



FMG'S CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Use standoff areas if the weather gets too wet
2	Cull the empty dry cows
3	Monitor the mastitis issue in the herd
4	Adjust the rotation length

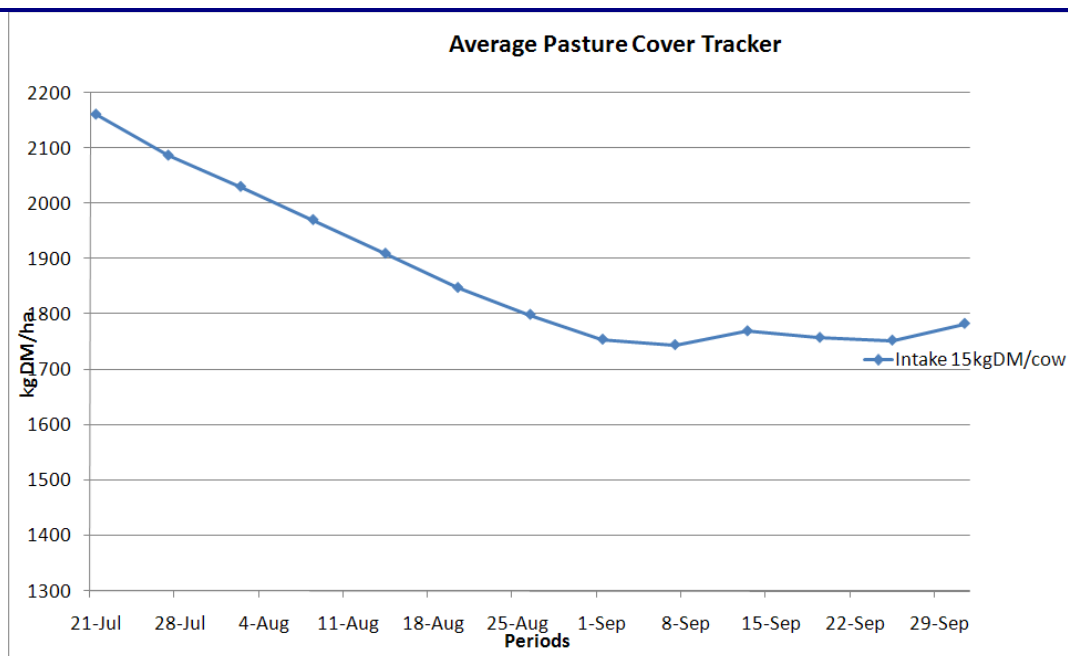


SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA

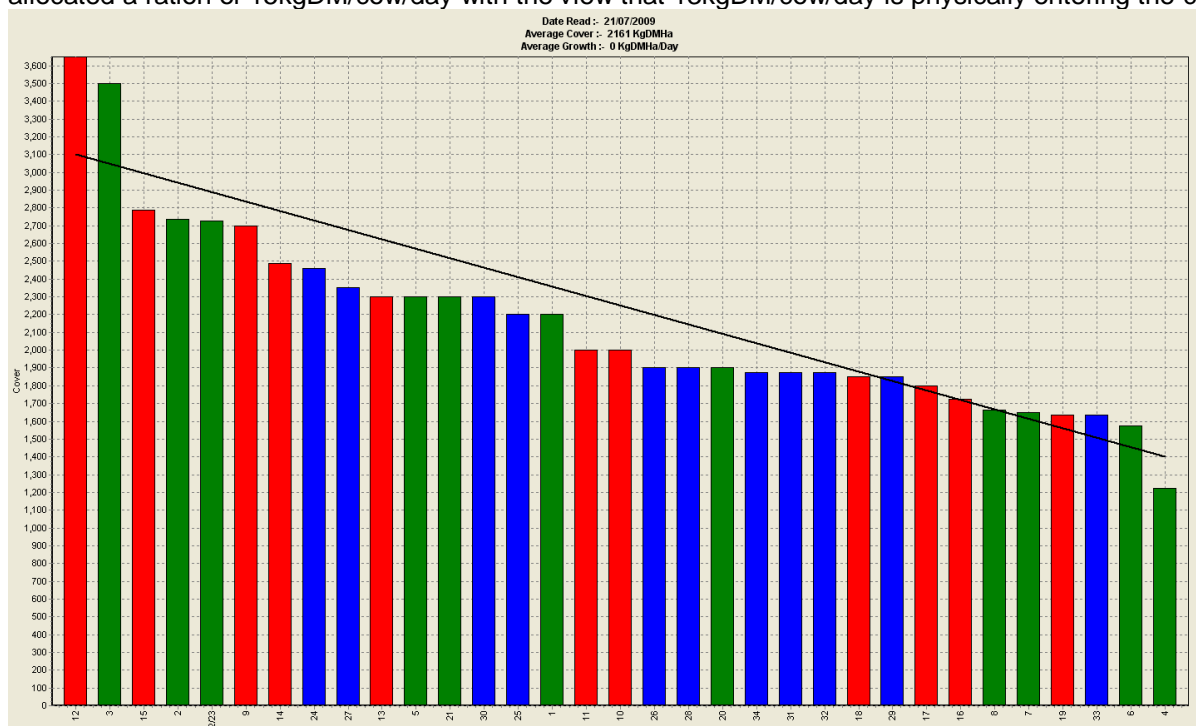
Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	21 days/leaf	Cows	998 (total) 300(milking) 120(colostrum) 59(drug herd) 300(springers) 219(dry)
Rotation Length	75 days	Litres/cow/day	15
Pasture Growth Rate	N/A	MS/cow/day	1.12kg
Average Pasture Cover	2161kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	1.25kg
Soil Temperature (9am)	8.5°C	Cow intake (as fed)	8 kgDM/cow/day (dry) 15kgDM/cow/day (milkers)
Rainfall (past 7 days)	27 mm	Supplement Fed (as fed)	5kgDM/cow/day Hay (dry/springers) 2kgDM/cow/day Silage (colostrums/milkers) 3kgDM/cow/day Pellets (colostrums/milkers)
MOFC (\$/cow)	\$2.42	Body Condition Score	4.8 (milkers)

