

# HubWatch

**2025/26 Season**

Weekly Farm Update as at 15 May 2026

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



## Insights

**Dry off:** The end of the season is just around the corner, with the Standard herd planned for dry off on 25 and 26 May, and the Future herd on 28 and 29 May.

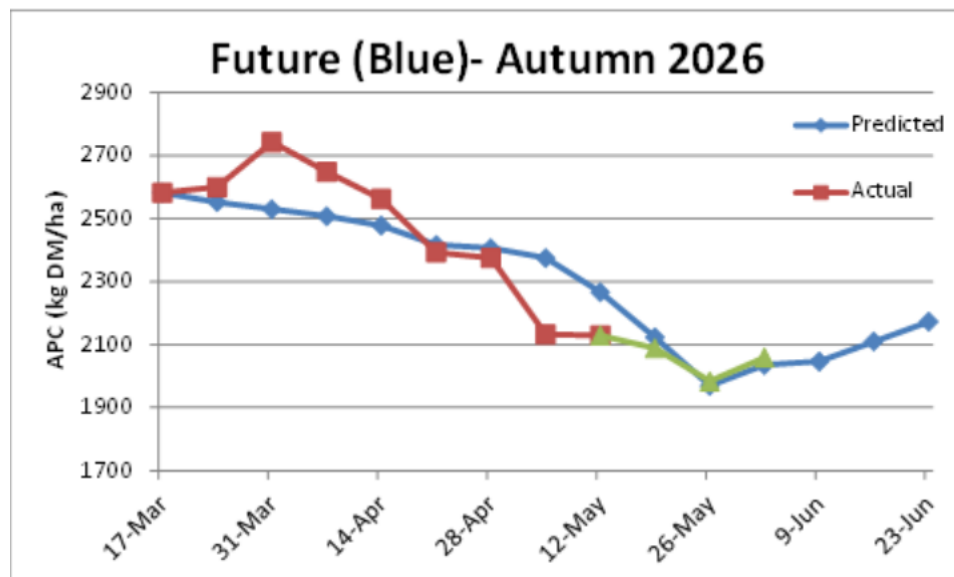
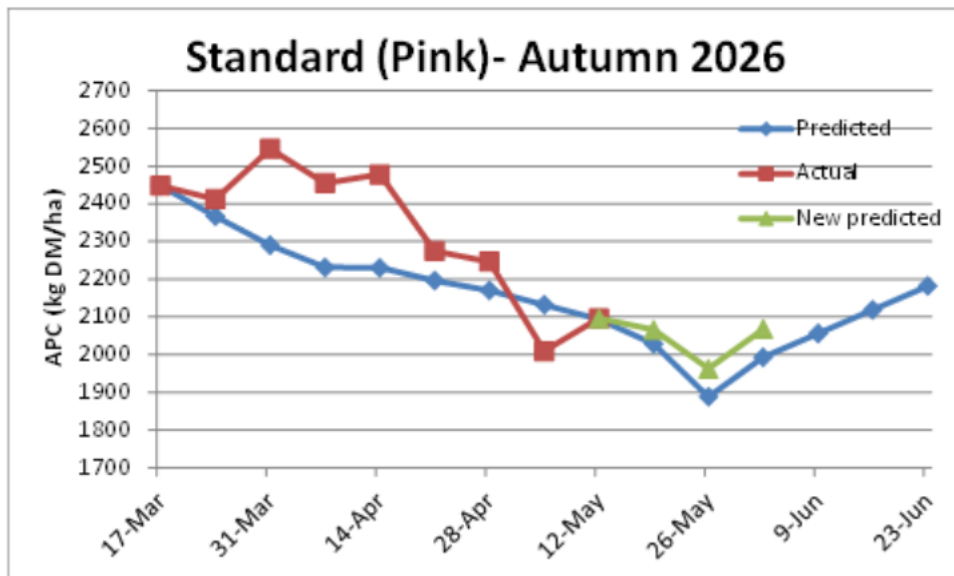
To date, 23 Future cows and 104 Standard cows have already been dried off based on BCS (ensuring cows hit BCS targets for calving) and milk yield. We have dried off slightly more cows earlier this year, as we've been more challenged with BCS towards the end of the season than in previous years. The team is working hard to balance BCS and production through the final weeks of the season.

Production remains ahead of target, with the Future herd producing 490kgMS/cow and the Standard herd 448kgMS/cow as at 30 April 2026. We're looking forward to sharing more season data at our upcoming Field Day on 3 July 2026.

**Aeration:** Our last lot of paddocks were aerated this week, bringing the total to eight paddocks (24ha) aerated this season. We've been working hard to address some of the compaction challenges caused by the wet spring in 2024, with the aim of improving soil conditions and supporting stronger grass growth next season.

**Growth rates:** Growth rates lifted this week, with the Future herd growing 34kg DM/ha/day and the Standard herd 42kg DM/ha/day. While this is above the average used in the feed budgets, average growth over the past four weeks has remained close to the feed budget expectations.

The improved growth, along with decisions made last week to extend the rotation length, has helped get us back on track for reaching desired dry-off targets. We've also added a "predicted" line to the graphs, which includes in-shed feed for both herds.



**In-calf heifers:** The in-calf heifers are due home early next week and will be grazed on grass and baleage at the support block. There's plenty of grass available, so we're hoping for kind winter conditions.

The heifers are also being divided into the Future and Standard herds, with the top BW heifers allocated to the Future milking herd. The aim is for both groups to remain balanced for calving date and liveweight. There is a 140kg liveweight BV range across the group.

With heifers beginning to calve from 30 July, and 80% due to calve by 5 August, we will look to adjust our PSM approach for the heifers mated next season.

**Health and Safety:** The team took part in a motorbike training course this week with Ant from Sutherland Onfarm Solutions. The course focused on riding on slopes, wet and undulating ground, and towing. There's always something to learn, and the timing was ideal given current conditions. We also used the opportunity to undertake tractor assessments.

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**as at 13 May 2026**

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		13-May-26	13-May-26
		Standard	Future
Farm Area	Grazing area available to milkers - ha	151.18	75.92
	Area out of rotation - ha	45.62	23.22
Stock Numbers	Cows milking into vat	331	170
	Cows milking NOT into vat - treated	0	0
	Total cows milking	331	170
	Total Sick Cows	6	3
	Dry cows on farm	104	23
	Average BCS Milking Cows (camera)	4.5	4.3
	BCS 4.0 or less (%)	10	25
Feed Budget	Average pasture cover (kg DM/ha)	2096	2129
	Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	11.9	15.8
	Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	2.6	1.1
	Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	3.5	1.1
	Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation)	18.0	18.0
	Stocking rate (based on available pasture area)	2.9	2.5
	Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha)	25	29
	Pasture growth rate	42	34
	Pre-graze cover target (for week coming)	2800	2990
	Residual (average for week past)	1760	1770
Round length (actual)	27	29	
Milk production	Weekly average milksolids (kg/cow)	1.36	1.44
	Fat:protein	0.73	0.73
	SCC	156	158
	Milk urea	37.2	37.2
Farm Conditions	Soil temperature average (degree C)	11.8↑	
	Rainfall (mm)	34.6	
	Rainfall season to date (mm)	957.4	
	Soil conditions	Slightly wet underfoot	
People	Current Roster	5 in 2	
	Milking routine	TAD & OAD	
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		