

TDDF FMG Walk Notes

Volume I, Issue I

Monday August 6, 2007



FMG'S CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Maintain milking cow intake at 15kgDM
2	Manage reduced growth rates, rotation length and supplements
3	Address calving speed and spread
4	Feedwedge management



SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA

Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	24 days/leaf	Litres/cow/day	15.35L
Rotation Length	60 days	MS/cow/day	1.22kg
Pasture Growth Rate	20 kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	2.03kg
Average Pasture Cover	1704 kgDM/ha	Cow intake	15 kgDM
Soil Temperature	10.1°C	Supplement Fed	2 kg Pellets 3kg Silage
Rainfall (past 7 days)	71mm	Body Condition Score	4.3

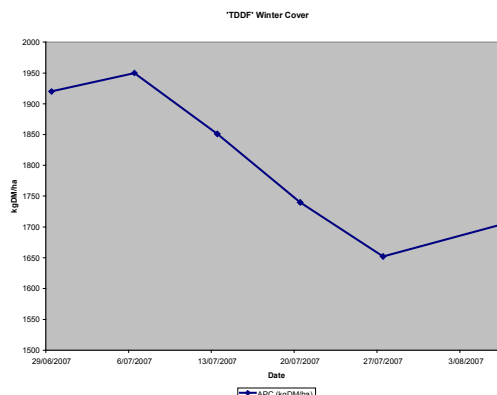
TDDF Grazing and Animal KPI'S

Grazing Management

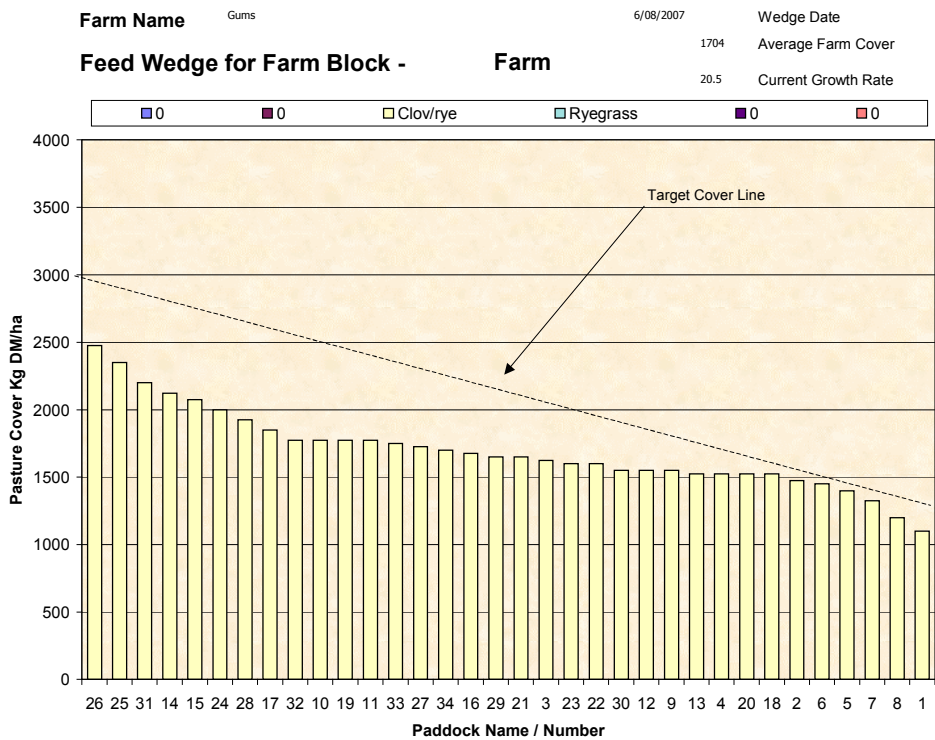
Soil Temperatures have increased over the past week to **10.1°C**. If this trend continues we will see improved pasture growth rates and the grazing rotation can be sped up.

Pasture Growth Rate is at **20kgDM/ha/day** compared with last week of **8kgDM/ha/day**. This increase can be attributed to better growing conditions, in terms of soil temperature and day length increasing. **Nitrogen** at 46kgN/ha was applied to 1/3 of the milking area in the first 2 weeks of July, we should start seeing some significant results from that application in terms of growth over the next 2 weeks. Since then nitrogen has been applied at 46 kgN/ha following the cows.

Average Pasture Cover (APC) has risen to **1704kgDM/ha** compared with **1652kgDM/ha** 7 days ago. Our target of 2000kgDM/ha at the start of calving (July 1) was not quite achieved (**1920kgDM/ha**). Low soil temperature in July (16 frosts) saw growth rates plummet while demand significantly outweighed supply, which ultimately affected the APC.



Round Length of the herd is currently **60 days**. This is expected to shorten as LER increases over the next few weeks.



Grazing management will be **critical** in the coming weeks when LER and growth rates increase and the section in the middle of the feedwedge gets to **3-leaf stage** (all at once). The grazing strategy needs to reestablish a feed **wedge**. This will be achieved by carefully monitoring growth rate and LER. Silage, hay and grain is currently being used to maintain rotation length.

Pasture Allocation to the milking herd is 5 hectares per day, the dry and colostrum herds get a total of 1 hectare per day. The milking herd is currently entering the paddocks at a pre grazing level of **2400kgDM/ha** and leaving a post grazing residual of **1400kgDM/ha**. Dry cows are entering at a pre grazing level of **2400kgDM/ha** and leaving a post grazing residual of **1000kgDM/ha**.

Animal Performance

711 Cows have calved since July 1, which is **79%** of the herd in 5 weeks. **58** (5.88%) cows have been either culled or died since July 1.

Cow Intakes for the milking herd are **15kgDM/day**, this ration consists of 10kgDM pasture, 3kgDM silage and 2kg pellets. When pasture growth increases silage will get dropped from the ration and replaced with pasture or grain if growth rates remain low. The dry matter intake of the dry cows and springers is **9kgDM/day**, and consists of 7kgDM pasture and 2kgDM hay. This is a maintenance plus pregnancy ration for the herd. No feed being allocated for weight gain and the dry cows are averaging about CS 4.6.

Cow Production for the milking herd is **1.22kgMS** per cow at a **4.63%Fat** and **3.36%Protein** test. Bulk Milk Cell Counts have been fluctuating over the past few weeks and have ranged between 100,000 and 170,000.

Calving Spread for the herd is of critical importance for herd reproductive performance going into next season. This will be monitored over the coming weeks but it is expected that **inductions** will occur to maintain a tight calving spread.

The next **WEEKLY TDDF FMG** farm walk will be Monday August 13.

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