

Weekly Farm Summary 20 September 2023

Farm-system impacts of: Bales vs Beet for winter AND Reducing N loss to water by 30%.

	Blue -Std Infrastructure	Pink- LI Baleage	Green- Std FB	Yellow- LI FB
Farmlet area including wintering	49.3	93.6	86.9	60.8
Peak cow numbers	140	212	237	137
Milking Area	52.2	86.3	75.3	55.0
Current Herd size (cows)	118	188	213	125
Pasture Stocking rate (current)	2.3	2.2	2.8	2.3
Winter Feed Milking supplement	Baleage	Baleage	Beet	Beet
Average Cover (kgDM/ha)	2395	2453	2347	2428
Average Growth (kgDM/ha/d)	49	40	47	43
Target rotation length (d)	35	44	35	35
Last week actual rotation (d)	31	44	39	37
Last week supp (kgDM/c)	1.4	1.3	2.8	1.3
Latest Average BCS	N	E	X	T
% less than BCS 5	W	E	E	K
% in Milk	84%	89%	90%	91%
7-day Average Milk yield (L/cow)	25.0	24.8	24.6	24.2
Nitrogen Cap kgN/ha/yr	180	50	180	50
% Nitrogen used (kgN/ha) YTD	0%	0%	0%	0%
Effluent N YTD	0	0	1	0
YTD supp (kg DM/c)	29	43	63	36
YTD MS/milk ha (YTD MS/farm ha)	174 (200)	70 (71)	139 (131)	109 (107)
Focus area	Current Status			
Milk Production	Milk production is trending in the right direction now we have the bulk of cows on TAD. We are doing 2.1-2.2kgMS/cow/day and compared to the same last year we are sending around 81kgMS/day more. Overall, we are still tracking behind last season on a whole farm scale, however the gap is narrowing rapidly as we track towards the end of calving.			
Pasture & Feed	There is a range of management techniques being used this week as we still navigate high covers in 3/4 of the farmlets. Weather conditions throughout the week have resulted in poorer pasture utilisation and a slight lift in residuals. Springers and colostrum's are being used either in front of cows or in the back 10% of the paddock to help remove some of the mass. Second round will be starting in the next week for all 4 farmlets.			
Animals	All cows that calved at least 3 weeks ago were metrichecked by the VetSouth team last Friday with only 12 requiring treatment. The remaining cows will be checked at the start of October with the target being less than 7% of the herd requiring treatment. There are still 64 cows left to calve, however we are getting 6-10 some days and then 1 or 2 other days so getting there slowly... 2 mobs of calves were due to go to the support block this week but with the rain looming and potential flood risk, this has been delayed until next Tuesday.			
Environment	Effluent applications are underway with the team getting 2-3 runs in per day. Synthetic N fertiliser applications have been held up with the forecasted rain on Thursday but the bottom 2/3 of each of the wedges will be getting an application as soon as weather permits- likely early next week.			
Wintering	Billy met with the contractors this week to discuss the cultivation plans for next seasons winter crops and the plans for regrassing this winter's paddocks. The conversation included discussing breakout areas for wet weather, CSA's, buffer zones etc. The next step will be doing individual paddock plans, so the contractors are aware of our requirements when cultivation starts.			
People	This week we have shifted back to a 5-2 roster now the bulk of calving is over. Recruitment is still on-going to find a farm assistant to get the team back to full capacity.			
Research	Tash finishes up with the team this week- thanks for all your contributions over the last few years Tash. A casual research tech is now on board. Pasture samples have been sent away for the first time this season.			

Milk Production

Principles of Milk Production management this week

Milk production	<p>Production has fluctuated slightly over the past week with the poor weather conditions but is heading in the right direction as we get the bulk of the herd onto TAD. On a per cow basis, the cows are producing ahead of this time last year with the herds averaging between 2.1-2.2kgMS/cow/day. Some of you may have noticed a switch in our herd allocations. With a proposed smaller wintering infrastructure design the LI Baleage herd is now the larger Pink herd.</p> <p>With the switch we are still working through the data to allow valid comparisons to last year.</p>
Key Influences of Milk Production	<p>Feed availability is still not limiting production. Season to date production compared to last year is still behind which we attribute to last season 30% of the herd had calved before the planned start of calving and this year it was only 4% and PSC was 2 days later. With the weather forecasted, in shed feed will be used to ensure intakes remain high as pasture utilization will decrease in the bad weather.</p>
Cow Management	<p>OAD and preferential feeding are still being used as management tools to get lighter cows up to BCS targets for mating. High SCC cows that have been identified from the past 2 herd tests have been removed from the milking herd to manage SCC. A MINDA report will be used for the remainder of the season to identify repeat high SCC so we have a list at dry off to use for decision making purposes around drying off treatments.</p>

