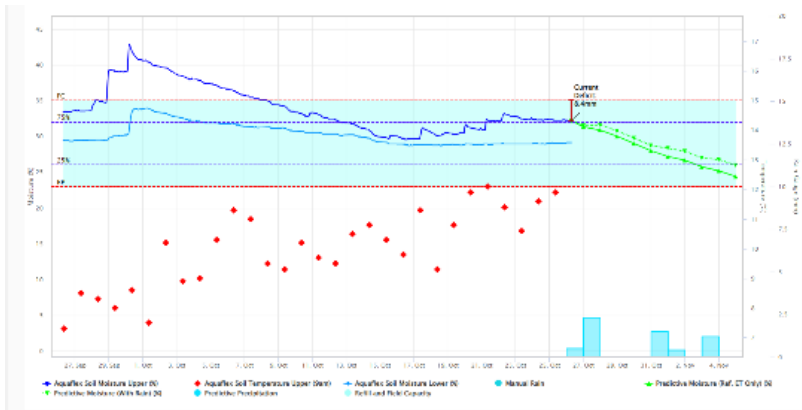


WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Pasture Management

The variability of spring weather is keeping things interesting on farm with one pivot being blown over in the wind on the 14 October and has since been repaired (refer to photos at the end of the newsletter). There has been enough rainfall that there has only been 2 days of irrigation in the last 5 weeks. Due to the predicted rainfall later that week soil moisture was kept under field capacity so the rainfall can be absorbed and utilized. There has been a substantial increase in soil temperatures over the last week from 10.9°C to 12°C (refer to graph below) which has spurred on grass growth.



Per cow production is being maintained at or over 2 kgMS/cow over the last month with a corresponding feed allocation of 20 kgDM/cow over the same period. This translates to a pasture demand of 72 kgDM/Ha while the pasture growth rate this last week has been 88 kgDM/Ha. Overall pasture growth has been above requirements over the last three weeks. So, no supplementary silage has been feed out since the 12th of October. The pre-gazing cover has increased back up to 3197 kgDM/HA from 2939 kgDM/HA. However, when walking the grass feels a bit thicker and stiffer (common for this time of year) underfoot. So, the platemeter is probably an overestimating feed supply due to emerging stems (future seedheads) holding up the plate. So, the round length also increased from 21.5 days back up to 24 days. If the round length increases to above 25 days, then skipping a paddock in that round and turning it into silage will be considered to ensure feed quality.

Strategic mowing is taking place as needed to reset the residual to ensure quality in the next grazing. Due to the long pasture cover on the first round, there is a tendency for the base to be a bit yellow and in some paddocks the urine patches have become clumpy. Mowing ensures consistent quality feed in the regrowth material, often at the expense of slightly reduced growth rates. Not all paddocks are mowed after the cows have finished, only those where quality can be improved. It is planned that strategic mowing will continue to occur over the next 3 rounds.

This Week:

