SDF Farm Walk Notes

Wednesday, 3rd March 2010

Total Effective Ha: 295ha
Winter Crop Ha: 36ha
Area in Grass Ha: 253ha (6ha sprayed out)
Cows in Milk: 690

CRITICAL ISSUES FOR THE SHORT TERM

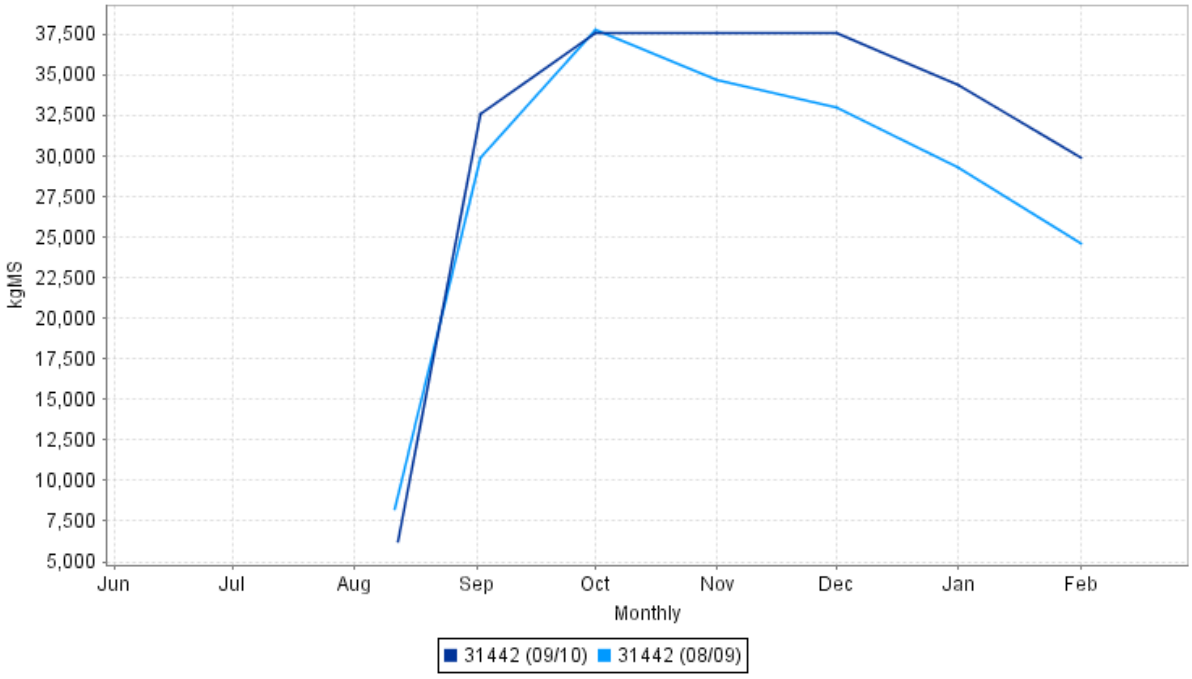
1. **Constantly monitoring financial budget and cash flow**
2. **Continued monitoring of post grazing residuals and cow intakes**
3. **Weed control**
4. **Crop management**
5. **Young Stock Management**
6. **Round Length**

MILK PRODUCTION

	This week	↑ or ↓ compared to last week	↑ or ↓ compared to last year
Per cow (kgMS/cow/day)	1.44	↓ 0.09	
Per ha (kgMS/ha/day)	3.75	↓ 0.19	
kgMS/day	971	↓ 70	↑ 140
Month to date			↑16.9%
Season to date			↑9.7%

1. Production has dropped right off this week however there are a number of reasons for this. The shed broke down (electrical fault in milk lift pump) and only 90 cows were milked on Saturday morning so most of the herd was only milked once a day. The cows dropped by over 250kgMS on the following pick up. Secondly a water fitting under one of the bridge's had come apart causing the cows to have no water. The problem was noticed when getting the cows in, the leak was then found. All problems have been fixed.

