



FMG'S CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Dry off all the milking herd
2	Split dry herd on body condition
3	Feed silage to dry cows below BCS 4
4	Manage ryegrass staggers



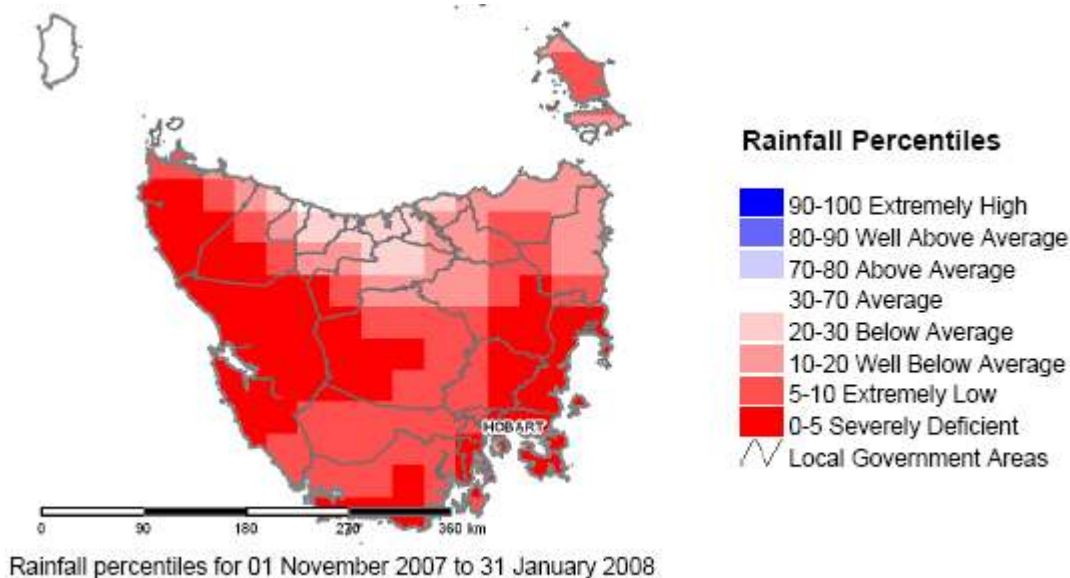
SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA

Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	30 days/leaf	Cows	480
Rotation Length	90 days	Litres/cow/day	6.5
Pasture Growth Rate	0kgDM/ha/day	MS/cow/day	0.55 kg
Average Pasture Cover	1755 kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	0.72 kg
Soil Temperature	14.8°C	Cow intake	13 kgDM/cow/day
Rainfall (past 7 days)	2.4 mm	Supplement Fed	10 kgDM Silage
MOFC (\$/cow)	\$1.85	Body Condition Score	4.3

TDDF Grazing and Animal KPI'S

Pasture Management

- Average pasture cover continues to decline with no significant rain. The figure below illustrates rainfall percentiles from November 1 to January 31.

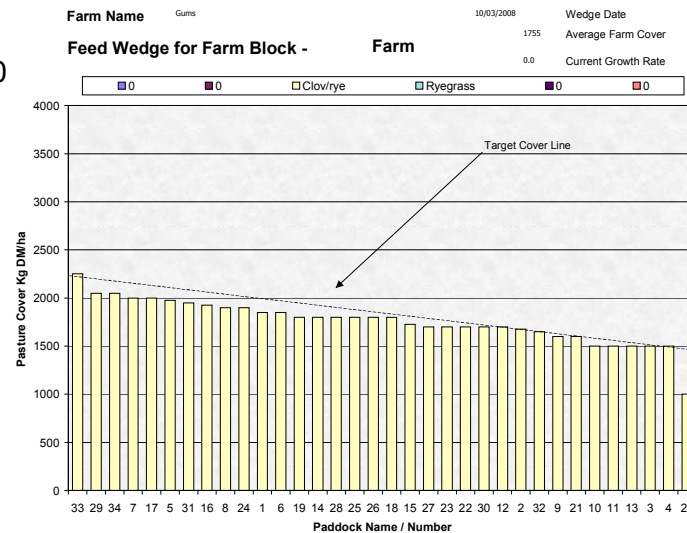


The figure indicates that late spring to summer rainfall has been well below average for the Woolnorth / Circular Head region.

- Ryegrass staggers are starting to reveal within the dry herd. The aim will be to increase the amount of hay in the diet for the next week to reduce the effect of the staggers, then split the herd (currently it

would be quite difficult to split the herd due to the effect of the stagers). The herd will be split into groups on body condition so that animals can be strategically fed.

- The last 100 DM tonne of silage will be fed to dry cows <4 BCS to improve their body condition. The cows are just entering their last trimester of pregnancy, where pregnancy starts to influence energy partition in a cow (14 MJ ME is required at 7 months pregnancy on top of maintenance). If these animals (below BCS 4) are not strategically fed to gain body condition they will not reach the target BCS of 5.0 at calving.



- TDDF Pasture Management Policy for the dry cows is to:
 - Leave post grazing residuals of 1000 – 1200 kgDM/ha;
 - Maintain a 90-day rotation until autumn rainfall events; and
 - Feed hay and silage to hold out the rotation length.

Animal and Financial Performance

- Over the next 3 days the rest of the milking herd (480 cows) will be dried off. The main reasons for doing this were:
 - Cows are producing 6.5 litres/cow/day (.55kgMS/cow/day) and research suggests cows producing <6 litres/day are trying to dry themselves off.
 - The FMG did not want to compromise the lighter cows (BCS <4) for next season as continuing their lactation would have made it difficult for these cows to reach a BCS of 5 at calving. It was decided that silage would be better fed to these animals as a dry cow rather than a lactating cow. The higher metabolisable energy content of silage (10.5 MJ ME) will improve body condition better than hay (9.2 MJ ME) because more energy will enter the total ration

In this production system having a shorter lactation (252 days) there is more time after drying off for cows to put on body condition. It is advocated in production systems with longer lactations (300 days) to dry cows off at the condition that you want them to calve. Dry cows cannot physically eat as much dry matter compared with a lactating cow, and because pregnancy demand increases throughout gestation it becomes increasingly harder to feed a cow enough to increase body condition. Remember a dry cow will never gain body condition as good as a lactating cow because their metabolism is not functioning as efficiently.

- Over the next week herd pasture intakes will be limited to reduce the impact of stagers. Cows being dried off will be fed a diet of hay (5kgDM/cow/day) and pasture (3kgDM/cow/day) to assist in the drying off process. Dry cows will be fed a diet comprising of predominantly hay (5kgDM/cow/day) with pasture (2 – 3kgDM/cow/day). With the higher amounts of supplements being fed, rotation length will be greater than 90 days over the next week.

THE NEXT WEEKLY TDDF FMG farm walk will be on Monday March 17 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).

Don't miss next weeks walk notes, as they should be cracking!

- 2007/08 milk production target versus actual; and
 - TDDF's 2008 pasture renovation plan.