

**2025/26 Season**

Weekly Farm Update as at 13 March 2026

*Your weekly glimpse into research in action at Southern Dairy Hub.*

## Insights

**Production:** Last week we made a bold move to remove all in-shed feed for the Future herd. We're pleased to report they have maintained production, averaging 1.93 kgMS/cow/day for the week (compared with 1.92 kgMS/day last week).

You will see from the table that we continue to be challenged by pasture residuals, particularly in the Future herd (2000 kgDM/ha on average, compared with a target of 1650 kgDM/ha). As a result, we've decided to bale a couple of paddocks to bring residuals back under control as we head into the autumn months.

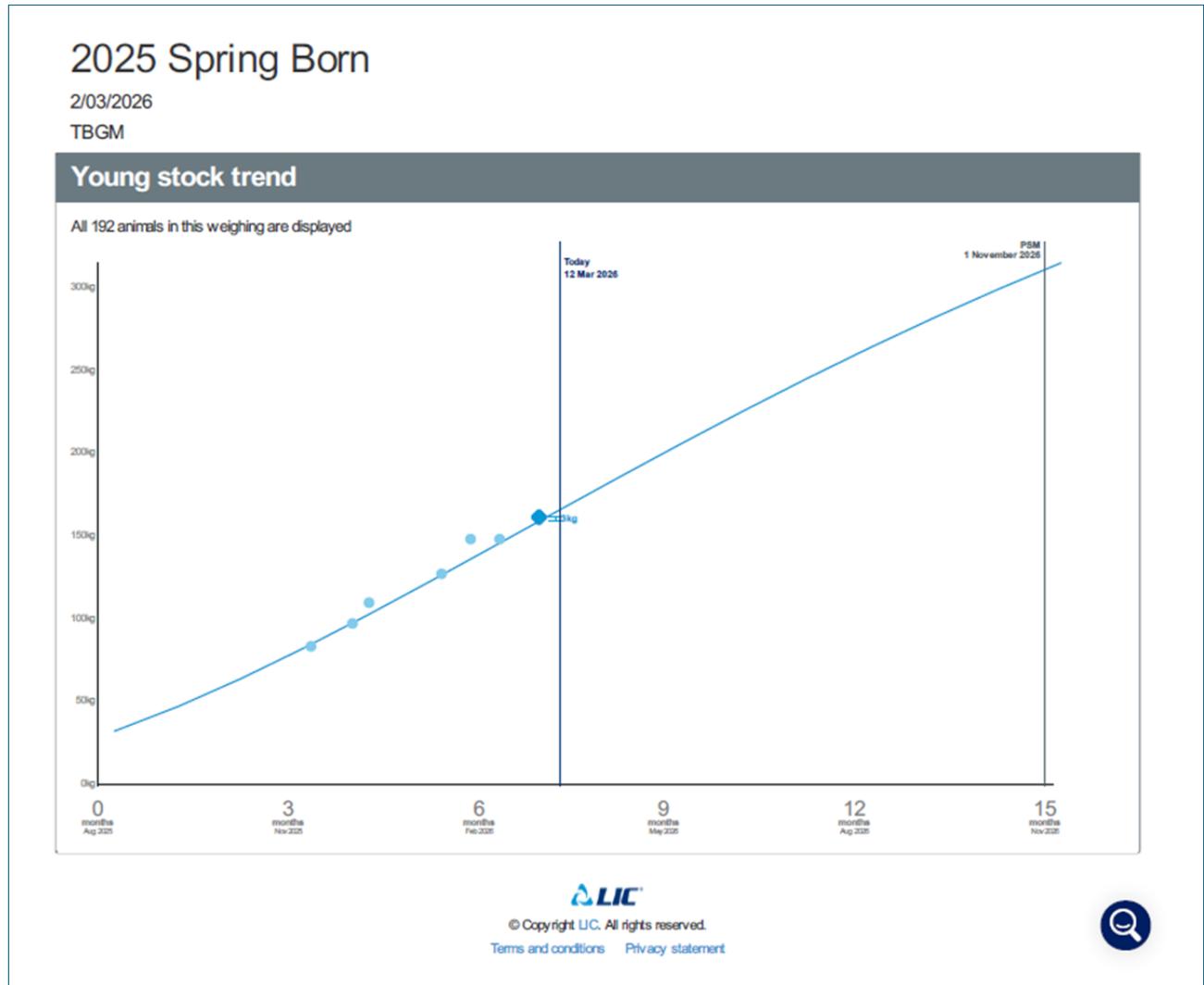
**Pasture samples:** We continue to monitor pasture quality from a selection of paddocks, with results from last week's samples included in the table below. The quality of pasture on offer at this stage of the season remains good.

