

2025/26 Season
Weekly Farm Update
as at 29 October 2025



Your weekly glimpse into research in action at Southern Dairy Hub

		29-Oct-25	29-Oct-25																																																												
		Standard	Future																																																												
Farm Area	Grazing area available to milkers - ha	170.7	85.81																																																												
	Winter area - ha	26.1	13.3																																																												
Stock Numbers	Cows milking into vat	516	208																																																												
	Cows milking NOT into vat - treated	4	2																																																												
	Total cows milking	520	210																																																												
	Colostrum cows	0	0																																																												
	Total Sick Cows	4	2																																																												
	Dry cows on farm	0	0																																																												
	Average BCS (camera, milking cows only)	4.5	4.6																																																												
	BCS 4.5 or less (%)	41	51																																																												
Feed Budget	Average pasture cover (kg DM/ha)	2308	2544																																																												
	Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	12.8	18.9																																																												
	Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	2.4	0.0																																																												
	Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	4.8	1.1																																																												
	Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation)	20.0	20.0																																																												
	Stocking rate	3.0	2.4																																																												
	Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha)	39	46																																																												
	Pasture growth rate	39	45																																																												
	Pre-graze cover target (for week coming)	2800	2800																																																												
	Residual (average for week past)	1850	2000																																																												
	Round length (actual)	28	26																																																												
	Weekly average milk solids (kg/cow)	2.13	2.29																																																												
Milk production	Fat:protein	0.77	0.75																																																												
	SCC	159	196																																																												
		21.3	14.1																																																												
Farm Conditions	Soil temperature average (degree C)	11.2+																																																													
	Rainfall (mm)	35.8																																																													
	Rainfall season to date (mm)	475.6																																																													
	Soil conditions	Wet																																																													
People	Current Roster	5 in 2																																																													
	Health and safety incidences																																																														
	Milking routine	TAD																																																													
Farm System Description	Standard herd: average BW Southland herd stocked at 3.2 cows/ha at peak, up to 180 kg N/ha and wintered on swedes Future herd: higher genetic merit herd (127 BW difference) stocked at 2.5 cows/ha at peak, up to 180 kg N/ha and wintered on baleage																																																														
Decisions and Insights	2025-born calves were weighed this week, averaging 85.4kg with a range between 65kg and 111kg. The three dairy-beef calves we're holding for Hospice Southland are the big guys in the mob. Heifers have been marked into three weight groups: 85kg+, 75–84kg, and 74kg and below. Once power is restored at the support block, we'll be able to mob them accordingly and begin weaning some. For now, they're roaming freely. We managed to mow five paddocks this week and hope to bale in the coming days. These paddocks on the dairy platform were getting very long (over 4000kg DM/ha). While conditions are still challenging, it was decided to get the grass off so the paddocks can return to the rotation. Pasture growth this week has been slow again (45kg DM/ha/day for Futures and 39kg DM/ha/day for the Standard farmlet). This aligns with Woodlands growth of 36kg DM/ha/day for the week of 18 October. The Woodlands 20-year mean growth is 57kg DM/ha/day, so the region remains well below average for the last few weeks. Warmer temperatures forecast for next week should help turn this around quickly. For those keen to see the full set of pasture growth data, please contact AgResearch scientist Chris Smith at chris.smith@agresearch.co.nz to be added to the distribution list. Woodlands pasture Rate of Growth 2025-2026 <table><caption>Estimated data for Woodlands pasture Rate of Growth 2025-2026</caption><tr><th>Date</th><th>20 yr Mean (kg DM/ha/day)</th><th>2025-2026 (kg DM/ha/day)</th><th>2024-2025 (kg DM/ha/day)</th></tr><tr><td>31-May</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Jun</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>15-Jun</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Jul</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Aug</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Sep</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Oct</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Nov</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Dec</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Jan</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Feb</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Mar</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-Apr</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>1-May</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr></table> Crop cultivation has also started this week. Great to have the DT Contracting team on farm. We'll be planting swedes and kale for the Standard farmlets. The Future herd will again be wintered on grass and baleage, using Supercruise Italian ryegrass (PGG Wrightson Seeds) to conserve baleage through the season and graze during winter. This pasture has performed very well, producing top-quality baleage and contributing to BCS gains through the winter for the Future herd. Mating of the dairy cows begins Monday. CIDRs were inserted into 34 cows this week (those not yet cycled, calved more than 42 days, aged 2-6 years, and positive BW). We plan a four-week mating period for AB replacements, then move to beef/short gestation. This is possible as our heifers have already been mated to AB semen and we're also using sexed semen across both farmlets. Future herd: all mated to AB replacement semen (4 weeks) – highest genetic merit, +127 BW over Standard herd. Standard herd: 30% of lower-BW cows mated to beef and the rest to AB replacement semen (4 weeks). This strategy increases the number of dairy-beef calves for market and fits our Non-AB Replacement approach. Carefully selected beef bulls ensure compatibility with dairy cows and a valuable product for the dairy-beef value chain. If we see concerns with submission rates at week three, we'll consider extending the AB replacement mating period. Given the challenges of recent extreme weather, ongoing power outages across parts of the farm, damaged repeater stations, and the different systems we use for API integration, we have decided to also tail paint the cows this season. We will monitor mating performance closely over the next two weeks and may move back to full reliance on technology once things are back to normal. It's such an important time of the year, and one we all want to go well.			Date	20 yr Mean (kg DM/ha/day)	2025-2026 (kg DM/ha/day)	2024-2025 (kg DM/ha/day)	31-May	10	10	10	1-Jun	10	10	10	15-Jun	10	10	10	1-Jul	10	10	10	1-Aug	10	10	10	1-Sep	10	10	10	1-Oct	10	10	10	1-Nov	10	10	10	1-Dec	10	10	10	1-Jan	10	10	10	1-Feb	10	10	10	1-Mar	10	10	10	1-Apr	10	10	10	1-May	10	10	10
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