



Insights

Drying off: The Standard herd was dried off on Tuesday and the Future herd on Friday, with both herds moving straight onto their wintering areas. The final surplus animals are booked to leave the farm at the end of the week.

End of season cover: With lower than predicted growth rates over the last two weeks, we are slightly below APC target for the Future herd (1860 kg DM/ha) this week and at target for the Standards (1960 kg DM/ha). With all animals off the platform from Friday, very little change is expected by 1 June.

Wintering: The Standard herd are currently being wintered in five mobs based on BCS gain requirements, with the higher gain mobs grazing swedes with ad libitum baleage. The [DairyNZ FeedChecker tool](#) has been used to calculate allocations needed to achieve the required BCS gain. Mobs will be redrafted based on calving date at the end of June, when they will also be BCS assessed.

The Future herd will be wintered on baleage and grass in two equal-sized mobs, with one paddock set up at 10 t DM/ha baleage (44 bales/ha) and the other at 14 t DM/ha (62 bales/ha).

	BCS gain before calving	ME Intake	Estimated DM allocation assuming 80% utilisation
Groups 1&2	1.10	120	13.6
Group 3	0.90	105	12.0
Group 4	0.65	90	11.3
Group 5	0.30	90	10.0

Winter feed budget: The crop area grazed by the early dry cows has been measured this week so we can update the winter feed budget and ensure we have sufficient feed on hand to achieve our targets.

Health and Safety: At this week's H&S meeting, the team reviewed wintering and flood management protocols so everyone is familiar with the processes to be implemented should conditions become wet or the river flood. Everyone now has the Environment Southland app downloaded on their phone to track river flows.

Visitors: This week we had two rural professionals on farm for a refresher in pasture assessment and to test a drone for counting baleage in crop paddocks.

2025/26 Season
 Weekly Farm Update
 as at 27 May 2026

Your weekly glimpse into research in action at Southern Dairy Hub



		27-May-26	27-May-26
		Standard	Future
Farm Area	Grazing area available to milkers - ha	151.2	75.9
	Area out of rotation - ha	45.6	23.2
Stock Numbers	Cows milking into vat	303	152
	Cows milking NOT into vat - treated	0	1
	Total cows milking	303	153
	Total Sick Cows	2	1
	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)	1962	1861
Feed Budget	Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	11.4	10.5
	Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	4.4	6.1
	Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	2.2	1.4
	Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation)	18.0	18.0
	Stocking rate (based on available pasture area)	2.7	2.3
	Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha)	0	26
	Pasture growth rate	12	11
	Pre-graze cover target (for week coming)		2680
	Residual (average for week past)	1600	1600
	Round length (actual)	48	37
Milk production	Weekly average milksolids (kg/cow)	1.04	0.98
	Fat:protein	0.75	0.74
	SCC	191	144
	Milk urea	31.4	36.6
Farm Conditions	Soil temperature average (degree C)	10.0↓	
	Rainfall (mm)	20.4	
	Rainfall season to date (mm)	980.8	
	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		