

2026/27 Season
Weekly Farm Update
as at 21 October 2026
Your weekly glimpse into research in action at Southern Dairy Hub



		21-Oct-26	21-Oct-26	
		Standard	Future	
Farm Area	Grazing area available to milkers - ha	173.4	84.6	
	Area out of rotation - ha	23.1	14.5	
Stock Numbers	Cows milking into vat	513	218	
	Cows milking NOT into vat - treated	7	5	
	Total cows milking	520	223	
	Total Sick Cows	14	11	
	Average BCS Milking Cows (camera)	4.4	4.5	
	BCS 4 or less (%)	13%	13%	
Feed Budget	Average pasture cover (kg DM/ha)	2293	2404	
	Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	9.9	16.8	
	Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	4.7	0.0	
	Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	4.4	2.2	
	Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation)	19.0	19.0	
	Stocking rate (based on available pasture area)	3.0	2.6	
	Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha)	54	47	
	Pasture growth rate	51	52	
	Pre-graze cover target (for week coming)	2900	3000	
	Residual (average for week past)	1840	1830	
	Round length (actual)	27	23	
	Milk production	Weekly average milksolids (kg/cow)	2.17	2.26
		Fat:protein	0.73	0.77
		Fat%	5.25	5.15
Prot%		3.83	3.96	
SCC		117	129	
Milk urea		23.7	21.3	
Farm Conditions	Soil temperature average (degree C)	13.4		
	Rainfall (mm)	17.6		
	Rainfall season to date (mm)	524		
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 & kale 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	- With pasture growth now exceeding demand, based on a target pasture allocation of 18 kg DM, in-shed feeding will be reduced in both farmlets. The Future herd will be offered 1 kg DM/day and the Standard herd 4.5 kg DM/day for at least the next week. - Our first pasture quality results have come back, with dry matter averaging 19.2%, crude protein 16.9% and metabolisable energy 11.7 MJME. These results included a mix of first- and second-round samples, so we expect dry matter to start dropping, while protein and energy increase, based on growth rates and nitrogen fertiliser applications. - The last load of silage will be fed to the Standard herd, and the bunker will be cleaned out in preparation for refilling. - One Future paddock has been stepped over for conservation as it is above target pre-grazing levels. - One Standard paddock, which was badly damaged during wet conditions, will be sprayed out, ripped and surface worked before being regressed alongside the re-establishment of our winter paddocks. - Blood samples and liver biopsies were collected from a range of cows in both herds this week to check their mineral status ahead of mating. - This week, we discussed how changes in the herds' dietary management over recent weeks may have affected cow behaviour and, in turn, the baseline activity used to generate cycling alert data. Many devices rely on changes in activity, rumination, walking and lying behaviour relative to the previous 7-10 days. There was a feeling that the collars were detecting more cycling activity than was being observed visually; however, given the spring conditions, cows may be experiencing weaker cycles that are harder to detect visually. - Scratchies have been applied to R2 heifers in preparation for artificial breeding (AB). The bulls have arrived at the graziers to complete the mating programme after the heifers have been inseminated. - All calves will receive their first Lepto vaccination next week and be weighed at the same time. Discussions have also started with the grazier about receiving the first group of weaned calves. - This week, we welcomed Marine, our new farm assistant, to the SDH team.			