

Current situation and issues

- The past week has been generally calm, warm and sunny but with cool nights. There was a very light ½mm of rain one night. Rainfall for the month is very low at a third of average levels. There have been heavy dews but the soil is drying out. Pasture growth has dropped, reflecting the dry conditions with 34 kg and 30 kg DM/ha/day for the old and new pasture farmlets respectively. The old pasture has a high density while the new pasture is more open and is being grazed out harder. Pasture pulling is a problem in some paddocks. Pasture covers have dropped near 200 kg DM/ha. They are still good on the Old pasture farmlet but are low on the New pasture farmlet. Soil temperatures have dropped to 15°C.
- Silage feeding and/or destocking will be required on the New pasture farmlet from now on to maintain adequate feeding levels and rotation length. There is a moderate 290 kg DM/ha of supplements available for this group, of which only about 90 kg is available for milkers. The Old pasture herd requires no supplement at this stage.
- The facial eczema problem has reduced with the cooler weather and spore count levels have dropped. Zinc treatment continues.
- Milk production has lifted on the Old pasture and dropped on the New pasture farmlet so they are now near equal on a daily basis. The New pasture herd is 3% ahead of the Old in total annual production. Both are a moderate level ahead of last season's drought-affected production on a daily basis and are gradually extending a lead on last season in total, but good rain is urgently needed for this to continue.
- The somatic cell count on both farmlets is at good levels around 120,000.
- The recently drilled new pasture has germinated but badly needs some rain.
- The calves continue to be break-fed on medium-long pasture and are doing well.
- Autumn fertiliser of 250 kg/ha 30% potash super is being applied.
- A round of nitrogen fertiliser at 27 kg N/ha is being applied behind the cows now and then for a second round into early May on part of the farm. Again some rain is needed for this to work well.
- The effluent ponds were emptied out last week. No autumn fertiliser will be applied to the area that gets the effluent.

Farmlet production and management summary

Old pasture

New pasture

Date week ending 30/3/09 30/3/09

Weather and pasture growth

Rainfall mm	past week	0.5	0.5
	month to date (March)	43	43
	monthly average	134	134
Soil temperature °C		15	15

	monthly average	15.4	15.4
Pasture growth	week	34	30
Kg DM/ha/day	monthly average (no N)	35	?
<u>Stock</u>			
Cows milking		73	78
Cows dry		4	0
Cows/ha		3.0	3.0
Weight kg	(Feb 2)	403	400
Condition score		4.57	4.54
<u>Milk production</u>			
kg ms/cow/day		1.2	1.2
kg ms/ha/day		3.4	3.6
cell count (000)		120	130
Days/cow		216	204
kg ms/cow to date		300	310
kg ms/ha to date		965	996
<u>Feeding</u>			
Average pasture cover	kg DM/ha	2815	2553
Pre grazing	kg DM/ha	3600	3400
Post grazing	kg DM/ha	2200	2000
Pasture intake est	kg DM/cow	14	13
Hay/silage/crop	kg DM/cow	0	0
Molasses	kg DM/cow	0	0
<u>Management</u>			
Rotation length	(% of farm grazed/day)	3.0	3.2
Rotation length	(days interval if all paddocks in)	34	32
Rotation length	(days interval with paddocks out)	30	28
Supplements fed to date	kg DM/cow from June 1	271	202
Nitrogen applied to date	kg N/ha	110	111
% of farm shut		0	0
% of farm in crop		0	4
Supplements made to date	kg DM/cow	421	278