here, as with the higher demand one week's growth at 55kgDM/day will mean that we have to drop the rotation to a 20 day round if we do not want to feed supplement.
- The decision has been made that we are going to maintain our residuals at up to 8 clicks (1620 kg DM/ha). This is still low enough to ensure that the cows eat most of the developing seed heads as possible before they appear. We are prepared to use the mower if necessary to assist this 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. We know that a lot of production can be lost "post-peak" if we do not get residual management, and the resultant detrimental effect on pasture quality right. With pre-grazing covers of above 3250kg DM/ha this week we expect that it will be more difficult to maintain residuals with the cows especially with the seed head in the pasture.
- When using the mower, our policy will be to mow no more than 2% of the farm per day – which equates to a 24-hour grazing for one herd.

12. We are aware that leaving a higher target residual and lengthening the round out will mean a higher pre-grazing cover of 3250 kg DM/ha assuming the cows continue to eat 20.5 kg DM/day. Although we may be losing some quality going into these covers we feel that this, compared to the prospect of a quicker rotation and having to feed out silage during mating if growth rates don't keep on a par with feed demand, is the more acceptable option. Our target is to feed all grass through the entire mating period to maximise energy intakes.
13. A further 4.5 t urea has been applied to the farm at 80 kg urea per ha this week. Given that a total of 1075 bales of baleage is required for the winter crop, and that silage is required for this autumn and next spring, any pasture surplus will be taken to fill these requirements.
14. Milk solids production has dropped to 1.75 kg MS/cow/day from 1.80 kg MS/cow/day last week. Per hectare daily production is now 5.2 kg MS /ha/day to 5.06 kg MS/ha/day which indicates we have now passed our peak milk day.
15. The cows are now receiving 90 gm / cow /day (down from 120 gm /cow/day) of MgCl flake through the inline dispenser. There was some concern that high concentrations of MgCl in the water was limiting cow water intake. A stock water metre has now been installed, and yesterday cow water intake was calculated at 57 litres per cow per day, which is within expectations.
16. Analysis of mating at this stage is difficult because the 100 lease cows have a mating start that is a week later than the rest of the herd. Also prior to mating 300 cows that had not lost their tail paint were checked and 166 cows had active ovaries and so were left and 134 were treated with a CIDR program. All these cows were mated in week one.
17. Most of the herd has now been mated for 20 days (100 lease cows started 1 week later, therefore have been mated for 13 days). By today, for the farm to meet the target of 30% submission rate for each week, a total of 638 cows needed to be mated. The actual was 602 cows (this includes the 134 CIDR cows).
18. Due to being behind target, the decision has been to intervene further to maximise submission rates and positively influence the 6-week in-calf rate. The Vet has been booked for tomorrow morning to 'Ovsynch' all cows not yet mated.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Wednesday, **28th November 2007, at 9.00am**

### **Management Group**

David Newport, (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant for Trust), Peter Macfarlane, Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel), Brad Houghton (Herd Manager).

# Farm Walk Notes

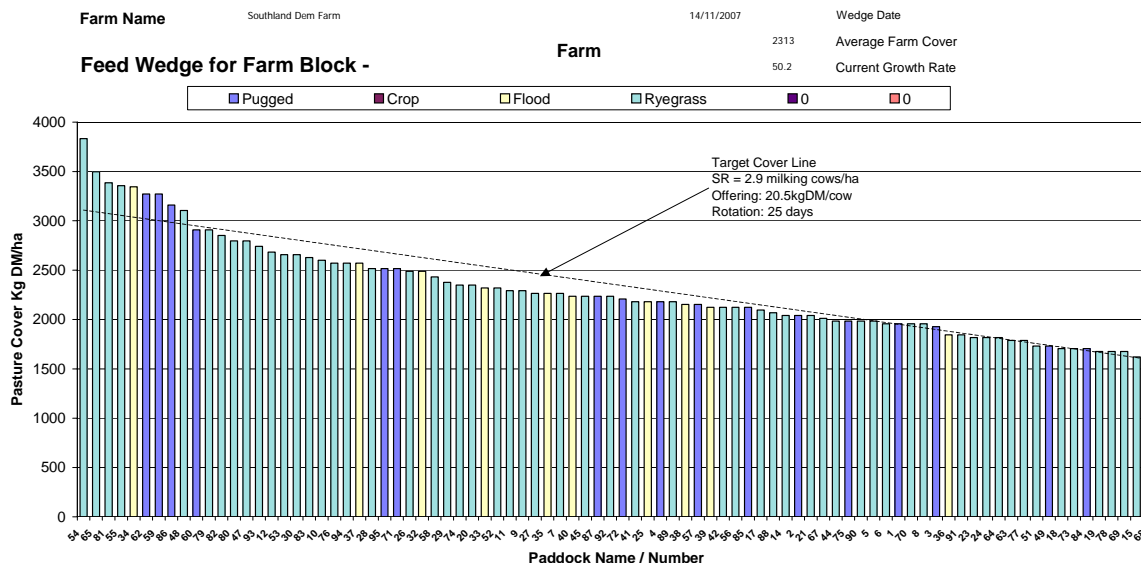
Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007

