FOCUS DAY

Wed 4 March 2026
10.00am to 1.00pm

SIDDC
South Island Dairying Demonstration Centre

LUDF

LUDF FARM UPDATE
Peter Hancox (LUDF) &
Antoinette Archer (SIDDC)

GROWING OUR PEOPLE
Sarah Watson (PeopleMAD)

Investing in people is an investment in your business

This session will dive into how to grow a supportive learning environment, and opportunities to develop our team and leadership

PLANNING FOR DRY OFF
Ryan Luckman (Blue Cross Vet)

Setting up for next season's success

This session will highlight the power of a solid dry off plan and decision tree

Use of data to drive insights that result in more timely decisions

Farmer panel discussion on using flexible milking as a strategy for dry off

Register on the day from 10.00am
Lincoln University Dairy Farm, Lincoln
Parking: Entrance off Ellesmere Junction Rd
Refreshments & light lunch provided

E. office@siddc.org.nz
T. 03 423 0022 or M. 027 272 4069
www.siddc.org.nz

Welcome to Lincoln University Dairy Farm (LUDF).

The farm is a fully operational, commercial dairy farm with a number of potential hazards for both visitors and staff. Many of the potential hazards cannot be eliminated while also providing access to visitors, therefore, all staff and visitors MUST watch for potential hazards and act with caution.

Hazard Summary: Look, think, act.

The following chart provides a reminder of the types of hazards at LUDF. Watch for these and any other hazards that may be on the farm today.

People: • Uninformed/ill-prepared visitors may be the greatest risk	**Animals:** • **You are in their space**	**Milking shed:** • Moving rotary platform • Confined animals • Chemicals
Eyes / Ears: • Water / oil / milk / chemical splashes • Welding flashes • Loud machinery		**Touch:** • Hot/cold surfaces, hot water, chemical burns • Electric fences – treat them as high voltage power sources
On-farm machinery and tools • Chainsaws, hand tools etc. generate noise, fragments	**Potential slips/trips:** • Uneven surfaces occur across the farm • Fences • Drains • Underpass • Effluent pond	**Vehicles:** • Contractors and farm equipment – **act as though they can't see you** – keep out of their way • Centre Pivot takes precedence over your plan

ARE YOU TRAINED FOR WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO DO? If not, STOP.

If you are uncertain how you should act or proceed, stop and contact the farm manager, other farm staff or your host.

By entering this farm, you are acknowledging your receipt of this hazard summary and your agreement to take personal responsibility to watch out for potential hazards and act in such a manner as to protect yourself and any others also on-farm.

SIDDC FOCUS DAY

4 March 2026

10:00am – 1:00pm

LUDF Update

Season Review

Presenters: Peter Hancox, LUDF Farm Manager & Antoinette Archer, SIDDC Partnership & Demonstration Lead

Planning for Dry Off

Setting up for next season's success.

Presenter: Ryan Luckman, Blue Cross Vet

Growing our People

Investing in people is an investment in your business

Presenter: Sarah Watson, People MAD

Contact us: Ph: 03 423 0022 www.siddc.org.nz www.ludf.org.nz

With thanks to our partners:

Like us & follow us on Facebook and Instagram

SIDDC

Lincoln University Dairy Farm (LUDF) is a demonstration farm developed by the South Island Dairying Demonstration Centre (SIDDC). This industry-funded partnership of seven leading dairy sector organisations collaborate to promote the sustainable development of South Island dairying via demonstration activities, research, education and training of farmers. The current partners of SIDDC are:

Strategic Objective at LUDF

To maximise sustainable profit embracing the whole farm system through:

- Increasing productivity
- Without increasing the farm's total environmental footprint
- While operating within definable and acceptable animal welfare targets; and
- Remaining relevant to Canterbury (and South Island) dairy farmers by demonstrating practices achievable by leading and progressive farmers.

Focus for 2026/27 Season:

Nil-Infrastructure, low input, low N-loss, optimise profit.

Current farm system:

- 3.5 cows/ha (target 560 peak milked).
- Target up to 190kg N/ha synthetic fertiliser.
- 450kgDM/cow imported supplement with cows wintered off farm.
- Cost control - FWE budget of $5.50/kg MS or less.
- Target production 487 kg MS/cow on a hybrid/tactical milking system.

Current Focus at LUDF

Grazing Plantain

- Aiming for a minimum of 10% of the diet, with a target of 30% of the diet, in plantain via a mixed sward.
- Currently assessing composition over time through direct drilling and broadcasting, with a spring and autumn sowing date.
- To result in decrease in N loss in OverseerFM from 26 kg N/ha/yr to 23 kg N/ha/yr for expected composition when direct drilled and 22 kg N/ha/yr for expected composition when broadcasted.

Reproduction & Replacement Rate

- Continued focus on our reproductive performance by focusing on:
- Transition cows – milk cows OAD for first 10 days of lactation, or until rumination criteria is met. Focus on feeding and silage allocation during this period. This is aimed to improve BCS loss over this period.
- Body condition score (BCS) targets for dry off and targeted winter feeding to achieve planned start of calving BCS targets, aiding in planned start of mating BCS.
- Early scanning based on data via wearables to implement our phantom cow strategy, see reproduction project for more information.
- Use of short gestation length semen (SGL) to shorten calving period, 12 week mating.

Tactical milking frequency

The current system will now encompass:

1. Once-A-Day (OAD) for the First 10 Days of Lactation: Focus on cow recovery.
2. Transition to Twice-A-Day (TAD): After the 10 day OAD period, we move to TAD during peak pasture growth to optimise pasture utilisation and milk production.
3. Flexible Milking – Late Lactation: With a default shift date of March 1st if not triggered earlier, this is to achieve benefits of flexible milking, whilst minimising production drop. These triggers include:
    - Body Condition Score (BCS): To maintain or improve cow condition.
    - Climatic Conditions: Adapting to environmental stressors like heat and/or wet periods.
    - Animal Welfare: Using lameness levels as a trigger.
    - People Metrics: Prioritising staff well-being.

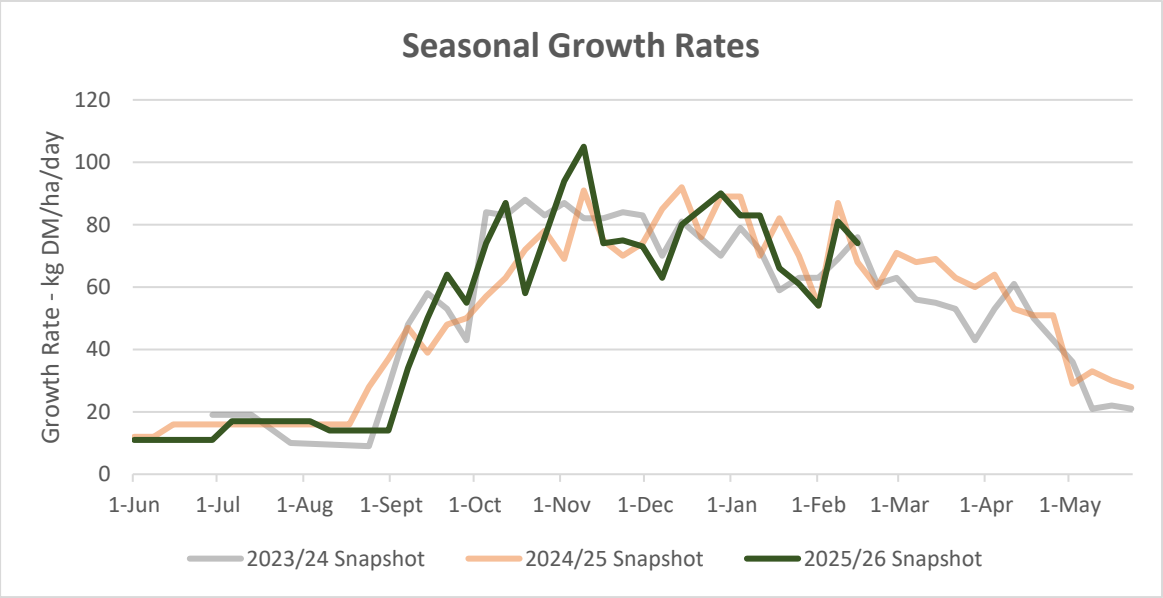
LUDF Update

FARM PERFORMANCE – Pasture & Feed

- APC at calving was 2690 kg DM/ha, target of 2600 kg DM/ha
- 1st Round completed 22 September 2025
- Balance Date was first week of October.
- Very wet start to spring (early August) – this has reduced utilisation and higher allocations given to reduce pasture damage.
- This has led to some increased residuals that will require mechanical intervention (mowing) when in surplus.
- Growth rates have been variable and lower through December and late January and early February.
- Topping in January due to later seed head, higher residuals with wet conditions and to reduce the mature dock to increase utilisation for the next grazing.

