



FMG'S CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Maintain average pasture cover
2	Lay woodchips on laneway
3	Conduct first herd test
4	Magnesium and calcium supplementation



SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA

Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	20 days/leaf	Cows	358 (dry herd) 470 (milking herd)
Rotation Length	60 days	Litres/cow/day	15
Pasture Growth Rate	17 kgDM/ha/day	MS/cow/day	1.26kg
Average Pasture Cover	1985 kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	1.61kg
Soil Temperature 9AM	9.5°C	Cow intake	8 kgDM/cow/day (dry herd) 15 kgDM/cow/day (milking herd)
Rainfall (past 7 days)	40 mm	Supplement Fed	2 kgDM/cow/day grain (milking herd) 6 kgDM/cow/day hay (dry herd)
MOFC (\$/cow)	\$5.50	Body Condition Score	4.7 (milking herd) 5.0 (dry herd)

*Note the herd gets body condition scored every 2 weeks.

Laneways

- The laneway that travels to paddocks across Red Marsh Road is in a serious state of disrepair. The herd is due to use this laneway over the coming week. Woodchips will be laid onto the laneway, providing short-term fix to the problem until serious works can be completed. The plan is use this laneway over the next 20 days until budgets get approved so it can get fixed properly. The FMG are planning for this laneway to get repaired in early - mid August, and will allow it to settle for about 4 – 6 weeks prior to it being used. In the mean time, a sacrifice paddock will be used to help transport cows to the paddocks across Red Marsh road. The approximate length of the laneway to be resurfaced is 900 meters.

Note: Lameness was a considerable issue last season with over 50 cows dried off and culled in the first 6 weeks post calving because of feet problems. This was due to the fact that inadequate laneways existed on the farm. Last season, repairs were conducted on some sections of the laneways across the farm but the budget could not cater for all areas.

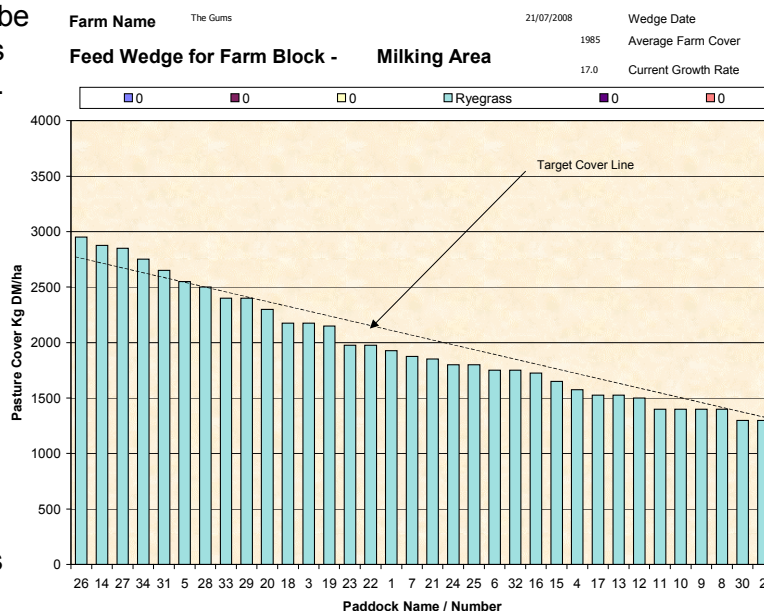
Pasture Management

- Grazing management continues to be a challenge as pasture growth rates are still well below pasture demand. Soil temperatures have dropped considerably over the weekend, as the cold weather trough moved across the state. This will most likely slow pasture growth.

- 40mm of rain fell during the week, leaving plenty of water to flow out of the drains. Subsequently, nitrogen applications were ceased over this period.

- Rotation length has been maintained at 60 days, which aligns with the leaf emergence rate of 20 days per leaf.

- Dry cows are currently following behind the milking herd with 9 bales of hay per day, this equates to 6kgDM/cow/day of hay. Current post grazing residuals after the dry herd leave the paddock are around 1300 – 1400kgDM/ha. The milking herd has had the amount of concentrate in their diet increased to 3kgDM/cow/day, as average pasture cover has fallen below 2000kgDM/ha.



Animal and Financial Performance

- 470 cows are in the milking herd, with another 50 in the colostrum. The farm is over half way through calving, with only 8 deaths. Of the 902 cows that calved the farm has budgeted to peak at 850 cows for this season, which allows 50 cows (5.8%) to be culled over this period. This was a major area of concern last season, as quite a number of animals were culled in the first 6 weeks post calving.
- The sick herd consists of 15 cows of which mastitis, lameness and post calving infections are the main health problems that need addressing.
- Milk production is still very hard to get an accurate gauge on, as a number of animals enter the milking herd each day. On average the cows are producing 15L or 1.26kgMS/day.
- The first herd test of the season will be completed on Tuesday, this will give some good data about production performance across the 470 milking cows. As mentioned last week, cell count has been an issue therefore this will help in identifying suspect animals.
- The incidence of milk fever has substantially reduced since CauseMag has recommenced being spread. Changes to the post calving transition cow brew have reaped little reward with the animals not taking very well to it.
- Calves are doing really well, with the first batch leaving the shed for the calf paddocks over the last couple of days. In ideal situation it would have been good to leave these animals in the shed for another 1 – 2 weeks but since the calf shed is too small they have to go to the calf paddocks. Calf paddocks have large square bales of straw in them to help provide shelter. The farm has adopted a policy to feed calves twice a day when in the shed, and once a day when they leave for the paddock. This is showing better calf-rearing results compared with last season. Calf pellets are being fed from week 1.

THE NEXT WEEKLY TDDF FMG farm walk will be on Monday July 28 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).