TDDF FMG Walk Notes

Volume 1, Issue 13 Monday October 29, 2007

FMG's Critical Issues	
1	Maintain milk production.
2	Monitor pasture surpluses.
3	Heifer calves to agistment.
4	Lameness.
5	Maintain the health of the bull team.

Summary of Farming Operation Data			
Pasture Information		**Animal Production**	
LER	8 days/leaf	**Cows**	810
Rotation Length	26 days	**Litres/cow/day**	17.5
Pasture Growth Rate	85 kgDM/ha	**MS/cow/day**	1.32kg
Average Pasture Cover	2562 kgDM/ha	**MS/ha/day**	2.96 kg
Soil Temperature	12°C	**Cow intake**	+15 kgDM/cow/day
Rainfall (past 7 days)	6 mm	**Supplement Fed**	-
		MOFC ($/cow)	$6.08
		Body Condition Score	4.1

TDDF Grazing and Animal KPI'S

Pasture Management

Soil Temperatures remain around **12°C**

Pasture Growth Rates have increased to **85 kgDM/ha/day** from **45kgDM/ha/day** over the past week. As per last weeks notes big fluctuations in growth rates are quite common during the spring growing season.

Average Pasture Cover has increased sharply to **2562 kgDM/ha** from **2212kgDM/ha** over the past week.

Rotation Length is being maintained at **26 days**, which correlates with the Leaf Emergence Rate of **8 days per leaf**.

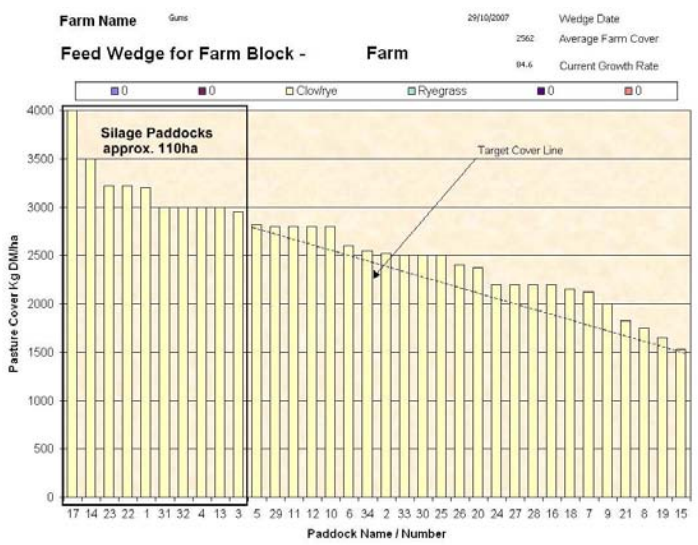
Fertiliser Plan. The entire grazing platform has had 345 kg/ha of **12:5:8:6** applied to it. Strategic use of nitrogen may be used once silage paddocks have been cut, until then no more nitrogen will be applied on to the grazing platform.

Silage. Any paddocks above the pre-grazing cover of 2800kgDM/ha will be cut for silage (see pasture trigger level calculation below). 10 paddocks (approximately 110ha) have been dropped out of the rotation for silage (30% of the grazing platform). The FMG have budgeted to harvest **300 tonnesDM** of silage for the 2007/08 season. The first cut of silage should allow the farm to reach this target.

Pasture Trigger Level. SR* x Pasture Demand x Rotation Length[#] + 1500 (optimum post grazing residual)
=3.22 x 15 x 26 + 1500
=2755kgDM/ha (any paddocks above this figure are considered being in pasture surplus)

*SR = available grazing area ÷ cow numbers (~110 ha dropped from the rotation for silage)
[#]Rotation Length = Days to a ryegrasses 3-leaf stage (only ~251 ha grazing area available)

Feedwedge. Displayed on the feedwedge are the paddocks allocated for silage. The wedge clearly shows that that the paddocks left in the rotation are further advanced (ie. over the target cover line), therefore the probability of another cut of silage in 3 weeks time is high.



Feed Test Results.
12.8 MJ/kg
83.9% Digestibility
15.7% Dry Matter
23.2% CP
41.9% NDF

3-leaf stage. The herd is currently entering paddocks at 2 – 2.5 leaf stage. The aim is always to graze paddocks at 3-leaf and / or before canopy closure. Since the paddocks removed from the rotation were generally at a 3 – 3.5 leaf stage (or the next to be grazed), the paddocks further back in the feedwedge are being grazed earlier, therefore they will not be at 3-leaf at grazing. This problem occurs when genuine pasture surpluses occur and paddocks are removed from the rotation.

Animal & Financial Performance

There are currently **810 cows** being milked twice a day; with **10 lame** cows on once-a-day.

"It was discussed whether there could be a mineral deficiency in the herd that is contributing to the lameness problem in the herd, the FMG continue to agree that the lameness problem in the herd can be attributed to the laneway conditions on the farm."

Feed Intake. At a rotation length of **25 days**, the cows are grazing about **10 ha/day**. Pre-grazing covers are **2800 kgDM/ha** and residuals are **1500 kgDM/ha**. The cows are taking in (2800-1500) kgDM/ha/day = **1300 kgDM/ha**. A 10 ha area offers the herd 13000 kgDM/day = **16 kgDM/cow/day**. This is above the targeted **15kgDM/cow/day**. At **12.8 MJME/kgDM** the cows are on a daily energy allocation of **203 MJME/cow/day.**

Reproduction. Bulls are continuing to be rotated in and out of the herd on a weekly basis to maximise health and performance.

Calves. All calves were weighed today. The first batch of heifer calves to be agisted off the farm will be sent on Tuesday October 30. The farm is required to rear 265 heifer calves to weaning at a minimum liveweight of:

Crossbred or Fresian = 80kg liveweight
Jersey = 75kg liveweight

**Any calves under these liveweights will not be sent off to agistment until they reach their minimum liveweight.*

Production has increased to **1.32kgMS/cow/day** compared with **1.26kgMS/day** last week. The milk test has remained constant at **4.07% Fat** and **3.45% Protein**.

Milk Quality. Bulk Milk Cell Counts averaged **191,000** compared with **189,000** last week.

MOFC. The Margin Over Feed Costs (MOFC) is **$6.08/cow** compared to **$5.75/cow** last week.

THE NEXT WEEKLY TDDF FMG farm walk will be on Monday November 5.
TDDF Farm Management Group – Basil Doonan (Davey & Maynard), Rob La Grange (TIAR), Chris Haynes (TIAR), and Justin McGowan and Nicki Devantier (TDDF Sharefarmers).