Farm Data:

Scan Me



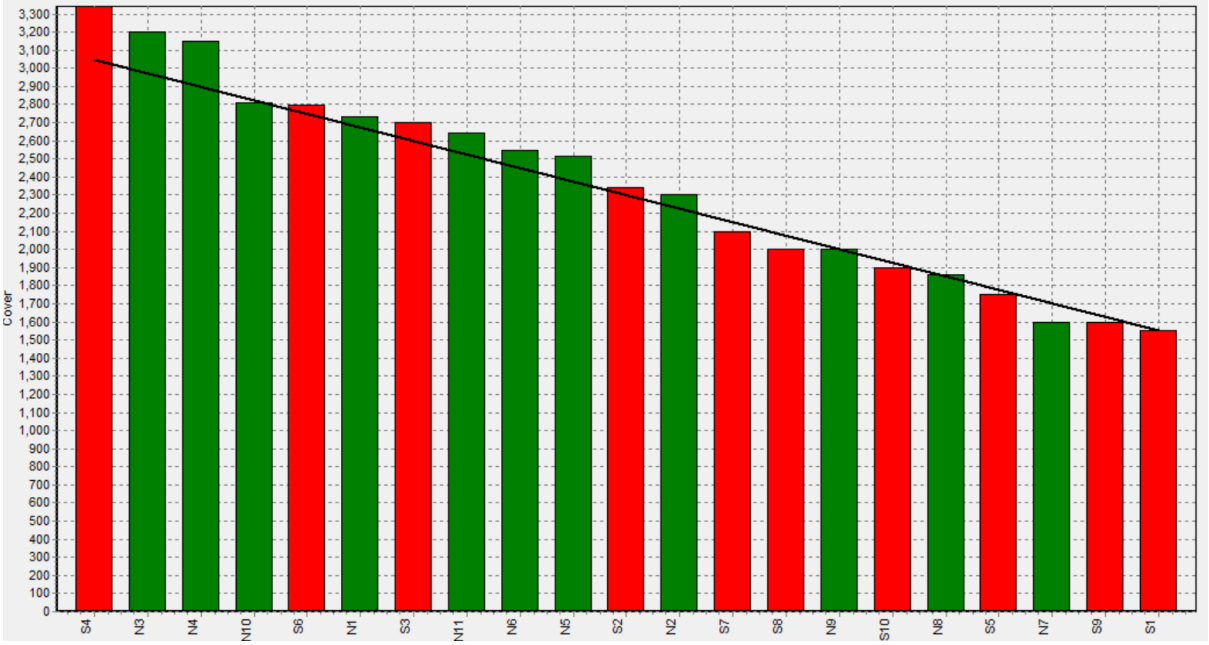
Current Grazing Rules

- Stocking Rate: 539 cows on 160 ha = 3.37 cows/ha.
- Target allocation: 18.5 kg DM/cow
- Residual target: 1,550 kg DM/ha.
- Demand: SR x allocation = 3.37 x 18.5 = 62 kg DM/ha
- Pasture required: Demand x round length = 62 x25 = 1558
- Pre-grazing target required: Pasture required + Residual target = 1550 + 1550 = 3108

LUDF Target Diet – 18.5 kg DM/cow/ha							
Post grazing target - 1550 kg DM/ha				Round length - 25 days		Area - 160 ha	
Herd	**Cows**	**Pre-grazing target**	**Area in round**	**Kg DM/cow offered**	**Supp. offered – kg DM/cow**	**ha/ day**	**M²/cow/ day**
3 in 2	481	3100	143 ha	18.5	0.0	5.7	121
OAD	58	3100	17 ha	18.5	0.0	0.7	121
Total	**539**			**18.5**	**0.0**	**6.4**	**121**

Feed Wedge

Date: 17/02/2026
APC: 2347 kg DM/ha
Average Growth Rate: 74 kg DM/ha/day



Regrassing & Weed Control

Paddock	Area	Plan	Spray	Pasture Cultivar	Rate kg/ha	Other Species Cultivar	Rate kg/ha
N10	7.2	Italian ryegrass - break crop high weed pressure	Norton - pre emergence for poa Baton - 2kg/ha to control seedling dock	Tabu+	20		
S9	7.1	Perennial ryegrass - grass to grass		Array & 4Front	18.5	White Clover - Kotuku, Ruru & Plantain - Ecotain	2, 2, 2.5
N6	7.6	Repair		Forge NEA	15		
S8	7.4	Weed Control - primarily dock	Pasture Boss - 2L/ha - early March	Maxsyn	15		
S7	7.6	Weed Control - primarily dock	Pasture Boss - 2L/ha - early March	Maxsyn	15		

Feed Quality Tests

Date	MJ ME/ kg DM	Dry Matter %	Digestibility % (DMD)	Protein % DM	NDF % DM	ADF DM %	OM %	WSC % DM
June	12.39	16.93	81.03	23.32	40.36	21.91	92.11	18.04
July	12.64	20.96	82.84	18.08	37.98	20.61	92.01	27.22
August	12.73	20.77	83.13	16.96	37.19	20.13	92.38	29.90
September	12.42	20.19	81.12	20.88	40.43	21.46	92.25	22.13
October	12.15	18.31	80.22	22.07	38.62	21.50	91.26	19.52
November	11.94	16.62	78.52	20.53	41.17	22.63	91.53	19.47
December	11.86	17.98	78.16	25.79	41.73	22.90	91.24	12.58
January	11.75	16.26	77.17	24.54	43.33	23.96	91.61	12.70
February	11.78	15.08	77.82	24.67	42.39	24.38	91.27	11.77

Autumn Feed Budget

FarmRight
Investing Sustainably

LUDF									
Start date	3-Feb-26	Period start	3-Feb	15-Feb	1-Mar	15-Mar	1-Apr	15-Apr	1-May	15-May
Total days		118	12	14	14	17	14	16	14	17
Accumative days			12	26	40	57	71	87	101	118
Effective grazeable area (ha)		160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0
Remove or add area		160.0								
Feed demand										
Total cows on farm			541	541	541	541	541	541	431	431
Cows Calving (No. in each period)										
Cows dried off /culled (first day of period)							*30*		80	
Average milking cows			541	541	541	541	511	511	431	431
Intake dm/day		6,195	18.0	18.0	17.0	17.0	17.0	16.0	15.0	15.0
Dry cows							*30*	*30*		
Intake dm/day		84	10	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Total feed demand /ha		6,279	61	61	57	57	57	54	40	40
Stocking rate (cows/ha)			3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2.7	2.7
			kgs dm/ha/day							
Pasture growth		5,642	60	60	58	55	50	45	35	25
Total supplement		51,122 kgDM	Supplements feed per day in each period							
Milking cow supplement		Intake/cow/day				1.0	2.5	2.5		
Silage 30%	wet tonnes	193.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	5.2	5.2	0.0	0.0
	kgDM/day fed	47,522	0	0	0	541	1,278	1,278	0	0
Dry cow supplement		Intake/cow/day					4.0	4.0		
Silage 30%	wet tonnes	14.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0
	kgDM/day fed	3,600	0	0	0	0	120	120	0	0
Total (kgDM/ha/day)		320	0	0	0	3	9	9	0	0
Total feed supply kgDM/ha/day		5,962	60	60	58	58	59	54	35	25
Pasture cover										
Cover change kgDM/ha/day		-318	-0.9	-0.9	0.5	0.9	1.6	-0.2	-5.4	-15.4
Predicted pasture covers		2,327	2,317	2,305	2,312	2,327	2,350	2,347	2,271	2,009

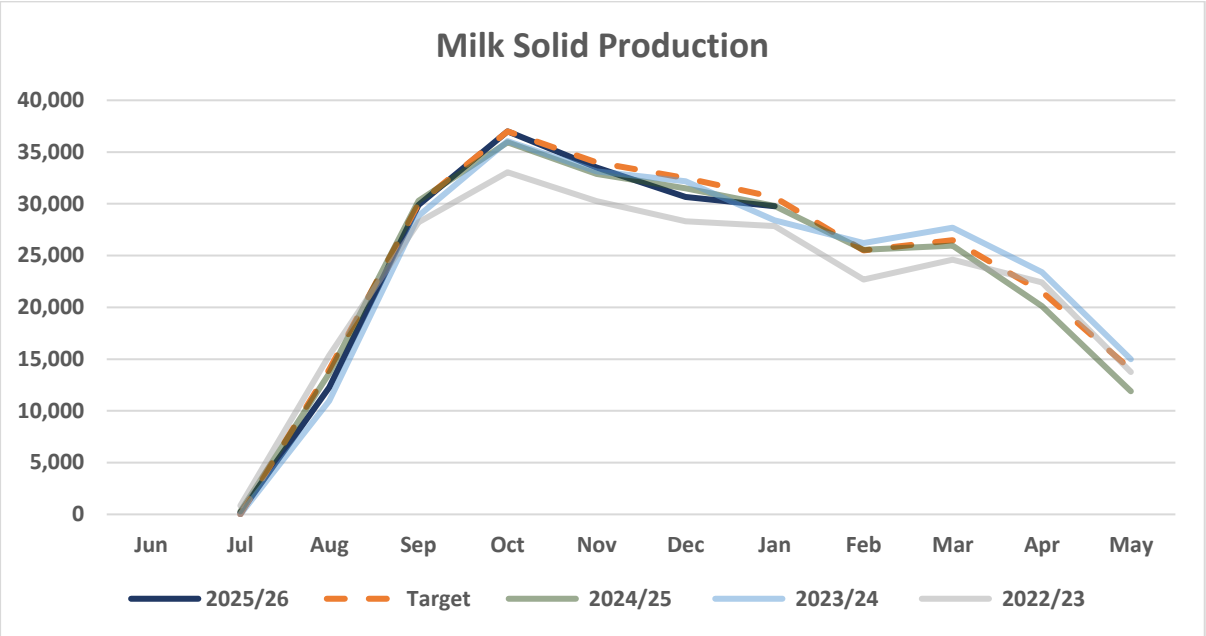
FARM PERFORMANCE – Herd & Milk Production

Milk Production: Production to the end of January was 173,237 kg MS, which is 0.6% behind last season and 2.7% behind target.

- **Milk production per cow:** Currently 1.74 kg MS/cow/day and 346.9 kg MS/cow STD. Comparing with last season of 1.60 kg MS/cow/day and 350.9 kg MS/cow STD.
- **Milk production budget:** 487 kg MS/cow, 1660 kg MS/ha or 265,633 kg MS.

