



CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Increase silage in the ration
2	Develop a pasture renovation strategy
3	Hold the rotation at 60 days
4	Remove culls off farm

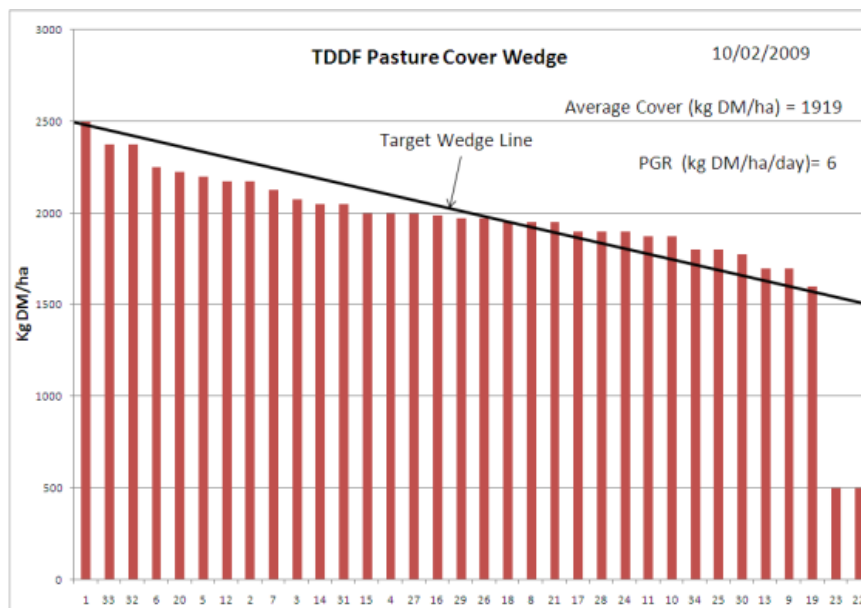


SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA

Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	20 days	Cows	531 (twice-a-day) 200 (once-a-day)
Rotation Length	60 days	Litres/cow/day	11.5 average
Pasture Growth Rate	6kgDM/ha/day	MS/cow/day	0.95
Average Pasture Cover	1919kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	1.89
Soil Temperature 9AM	16°C	Cow intake	14 – 15 kgDM/cow/day
Rainfall (past 7 days)	3 mm	Supplement Fed	8kgDM/cow/day
MOFC (\$/cow)	\$1.33	Body Condition Score	4.1 (milking herd)

Pasture and Forage Crop Management

- Soil tension has held at 56kpa which is expected with no significant rainfall events over the past week.
- Pasture growth rates have decreased to 6kgDM/ha/day from 16kgDM/ha/day. The grazing platform is dormant, so growth rates will stay inactive until the autumn rainfall events occur. Changes in week to week growth rates over this period are most likely due to rising plate meter inconsistencies and error rather than plant growth.



- Pre grazing pasture covers continue to hold at 2500kgDM/ha and post grazing residuals remain between 1500 – 1700kgDM/ha. Rotation length continues to be at 60 days. It was discussed by the FMG to slow rotation length to 90 days from 60 days to build up cover, but it was decided that there was no point as the platform is dormant and cover would not be built up over the summer dry. In addition, the FMG expect that the twice-a-day herd is still producing over a 1kgMS/cow/day, so slowing them down would only put more pressure on post grazing residuals decreasing total dry matter intake resulting in more silage needing to be fed and potential higher intakes of endophyte toxin in the ryegrass causing stagger issues (the endophyte toxin is more concentrated in the lower stem of the ryegrass plant). Dry cows will be grazed behind the milking herd, which will push post residuals lower. This in turn may mean there will be potential stagger issues with this herd.
- The turnips will run out by the end of the week, so silage will be increased in the ration to make up to a total ration of 15kgDM/cow/day. The FMG are very happy with the crop especially with the 8 tonne dry matter per hectare yield and see these as a key part of the farms operation for next season. Timing of planting, seed bed preparation, pest control and nitrogen are the four key areas of a successful crop in the Woolnorth environment. The plan for the turnip paddocks is to sow them down to a perennial ryegrass in the autumn. The FMG will be talking to management around improving the drainage in the paddock as it is seen as a key limitation to forage production.

Animal and Financial Performance

- Once the final once-a-day animals have been dried off the two herds will be made up of 480 milking cows, 183 dry cows and 68 empty animals being culled.
- Average milk production has reduced to 0.95kgMS/cow/day from 1.01kgMS/cow/day as the once-a-day herd is being dried off. Bulk milk cell has increased to 225,000 from 180,000 last week, this will be monitored as the farm does not want to be downgraded because of quality issues.
- Daily ration
 - *Milking herd (2500 – 1700) x 6 hectares = 4800kgDM ÷ 480 cows = 10kgDM/cow/day pasture plus 5kgDM silage (~95MJME/cow + ~50MJME/cow = 145MJME/day allocated)
 - *Dry herd (1700 – 1300) x 6 hectares (grazing behind the milking herd) = 2400kgDM ÷ 183 cows = 10kgDM/cow/day pasture (~95MJ ME/cow allocated)
 Note: When pre grazing covers start to reduce silage will be increased in the ration to the milking herd.
- Using expenditure information from the cashflow budget the break even position of this farm for the next two months has been calculated. Below is the kgMS per cow per day figure to break even, the calculation uses all variable and overhead costs.

	February	March
Income (estimated milk price)	\$3.45/kgMS	\$3.44/kgMS
Cost per hectare to breakeven	\$4.13/ha	\$4.62/ha
Breakeven per cow (kgMS) with 480 milking	1.1kgMS/cow/day	1.24kgMS/cow/day

Current milk production is being affected by the once-a-day herd who are being dried off and it is expected that the twice-a-day herd are producing up to 1.2kgMS/cow/day. Production is likely to reduce once the turnips have been removed from the ration because of less available metabolisable energy for milk production.

- Margin over feed costs has reduced dramatically with 35% reduction in milk price and just on feed costs there is a margin of \$1.33/cow/day.

THE NEXT WEEKLY TDDF FMG farm walk will be on Tuesday February 17 at 10:00am.

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