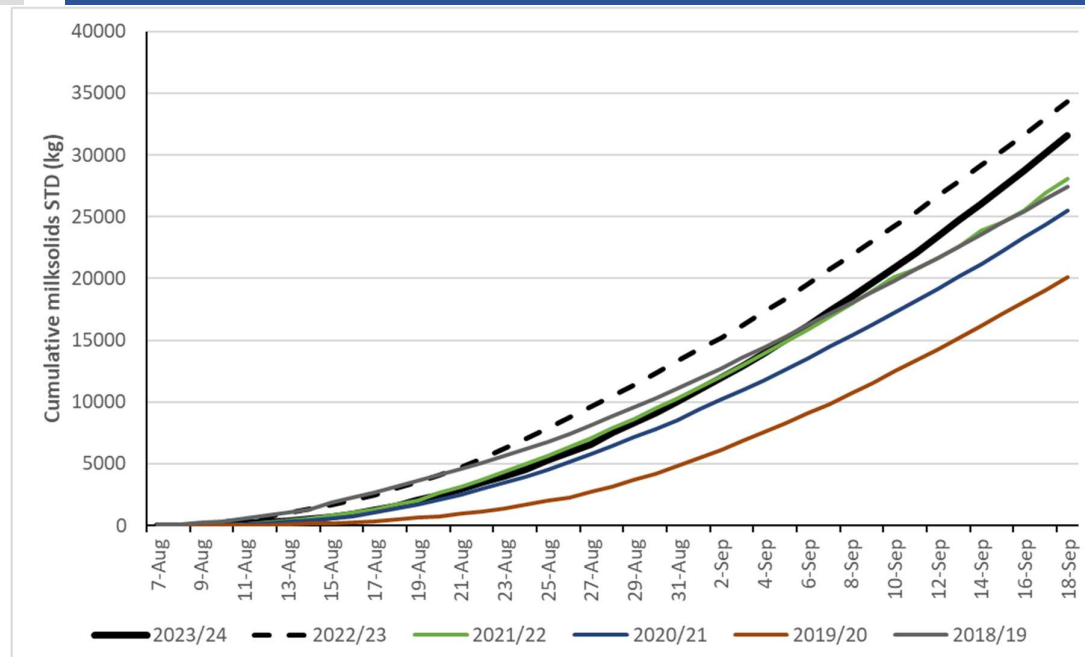


Figure 1. Cumulative milk solids (total kgMS) this year compared to past 4 years.

Feed

Principles of Feed management this week

<p>Feed Quality</p>	<p>Great pasture quality coming back through the earlier grazed first round paddocks as growth rates stay high. To maintain quality heading into the next round colostrums are being used to take a first nip off the high mass paddocks before the milkers go in and springers are being given the back 10% of some paddocks where covers are higher than pre grazing targets. This is all to ensure residuals are as close to target as possible. Pasture intake levels will remain the same this week, however supplements will be used through poor weather to fill any gap created by poor pasture utilization. All first-round paddocks will be grazed before the second round can start, even in the instance of second round paddocks being higher up the wedge.</p>
<p>Growth Rate</p>	<p>Growth rates have been above 40kgDM/ha/day for all the farmlets over the past week, although that might come back slightly in the next week with the change in weather. Any paddocks where residual has not been met will be reset with the mower in the second round. Growth for the season to date is still sitting above the average of the past 4 years and Woodlands growth curve also above the same time last year. No wonder our APC isn't coming down!</p>
<p>Nitrogen Strategy</p>	<p>An order is ready to be sent in for the first round of nitrogen fertilizer, however this will likely go on early next week after the spell of rough weather goes through. N will be applied to the bottom two thirds of paddocks from each farmlet. The LI paddocks will be getting 12.5kgN/ha and the Std's 25 kgN for their first applications. As mentioned above effluent applications are going on as an when possible, however wet weather is meaning the pond levels aren't dropping as quickly as we would like.</p>

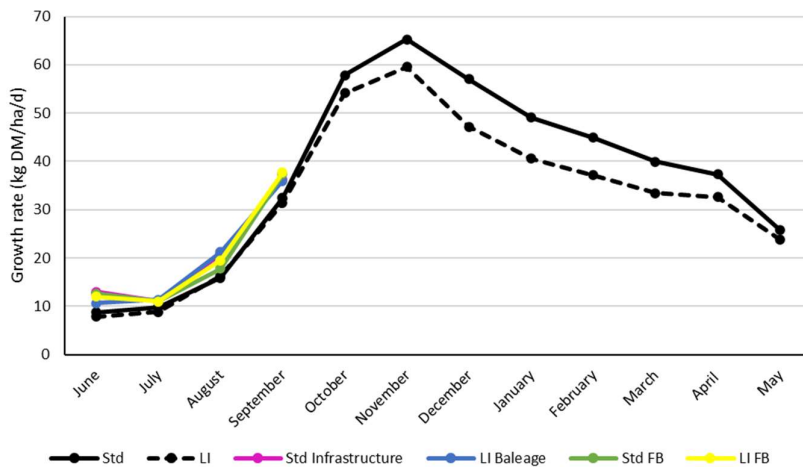


Figure 2. Average monthly growth rates compared to the 4 year average for the Std and LI herds

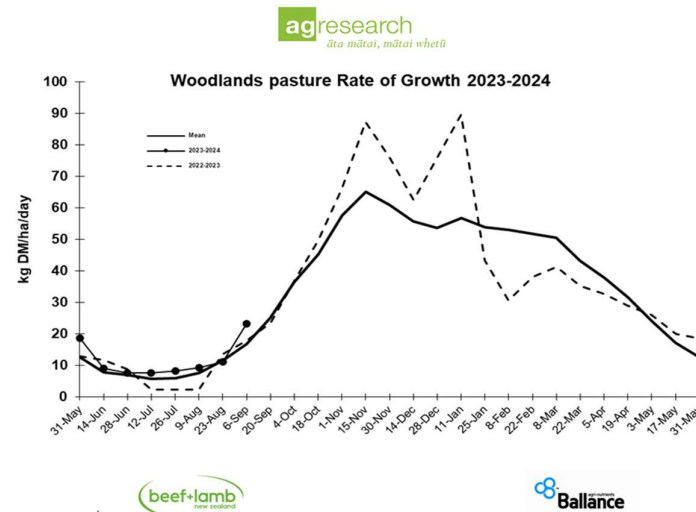


Figure 3. Woodlands growth curve as at 6th September

Feed



Figure 4. Last 10% of the paddock left over to be dusted for the springers