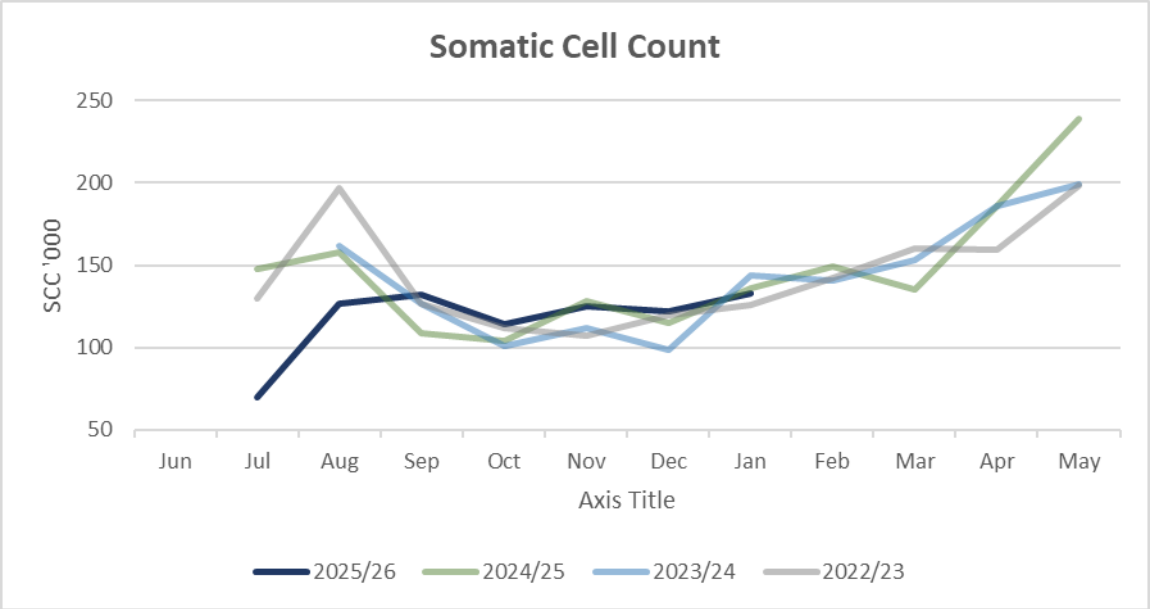
Herd Test Data

Date	No of Animals	Milk (l)	Fat (%)	Fat (kg)	Protein (%)	Protein (kg)	Milk solids (kg MS)	SCC (000)	Total Fat	Total Protein
7-Oct-25	513	24.80	5.08	1.26	4.06	1.01	2.26	114	645	516
10-Dec-25	477	20.60	4.87	1.00	4.18	0.86	1.87	120	479	411
17-Feb-26	492	17.20	5.61	0.97	4.75	0.82	1.78	144	476	402



Milk Solid Production - kg MS								
Month	**Litres**	**kg MS (%)**	**Avg SCC**	**2025/26 kg MS**	**Target kg MS**	**Variance to Target**	**2024/25 kg MS**	**Variance to 24/25**
Jul	1,797	9.99	132	179	0		282	-36.5%
Aug	130,471	9.40	127	12,268	14,000	-12.4%	13,611	-9.9%
Sep	333,587	8.96	132	29,876	30,000	-0.4%	30,282	-1.3%
Oct	405,131	9.13	114	36,999	37,000	0.0%	35,938	3.0%
Nov	365,139	9.18	125	33,505	34,000	-1.5%	32,888	1.9%
Dec	331,120	9.26	122	30,647	32,500	-5.7%	31,503	-2.7%
Jan	311,564	9.95	133	29,763	30,633	-2.8%	29,793	-0.1%
STD	**1,878,809**			**173,237**	**178,133**	**-2.7%**	**174,297**	**-0.6%**

Somatic Cell Count



Somatic Cell Count

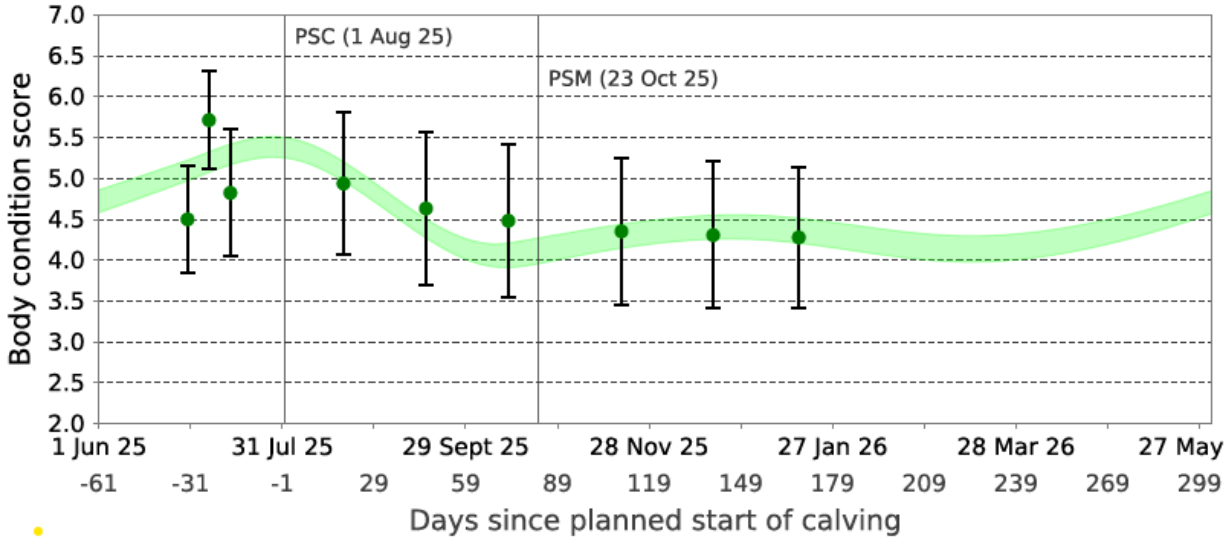
Month	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
Jul	70	148		130
Aug	127	158	162	197
Sep	132	109	127	127
Oct	114	104	101	112
Nov	125	128	112	107
Dec	122	115	99	120
Jan	133	136	144	126

ANIMAL CARE

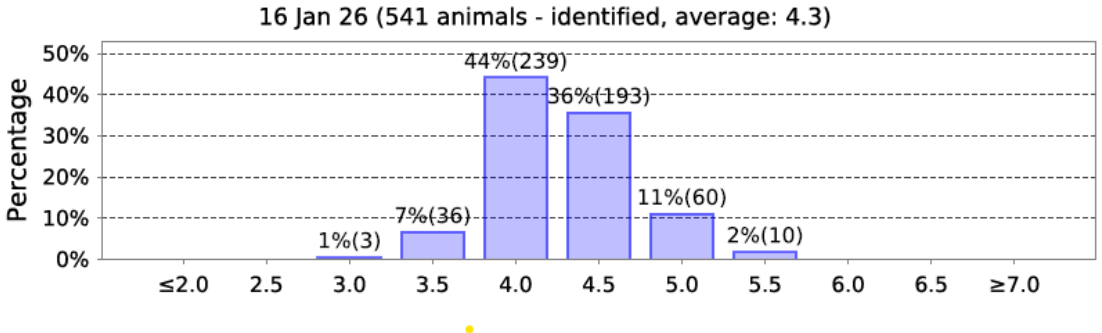
Body Condition Score

- Latest Body Condition Score was 4.3 on 16 January.
- Spread of 3.0 to 5.5.

