



FMG'S CRITICAL ISSUES	
1	Maximise pasture quality and intake
2	Drop hay paddocks from the rotation
3	Weigh calves and send to agistment
4	Increase the rotation length



SUMMARY OF FARMING OPERATION DATA

Pasture Information		Animal Production	
LER	8 days/leaf	Cows	810
Rotation Length	24 days	Litres/cow/day	14.5
Pasture Growth Rate	61 kgDM/ha	MS/cow/day	1.09 kg
Average Pasture Cover	2139 kgDM/ha	MS/ha/day	2.40 kg
Soil Temperature	14.5°C	Cow intake	+15 kgDM/cow/day
Rainfall (past 7 days)	0 mm	Supplement Fed	-
Hay area shut	65 ha	MOFC (\$/cow)	\$4.84
		Body Condition Score	4.3

TDDF Grazing and Animal KPI'S

Pasture Management

Soil Temperatures have risen further to **14.5°C**, with the soil tensiometer is reading **14kpa** (14kpa last week). With no rain falling over the past week it is imperative the FMG monitor soil moisture closely, as the season can change "in the blink of an eye" with the poor water holding capacity of the acid sand and sandy loam soils that exist on the farm.

Pasture Growth Rates have increased to **61kgDM/ha/day** from **36kgDM/ha/day** over the past week. **It is important to note that last weeks pasture growth rate was not indicative of what was happening on the farm, with such a large proportion of the farm (170ha) cut for silage there was a fair percentage of the grazing platform at the tail end of the feedwedge.*

Average Pasture Cover has risen to **2139kgDM/ha** from **1883kgDM/ha** over the past week.

Rotation Length has stayed constant at **24 days**, which correlates with the Leaf Emergence Rate of **8 days per leaf**. The farm is currently in the difficult situation where the pasture (predominantly ryegrass) is starting to go reproductive. This means that the quality of pasture is reducing in terms of megajoules of metabolisable energy (MJ ME), and plant fibre levels (NDF) have increased.

Last week three paddocks were identified by the FMG as being not suitable to be cut for silage, as this could have put the farm in a very risky position if pasture growth rates crunched. Two of these three paddocks were grazed over the past week. Hindsight suggests all three paddocks (~30ha) could have been cut for silage. The FMG made this decision based on:

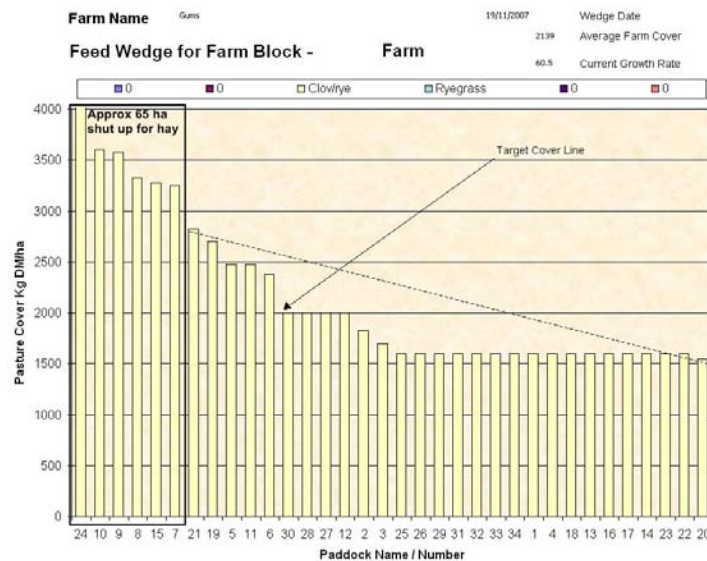
- Uncertainty around the weather forecast (rainfall);
- Soil tensiometer reading 14kpa last week;
- Feed wedge, and
- Having 200ha out of a possible 368ha not being available to graze for about 30 days (even if it had of rained).

By having to graze paddocks with higher than desired pre grazing cover (>3200kgDM/ha) has meant the herd has found it difficult to graze to a post grazing residual of 1500kgDM/ha. This subsequently **slowed the rotation length**. The lower stocking rate and large paddock size (~10ha) means the farm does not have the mouth power to graze paddocks with the higher pre grazing covers especially when pasture growth rates are maintained.

Fertiliser Plan. **30kgN/ha** will be applied to a 1/3 of the grazing platform at a time, with the paddocks cut for silage getting preference.

Feedwedge. A further 65 ha has been removed out of the grazing rotation for hay. The feedwedge depicts a potential feed deficit with those paddocks cut for silage, as mentioned last week it will be important to monitor this over the coming week especially soil moisture and pasture growth rates are maintained.

Hay. The hay policy is that of any paddocks above the pre-grazing cover of 3000kgDM/ha will be cut for hay, where pasture quality has reduced because of seed heads emerging. It was decided that for this pasture based production system that it would be more cost effective to cut these paddocks for hay not silage at this later stage in the season.



Animal & Financial Performance

There are still **805 cows** being milked twice a day, with **5 lame cows** being milked once-a-day.

Feed Intake. The aim over the past week has been to graze paddocks to a post grazing residual of 1500kgDM/ha. Since approximately 65 ha has been removed from the grazing rotation for hay, the rotation has increased. Paddock areas of **10-12 ha /day** has been allocated to give a total ration of **15kgDM/cow/day**. The herd will enter paddocks at pre grazing covers of around **2500 – 2700kgDM/ha**.

Production has declined **1.09kgMS/cow/day** compared with **1.11kgMS/day** last week. The milk test has reduced to **4.15% Fat** and **3.37% Protein**. This change can be attributed to:

- A decline in pasture quality, (with a fair bit grazing platform being reproductive, which is normal for this time of the year; and
- Pasture intakes being compromised from having to graze very hard to **1500kgDM/ha**.

Calves. The last of the calves due to leave the farm on November 26. These calves will be weighed before they leave the farm to ensure they have reached their target weights of **80kgLW (Crossbred or Fresian)** and **75kgLW (Jersey)**.

Milk Quality. Bulk Milk Cell Counts averaged **160,000** compared with **179,000** last week.

MOFC. The Margin Over Feed Costs (MOFC) is **\$4.84/cow** compared to **\$4.94/cow** last week.

THE NEXT WEEKLY TDDF FMG farm walk will be on Monday November 26

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