



FMG'S CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Keep on top of higher cover paddocks
2	Emptying the effluent ponds
3	Apply nitrogen to new pastures and forage crops
4	Monitor condition score

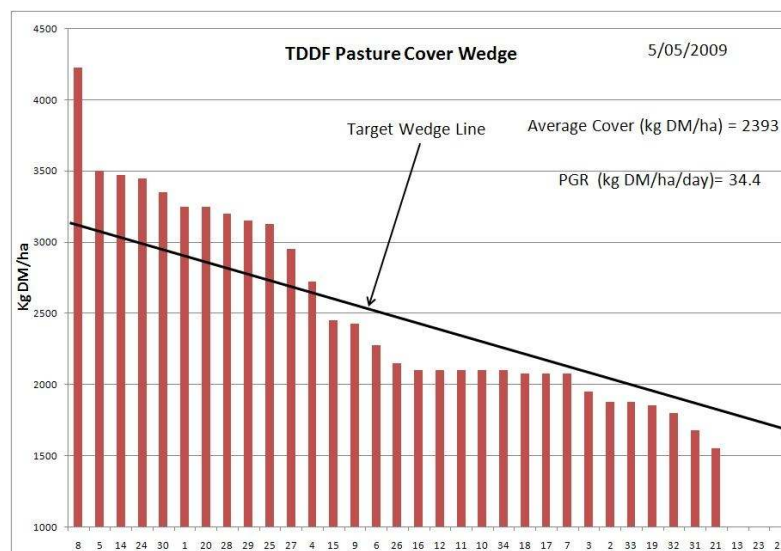


SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA

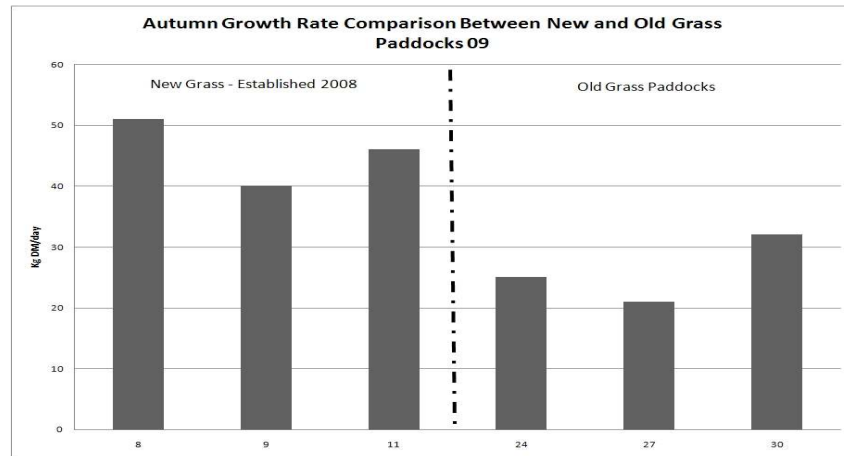
Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	14 days/leaf	Cows	668 (Dry)
Rotation Length	90 days	Litres/cow/day	-
Pasture Growth Rate	34 kgDM/ha/day	MS/cow/day	-
Average Pasture Cover	2393 kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	-
Soil Temperature	12.0°C	Cow intake (total)	8 - 10 kgDM/cow/day
Rainfall (past 7 days)	8.5mm	Supplement Fed	-
MOFC (\$/cow)	\$0.00	Body Condition Score	4.8

Pasture Management

- Growth rates are holding steady with adequate moisture (Tensiometer = 14 kPa) and some warmer days. This has seen the average pasture cover (APC) continue to build. The older paddocks (i.e. from the previous graze) have the bottom 1 – 2 leaves dying back. Discussion in previous walk notes looked at options to manage a great autumn and dare we say it, a shortage of autumn feed can be easier to manage providing there are supplements available, than a surplus of feed. There will be spoilage unless mouth power can increase and/or paddocks removed from the grazing round and conserved. Some farmers have wondered whether they could of taken a silage crop off. Hindsight can be a cruel commentator. Of course when conditions were favourable for making silage, there were likely not enough paddocks with enough cover to make conservation economically attractive.



- **Free Feed!** We did not factor in that our surplus feed has attracted some competition. I seemed to see every bug around on the walk. There were plenty of red legged mites, lucerne fleas and what I took to be winter corbie caterpillars. I've no doubt that there were black headed cockchafer grubs as well. The wallabies have also cashed in on boundary paddocks. Aerial spraying targeting these bugs is taking place this week across the whole of Woolnorth.
- This week has also seen a broad leaf herbicide (MCPA based) applied together with the pesticide to target a range of broad leaf weeds. The TDDF has a challenging array of weeds such as dandelion, chickweed, docks and thistles. The presence of these weeds and pests is more marked in older poorer performing paddocks. The graph below shows the difference in growth rates of the three new paddocks and three older paddocks over a ten week period this autumn.



- The regrassed paddocks will need nitrogen to be applied shortly and discussions are taking place as to when and how much. We have also broached the possibility of using young stock to take off the first nip, especially in the worked up ex turnip paddock.

Animal & Financial Performance

- The change in condition score is not as obvious this week. I scored the herd at a little over 4.8 on average. As the demand for pregnancy starts to make itself more obvious so the condition recovery is slower on the ration eaten.
- Last week's notes mentioned that we had no option but to see the round length edge up toward 90 days. Unless we increase the effective stocking rate either through taking paddocks out of the grazing round or through increasing the number of stock on farm, the cows need a reduced daily allocation of grazing area to get covers down to acceptable residuals. May will be a challenge to manage as we work through the higher-cover paddocks.
- Once the heifers and other pregnant cows come back on farm in early June we will have a greater opportunity to manage the cover as we set up for calving with a planned APC of somewhere between 2400 and 2500 kg DM/ha at the 1st July 2009.

Official Weekly TDDF FMG farm walks are on hold until the new manager arrives. However members of the FMG continue to walk the farm on a weekly basis. The next walk will be on Monday 11th May, 2009 at 10.30 am.

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