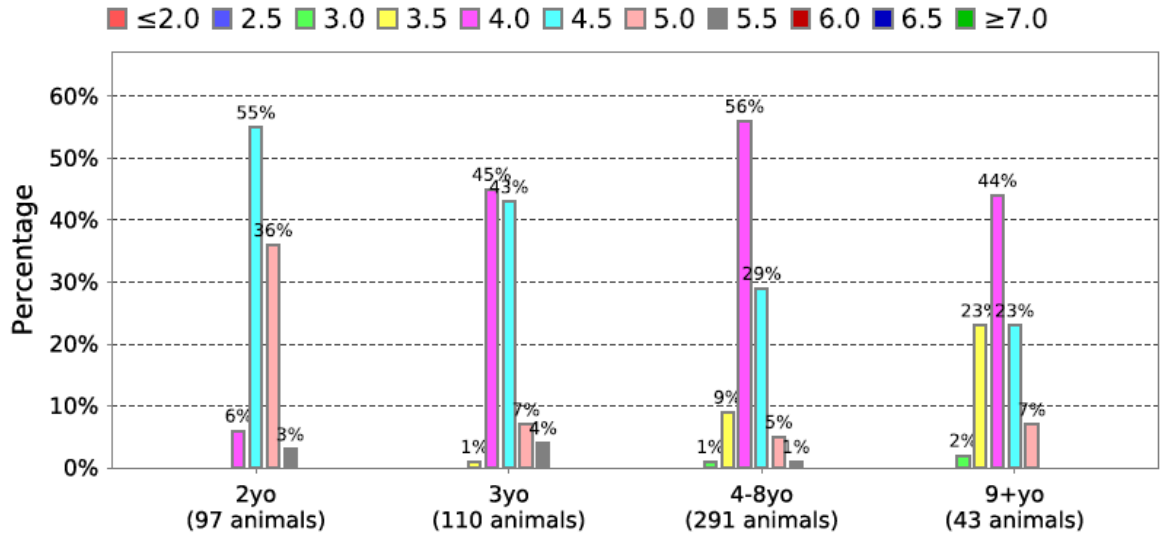
Annual Body Condition Score



January Herd Body Condition Score

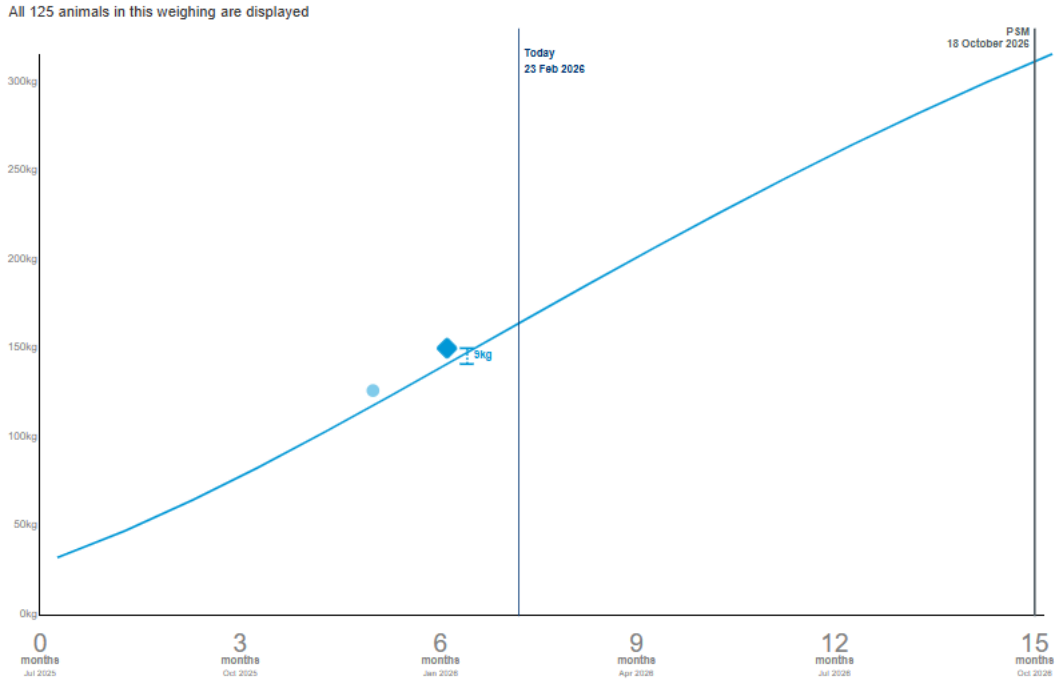


Body Condition Score - Age Analysis

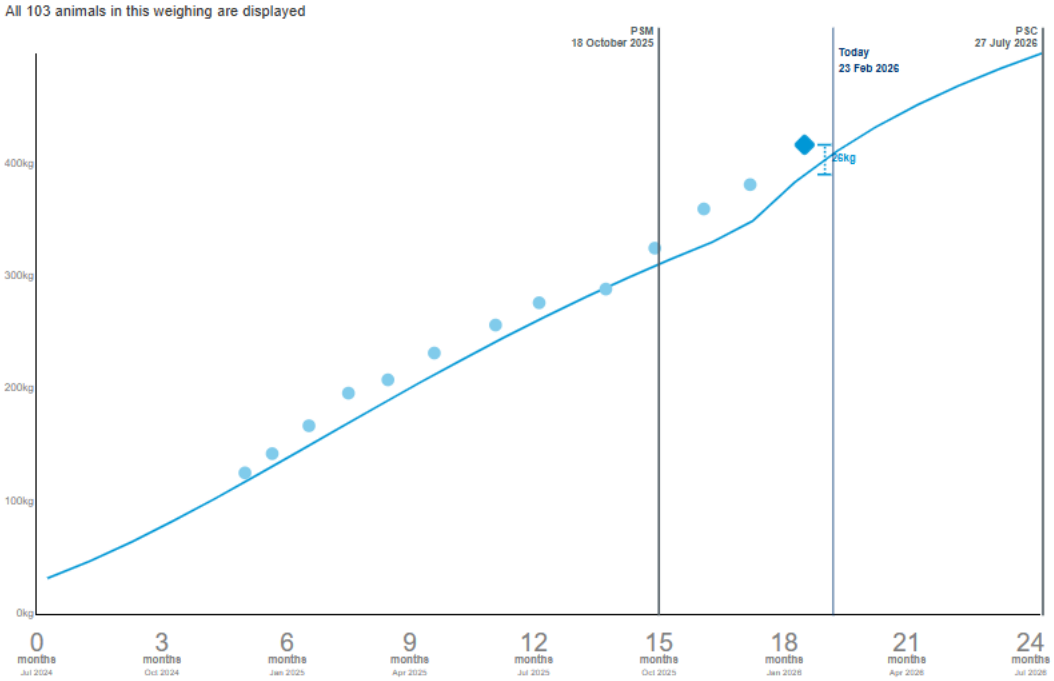


ANIMAL CARE – Youngstock

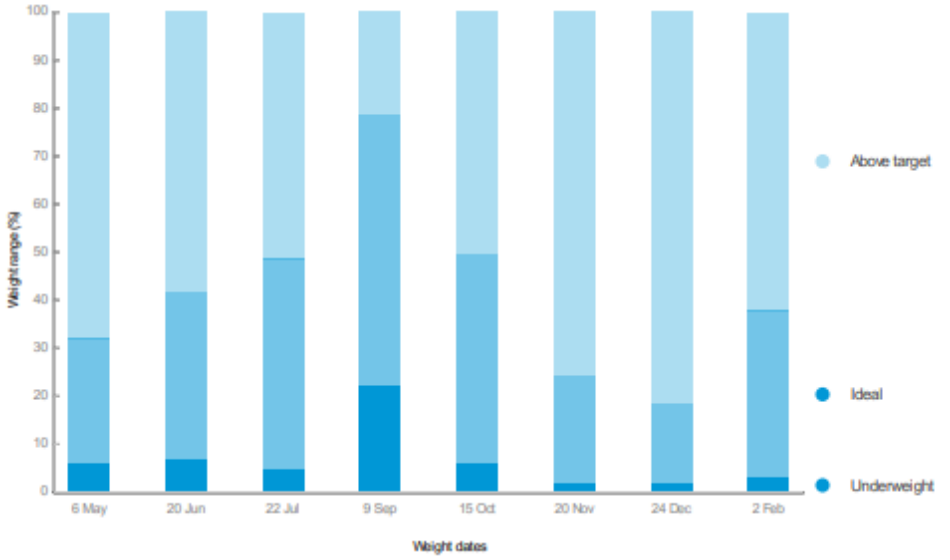
2025 Born (R1s)



2024 Born (R2's)



2024 Born Weight Ranges



Range	May 2025		June 2025		July 2025		September 2025		October 2025		November 2025		December 2025		February 2026	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Above target	70	68	60	58.3	53	51.5	22	21.4	52	50.5	78	75.7	84	81.6	64	62.1
Ideal	27	26.2	36	35	45	43.7	58	56.3	45	43.7	23	22.3	17	16.5	36	35
Underweight	6	5.8	7	6.8	5	4.9	23	22.3	6	5.8	2	1.9	2	1.9	3	2.9
Total Animals	103		103		103		103		103		103		103		103	

Mating Results

Our R2's have been achieving very good liveweights and have also achieved good reproductive results. We used a 5 day heifer CIDR synchro programme this season and achieved a 70% in calf to AI, however we have had 2 slip since their first scan. We had 6 that were scanned empty and 3 that are freemartins. This resulted in 8% empty in this cohort.

Herd Mating Results

Results to be discussed – not available at time of printing.

Stock Reconciliation

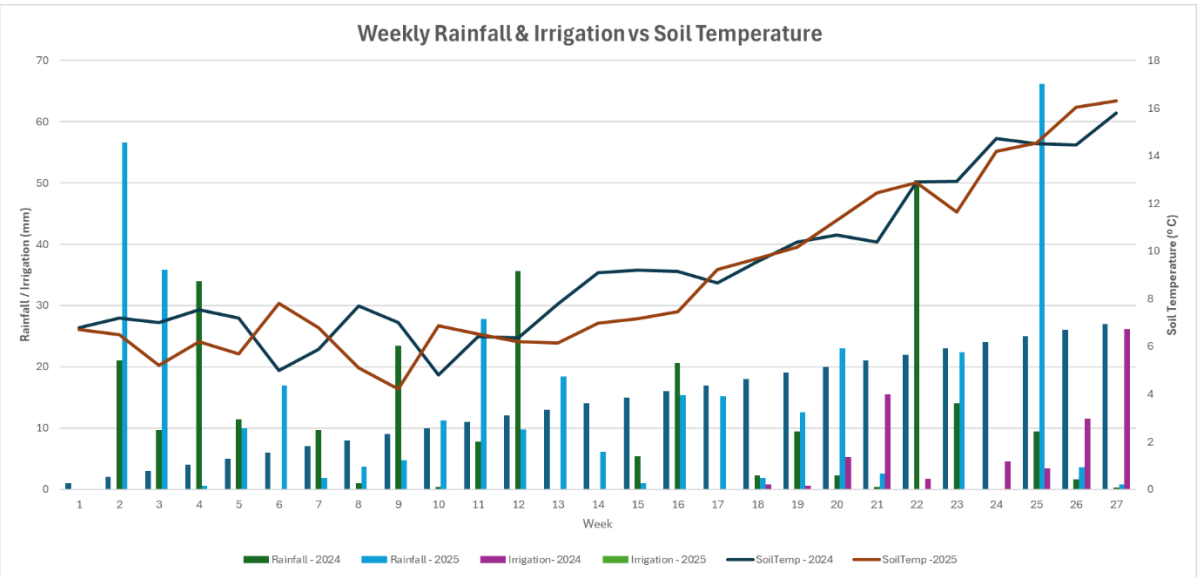
1 June – MA inc R2's	561
Purchases	10
less	
Deaths	20
Culls	9
Drys	3
Current milking herd	**539**
In calf heifers	92
purchase IC heifers – 1 May delivery	30
Yearlings	125* TBC

ENVIRONMENT

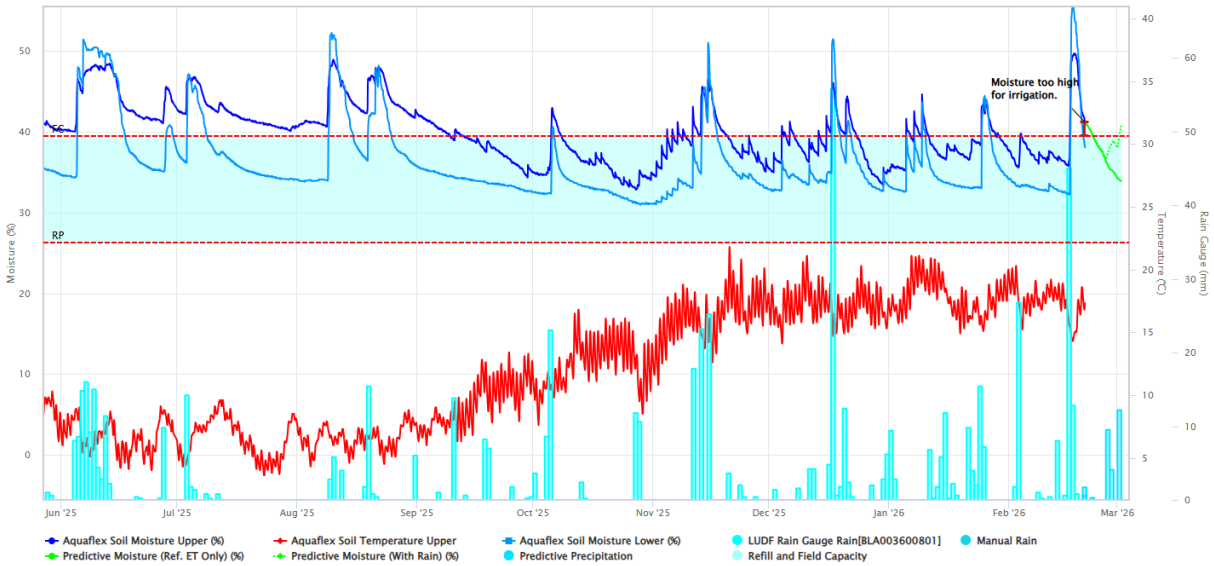
Rainfall: 603 mm STD 25 February 2026.

