



FMG'S CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Increase supplement levels
2	Hold rotation length
3	Manage the problem laneway
4	Remove cull cows off the farm



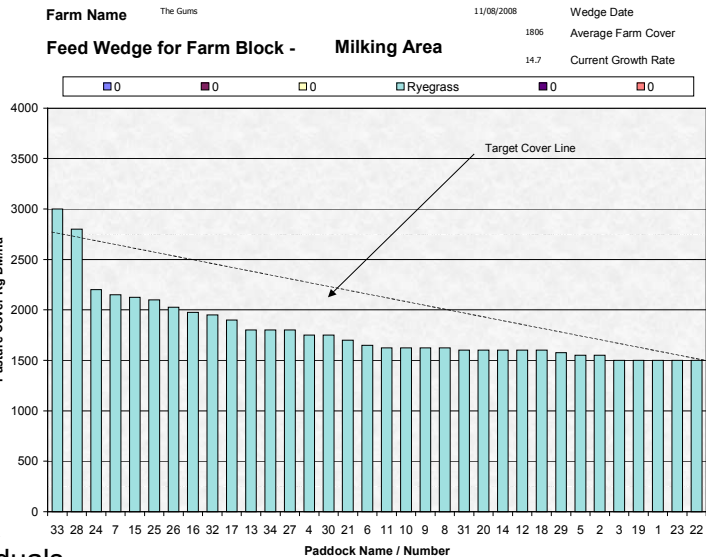
SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA			
Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	20 days/leaf	Cows	600 (milking herd) 58 (dry herd)
Rotation Length	60 days	Litres/cow/day	21
Pasture Growth Rate	15 kgDM/ha/day	MS/cow/day	1.63kg
Average Pasture Cover	1806 kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	2.66kg
Soil Temperature 9AM	10°C	Cow intake	8 kgDM/cow/day (dry herd) 15 kgDM/cow/day (milking herd)
Rainfall (past 7 days)	33 mm	Supplement Fed	3.6 kgDM/cow/day grain mix (milking herd) 6 kgDM/cow/day hay (dry herd)
MOFC (\$/cow)	\$7.00	Body Condition Score	4.4 (milking herd) 4.8 (dry herd)

*Note the MOFC assumes a \$6/kgMS payout, with a pasture cost of 8¢/kgDM (2007/08 DBOY Figures) and a grain mix cost of 52¢/kgDM

Pasture Management

Average Pasture Cover and Pasture Growth Rate

- APC has dropped to 1806kgDM/ha. As expected August is the toughest month to get through because pasture supply is well below demand. Pasture growth rates have held at 15kgDM/ha/day, which is approximately 15kgDM/ha/day below demand. Supplements are being fed to arrest this drop in APC and will be increased over the next week. The adjacent feedwedge is showing a significant drop in pre-grazing cover after the two high paddocks get grazed. The FMG expect the herd to be entering paddocks at a pre-grazing cover of 2400kgDM/ha in the next week leaving 1500kgDM/ha post-grazing residuals.



Rotation Length

- It is crucial rotation length stays at 60 days until leaf emergence starts to increase.

Nitrogen

- As mentioned in previous walk note editions, nitrogen has been budgeted to be put on following the herd for past 2 weeks. Inclement climatic conditions have impacted the nitrogen being applied, as it has been too wet (66ml over the past 2 weeks). The FMG are very conscious of nitrogen leaching during this period.

Supplement Strategy

- The grain mix will be increased when the herd enters paddocks with lower pre-grazing covers. The FMG have budgeted for 5.5 – 6kgDM/cow/day of concentrates during this period. Feed budgets indicate that this level of feeding will occur for 2 – 3 weeks, as pasture production would have increased.

Animal and Financial Performance

Animals

- There are 58 dry cows left to calve, with 170 in the colostrum (inclusive of 14 sick animals), and 600 animals comprise the two milking herds. 80 animals will enter the milking herd over the next two days.

Animal Health

- Mastitis is the major animal health issue that the farm is dealing with, at the moment 11 out of the 14 sick animals having it. Lameness seems to have cleared for moment with only a couple of lame cows across the herd. Early detection of lame cows has been the key to successful treatment and subsequent re-entry into the milking herd.
- Calving paralysis from calving down large calves has caused 5 heifers to be put-down. These animals were in calf to Friesian.
- Body condition for the milking herd averages 4.4. The FMG have budgeted for this not to fall below 4.0 by break even.
- Results from the plasma pepsinogen testing that was conducted a week ago showed that there is a worm burden starting to develop in the herd. All animals will be drenched over the coming 10 days. The Smithton Veterinary Service, as part of the TDDF project, has committed to fortnightly plasma pepsinogen testing to monitor the worm burden within the herd.

Milk Production

- Current milk production is up 23% per cow on last season's peak, with animals producing 1.62kgMS/cow/day (the farm peaked at 1.32kgMS/cow/day in the 2007/08 season). With this increase, the FMG are very prepared to feed high quantities of concentrates to supplement pasture. The milk test is averaging 4.24% fat and 3.54% protein.
- The second herd test will be completed once calving has finished. There are around 10 – 15 animals that already look to be suspect, the test will confirm if these are to be culled. Similarly to last season, the FMG are not prepared to cull any animals on 'gut-feel'.

Herd Nutrition

- When pre-grazing cover reduces to 2400kgDM/ha

Pasture	8kgDM/cow/day	=	88 – 95MJME/day
Grain	5.4kgDM/cow/day	=	63 – 65MJME/day
Hay	1 – 2kgDM/cow/day	=	8 – 6MJME/day
Total	14.4 – 15.4kgDM	=	159 – 176MJME/day

Cow Requirements to produce 21 litres (1.6kgMS) = 170 – 175MJME/day

THE NEXT WEEKLY TDDF FMG farm walk will be on Monday August 18 at 10:30am.

TDDF Farm Management Group – Basil Doonan (Davey & Maynard), Rob La Grange (TIAR), Chris Haynes (TIAR), and Justin McGowan and Nicki Devantier (TDDF Sharefarmers).