## Critical issues for the short term

1. Continue to lengthen round out to 26 days over next week in anticipation of winter crop ground coming out of pasture.
2. Maintain residuals to keep quality.
3. Pick all cycling cows and ensure that they are drafted and mated.

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance
--

1. Soil temperatures have dropped slightly from an average of 11.9°C last week to 11.6 this week, due to cooler, variable weather.
2. The pasture growth rate has dropped to 50 kg DM / ha / day from 79 kgs DM / ha / day last week.
3. Average pasture cover has dropped by 50 kgDM/ha to 2313 kg DM/ha (down from 2363 kg DM/ha last week) after holding the cows at an actual average 1/26th of the farm a day (1/25<sup>th</sup> day was planned) and offering them above residual approximately 20.5kgDM/cow/day.
4. This weeks Pasture Wedge



This week the management team reviewed the feed wedge and plan to set the grazing round at 25 days this week.

5. The decision has been made that we are going to maintain our residuals at up to 8 clicks (1620 kg DM/ha). This is still low enough to ensure that the cows eat most of the developing seed heads as possible before they appear. We are prepared to use the mower if necessary to assist this 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. We know that a lot of production can be lost “post-peak” if we do not get residual management, and the resultant detrimental effect on pasture quality right.

6. When using the mower, our policy will be to mow no more than 2% of the farm per day – which equates to a 24-hour grazing for one herd. This will include any camp areas, and areas of Californian Thistles.
7. We are aware that leaving a higher target residual and lengthening the round out will mean a higher pre-grazing covers of 3100 kg DM/ha assuming the cows continue to eat 20.5 kg DM/day.
8. Over the next week we are aiming to increase the round length up to 26 days in anticipation of having to take out new area for crops (30 ha). This will mean that when the new crop area is excluded from the grazing round, we will continue to be able to allocate the same area per day. The rotation length will drop to 22 days which will still be long enough to cope with periods of colder weather. We need an average growth rate of 64 kg DM per day over the next week, (5 kg above demand) to achieve this goal. This target of 64 a day is less than the average growth rate for the first half of November calculated from Woodlands pasture growth data.
9. We have been targeting correct allocation for 12 or 24 hour feeds, but will continue to put cows back into paddocks to achieve the target residuals if weather conditions allow.
10. The allocations above residual are continuing to average 20.5 kg DM /cow/day, with an allocation of 22 kg DM/cow/day to the big herd (older, larger cows that have been calved longer) and 18kg DM/cow/day to the small herd (heifers, lighter cows and late calvers).
11. No urea has been applied this week.
12. The annual fertilizer is currently being applied following the cows. A one-off every-paddock soil sampling analysis was undertaken by Ravensdown. This has highlighted a wide range of Olsen P from 18 to 46 across the farm. On the basis of this, the fertilizer this year will be applied in different rates across 5 blocks of the farm as per recommendations. The aim is to lift all the paddocks to an Olsen P of between 35 and 40 which is the economic optimum calculated through the Overseer Nutrient model.
13. Milk solids production has dropped to 1.80 kg MS/cow/day from 1.82 kg MS/cow/day last week. Per hectare production has dropped from 5.2 kg MS /ha/day to 5.06 kg MS/ha/day which indicates we have now passed our peak milk day.
14. The cows are continuing to receive 120 gm /cow/day of MgCl flake through the inline dispenser. Milk volumes have fluctuated around 23 l /cow/day for a over a month indicating that this concentration of MgCl may not be impacting on water intake. There is no other source of water on the farm.
15. Our contractor has done a good job putting in the resources necessary on fine days to complete sowing last winter's crop paddocks back into pasture as quickly as possible. We are now close to completing this. We are now planning to cultivate next winter's crop ground.