Month	Rainfall (mm)
June	103.0
July	19.2
August	37.0
September	33.0
October	60.2
November	72.6
December	100.6
January	80.0
February	98.0
STD	**603.6**

Irrigation days: 44.5 days STD, last season 43.75 days STD and for the season.

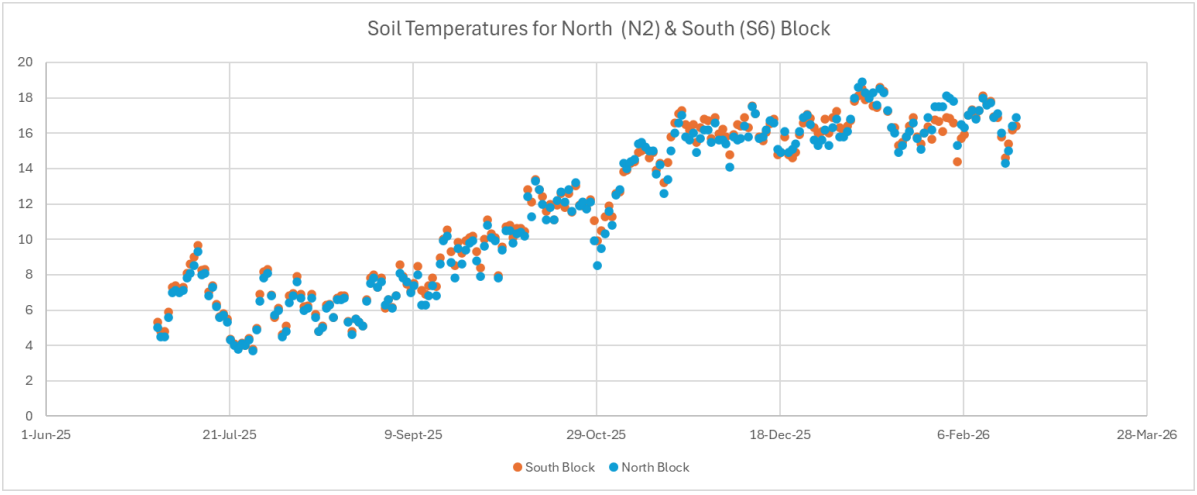


Soil Moisture – N2



Soil Temperatures

Month	Average	Min	Max
June	8.9	4.0	9.1
July	6.9	3.7	9.7
August	6.5	4.5	8.4
September	8.5	11.3	5.1
October	11.6	7.8	16.1
November	15.1	10.8	17.6
December	16.2	14.1	17.9
January	16.9	14.9	19.2
February	16.9	14.3	18.7



Fertiliser

LUDF Super 2025/26

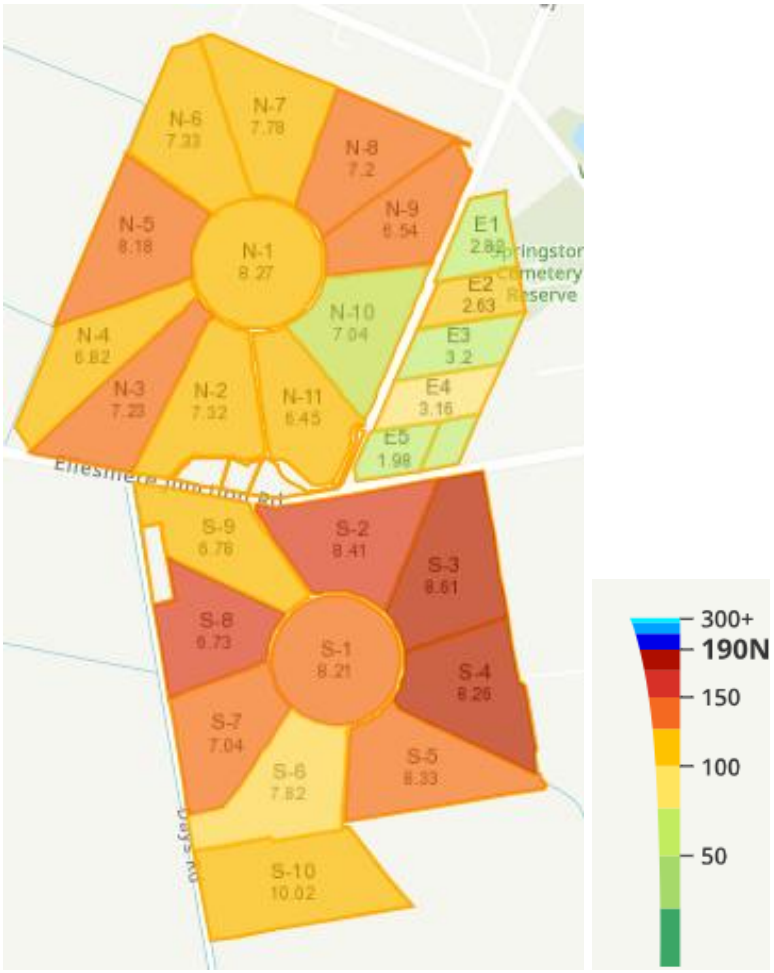
Block	Area	kg/ha	N	P	K	S	Ca	Mg	Total
Olsen P 20-29	11.7	610 kg		55.0		67.0	122.0		7.15t
Olsen P 30-40	82.1	390 kg		35.0		43.0	78.0		32.00 t
Olsen P >41	81.5	230 kg		20.0		34.0	44.0		18.70 t

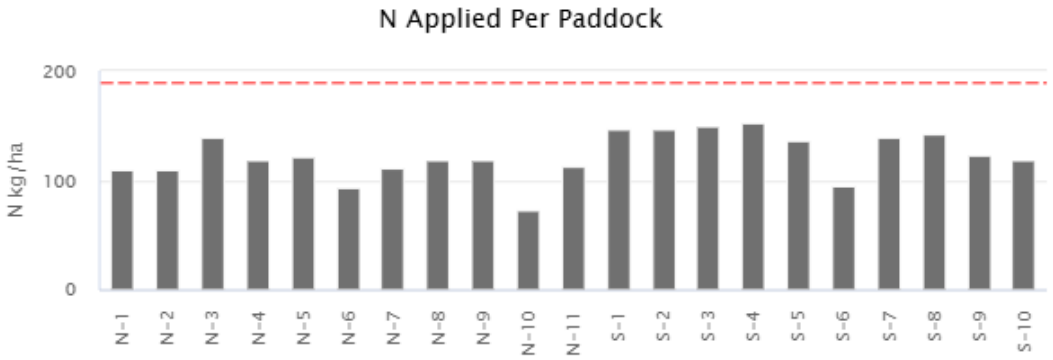
Nitrogen 2025/26

Time	Rate - kg/ha	Product	kg N/ha
September	85.0	Ammo 31	26
October	60.0	N-Protect	28
November	60.0	N-Protect	28
December	60.0	N-Protect	28
January	60.0	N-Protect	28
February	60.0	N-Protect	28
March	50.0	N-Protect	23
Total kg N/ha			**187**

As at 23 February the weighted average based on effective area is 123 kg N/ha.

Nitrogen Heat Map





PEOPLE, WORKPLACE COMMUNITY & CULTURE – Team Update

- **Our Team:** Peter, Eugene, Jeremy & Jack
- **Roster**: 5 on / 2 off
- **Focus**: Personal development plan and training opportunities.

A big thanks to the team for all their effort this season!

BUSINESS HEALTH – Financials & Farm Plan

Overview

Measure	25/26 Revised	25/26 Budget	24/25 Actual	24/25 Budget
Peak Cows	557	545	560	560
Total Production	**260,000**	**265,633**	**257,815**	**266,000**
Per Cow	467	487	460	475
Per ha	**1,625**	**1,660**	**1,611**	**1662**
Milk Price	$9.50	$10.00	$10.00	$9.00
Farm Op Exp	$5.97	$5.36	$5.48	$5.43
Total Op Exp	**$5.99**	**$5.36**	**$5.56**	**$5.50**
EBIT	$1,091,084	$1,381,255	$1,355,755	$1,099,186
EBIT/ha	**$6,819**	**$8,633**	**$8,473**	**$6,870**

Notes to Budget Reforecast

- There has been a $0.13/kg MS effect due to reduction in milk solids.
- There has been a $0.51/kg MS effect due to increased farm working expenses.