2. Below is a graph comparing the last two years milk production to the end of February

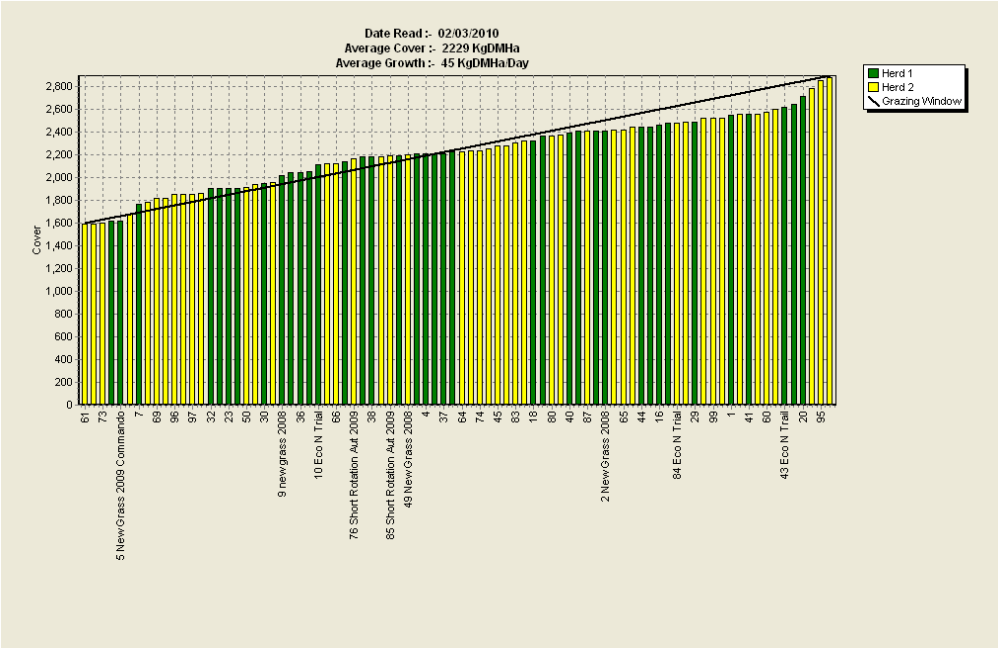


PASTURE MANAGEMENT AND FEEDING LEVELS

3. The round last week was 1/24th of the farm grazed per day.

4. We are down from our target of 30days by then end of February. Our lower than expected growth has had a part to play in this. We are however not going to take any drastic measures until we see where we are next Wednesday. If we cannot achieve a 30 day rotation from next week we will have to look at other options (culling or feeding out).

5. The 2nd March pasture feed wedge is below. The average pasture cover is 2229kgDM/ha.



6. The target line is based on an area of 253ha being grazed (excludes 6.03ha young grass). The pre-grazing target cover for this week is 2894kg DM /ha. This is based on 1/30th of the farm being grazed, offering 17kgDM/cow/day. We have 690 cows on the platform and the targets for this week are calculated as follows:

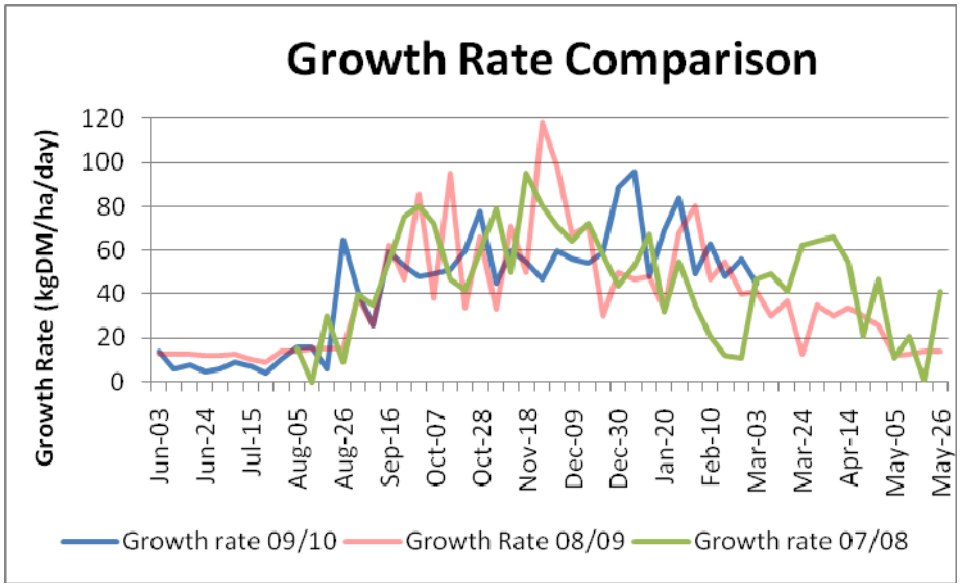
   (2.72cows/ha x 17kgDM/cow/day x 30day rotation) + 1600kgDM/ha = 2894kgDM/ha pre grazing
   (2.72cows/ha x 17kgDM/cow/day x 30day rotation)/2 + 1600kgDM/ha = 2247kgDM/ha APC target

