

2025/26 Season

Weekly Farm Update

as at 15 October 2025

Your weekly glimpse into research in action at Southern Dairy Hub



		15-Oct-25	15-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	509	214
	Cows milking NOT into vat - treated	8	3
	Total cows milking	517	217
	Colostrum cows	0	0
	Total Sick Cows	11	9
	Dry cows on farm	3	1
	Average BCS (camera, milking cows only)	4.7	4.8
	BCS 4.5 or less (%)	29	20
	Average pasture cover (kg DM/ha)	2264	2436
Feed Budget	Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	12.0	19.1
	Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	4.7	0.0
	Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	3.3	0.9
	Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation)	20.0	20.0
	Stocking rate	3.0	2.5
	Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha)	37	49
	Pasture growth rate	51	52
	Pre-graze cover target (for week coming)	2800	2800
	Residual (average for week past)	1650	1650
	Round length (actual)	27	29
Milk production	Weekly average milksolids (kg/cow)	2.18	2.30
	Fat:protein	0.73	0.75
	SCC	114	162
	Milk urea	18.2	22.9
Farm Conditions	Soil temperature average (degree C)	12.4↑	
	Rainfall (mm)	9.2	
	Rainfall season to date (mm)	414.4	
	Soil conditions	Drying out	
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	Calf sampling: The last group of AB replacement calves were DNA sampled this week for parentage verification and genomic evaluation. We're looking forward to the results, as we'll be selling some of our AB replacement calves and keeping those with the highest genetic merit. The calves have certainly enjoyed a bit of sunshine this week.		
	Pasture growth is now ahead of demand: This week we removed silage feeding (first for one herd, then later in the week for the second herd) and reduced in-shed feed for the Standard herd. A couple of paddocks were shut up for cultivation yesterday – let's hope it doesn't rain all week next week! Contractors are certainly going to be busy across the Southern region in the coming weeks.		
	Cultivation underway: Cultivation of new grass paddocks and crop planning are front of mind. Contractors were also on farm this week cleaning the weeping wall.		
	Mating heifers: Heifers started their synchrony programme today, and we're looking forward to the results from mating. Mating the heifers allows us to mate 30% of the Standard herd to beef sires, lifting the number of calves we can feed into the dairy beef market while accelerating genetic gain. This year we'll be using some Changus straws (a composite breed of Kakahu Angus and Kakahu Charolais, with lower calving ease and gestation) in the bottom 30% on BW in the Standard herd.		
	Grass quality management and conservation: Pasture quality is being closely managed, with paddocks identified for conservation to maintain feed quality and consistency across both herds.		
	Feeding plan: The Futures will continue to get 1 kg of in-shed feed until December to ensure they're getting the minerals needed at this time of year (at a per cow level). For the rest of the season, they'll only receive in-shed feed if there's a pasture feed deficit.		
	Mating and BCS management: Body condition is being closely tracked to support the mating period, ensuring priority management for lighter cows.		