Pasture Update

Mating Update



Next Farm Walk

Wednesday

1st November

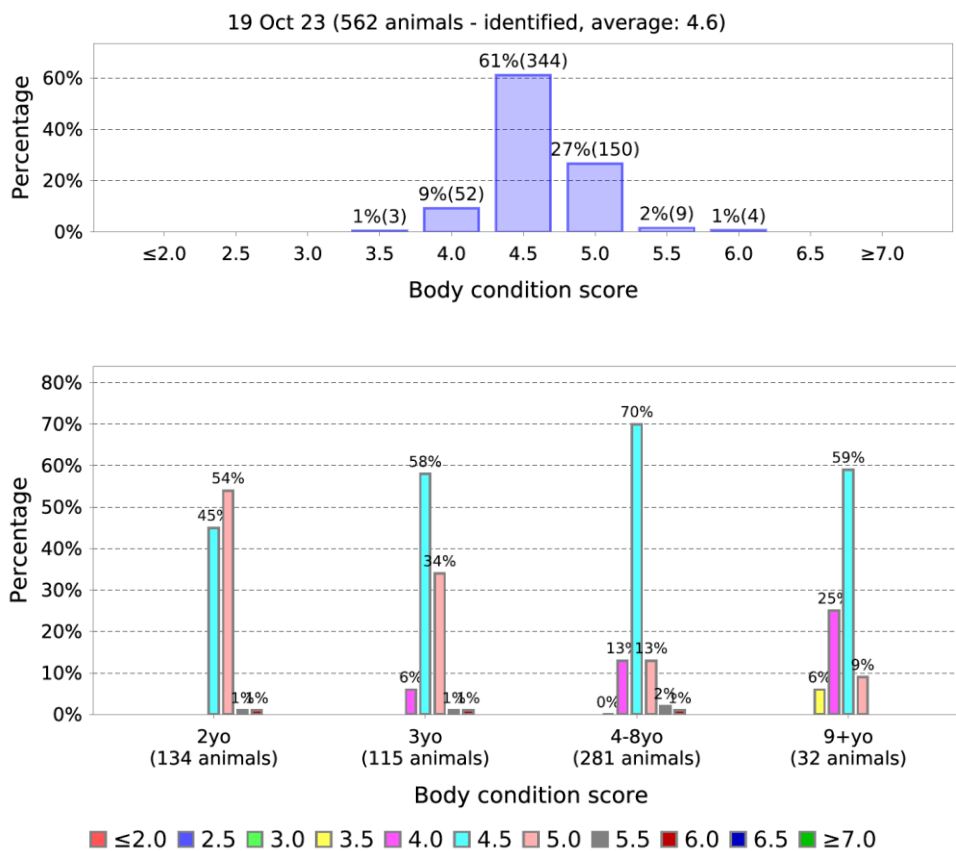
9 am

Paddock S7 and S8 will be sprayed with Dockstar to deal with the dock present in those paddocks. Dock typically flowers from November, so spraying this week will help break the lifecycle. The paddocks will be grazed and then regressed in 4front a (hybrid) tetraploid perennial ryegrass, ruru white clover and Ecotain plantain.

Mating

Premating heats are meeting industry targets of 85% of cows cycled. This year calving was delayed by 5 days compared to the 2022 season, and it is planned that the 2024 season will maintain the slightly later calving date due to how well it has worked this year.

Before the start of mating the herd was body conditioned scored (BCS) on the 19th October. The average dropped from 4.7 to 4.6 BCS with the majority of the herd (90%) having a BCS of 4.5 and above. There were only three cows that scored a 3.5 BCS, one was a 5-year-old and the other two were in the 9+ age range. Refer to graphs below.



There were 49 cows identified as non-cycling and were vet assessed on Friday 20th October with 6 cows treated for cysts, 4 with metritis and treated with metricure, 17 cows were given PG to help cycle, and the remaining 22 cows had no intervention and were left to cycle. In the 5 days after, 10 out of the 49 cows have cycled.

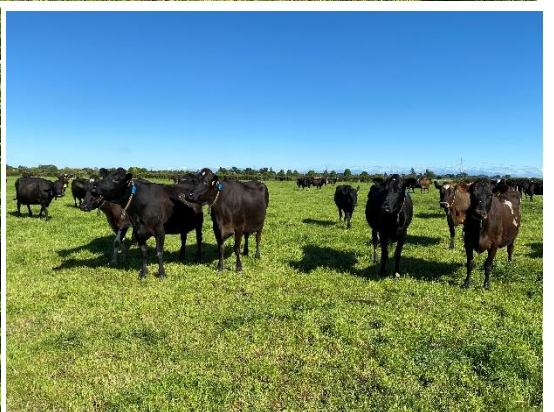
Mating for the main herd started on Sunday 22nd October and there is 90 days till the end of mating season which allows for 3-4 cycles with AI. An average of 26 cows a day need to be mated to mate all cows over the first 3 weeks. Within the first 4 days 115 cows have received AI. There are 7 sexed semen straws used each day which will only occur during the first round of AI, with ideally 147 straws used. Most of the herd is receiving LIC's PS Forward Pack Kiwi Cross semen up until early December (over a 42-day period). After that those not in calf will receive Short Gestation Length (SGL) Dairy Kiwi cross semen. The bottom 30% of BW cows will be mated to beef for the first 6 weeks.



The wind-blown pivot with curious cows. Some took advantage and used it for a good rub.

Pivot has been repaired.

Students doing the 10-week Dairy NZ program through the National Trades Academy program took part in the farm walk. It was great comparing measurements and taking photos with some good-looking cows.



	KEY WEEKLY INFO	This Week	Last Week	1 Year Ago
		25-Oct 23	18-Oct 23	26-Oct 22
Farm Area	Grazing area (Ha)	160	160	160
	Re-grassing (Ha)	0	0	0
Stock Numbers	Cows currently milking to vat	554	555	539
	Cows currently milking NOT to vat	6	5	2
	Total cows milking	560	560	541
	Once-a-day milking cows	5	10	8
	Lame cows current	5	6	8
	Dry cows on farm	0	2	1
Milk Production	Current bulk milk SCC (tgt below 150) (SCC)	108	94	118
	Milk Solids per cow (kgMS/cow)	2	2.13	1.9
	Protein:Fat ratio (%)	0.8	0.81	0.81
Feed Budget	Average pasture cover (kgDM/Ha)	2400	2318	2279
	Current Pasture Fed - Milkers (kgDM/cow)	20	20	16.85
	Current Silage Fed - Milkers (kgDM/cow)	0	0	3.15
	Current Demand per cow (kgDM/cow)	20	20	20
	Stocking Rate - Milkers (Cows/Ha)	3.52	3.52	3.63
	Current Pasture Demand - Milkers (kgDM/Ha)	72	72	68
	Pasture Growth Rate (kgDM/Ha)	88	83	70
	Pre-grazing cover (ave for week) (kgDM/Ha)	3197	2939	2989
	Residual (ave for week) (kgDM/Ha)	1550	1600	1550
	Round Length (Days)	24	21.5	25
Farm Conditions	Soil temp average (Aquaflex) (degree C)	12	10.86	10.98
	Rainfall (MM)	0	13.4	9.4
	Irrigation days this week (days)	2	0	5
People	Current Roster	5+2	5+2	5+2
	Health & Safety Incidences	nil	nil	nil
	Milking Routine	10 in 7	10 in 7	10 in 7