7. Pasture Sample results from 17th February.

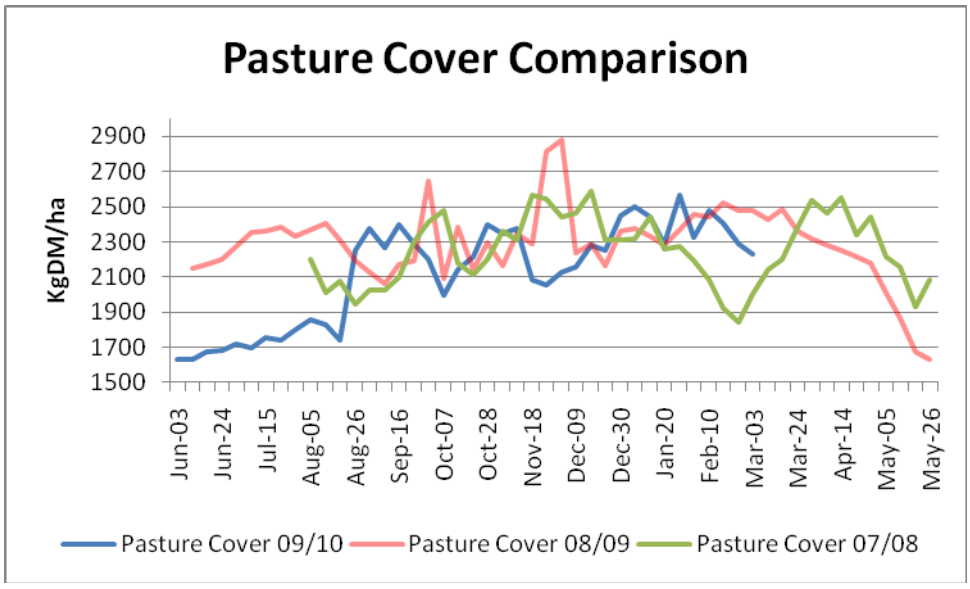
	Old Pasture	New Grass	Average	Normal Range
ME	12.7	12.7	12.7	10-11
Protein	26.9	27	26.95	10-25
DM	19.2	18.6	18.9	9-35
NDF	41.2	40	40.6	45-55

PASTURE GROWTH AND AVERAGE PASTURE COVER

8. Pasture growth this week was 45kg DM/ha/day. Below is a graph with a comparison of growth rate for this season compared to the last two seasons.



9. Below is a graph comparing the pasture cover for this year compared to the last two seasons.



SURPLUS AND DEFICIT MANAGEMENT

10. We are budgeting on growing and harvesting all supplements on the farm this season. The targets including what is already on hand are as follows:

Winter baleage	-	1200 bales vs 1334 bales on hand
Silage for extending lactation in the autumn and allowance for spring.	-	260,000 kgDM vs 269,000kgDM

11. Two paddocks (6.03ha) are still out of the rotation as they were planted with Short Rotation ryegrass last week.

12. 3.25ha was cut for baleage on Friday – 36 bales were harvested.

