

TDDF FMG Walk Notes

Volume 1, Issue 4

Monday August 27, 2007



FMG'S CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Return cows to positive energy balance
2	Low soil temperatures
3	Nitrogen and spring fertiliser management
4	Developing a feedwedge (to maintain quality grazing and silage making conditions)



SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA

Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	15 days/leaf	Litres/cow/day	17.5L
Rotation Length	45 days	MS/cow/day	1.30kg
Pasture Growth Rate	22 kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	2.76kg
Average Pasture Cover	1783 kgDM/ha	Cow intake	12 kgDM
Soil Temperature	9.6°C	Supplement Fed	3 kg Grain
Rainfall (past 7 days)	1mm	Body Condition Score	3.9

TDDF Grazing and Animal KPI'S

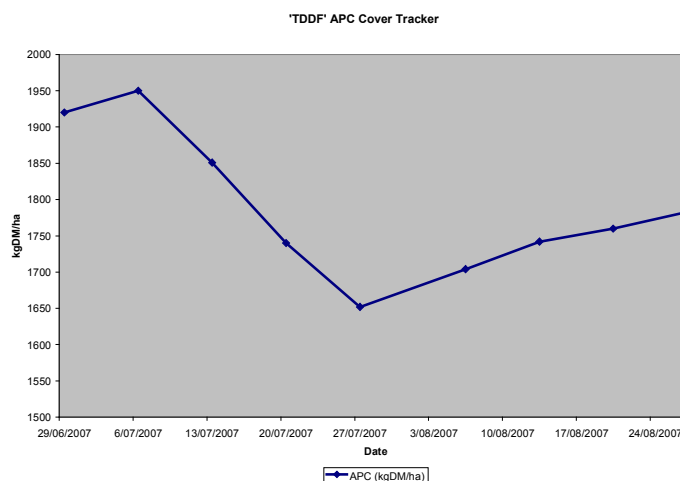
Grazing Management

Soil Temperatures have decreased over the past week back to **9.6°C**. (Cooler and foggy climatic conditions)

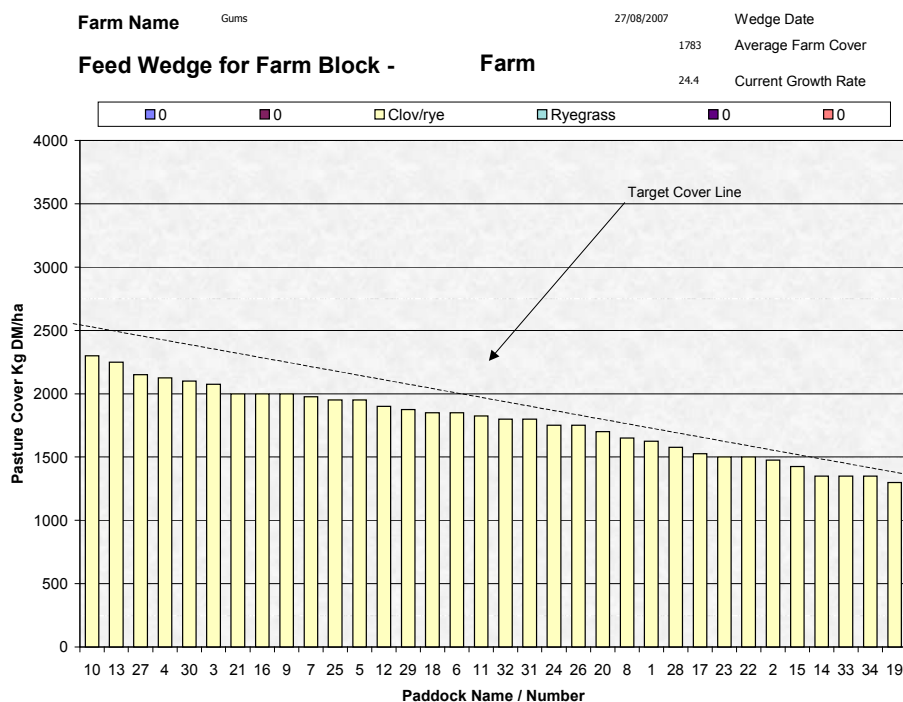
Pasture Growth Rate is at **22kgDM/ha/day** compared with last week of **26kgDM/ha/day**. The soil temperature reduction has contributed to this.

Nitrogen application is continuing behind the cows at **46kgN/ha**. This will be reduced in coming weeks as growth rates continues to climb and the grazing rotation speeds up.

Average Pasture Cover (APC) has been gradually increasing over the past month. Over the past week APC increased from **1760kgDM/ha** to **1783kgDM/ha**. We have budgeted for improved growth rates over the next few weeks with better growing conditions so APC should continue to increase.



Rotation Length is currently **45 days** (in accordance with **LER**). Leaf emergence rate decreased to **15 days/leaf** from **18 days/leaf** 7 days ago. **LER** over the month of August has been decreasing in accordance with increasing soil temperature. It will be important for the FMG to monitor **LER** over the next few weeks (with the increasing soil temperature) so that rotation lengths can be adjusted accordingly.



Pasture Allocation to the milking herd is 8 hectares per day, with the colostrum herd being allocated 0.5 hectares per day. Both herds are currently entering the paddocks at a pre grazing level of **2200-2400 kgDM/ha** and leaving a post grazing residual of **1300kgDM/ha**.

Animal Performance

The last **50 cows** to calve are springing and will come in over the next week, which will give a calving spread of **8 weeks**. There are currently **782 cows** in the milking herd. The FMG expect to peak at **820 cows** for the 2007/08 season. This is about 100 cows below budget.

Feed Intake for the milking herd will reduce to **12kgDM/day** compared with **14kgDM/day** last week. Concentrates have been reduced to **3 kg/day (2.7kgDM)** from **4 kg/day (3.6kgDM)**. The FMG has decided to compromise intake to maintain the grazing rotation. Concentrates were reduced because the cows were struggling to eat the **4 kg** allocated.

The ration consists of **9kgDM pasture**, and **3kg grain** (which is a total energy allocation of 155 MJME). When pasture growth increases pasture allocation will also increase and the **level** of concentrate will be reduced as post grazing residuals are predicted to come above 1500 kgDM/ha.

The lactating cows are in negative energy balance (which is normal after calving), which has resulted in the gradual reduction in **BCS** over the past month. It is important that they are returned to positive energy balance in the next 7-14 days in preparation for mating.

Milk production is **1.30kgMS** per cow at a **4.41%Fat** and **3.11%Protein** test. Bulk Milk Cell Counts average **250,000**.

The next **WEEKLY TDDF FMG** farm walk will be Monday September 3.

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