

## 1.0 Spring management

This section covers how to manage your way through spring in any year, with grass and supplements and what you have to do to get it right. Regardless of the spring, the Spring Rotation Planner (SRP) is a tool that can be used to allocate feed and make decisions on feeding supplements to ensure the cows are fed sufficient quality feed at mating. To get the best value from the tool, it should be used with average pasture cover targets.

### *Using the Spring Rotation Planner is the most important thing you can do to manage this spring*

Grazing management in the first two months after calving largely determines production to Christmas and how well fed the cows are at mating. The SRP takes the guesswork out of grazing management over this critical period in the early spring and allocates the feed to ensure that the target cover at balance date (when feed supply equals feed demand) is achieved.

The SRP allocates a set area per day (or per week) from when the mixed aged (MA) cows calve to balance date, starting on a slow rotation and speeding up to the fastest rotation the farm is on in spring (excluding when silage paddocks are harvested).

The SRP is most effective when actual pasture cover (APC) is monitored against target and the rotation sped up or slowed down to get APC back on target.

To use the SRP for your farm to calculate the hectares grazed per day, target pasture covers and allocate the area to be offered on a daily basis between mobs you can:

1. Use the information in this booklet
2. Download DairyNZ FarmFacts 1-12, 1-13a,1-13b on the SRP and 1-84 Cover at Balance Date from the DairyNZ website, or
3. Use the Spring Rotation Planner calculator (either the web-based calculator or download the Excel spreadsheet found under Production and Feeding Tools on the DairyNZ website: [www.dairynz.co.nz](http://www.dairynz.co.nz))
4. Use the Spring Feed Allocation calculator (Excel spreadsheet) to work out how to allocate the area between mobs of stock on the farm for any one day or week – this is also found under tools on the DairyNZ website: [www.dairynz.co.nz](http://www.dairynz.co.nz)

### *When to feed supplements in the spring - The 10 commandments of supplementary feeding*

Thinking of feeding supplements? Follow the 10 commandments in Section 1.3 and use the tables in Section 1.4 on response rates from supplements to determine under what conditions feeding supplement will make you money as well as milk.