13. The harvesting cost of the silage put into the stack this season was 7.4c/kgDM which is very good.

14. Below are the results for the new silage – sample taken on 17th February.

	New Silage	Normal Range
ME	11.3	9.5-10.5
Protein	14.5	10-20
DM	24.7	15-40
NDF	50.5	35-50
Digestibility	77.4	60-67

NITROGEN AND FERTILISER USE

15. No nitrogen went on this week. We are starting the next round on Friday using 40kg/ha of KCl and 50kg/ha of urea (23units of N)

16. In total over the whole 295ha 133.93kgN/ha has been applied year to date.

CROP MANAGEMENT

17. All crops have had a sample taken from them last week to see what sort of yield they are at so far. We will report the findings as soon as they arrive.

ANIMAL HEALTH

18. SCC last week ranged from 159,000-381,000cells/ml. We have 16 cows being treated for mastitis. The SCC spiked up to 381,000cells/ml as a result of the herd only being milked OAD on Saturday. The latest SCC is back down to 243,000cells/ml.

19. As a result of the concern about how the calves looked a small group have had bloods and faecal egg samples taken. The results from the vet are below:

Copper:

OUR LEVEL: 15.14

OPTIMUM RANGE: 8-25

These levels are all fine. It is essential that all the calves receive a copper bullet in the Autumn before going on to Winter crop. Brassica crops interfere with copper absorption it is very important that blood levels are maintained by way of a copper bullet.

ACTION: Nothing right now

Selenium:

OUR LEVEL: 64.29

OPTIMUM RANGE: 140-2000

Levels are very low and will certainly contribute to the ill-thriftiness of the mob. A short acting Selenium product such as Prolaject will boost levels and last for roughly 6 weeks. It is important to ensure levels do not fall back again and I would strongly recommend using a long-acting product such as "Selovin LA". This will maintain levels for up to 12 months.

ACTION: 5ml Prolaject to all calves has been given

Vitamin B12:

OUR LEVEL: 458.57

OPTIMUM RANGE: 150-1000

Levels are on the low side but will have been topped up by the B12/Se injection given last week.

ACTION: Prolaject injection.

Microbiology:

All faecal samples taken from the tail-end mob cultured positive for Yersinia pseudotuberculosis. Yersinia is a bacteria found in the intestines of normal healthy animals. Under stressful conditions such as a worm burden, bad weather or low feeding the bacteria can multiply and proliferate causing lesions in the intestines causing obvious scouring. Treatment of choice is to use "Bivatop" or "Engemycin" injection which should resolve the scouring issues.

ACTION: We treated 50 calves with Bivatop (2 x 10ml 3 days apart)

Parasitology:

Worm counts were not significantly high but this does not rule out a worm burden. Adult worms shed eggs and low counts can still mean that worm larvae are still maturing to adulthood prior to shedding any eggs. Hence, a negative worm count can still mean that an animal can still have a larval challenge. In this case the dectomax injection will last for approximately 6 weeks. In the Autumn worms such as Cooperia become more of a problem and using a combination drench such as " Eclipse" would be recommended.

ACTION: **All calves were given a 4ml Dectomax injection.**

20. The cows were weighed on 4th March with the results in a table below. As a group an average of 18kgLwt has been put on since 27th Jan 2010 and 0.4 of a condition score.