16. Analysis if mating is difficult because the 100 lease cows have a mating start that is a week later than the rest of the herd.
17. Also prior to mating 300 cows that had not lost their tail paint were checked and 166 cows had active ovaries and so were left and 134 were treated with a CIDR program. All these cows were mated in week one.
18. By the end of week two, for the farm to meet the target of 30% submission rate for each week, a total of 408 cows needed to be mated. The actual was 443 cows (this includes the 134 CIDR cows).  
If we remove the 134 CIDR cows from the target than we needed to mate 330 cows from normal cycles. The actual number was 309. This is slightly behind target but will be a concern if it continues and we do not achieve a 90% submission rate in the first 3 weeks. We believe if we can get a run of fine, sunny days, this will have an instant positive result on mating activity.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Wednesday, **21<sup>st</sup> November 2007 at 9.00am**

#### **Management Group**

David Newport, (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant for Trust), Peter Macfarlane, Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel), Brad Houghton (Herd Manager).

# Farm Walk Notes

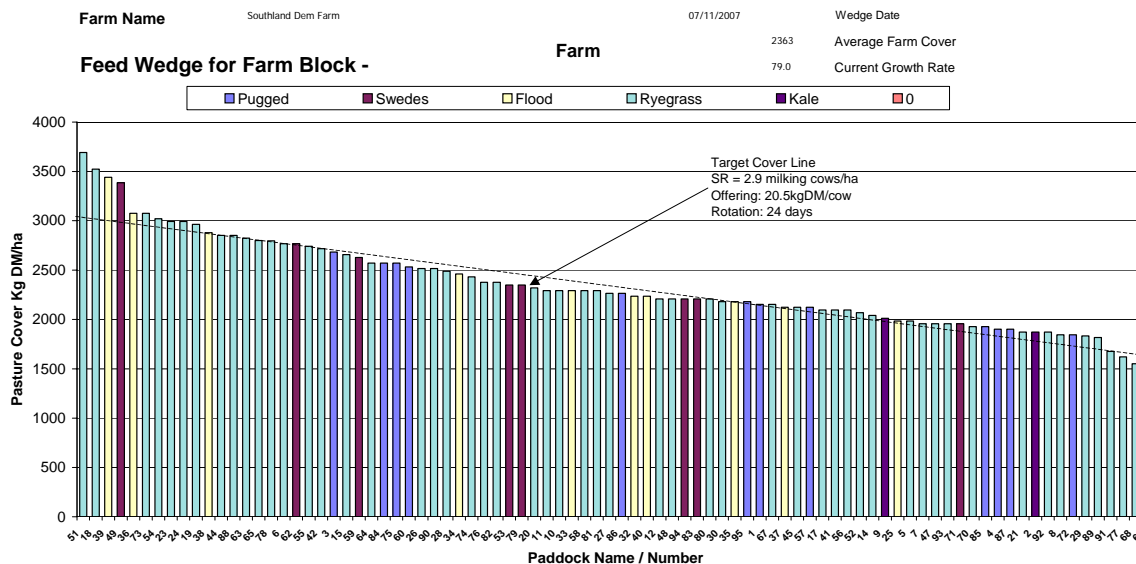
Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007

## Critical issues for the short term

1. Continue to lengthen round out to 26 days over next week in anticipation of winter crop ground coming out of pasture
2. Maintain residuals to keep quality.
3. Pick all cycling cows and ensure that they are drafted and mated.

