2026/27 Season
Weekly Farm Update
as at 30 September 2026
Your weekly glimpse into research in action at Southern Dairy Hub

SOUTHERN DAIRY HUB
HubWatch

		30-Sep-26	30-Sep-26
		Standard	Future
Farm Area	Grazing area available to milkers - ha	173.7	84.6
	Area out of rotation - ha	23.1	14.5
Stock Numbers	Cows milking into vat	476	210
	Cows milking NOT into vat - treated/colostrums	30	11
	Total cows milking	506	226
	Total Sick Cows	14	5
	Dry cows on farm	19	0
	Average BCS Milking Cows (camera)	4.5	4.7
	BCS 4 or less (%)	11%	8%
Feed Budget	Average pasture cover (kg DM/ha)	2284	2258
	Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	11.1	14.8
	Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	2.4	0.0
	Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day)	4.5	3.7
	Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation)	18.0	18.5
	Stocking rate (based on available pasture area)	3.0	2.7
	Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha)	32	44
	Pasture growth rate	26	28
	Pre-graze cover target (for week coming)	2650	2950
	Residual (average for week past)	1800	1800
	Round length (actual)	30	34
Milk production	Weekly average milksolids (kg/cow)	2.01	2.09
	Fat:protein	0.73	0.72
	Fat%	5.26	5.40
	Prot%	3.85	3.86
	SCC	171	156
	Milk urea	17.3	16.3
Farm Conditions	Soil temperature average (degree C)	9.9	
	Rainfall (mm)	44	
	Rainfall season to date (mm)	486	
People	Current Roster	5 in 2	
	Milking routine	TAD, colostrums 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 & 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

- In-shed supplement and baleage feeding will continue to be offered to counteract lower pasture utilisation due to wet paddock conditions and to protect against sustained BCS loss. Standard cows will be offered 5 kg DM of in-shed feed and 2 kg DM of baleage, fed out in the springer paddocks to protect the milking platform. Future cows will be offered 2 kg DM of in-shed feed and topped up with baleage as required.

- The Future herd has just finished the first round, and the Standard herd will finish this week. With 24 hours per paddock, the Future herd is now on a 26-day rotation and the Standard herd on a 25-day rotation, excluding springer paddocks.

- Looking at the 10-day weather forecast, we're hoping to get ammonium sulphate on paddocks early next week.

- The difference in stocking rate is making a noticeable difference to the feed wedges, amount of pasture available and paddock damage, with the lower-stocked Future herd more settled and doing less damage.

<insert feed wedge graph/image>

- Despite some sustained challenging weather recently, all things considered, we feel we're in a relatively good position due to:

1. Drying off at our target average pasture covers.
2. Achieving pre-calving BCS targets and now utilising BCS camera data for strategic in-shed feeding of at-risk cows.
3. Sticking to the spring rotation planner area allocations, even when conditions got tough.
4. Weekly farm walks since the beginning of August.

Having a plan and sticking to it has allowed us to do our best under tough conditions.

- At last week's herd test, the Future cows averaged 2.13 kg MS/cow and the Standards 2.10 kg MS/cow.

- Herd test results are being used to identify poor-performing cows, mainly heifers, for early culling, along with the five cows that lost their pregnancies during winter.

- At our recent metricheck, we treated 6% of the Standard cows tested and 4% of the Future cows.

- Rainfall season-to-date is now 150 mm higher than the average of the last six years, with most of the increase occurring in the last 5 weeks.