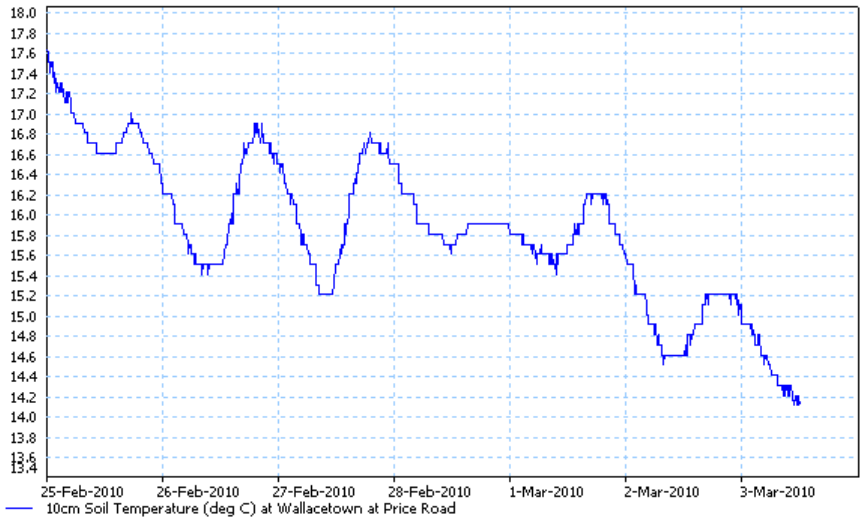
Number of cows	Year born	Av. Weight kg 3Dec09	Av. Weight kg 27Jan10	Weight kg 4Mar10	Av Condition Score Dec09	Av Condition Score Jan10	Av Condition Score Mar10	Condition score range
25	4yrs +	535	536	552	3.9	4	4.3	3.5-5.5
24	3yrs	460	464	480	3.9	4	4.3	3.5-5.5
12	2yrs	413	428	439	3.9	4.2	4.3	3.5-5.3

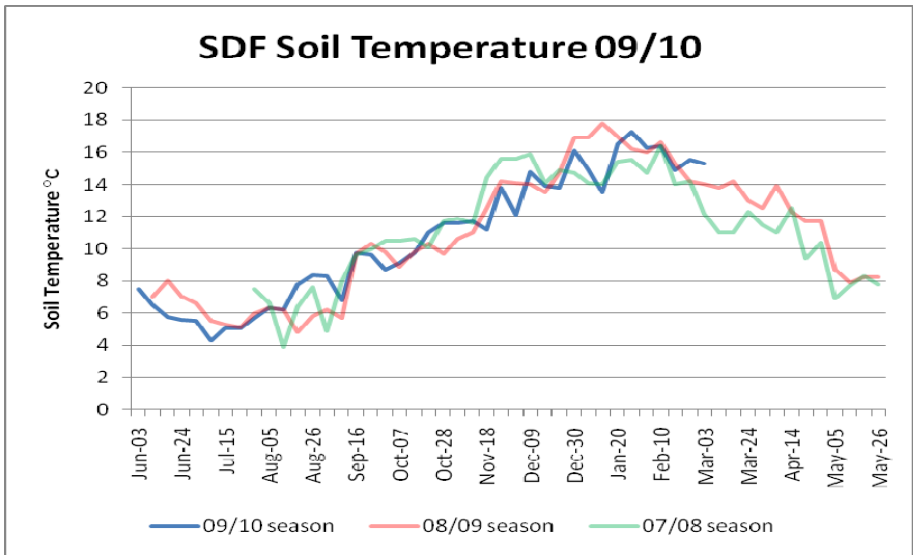
21. Below is a table showing how various groups of animals performed over mating. Of particular interest is the cows winter grazed at home with the best performance overall. Also it is interesting to note how infections have a big impact on conception rates. The non-cyclers run with the bull for their 1st cycle had just a good a conception rate to their 1st service as you would expect from CIDR's ~40%. The induction cows have also done better than expected.

Group	% Conceived to 1st service	% In-calf 4wks	% In-calf 8wks	% Rechecks	SCC	Feb HT per cow	kgMS to 16 Feb	Days in Milk
Weighed group	42	47	73	24	275	1.54	296	168
Non-cyclers Run with bull	41	13	50	45	538	1.65	281	155
Inductions	32	33	55	38	473	1.66	293	155
High SCC Jan Herd Test	32	30	51	46	2004	1.44	282	161
Wintered off Farm	37	38	60	36	407	1.69	287	150
Wintered at home	44	47	74	24	300	1.64	330	172
Late calvers	36	34	52	45	318	1.7	223	116
Metricured cows	21	30	43	52	528	1.57	284	163
All Cows	**42**	**46**	**70**	**27**	288	1.55	294	167

