

2025/26 Season

Weekly Farm Update as at 22 May 2026

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

Insights

Milking frequency: All herds are now once-a-day milking as we approach dry off next week. Growth and production are slowing, and we're close to our 1 June average pasture cover target. Frosty conditions on Tuesday potentially contributed to the lower growth rates recorded this week, with the Future farmlet recording 10kg DM/ha growth and the Standard farmlet 14kg DM/ha.

Dry off mobs: Next week we continue our dry off process. Immediately following dry off, cows in each farmlet will be drafted into BCS gain groups to allow prioritisation of feed allocation. Lighter cows will be wintered in smaller mobs and fed ad lib through June.

Crop yield data is in: Average swede yield is similar to last month, but with an increase in the proportion of bulb from 70% to 77%. Bulb DM% has remained the same, while leaf DM% has increased. Kale yield has increased to an average of 13.9t DM/ha, although there remains a 4t DM/ha range between paddocks. The yields are as follows:

Swedes:

Swede Pdks	Average Leaf DM %	Average Bulb DM%	Average Yield (t DM/ha)
☰ May	10.9%	8.9%	12.6
7	11.4%	9.3%	13.4
17	11.4%	8.6%	13.0
22	10.4%	8.8%	10.8
29	10.5%	8.7%	13.4
Grand Total	10.9%	8.9%	12.6

Kale:

Kale Pdks	Average DM%	Average Yield (t/ha)
☰ May	11.7%	13.9
23	10.5%	12.0
94	12.3%	16.4
98	11.7%	13.4
99	12.4%	13.6
Grand Total	11.7%	13.9

Measuring the crop ensures we set winter paddocks up with the correct feed allocation.

HubWatch through the winter: Next week will be the final HubWatch for the season, with updates resuming in early August. We'll still share a few video updates through winter to keep everyone updated on how things are tracking on-farm.

Farewell celebration lunch: This week, GM Andrea Dixon celebrated her final few days at the Hub. The team headed to Bluff for lunch to enjoy some local kaimoana at Hays on Anchorage. It was a great opportunity to spend time together, reflect on some of the achievements of the past three years, and celebrate the people behind the work at the Hub. SDDT also joined the farm team and Andrea for morning tea on her final day, sharing stories, insights, and plenty of laughs. Andrea says she'll greatly miss both the team and the wider SDH community who have been such an important part of her time at the Hub. She's been a fantastic GM and we wish her all the best!



2025/26 Season
Weekly Farm Update
as at 20 May 2026

Your weekly glimpse into research in action at Southern Dairy Hub



		20-May-26	20-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	303	158
	Cows milking NOT into vat - treated	0	0
	Total cows milking	305	161
	Total Sick Cows	2	3
	Dry cows on farm	104	23
	Average BCS Milking Cows (camera)	4.5	4.4
	BCS 4.0 or less (%)	8	25
	Average pasture cover (kg DM/ha)	2067	1976
Feed Budget	Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	10.0	14.7
	Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	2.7	2.6
	Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	5.3	0.7
	Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation)	18.0	18.0
	Stocking rate (based on available pasture area)	2.7	2.4
	Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha)	25	29
	Pasture growth rate	18	16
	Pre-graze cover target (for week coming)	2800	2990
	Residual (average for week past)	1700	1700
	Round length (actual)	36	27
Milk production	Weekly average milksolids (kg/cow)	1.16	1.44
	Fat:protein	0.74	0.75
	SCC	142	146
	Milk urea	34.6	41.0
Farm Conditions	Soil temperature average (degree C)	10.6↓	
	Rainfall (mm)	3	
	Rainfall season to date (mm)	960.4	
	Soil conditions	Dry	
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		