At this point, crude protein requirements for milk production are lower. Any surplus nitrogen (N) will show up as elevated milk urea nitrogen (MUN) and increased urinary N excretion. At present, MUN levels in the Future herd (higher BW, no in-shed feed and lower stocking rate) are much lower than last season, averaging 22 MUN for the week, compared with 31 MUN at the same time last year.

| Plant Analysis Results                               |               |               |               |               |        |   |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------|---|
| Sample Name:   | Pdk 3 (Pdk 5) | Pdk 21        | Pdk 20        | Pdk 49        |        |   |
| Lab Number:  | 4120927.1     | 4120927.2     | 4120927.3     | 4120927.4     |        |   |
| Sample Type:   | Mixed Pasture | Mixed Pasture | Mixed Pasture | Mixed Pasture |        |   |
| Sample Type Code:                                    | P1            | P1            | P1            | P1            |        |   |
| Nitrogen   | %             | 3.3           | 2.6           | 2.7           | 2.5    | - |
| Nitrogen   | %DM           | 3.5           | 2.7           | 2.8           | 2.6    | - |
| Dry Matter*  | %             | 12.0          | 17.3          | 18.1          | 17.7   | - |
| Crude Protein  | %DM           | 21.6          | 17.2          | 17.2          | 16.0   | - |
| Acid Detergent Fibre (seq)                           | %DM           | 20.7          | 24.6          | 20.8          | 24.0   | - |
| Neutral Detergent Fibre                              | %DM           | 37.8          | 46.4          | 38.5          | 45.0   | - |
| Lignin*  | %DM           | 2.5           | 3.9           | < 2.0         | 4.3    | - |
| Ash  | %DM           | 11.7          | 11.6          | 10.1          | 10.6   | - |
| Organic Matter*                                      | %DM           | 88.3          | 88.4          | 89.9          | 89.4   | - |
| Soluble Sugars                                       | %DM           | 12.5          | 10.3          | 14.3          | 9.5    | - |
| Starch   | %DM           | < 0.5 #1      | < 0.5 #1      | 0.7           | 1.9 #1 | - |
| Crude Fat  | %DM           | 3.9           | 3.4           | 3.1           | 3.5    | - |
| Digestibility of Organic Matter in Dry Matter (DOMD) | %             | 77.0          | 68.8          | 78.0          | 71.8   | - |
| Metabolisable Energy                                 | MJ/kgDM       | 12.3          | 11.0          | 12.5          | 11.5   | - |
| Non Structural Carbohydrate*                         | %DM           | 25.0          | 21.4          | 31.1          | 24.8   | - |
| OMD in-vivo*   | %DM           | 87.2          | 77.8          | 86.8          | 80.3   | - |

**2025-born calf weights:** We're very pleased with the latest heifer calf weights. The group averaged 162 kg on 2 March 2026, sitting 3 kg ahead of target.

This is a strong result considering the challenges we faced in December and January with **coccidiosis**.



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 as at 11 March 2026

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|   |   | 11-Mar-26                        | 11-Mar-26 |
|---|---|----------------------------------|-----------|
|   |   | Standard                         | Future    |
| Farm Area                                       | Grazing area available to milkers - ha  | 173.7                            | 90.4      |
|   | Winter area out of rotation - ha  | 23.1                             | 8.7       |
| Stock Numbers                                   | Cows milking into vat   | 511                              | 207       |
|   | Cows milking NOT into vat - treated   | 3                                | 1         |
|   | Total cows milking  | 514                              | 208       |
|   | Total Sick Cows   | 14                               | 2         |
|   | Average BCS (camera)  | 4.3                              | 4.3       |
|   | BCS 4.0 or less (%)   | 31                               | 37        |
|   | Feed Budget   | Average pasture cover (kg DM/ha) | 2426      |
| Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)   |   | 17.8                             | 20.0      |
| Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)    |   | 0.5                              | 0.0       |
| Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)   |   | 1.7                              | 0.0       |
| Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation)      |   | 20.0                             | 20.0      |
| Stocking rate (based on available pasture area) |   | 3.0                              | 2.3       |
| Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha)     |   | 50                               | 46        |
| Pasture growth rate                             |   | 49                               | 45        |
| Pre-graze cover target (for week coming)        |   | 3160                             | 3120      |
| Residual (average for week past)                |   | 1750                             | 2000      |
| Round length (actual)                           |   | 30                               | 30        |
| Milk production                                 | Weekly average milksolids (kg/cow)  | 1.84                             | 1.93      |
|   | Fat:protein   | 0.78                             | 0.78      |
|   | SCC   | 141                              | 161       |
|   | Milk urea   | 24.0                             | 22.1      |
| Farm Conditions                                 | Soil temperature average (degree C)   | 16.5↑                            |           |
|   | Rainfall (mm)   | 23.4                             |           |
|   | Rainfall season to date (mm)  | 770.4                            |           |
|   | Soil conditions   | OK                               |           |
| People  | Current Roster  | 5 in 2                           |           |
|   | 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<br>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 |                                  |           |