Pasture Management

- Soil temperature has reduced to 8.5°C from 9.8°C last week. 27ml of rain fell over the past week, certain areas of the farm are saturated which would be restricting pasture growth. The area of the farm in which soil tension is being measured is at 4kpa up from 1kpa last week. We are actively looking for drier areas on the farm to stand off cows if the weather is too wet. Through this period it is extremely important to hold rotation lengths.
- Average pasture cover was measured at 2161kgDM/ha. The farm manager has ceased walking the farm due to time constraints with calving; giving the responsibility to the other members of the FMG. We believe there has been error in the last few weeks data due to problems with plate meter, hence pasture growth information will be given after next week's farm walk. In referring back to last year's data, the farm was growing at 18kgDM/ha/day during this period. Looking forward if we are not confident with the data obtained we will not publish it in the walk notes. Average cover is 50kgDM/ha below target for this week, we are budgeting to lose 80kgDM/ha in cover each week over the next 5 weeks, with an aim for this not to go below 1700 – 1750kgDM/ha as this will retard pasture growth coming out of break-even.



3. Since there are areas of the farm that are saturated, nitrogen will only be applied to the drier paddocks at 46kgN/ha post grazing. 306ha had nitrogen applied at 46kgN/ha last week. We are continually looking at the weather forecast prior to applying nitrogen, which aligns with our environmental best practice recommendations.
4. Rotation length has been reduced to 75 days. Our plan will be track to 60 days by the first week in August. It was mentioned in last week's notes that we are aiming to maintain cover. What needs to be taken into account that this farms start of calving is 10 weeks prior to break-even which on average is 4 weeks earlier than most spring calving herds. It is paramount for us to try and maintain cover through July as we have considerable demand in August compared with supply. This goes against the science behind of aligning rotation length with leaf emergence rate. We are committed to taking a hit with pasture quality to have feed carryover closer to breakeven.
5. It should be clarified that we are budgeting to feed 15kgDM/cow/day down the throat of the milkers by the start of August. This means that we need to allocate pasture above the requirement to allow for wastage. We are budgeting for 80% of the pasture allocated each day actually goes into the animals. In the previous editions of the walk notes there has been reference to milkers being allocated 17kgDM/cow/day, this is wrong as a 480kgLW cow cannot physically eat this amount of feed in early lactation. Currently the milking herd is being allocated a ration of 15kgDM/cow/day with the view that 13kgDM/cow/day is physically entering the cows.



Animal and Financial Performance

6. Total herd numbers are at 998 cows. This is actually the peak cow number target meaning the farm will not peak at 998 cows. This is due to the fact that the farms opening numbers were 22 below the 1050 target. We have identified some empty dry cows to be culled that have slipped since the last pregnancy test, these animals will pregnancy tested before they are culled. In addition to this, there will be some cows that are culled on production in early lactation. These reductions will affect our annual budget; therefore we are refining the budget to peak at 950 cows to account for these losses.
7. Currently milk production is hard to measure accurately as there are cows entering the milking herd each day. This week we averaged the herd producing 1.12kgMS/cow/day at a milk test of 4.3% fat 3.3% protein. All heifers and lighter 3 year old animals are being milked once-a-day.
8. MOFC is \$2.24 (assuming feed costs of 11 cents/kgDM pasture, 35cents/kgDM pellets, 24cents/kgDM silage (high silage bill last season) at a \$4.84/kgMS milk income for July. Note the price will drop to \$3.17/kgMS for August.

9. Nutrition information (allocated)

Milkers/colostrums	Dries/springers
10kgDM/cow/day Pasture	3kgDM/cow/day Pasture
3kgDM/cow/day Pellets	5kgDM/cow/day Hay
2kgDM/cow/day Silage	
Total 15kgDM/cow/day	Total 8kgDM/cow/day*

We have increased hay in the ration to 5kgDM/cow/day from 4kgDM/cow/day. 45tonneDM of hay has been purchased to supplement the dry cows.

10. 30 animals have died since the start of calving which is 3% of our opening cow numbers. We have budgeted to lose 5% of the opening cow numbers to peak (which takes into account all culls and deaths).
11. Milk fever has been issue and seems to be weather related; cows seem to be more susceptible during the wetter periods. We will continue with the current program of dusting CauseMag, Magnesium Chloride (in troughs and onto the hay). The milkers and colostrum cows are not getting the metabolic disorder, rather cows just prior to and after calving. The farm induced 51 animals and had one milk fever case; all these cows had magnesium bullets prior to calving. This clearly suggests that this approach worked for this herd as these animals are the most susceptible to milk fever. Looking into next season, we may budget to bullet the entire herd except the heifers as the current transition cow plan has not achieved budgeted targets (currently 9% of the herd has been treated for milk fever).
12. The calf issues from the previous 2 weeks have been rectified, with all calves in the shed looking healthy. There is an on-going need to monitor these animals for any sign of further issues.
13. Mastitis has been an issue with 56 cows succumbing to the infection. We believe that this is attributed to the wetter weather and the sacrifice paddocks the dry cows are being grazed in. Dry cows will be removed out of sacrifice paddock if the weather becomes too wet and onto a standoff area.

The next **WEEKLY farm walk** is on Tuesday, 28th July at 10:30am.

Farm Management Group – Kevin Mills (Farm Manager), Chris Haynes (TIAR) and Adrian Neasey (VDL).