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance
--

1. Soil temperatures have lifted slightly from an average of 11.7°C last week to 11.9, although with variable weather the range has been between 10.8 and 14.1.
2. The pasture growth rate has lifted to 59.1 kg DM /ha /day from 41.8 kg DM /ha /day last week. This growth rate is possibly slightly overstated as the farm was plated in the rain last week (adding weight to the plate) which could have resulted in covers being underestimated last week.
3. Average pasture cover has lifted by 165 kgDM/ha to 2363 kg DM/ha (up from 2198 kg DM/ha last week) after holding the cows at 1/21<sup>st</sup> of the farm a day and offering them approximately 20.5kgDM/cow/day.
4. This weeks Pasture Wedge



5. This feed wedge will allow us to lengthen round to 24 days (from 21 days last week). We discussed the option of putting it to our target of 26 days this week, but given current weather conditions opted to play it safe and go to the 24 day option.
6. It is clear that we are struggling to maintain pasture residual at 7 clicks (1480 kg DM / ha) mostly due to higher residuals being left on wet weather days and a proportion of stem now present in the pasture sward. Due to laxer grazing than

ideal over the past week due to wet conditions, our target residual levels are now at the upper level of the target range 7 to 8 clicks (1620 kg DM / ha). The management team's aim is to ensure cows eat as many of the developing seed heads as possible before they appear, but we are also prepared to use the mower if necessary 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. We know that a lot of production can be lost "post-peak" if we do not get residual management, and the resultant detrimental effect on pasture quality, right.

7. When using the mower, our policy will be to mow no more than 2% of the farm per day – which equates to a 24-hour grazing for one herd. This is a risk management policy so that not too much of the farm is mowed all at once.
8. We are aware that lengthening the round out will mean higher pre-grazing covers – leading to a higher proportion of developing seed head in the sward – meaning quality control will be even more important.
9. Over the next week we are aiming to increase the round length up to 26 days in anticipation of having to take out new area for crops (30 ha). This will mean that when the new crop area is excluded from the grazing round, we will continue to be able to allocate the same area per day. The rotation length will drop to 22 days which will still be long enough to cope with periods of colder weather. We need an average growth rate of 64 kg DM per day over the next week, (5 kg above demand) to achieve this goal. This target of 64 a day is less than the average growth rate for the first half of November calculated from Woodland pasture growth data.
10. We have been targeting correct allocation for 12 or 24 hour feeds, but will continue to put cows back into paddocks to achieve the target residuals if weather conditions allow.
11. The allocations above residual are continuing to average 20.5 kg DM /cow/day, with an allocation of 22 kg DM/cow/day to the big herd (older, larger cows that have been calved longer) and 18kg DM/cow/day to the small herd (heifers, lighter cows and late calvers) which means that we require a pre-grazing cover of 3060 kg DM/ha and average cover of 2340 kg DM/ha, based on a stocking rate of 2.9 cows per ha and rotation of 24 days.
12. We have applied a total of 4.5 t urea this week at a rate 37 kg N / ha (80 kg urea / ha) following the cows this week. We are putting on a higher rate than previously (50 kg urea per ha) as we need to grow more than demand as we are also aiming to generate a surplus to harvest for autumn silage and baleage for the crop paddocks.
13. Milk solids production has dropped to 1.82 kg MS/cow/day from 1.90 kg MS/cow/day last week. Per hectare production has dropped from 5.3 kg MS /ha/day to 5.2 kg MS/ha/day which indicates we may have passed our peak milk day. This is earlier than expected and is due to the effects of the prolonged period of changeable weather. Also our latest pasture sample has come back and indicates ME levels have dropped by 0.9 MJ to 11.8 MJ ME / kg DM since last sample taken on 17<sup>th</sup> October.
14. The cows are continuing to receive 120 gm /cow/day of MgCl flake through the inline dispenser. We have discontinued dusting MgO due to the inclement weather conditions. MgO and Lime-flour are still on hand if dusting again required.

15. Our contractor has still yet to complete sowing last winter's crop paddocks back into pasture. The grass seed has been purchased and is available to the contractor as soon as required which we hope will be within the next week. We will be sowing two different pasture mixes which have been recommended by Wayne Nichol from Wrightson seeds – a Diploid ryegrass mix (Ceres 150), a more dense pasture for wetter paddocks, and a tetraploid ryegrass mix (Banquet / Delish).
16. Mating is going according to plan with submission rate above target, although this has been heavily influenced by mating 134 CIDR non-cyclers on the second day of mating.

The next WEEKLY farm walk is on Wednesday, **7<sup>th</sup> November 2007 at 9.00am**

**Management Group**

---

David Newport, (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant for Trust), Peter Macfarlane, Adrian van Bysterveldt (Dexcel), Brad Houghton (Herd Manager).