

Insights

- **Winter feed budget planning:** We've started planning our winter feed budget to ensure there is enough baleage on hand. The budget uses the average of previous season crop yields (15T for swedes and 13T for kale). While a few extra early bales have been made this year, some baleage will still need to be purchased, but less than originally budgeted for this season.
- **Plantain and new grass paddocks:** New grass paddocks are growing well, with strong plantain establishment. These were planted at 3kg/ha (see photo). As a Plantain Partner farm, work is underway to lift the proportion of plantain in pasture. This includes planting 3kg/ha in permanent new grass paddocks and using a drone last year to broadcast seed (4kg/ha) onto paddocks with no plantain or plantain older than two years. It's still early days to see results.
- **Body Condition Scoring (BCS):** We've seen a small lift in BCS in the Standard herd over the past couple of weeks, increasing to 4.3 (from 4.2). There's also been a reduction in the proportion of cows under 4 BCS, now 42% for Futures and 31% for Standards, down from 44% and 34% respectively last week. Great to see this positive shift.
- **Herd testing and Johne's:** The third herd test is scheduled for Monday 9 February, including our annual Johne's testing. Testing has been undertaken for a number of years, with Johne's cases reducing from 3% in 2018 to 0.5% in 2024. Testing continues to prove its value.
- **Decisions ahead:** February will provide key information to determine which cows leave the farm, including in-calf results, Johne's testing, milk production, SCC to date, and farm team nominations.

2025/26 Season

Weekly Farm Update

as at 28 January 2026

Your weekly glimpse into research in action at Southern Dairy Hub



| | | 28-Jan-26 | 28-Jan-26 |
|-------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|
| | | Standard | Future |
| Farm Area | Grazing area available to milkers - ha | 156.3 | 74.2 |
| | Area out of rotation - ha | 40.5 | 24.9 |
| Stock Numbers | Cows milking into vat | 511 | 208 |
| | Cows milking NOT into vat - treated | 3 | 0 |
| | Total cows milking | 514 | 208 |
| | Total Sick Cows | 5 | 7 |
| | Average BCS (camera) | 4.3 | 4.2 |
| | BCS 4.0 or less (%) | 31 | 42 |
| | | | |
| Feed Budget | Average pasture cover (kg DM/ha) | 2260 | 2323 |
| | Current Pasture fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day) | 16.5 | 15.4 |
| | Current Silage fed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day) | 1.8 | 3.0 |
| | Current Inshed feed - milkers (kg DM/cow/day) | 1.7 | 1.6 |
| | Current per cow (kg DM/cow/day allocation) | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | Stocking rate (based on available pasture area) | 3.3 | 2.8 |
| | Current Pasture demand - milkers (kg DM/ha) | 54 | 43 |
| | Pasture growth rate | 38 | 38 |
| | Pre-graze cover target (for week coming) | 3100 | 2950 |
| | Residual (average for week past) | 1750 | 1800 |
| | Round length (actual) | 27 | 28 |
| Milk production | Weekly average milksolids (kg/cow) | 1.87 | 1.99 |
| | Fat:protein | 0.81 | 0.76 |
| | SCC | 125 | 164 |
| | Milk urea | 20.8 | 20.1 |
| Farm Conditions | Soil temperature average (degree C) | 16.8↓ | |
| | Rainfall (mm) | 31.6 | |
| | Rainfall season to date (mm) | 670 | |
| | Soil conditions | Dry | |
| 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 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 | | |