2025/26 Budget Reforecast

LUDF Reforecast vs Budget 2025/26										
BUDGET					REFORECAST - November					
265,633 $/kg MS	545 $/cow	160 $/ha	2025/26 $	Description	2025/26 $	Variance	260,000 $/kg MS	545 $/cow	160 $/ha	Notes
				Income						
0.03	12.79	27.87	6,969	Sales - Bobby Calves	6,565	-404	0.03	12.05	41.03	
0.02	9.17	20.00	5,000	Sales - R2 Heifers	5,000	0	0.02	9.17	31.25	
0.00	0.00	0.00	0	Sales - Bulls	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	
0.18	89.45	195.00	48,750	Sales - Cows	73,383	24,633	0.28	134.65	458.64	$20k culls in June
0.10	48.44	105.60	26,400	Sales - Surplus heifer calves	26,439	39	0.10	48.51	165.24	Can we confirm heifer/beef split
0.24	114.68	250.00	62,500	Sales - Beef calf Sales	67,000	4,500	0.26	122.94	418.75	
0.64	**274.53**	**1,059.00**	**149,619**	**Total Stock Sales**	**178,387**	**28,768**	**0.69**	**327.32**	**1,114.92**	
10.00	4,874.00	16,602.06	2,656,330	Sales - Milk Solids Current Season	2,470,000	-186,330	9.50	4,532.11	15,437.50	Milk Price revised to $9.50, production back 4,025 kg MS
0.00	0.00	0.00		Sales - Co-operative Difference		0	0.00	0.00	0.00	
0.00	0.00	0.00		Sales - Feed, Silage, Other Crops		0	0.00	0.00	0.00	
0.00	0.00	0.00		Income - Other		0	0.00	0.00	0.00	
10.56	**5,148.53**	**17,537.18**	**2,805,949**	**TOTAL REVENUE**	**2,648,387**	**-157,562**	**10.19**	**4,859.43**	**16,552.42**	
				Expenses						
1.05	513.46	1,748.99	279,838	Labour	279,838	0	1.08	513.46	1,748.99	Linked to Federated Farmers salaries
0.05	23.11	78.70	12,593	Staff Costs: ACC, Super, H&S, Clothing	16,552	-3,959	0.06	30.37	103.45	Casual to cover leave
1.10	**536.57**	**1,827.69**	**292,430**	**Total Labour Expenses**	**296,390**	**-3,959**	**1.14**	**543.83**	**1,852.44**	
0.24	116.18	395.73	63,316	Animal Health	84,377	-21,061	0.32	154.82	527.36	Ketamax - $4k, BVD was underbudgeted - $3.5k
0.21	102.73	349.92	55,988	Breeding	55,988	-0	0.22	102.73	349.93	Heifer synchro $2.25k, additional insems due to returns
0.04	18.78	63.96	10,234	Dairy Shed Operating Expenses	22,872	-12,638	0.09	41.97	142.95	Additional teat spray use and in stock
0.13	64.22	218.75	35,000	Electricity - Other	34,148	852	0.13	62.66	213.43	
0.26	128.44	437.50	70,000	Electricity - Irrigation	67,091	2,909	0.26	123.10	419.32	
0.44	212.48	723.75	115,800	Feed Made/Purchased	115,800	0	0.45	212.48	723.75	*adjustments with support block
0.73	355.31	1,210.28	193,644	Grazing - Winter	181,631	12,013	0.70	333.27	1,135.19	Brought cows home early
0.03	14.75	50.26	8,041	Freight - Livestock	15,375	-7,334	0.06	28.21	96.09	Additional cows and underbudgeted
0.34	167.52	570.60	91,296	Youngstock Grazing	92,086	-790	0.35	168.97	575.54	
0.38	184.28	627.69	100,431	Calf Rearing	99,136	1,295	0.38	181.90	619.60	Additional beef calves and heifer calves reared to 100kg
0.17	84.94	289.34	46,295	Fertiliser -Nitrogen	49,612	-3,317	0.19	91.03	310.08	
0.11	52.63	179.28	28,685	Fertiliser - Other	26,687	1,998	0.10	48.97	166.79	
0.06	28.42	96.80	15,487	Fertiliser - Spreading	19,421	-3,934	0.07	35.63	121.38	
0.04	21.65	73.75	11,800	Seed	14,500	-2,700	0.06	26.61	90.63	Additional seed with weed control
0.09	43.16	147.00	23,520	Contractors - Regrassing	28,236	-4,716	0.11	51.81	176.48	Additional W&P
0.01	3.67	12.50	2,000	Weed & Pest Control	1,373	627	0.01	2.52	8.58	
0.07	33.32	113.50	18,160	Vehicle Expenses	59,938	-41,778	0.23	109.98	374.61	Tractor - $35 Mule - $12
0.08	36.77	125.25	20,040	Vehicle - Fuel	19,545	495	0.08	35.86	122.16	
0.15	74.31	253.13	40,500	R&M - Land & Buildings	55,909	-15,409	0.22	102.59	349.43	
0.09	45.87	156.25	25,000	R & M - Irrigation	28,647	-3,647	0.11	52.56	179.04	
0.15	73.39	250.00	40,000	R & M - Plant, Machinery, Other	64,362	-24,362	0.25	118.10	402.26	
0.01	4.59	15.63	2,500	R & M - Farm Houses	2,500	0	0.01	4.59	15.63	
0.00	0.92	3.13	500	Freight	500	0	0.00	0.92	3.13	
0.04	18.35	62.50	10,000	EcoPond	10,000	0	0.04	18.35	62.50	
0.15	75.12	255.86	40,938	Administration	39,614	1,324	0.15	72.69	247.59	Includes insurance adjustment of $25k
0.05	22.02	75.00	12,000	Consultant	12,000	0	0.05	22.02	75.00	
0.05	23.49	80.00	12,800	Fixed Charges - Rates	17,026	-4,226	0.07	31.24	106.41	Rates increase
0.00	0.00	0.00	0	Fixed Charges - Land Rent	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	
0.09	44.42	151.31	24,209	Lease - Technology (Collars)	24,255	-46	0.09	44.50	151.59	
0.05	25.83	87.99	14,079	DairyNZ Levy	13,865	214	0.05	25.44	86.66	
5.36	**2,614.12**	**8,904.33**	**1,424,693**	**TOTAL FARM WORKING EXPENSES**	**1,552,884**	**-128,190**	**5.97**	**2,849.33**	**9,705.52**	
5.20	**2,534.41**	**8,632.85**	**1,381,255**	**CONTRIBUTION PROFIT**	**1,095,503**	**-285,752**	**4.21**	**2,010.10**	**6,846.90**	
0.00	0.00	0.00		*less* East Block Adjustment - Support block	4,419	4,419	0.02	8.11	27.62	
5.36	**2,614.12**	**8,904.33**	**1,424,693**	**Total Operating Expenses inc East Block**	**1,557,303**	**-123,771**	**5.99**	**2,857.44**	**9,733.14**	
				Financial Ratios						
$10.00	$4,874	$16,602	$2,656,330	Milk Gross income	$2,470,000	-$186,330	$9.50	$4,532	$15,438	
$0.56	$275	$935	$149,619	Stock Gross income	$178,387	$28,768	$0.69	$327	$1,115	
$10.56	$5,149	$17,537	$2,805,949	Total Gross income	$2,648,387	-$157,562	$10.19	$4,859	$16,552	
$5.36	$2,614	$8,904	$1,424,693	Less Farm Operating Expenditure	$1,557,303	-$123,771	$5.99	$2,857	$9,733	
$5.20	**$2,534**	**$8,633**	**$1,381,255**	**EBIT**	**$1,091,084**	**-$281,333**	**$4.20**	**$2,002**	**$6,819**	

Body Condition Score: Making Autumn Count

Ryan Luckman BVSc (Dist) MANZCVS (Vet Epi) | LUDF Discussion | March 2026

What this handout covers

BCS at calving is one of the biggest drivers of milk production, reproductive performance, and cow health. This handout covers four things:

- **Section 1: Why BCS targets matter** - the production and reproductive cost of getting it wrong, and what you should be aiming for.
- **Section 2: The reality of winter BCS gain** - why relying on winter feeding alone to fix condition problems usually doesn't work, and how to get the most out of your winter feed budget.
- **Section 3: Autumn management options** - the practical tools you can use right now (milking frequency, priority mobs, early dry-off) and how to decide which approach suits which cows.
- **Section 4: The LUDF plan** - what LUDF is doing this season. Peter and Bernie will talk through this in more detail.

The key message: time is the enemy when it comes to BCS. The decisions you make in March and April have a far bigger impact on calving BCS than anything you can do over winter. The earlier you act, the more options you have.

1. Why BCS Targets Matter

DairyNZ recommends cows calve at **BCS 5.0 for mixed-age cows** and **BCS 5.5 for first and second calvers**. These aren't arbitrary numbers - they come from decades of New Zealand research showing that cows at these targets produce more milk, get in calf sooner, and stay healthier.

What does getting it wrong actually cost?

For every 1.0 BCS unit a cow is below target at calving, DairyNZ research shows she will:

- **Produce about 15 kg less milk solids** in the following lactation. At $9/kg MS, that's $135 per cow walking straight past your vat.
- **Take 8-10 extra days to start cycling after calving**. That means she's later to get in calf, calves later next year, and the problem compounds season after season.
- **Have lower in-calf rates and higher empty rates**. VetSouth analysis showed cows that were BCS 4.0 or below in autumn had a 10% lower 6-week in-calf rate than cows at 4.5+.
- Add in the reproduction costs (late calvers, empty cows, intervention costs) and the **total cost is about $175 per cow per BCS unit below target**.

The economics at a glance ($9/kg MS)

BCS Change	Extra MS	MS Value	Repro $	Total
3.0 → 4.0	18 kg	$162	$40	**$202**
3.5 → 4.5	12.5 kg	$113	$40	**$153**
Rule of thumb	**15 kg**	**$135**	**$40**	**$175**

Source: DairyNZ Facts & Figures Ch.7, updated for $9/kg MS. Reproduction benefits based on DairyNZ research over two seasons.

Why first and second calvers need BCS 5.5

Young cows are still growing, so they need extra body reserves to support both growth and milk production. They compete poorly against older, dominant cows for feed - especially in larger mobs. They're also the most likely to lose more than 1.0 BCS after calving, which delays cycling and leads to poor mating results. Getting young cows to BCS 5.5 keeps them cycling on time and keeps them in the herd longer.

> **The positive cycle:** Cows that calve at their BCS target tend to return to the same condition score the following year. Getting it right once sets them up for the next season too. Getting it wrong creates a downward spiral that gets harder and harder to break out of.

2. The Reality of Winter BCS Gain

A common assumption is that you can fix BCS problems over winter: dry cows off, send them to crop, and they'll come right. But the feed budgets tell a different story - especially for cows that need to gain a full condition score.

You have fewer effective days than you think

Consider a typical Canterbury scenario: you dry a cow off on 31st May and she's due to calve from 1st August. That looks like about 60 days. But two things eat into that time:

- **The first 7-10 days after dry-off:** cows are adjusting to their new diet and environment. They typically don't gain any BCS during this period.
- **The final 3 weeks before calving:** the calf is growing rapidly at this stage and energy demands from the pregnancy increase sharply. On top of that, the growing calf physically takes up more room in the abdomen, which **reduces rumen capacity** - so the cow can eat less at the very time she needs more energy. **Cows cannot gain BCS during this period**. All the energy goes to the calf and preparing for calving.

That leaves a max of 45 effective days to actually put condition on. If a cow needs to gain a full BCS unit in 45 days, the daily feed requirements become very high - often higher than what typical winter grazing contracts provide.

What the feed budgets look like

To gain BCS, a dry cow needs energy above maintenance and pregnancy requirements. All systems below include 2 kg baleage/day as a base. The crop amounts shown are **what each cow needs to be offered on top of that baleage**:

Feed system	For +0.5 BCS	For +1.0 BCS
Kale (+ 2 kg baleage)	**11.5 kg kale/day (13.5 kg total)**	**14.5 kg kale/day (16.5 kg total)**
Fodder beet (+ 2 kg baleage)	**8 kg FB/day (10 kg total)**	**10 kg FB/day (12 kg total)**
Typical winter contract	*10-12 kg DM/day total*	*10-12 kg DM/day total*

All amounts in kg DM. Kale ME 11.5, 25% wastage. Fodder beet ME 13, 5% wastage. Baleage ME 10, 20% wastage.