CLIMATE DATA AND COMPARISONS

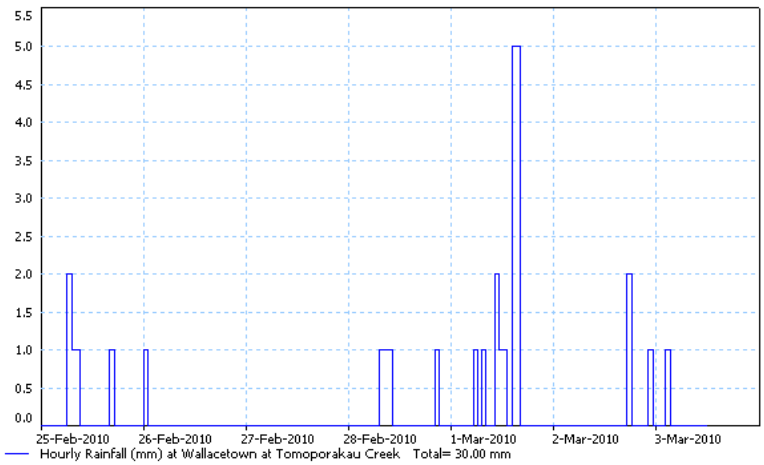
22. Soil temperatures at 9 am have averaged 15.3°C this week, an decrease of 0.2°C since last week. The graph below shows how the soil temperature has been tracking for the last week.

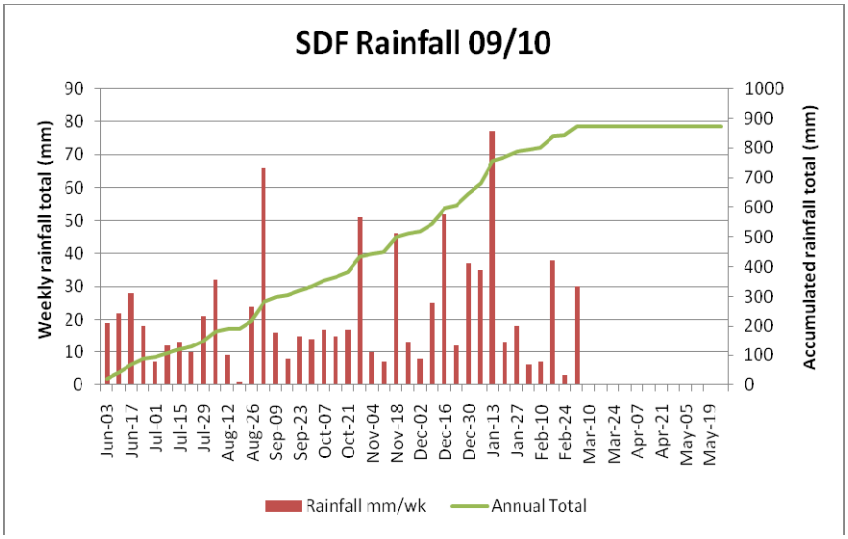




23. The graph above shows how the average weekly 9am (10cm) soil temperature is tracking throughout the season and compares against the last two seasons.

24. The farm had a total of 30mm rain last week. The graph below shows the rainfall distribution over the last week.





25. Above is a graph showing weekly rainfall and accumulated total for the season.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

26. We have a second scan for the rechecks in mid March. As a result of this we will cull 20 of the highest SCC MT cows in mid-March as well as the MT heifers. A further 20culls will go in mid-April and a further 60culls will go in mid-May. Our number and replacement for next year is based on the following assumptions:

Cows in milk	692
Dried off	18
Heifers	212
	922
Less empties	
- cows @ 10%	71
- heifers @ 5%	11
	82
Less culls	30
Leaves	810 to winter

FUTURE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

1. Feed budget till the end of season is adhered to.
2. Breeding programme for 2010/2011
3. Booking space in for culls March/April/May

The WEEKLY management meeting will be on **Wednesday, 10th March 2010**

On behalf of the **Management Group** Barry Bethune (Farm Manager), Sharn Roskam (Farm Supervisor)