Look at the +1.0 BCS column on kale: you need to offer over 14 kg of kale per cow per day, plus baleage. To get that much kale into her you need very high residuals in the crop - but high residuals mean more wastage (25% becomes 30-35%), which means you need to offer even more to hit intake. It becomes a vicious cycle that's hard to make work in practice.

Bottom line: if a cow is 1.0 BCS below target at dry-off in late May, winter feeding alone probably won't get her there by calving. The real opportunity to fix BCS is in autumn - not winter.

How to make the most of your winter feed

You can't grow more crop at this point - so the question is how to get the best return from the winter feed budget you already have.

- **Separate your skinny cows from your fat cows:** This is the single most effective thing you can do with a fixed feed budget. When light cows are managed separately, you can offer them more feed on a daily basis – and accept higher wastage figures to make sure they're actually getting enough in. A cow already at BCS 5.0 only needs maintenance over winter; a cow at BCS 3.5 needs significantly more offered per day. Running them together forces you to feed to the average. Split them and you can push the light mob harder without overfeeding the cows that are already on target.
- **Front-load the feeding:** Cows can't gain BCS in the final 3 weeks before calving no matter what you feed them. So there's no value in saving feed for late winter. **Push your extra feed into the first 45 effective days after dry-off**, then drop back to maintenance for the final month. Too often farmers end up with surplus winter crop or silage at the end of the season that they struggle to get rid of - while their light cows come home without having hit their BCS target. Plan the feeding curve to front-load, not spread evenly.
- **Match feed to need:** Cows at BCS 4.5 only need 50-60 days dry when well-fed. Cows at BCS 3.5 need 100+ days. Allocate your best feed to the cows with the furthest to go, and let the cows near target tick over on lower-quality options.

3. Autumn BCS Management: Your Options

Step one: get your cows scored - individually - as soon as possible. You can't make good dry-off or feeding decisions without knowing where each cow is at. A herd average isn't enough - you need to know which specific cows are behind so you can target your effort and feed where it matters most.

You have three main tools. Most herds will use a combination depending on individual cow needs.

Option A: Reduce milking frequency

Moving to 3-in-2 (16-hour milking) or once-a-day (OAD) reduces energy demand and gives cows more time to eat and rest. 16-hour milking offers a modest BCS benefit – around 0.1 BCS gain – and helps reduce further BCS loss in late lactation, making it a useful first step even if you don't go all the way to OAD. OAD for 3+ months can gain about 0.25 BCS - modest, but helpful for cows that are close to target. OAD for less than a month has minimal impact, so you need to start early to see a benefit. First and second calvers are ideal candidates. Not recommended for high SCC herds.

Option B: Priority mob with extra feeding

Draft out your light cows (BCS ≤4.0) and run them separately with the best pasture and extra supplement (PKE, silage, grain). Reduced competition from dominant cows means they actually eat what you give them. If your shed has in-shed feeding, this is a great way to target extra feed to lighter cows at milking time without overfeeding the rest of the herd.

The key advantage of a priority mob is that **these cows still come through the shed every day** - you can see them, monitor their condition, and adjust feeding as you go. This matters more than people realise (see the warning under Option C). Often combined with OAD milking for maximum effect.

Option C: Early dry-off

The most efficient option for significant BCS gain. DairyNZ research showed that 150 kg DM of grain fed over 100 days produced only +0.25 BCS in a milking cow, but **+1.0 BCS in a dry cow**. That's four times more efficient - once milk production is removed from the equation, feed goes directly into body reserves.

There's a common myth that cows put on weight more easily when they're still milking. There is a grain of truth here – cows are slightly more efficient at partitioning energy towards BCS gain while lactating. But because of the huge energy demand from milk production, the overall process of gaining BCS while milking is very inefficient. You're trying to fill a bucket with a hole in it. Drying a cow off removes that drain and is by far the most effective way to put condition on.

Use this table (DairyNZ Facts & Figures) to work backwards from calving date and decide when each cow needs to be dried off. These numbers already include the first 10 days of adjustment and the final 30 days where no BCS gain occurs.

Cow BCS	R3yo BCS	Pasture Only	Well-Fed + Supps
3.0	3.5	**160 days**	**120 days**
3.5	4.0	**130 days**	**100 days**
4.0	4.5	**100 days**	**80 days**
4.5	5.0	**70 days**	**60 days**

Example: a mature cow at BCS 4.0, calving 1st August, on pasture only needs 100 dry days - that means dry by **23rd April at the latest**. A second calver at the same BCS needs even longer – her target is BCS 5.5, not 5.0, so allow around 100 days well-fed to bridge that gap.

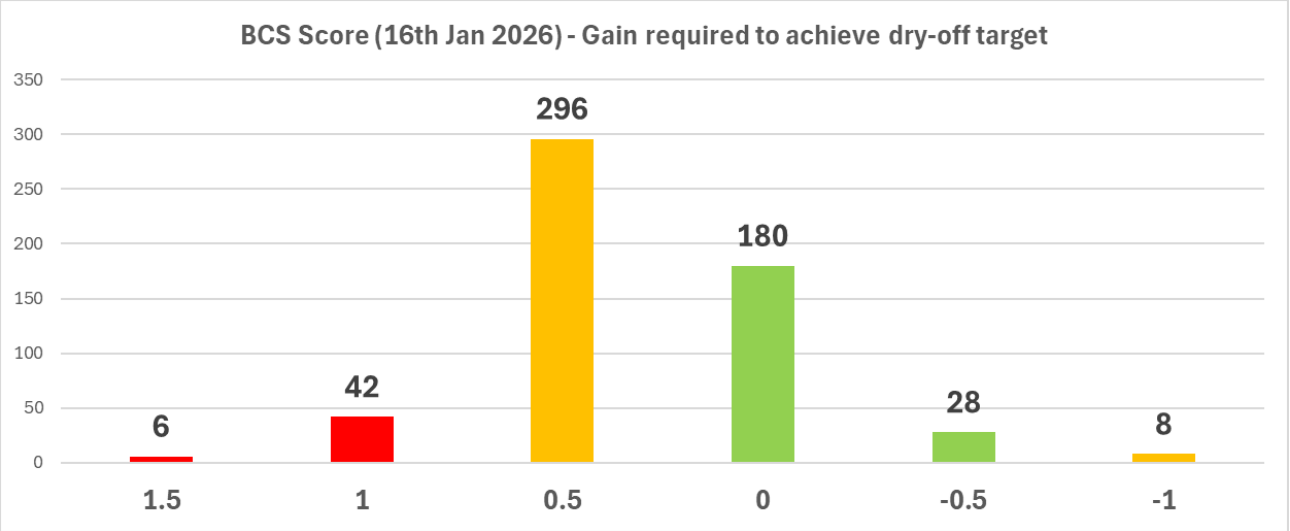
⚠ Don't create a forgotten mob. The biggest mistake with early dry-off is drying cows off and then forgetting about them in the back paddock. If they're not being fed properly and checked regularly, they won't gain the condition you're banking on. Split dry cows by BCS and calving date, give them quality feed, check BCS every 2-4 weeks, and protect young cows from dominant older cows. If you can't commit to that level of management, a priority mob through the shed (Option B) may be the better call.

Quick guide: Cows at BCS 4.0-4.5 needing a small gain? → Reduced milking frequency or priority mob. Cows at BCS ≤4.0 needing ≥1.0 BCS gain? → Early dry-off with good feeding. Not confident you can feed and monitor dry cows well? → Keep them in a priority mob through the shed with extra feed.

4. The LUDF Plan

Peter and Bernie will talk through the LUDF plan in detail, but here are the key decisions already made:

Action	Detail
3-in-2 milking	Changed to 3-in-2 milking frequency from **30th January**. Already in place and giving cows the benefit through to dry-off.
Early dry-off	Individual dry-off plan based on each cow's **current BCS and expected calving date**. Lighter cows and early calvers dried off first.
Split by BCS	**Separating skinny and fat cows over winter** so lighter cows can be offered more feed daily, with higher wastage accepted to ensure adequate intake.
Winter feed	Access to **oats, rape, and kale** this winter, plus **grass silage**. Multiple feed options to match nutrition to individual cow needs and manage transitions safely.



The take-home message:

Every BCS unit below target at calving costs around $175 per cow in lost production and reproduction. The decisions you make now determine if you can achieve calving targets over winter. Here's your action list:

- **Get your cows scored individually.** A herd average doesn't tell you which cows need help. You need individual scores to make targeted decisions.
- **Separate your light cows.** Offer them more feed daily and accept higher wastage - you can't fix BCS if they're being fed to the herd average. Keep these mobs over Winter and separate later for calving.
- **Consider milking frequency.** Make these changes early for maximum benefit (OAD > 16HR).
- **Make early dry-off decisions for thin cows.** Cows at BCS ≤4.0 need the most time - work backwards from calving date and act now, not in May.
- **Front-load your winter feeding.** Push your best feed into the first 45 effective days after dry-off, then taper to maintenance. Don't spread it evenly.
- **Don't create forgotten mobs.** If you dry cows off early, commit to feeding and monitoring them properly. If you can't, keep them in a priority mob through the shed.

Every week you wait in March and April reduces your options. Time is your most valuable resource – and it's running out.

References: DairyNZ Facts & Figures Ch.7 | DairyNZ Body Condition and Nutrition for Reproduction | DairyNZ FarmFact 3-25 | DairyNZ BCS Strategies | LIC Fertility Focus data | VetSouth BCS & Reproduction Analysis (2022)

PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT

Growing People, Growing Performance

The Importance of Investing in Learning and Development of your Team

The Opportunity:

- Set people up for success
- Develop an engaged team that feels valued
- Grow and improve team capability
- Identify problems early and support change
- Focus on strengths rather than weaknesses

The Benefits:

- Encourages and reinforces the right behaviours
- Motivates employees to improve
- Builds trust through recognition of both good and bad
- Creates a “no surprises” approach
- Builds sector capability for future resilience

Problem Solving - *Finding the REAL (Root) Cause*

Can't do vs Won't do

Did they have...

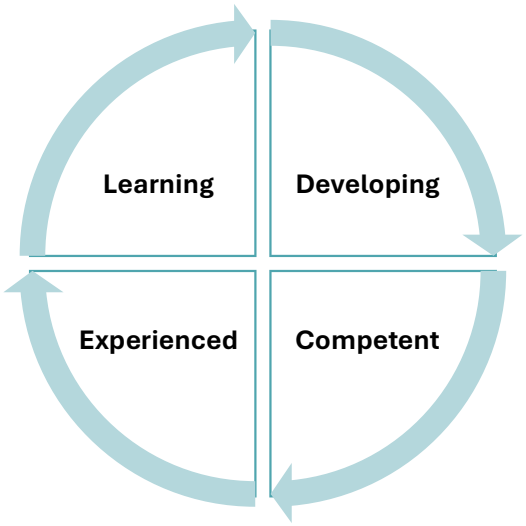
1. the **knowledge** to do the job?
2. the **skill** to do the job?
3. the correct **method** to do the job?
4. the right **tools** to do the job?
5. enough **resources** to do the job?

If the answer is NO then it is a... CAN'T DO situation (our responsibility as leaders)

If you answer YES then it's most likely a WON'T DO! (employees responsibility)

Skill acquisition

- 10% training event
- 20% peer learning
- 70% on the job



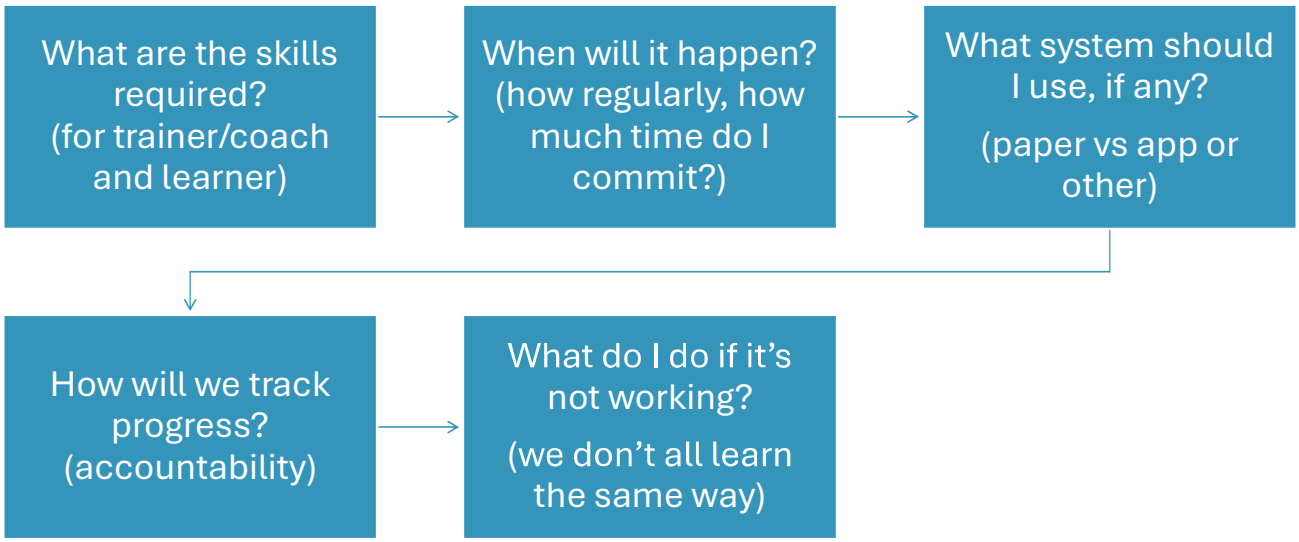
Setting People up for Success with

Training and Development

4 Stages of Learning

- Unconsciously Incompetent
- Consciously Incompetent
- Consciously Competent
- Unconsciously Competent

Implementing a Learning & Development Process



Relevance of the Farming Seasonal Cycle

Calving	Mating	Summer	Autumn	Winter

What do your team need to learn that is relevant for this time of the season?

What is the different requirements for the different roles in the business?

When is the best time to learn those skills?

Growth and Development Skills Matrix

Employee:
Manager:

Start Date:

Review Dates

Colour Coding Key:

Farm Assistant/ Senior FA	Herd Manager/2IC	Farm Manager/Assistant Manager

Achievement Level

Learning: Requires training or supervision to undertake the task to the required standard

Developing: Putting new skills into practice, requires a level of checking and coaching support, particularly when problem-solving

Competent: Can safely and competently undertake the task without supervision to the required standard.

Experienced: Can train others to undertake the task, high level of problem-solving ability

**insert date that achievement level is achieved*

Personal management	L	D	C	E	Notes	
Arrives ready for work on time free from impairment	*	*	*	*		
Responds to requests for assistance in good humour	*	*	*	*		
Helps other members of the team	*	*	*	*		

EXAMPLE

Feed management	L	D	C	E	Notes
Manages weeds following farm policy	*	*	*	*	
Can put up fence correctly to allocate correct area, ensure access to fresh water and adequate power	*	*	*	*	
Can assess post grazing residuals	*	*	*	*	
Can feed out following farm policy	*	*	*	*	
Can complete a pasture walk using the rising plate meter	*	*	*	*	
Can create and use feed wedge to allocate pasture	*	*	*	*	
Understands the on-farm feed policy, can develop a feed budget, and calculate pasture and supplement requirements, assisting with weekly grazing plan	*	*	*	*	
Manages surpluses/deficits to maintain pasture quality and optimum utilisation	*	*	*	*	
Understands and ensures good management practice around land cultivation	*	*	*	*	
Plans pasture allocation and grazing round to minimise pasture damage and pugging	*	*	*	*	
Strategically purchases supplement on a cents/KJ/ME basis	*	*	*	*	
Ensures whole farm pasture cover assessed and farm walks completed at least weekly	*	*	*	*	
Annual feed budget developed for farm, including fertiliser inputs, cropping/re-grassing plans and pasture cover targets	*	*	*	*	
Feed budget adjustments are made monthly and reforecast changes flagged	*	*	*	*	
Contingency plans are in place for adverse weather conditions	*	*	*	*	
Animals are fed to optimum levels with the most cost-effective feed type	*	*	*	*	
Implements an effective weed control programme	*	*	*	*	
Develops and implements a pasture renewal programme which meets the needs of the farm	*	*	*	*	

12-Month Development Process

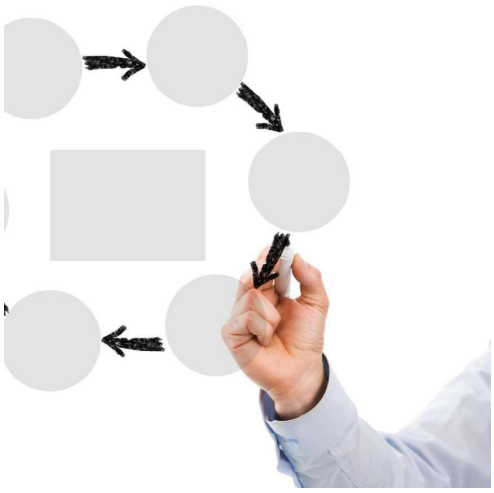
Kick-off Meeting
Month 1 meeting sets clear goals and development priorities collaboratively between leader and employee. Start by focusing on what's relevant and important.

Monthly Check-ins
Regular monthly meetings track progress, review goals, and identify new learning opportunities from Months 2 to 11.

Quarterly Realignment
Quarterly sessions enable reflection and adjustment of development plan focus to align with seasonal requirements.

Annual Review
Month 12 comprehensive evaluation pulls together insights from the year and sets future development goals.

RESET AND REPEAT – ITS AN ONGOING ANNUAL PROCESS



Getting Started – The kick off meeting

Prior to the meeting

Allocate time and get prepared

Communicate with your employee so they know what to expect.

What do they want to learn, what do you need them to learn? What are their career aspirations

Where are they now? (current state)

Is there anything that's relevant for them to learn linked with the time of year

Quarterly Development Plan: Example **For: xyz** **Period: Autumn - March to May**

Key Outcomes	Tasks Required	Purpose (what does good look like)	Current Position (where are we now)	Target Position (what will we measure)	Review & Results
Cow Management: Ensure cows are fully fed and production is maximized. Manage animal health and ensure cow condition meets target CS on 31st May.	▪ Fully feed cows. ▪ Develop a plan to increase cow CS to target by 31 May. ▪ Develop and implement plan for management of lame cows during autumn.	▪ Maximise prod plus increase CS. ▪ Target CS ___ on 31 May ▪ Minimise number of lame cows ▪ Lame cows treated quickly and effectively	▪ Prod below budget ▪ Cow CS _____ ▪ Number of lame cows is _____.	▪ Daily production targets met ▪ CS plan presented to owner. ▪ Cow CS by end of this period is _____ ▪ Lameness plan presented to owner. ▪ Number of lame cows less than _____	
Pasture Management: Ensure efficient utilization of grass. Manage pasture to achieve autumn/winter pasture cover targets. Using irrigation and urea as tools to increase pasture cover as required.	▪ Develop autumn/winter pasture management plan, including targets, use of supplements, irrigation and urea to achieve these. ▪ Meet target daily grazing residuals. ▪ Efficiently use supplements to	▪ Pasture cover at drying off to be _____ ▪ Irrigation to be running at maximum capacity ▪ Strategic use of urea and supplements to achieve targets	▪ Current pasture cover _____ ▪ Current rotation length _____ ▪ Current supplement use _____ ▪ Current grazing residual _____ ▪ Current irrigation level is _____ ▪ Current urea use is _____	▪ Pasture management plan to owner ▪ Pasture cover is _____ ▪ Grazing residual is _____ ▪ Rotation length is _____ ▪ Supplement use is _____ ▪ Urea use is _____ ▪ Irrigation	

Monthly Development Actions worksheet

Name:	Farm Business:
Position:	Date:

Development focus areas for the month	**Specific Actions** *(including training)*	**Target level and measures** *(what will be achieved in the next month?)*	**Results** *(complete this at next check-in)*

FEEDBACK

Spend time with your people

Provide regular feedback

Formal and Informal -**Timely and regular**

Formal linked to development and review of progress, no surprises. *Ideally a monthly commitment*

Informal as needed but minimum of 10/15 min per week.

Giving positive feedback ...**praise**... to reward the behaviour you want

If there are problems take immediate action

Thank you for coming along to our Focus Day.

We welcome your feedback and recommendations for future topics of interest,

let us know by emailing office@siddc.org.nz, we would love to hear from you.

Our thanks to our partners: