

# Weekly Farm Summary 11 October 2023

Farm-system impacts of: Bales vs Beet for winter AND Reducing N loss to water by 30%.

	Blue -Std Infrastructure	Pink- LI Baleage	Green- Std FB	Yellow- LI FB
Farmlet area including wintering	49.3	93.6	86.9	60.8
Peak cow numbers	141	218	243	141
Milking Area	46.4	87.8	75.3	55.0
Current Herd size (cows)	140	207	234	137
Pasture Stocking rate (current)	3.0	2.4	3.1	2.5
Winter Feed Milking supplement	Baleage	Baleage	Beet	Beet
Average Cover (kgDM/ha)	2199	2366	2251	2272
Average Growth (kgDM/ha/d)	45	47	56	42
Target rotation length (d)	24	30	26	29
Last week actual rotation (d)	22	24	18	29
Last week supp (kgDM/c)	4.6	2.2	4.4	2.2
Latest Average BCS	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.8
% of herd on priority management	4%	6%	6%	5%
7-day Average Milk yield (L/cow)	24.2	23.9	24.6	24.8
7-day Average Milk yield (kgMS/c)	2.13	2.10	2.20	2.23
<b>Nitrogen Cap kgN/ha/yr</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>50</b>
% Nitrogen used (kgN/ha) YTD	11%	16%	18%	13%
Effluent N YTD	0	0	1	0
YTD supp (kg DM/c)	76	99	169	71
YTD MS/milk ha (YTD MS/farm ha)	257 (255)	200 (222)	280 (230)	222 (215)
<b>Focus area</b>	<b>Current Status</b>			
<b>Milk Production</b>	Milk production is finally back to pre-flood levels and sitting between 2.1 and 2.2 kgMS/cow after a few weeks around 2.0 kg MS/cow/day. The SCC of the FB vat has come down and is sitting in the excellence level after several weeks with it being in the quality band. FB vat averaging 110,000 vs the baleage vat averaging 85,000 in the past week.			
<b>Pasture &amp; Feed</b>	Growth rates are averaging 48kgDM/ha/day across the farm this week with a couple of the herds struggling to meet residual. Strategies are being put in place to manage this over the coming week, however it is a fine line as not to take away from good milk production. Rotation length to stay the same as this is the fastest round we will get to this season. Stretching out any longer will push too much feed ahead and with soil temperatures at 11.7 and N now in the system, we want to be moving as fast as we can without compromising quality and quantity.			
<b>Animals</b>	BCS data has identified a few MA cows and 1st and 2nd calvers that are not at the level we would like pre-mating. Decision rules have been written to determine which cows are getting priority feeding and put on OAD milking vs ones just getting priority feeding. We are moving to monthly herd tests at the end of the month rather than fortnightly. Mating plans have been finalised with the beef straws we are using both coming through the dairy beef progeny trial.			
<b>Environment</b>	The first round of N applications is complete, and we are already seeing a reduction in the yellow colour in the paddocks that received N two weeks ago.			
<b>Wintering</b>	Cultivation has started with the first pass of rippers going over in the last week. All the springer and this year's wintering paddocks that required spraying have been sprayed out and for paddocks going into FB for next winter, buffer and breakout areas have been fenced off and flagged for the contractors. Transition bales for next winters FB paddocks have also been put in the paddocks already.			
<b>People</b>	The farm team have been making the most of the window between calving and mating by fitting in some training- some undergoing fire warden training and 2 team members updating their first aid training next week.			
<b>Research</b>	Our new research technician has started this week, welcome Catherine!			

# Milk Production

## Principles of Milk Production management this week

Milk production	Milk production is finally back above pre-flood levels, with the two standard herds outperforming the LI herds on per hectare level and the fodder beet herds outperforming the baleage herds on a per cow basis. SCC as mentioned above has returned to excellence levels in the FB vat and is still around 85,000 for the baleage vat. Fat to protein ratio is sitting lower than this time last year, further investigations will be done to determine whether it is a reduction in fat or increase in protein driving this difference. Fat % is higher in the FB vat but protein is similar in both vats.
Key Influences of Milk Production	The quantity of pasture in the system has pushed production up this week, however residuals have been sacrificed in a few paddocks to drive this higher pasture intake. We are balancing not leaving too much behind and creating poorer quality next round and not pushing the cows too hard and being negatively impacted in the vat.
Cow Management	For a number of reasons we are shifting from fortnightly herd test to monthly from the end of this month. To ensure that we keep on top of anything that may impact SCC or bad mastitis cases, the herd will be fully stripped every 4 days. We will continue to identify at risk cows based on BCS and use priority feeding to increase intake and reduced milking frequency to decrease demand.

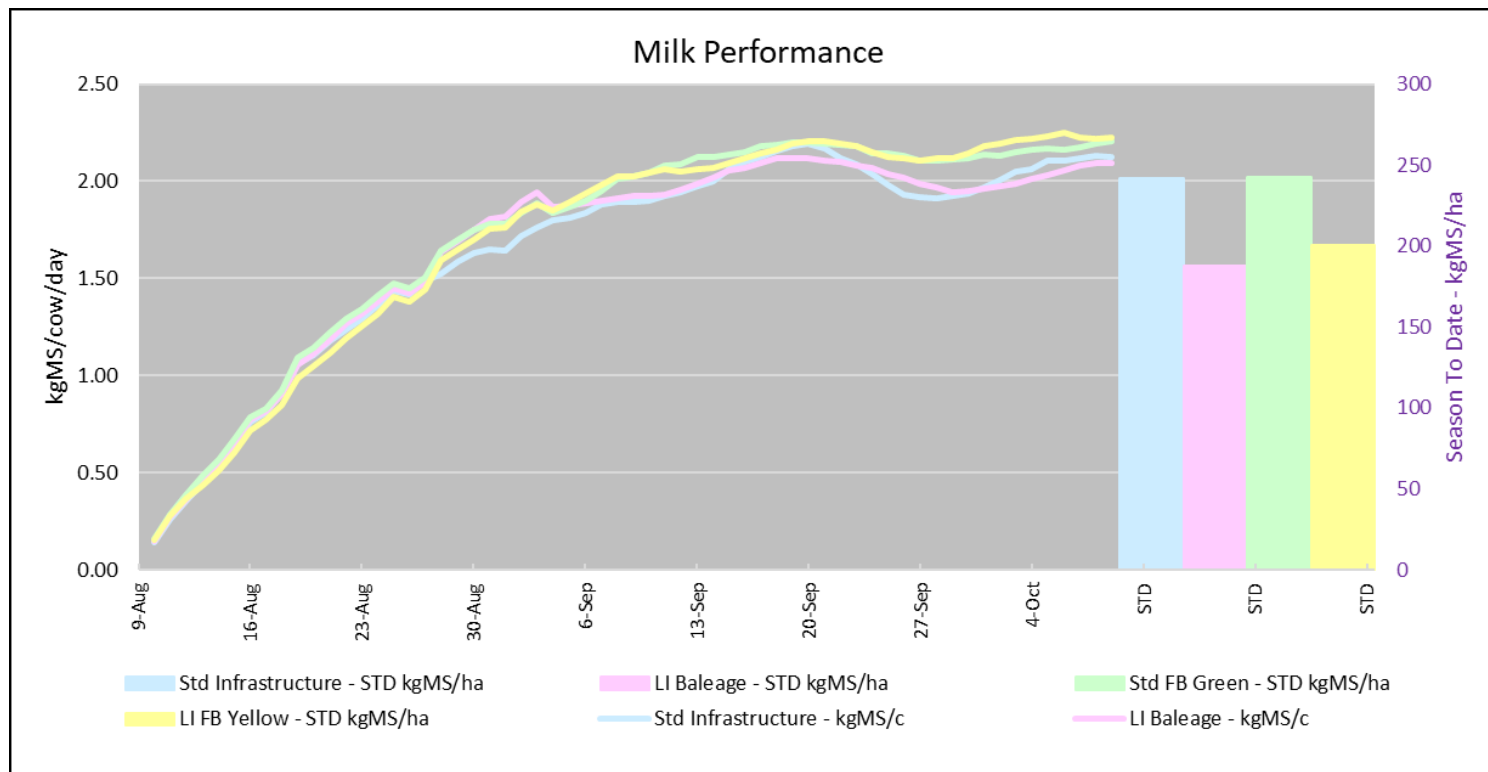


Figure 1. Milksolids per cow/day season to date and kgMS/ha season to date.

# Feed

## Principles of Feed management this week

<p>Feed Quality</p>	<p>Pasture quality samples have come back showing DM average is back at 17% with a range of 15-17.5%. Fibre has increased slightly which aligns with some increased stem elongation spotted in this weeks farm walk. There is also some plantain seedhead present in the new grass paddocks and the first signs of ryegrass seedhead noticed this week too....</p> <p>Differences in stocking rate and feed demand between the herds means pasture availability is varied across the farmlets with deficits to be filled with a combination of inshed feed and baleage.</p> <p>Aeration to start on 6 of last years new grass paddocks to combat the compaction damage and help promote better growth and quality for the remainder of the season. More paddocks will be done in the autumn.</p>
<p>Growth Rate</p>	<p>Growth rates have continued to lift this week and with soil temperatures above 11 degrees and good weather conditions APC across the farm has lifted. Given the residuals being left, either we are underestimating the pasture available or cow intake is not as high as we are estimating. In the next few weeks if growth continues as it has, paddocks will be stepped over for conservation.</p>
<p>Nitrogen Strategy</p>	<p>First round applications have been completed and we will start the next round within the next few weeks, ensuring there is at least 21 days between applications.</p>

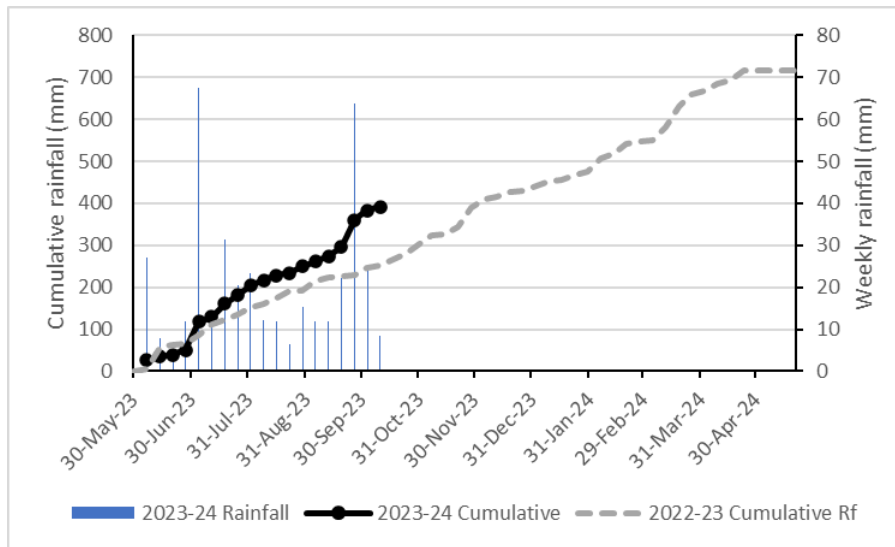


Figure 2. Season to date rainfall compared with cumulative rainfall 2022-23

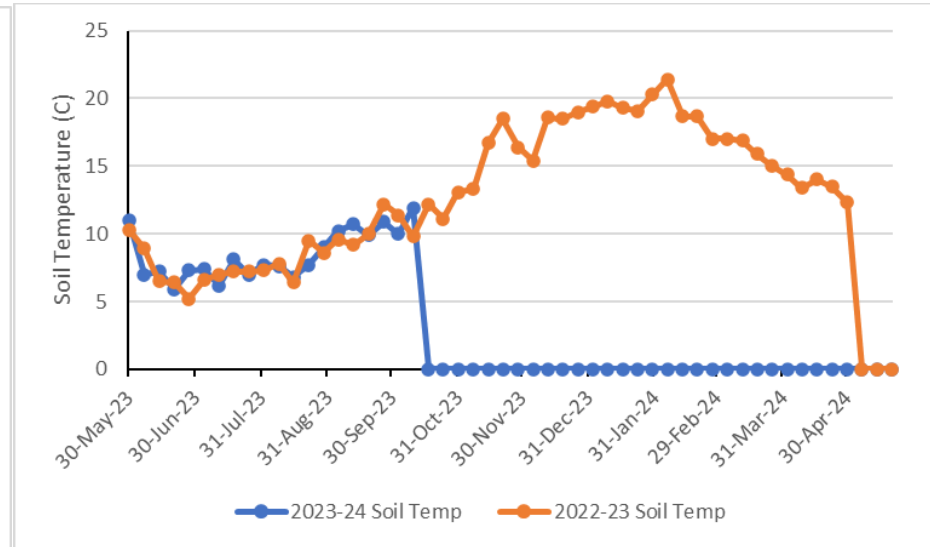


Figure 3. Soil temperatures 2023-24 vs 2022-23

# Feed

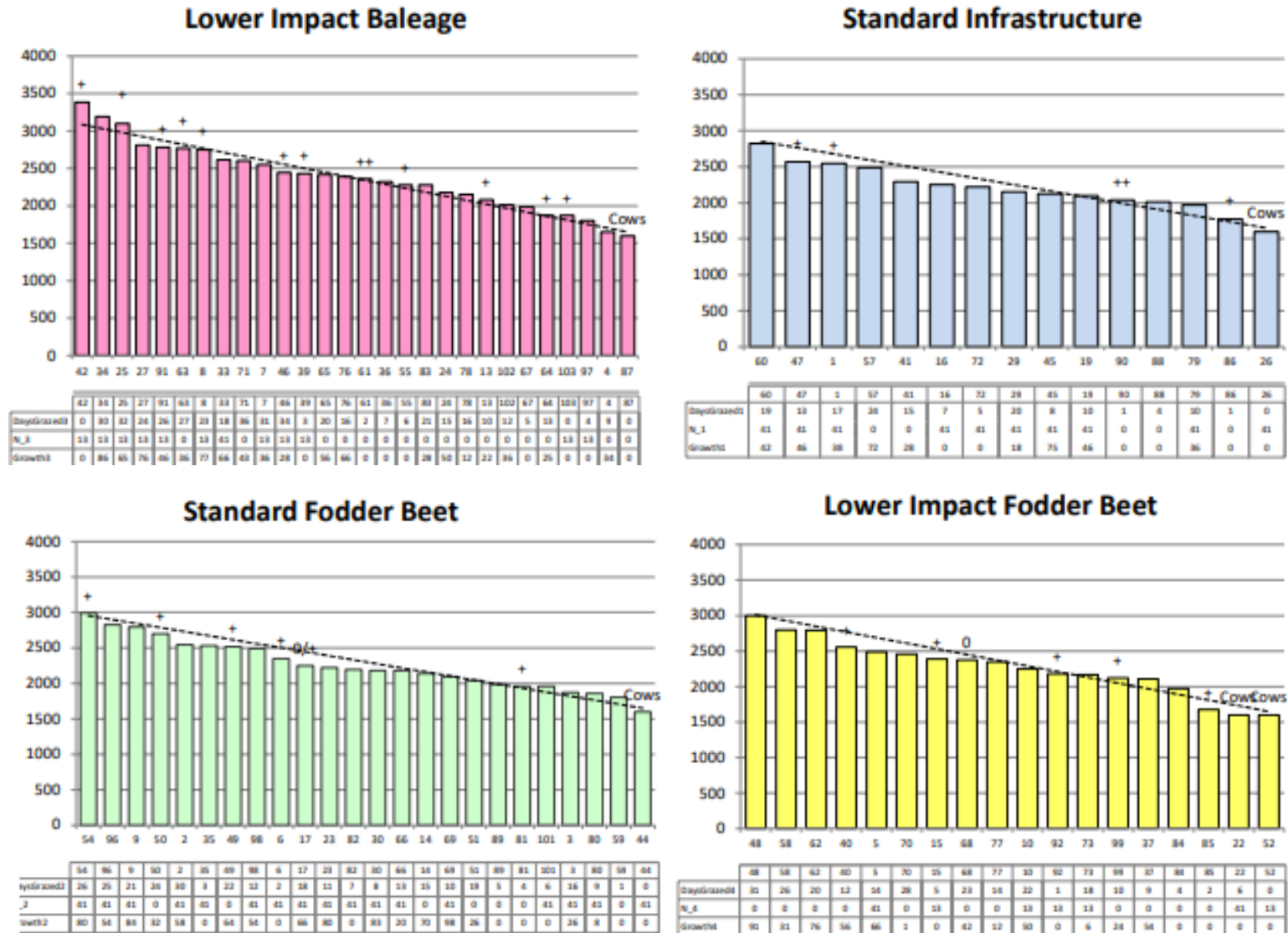


Figure 4. Plate meter feed wedges at 10 October 2023

# Extension



**Figure 5,6,7: Guest speakers in action at this weeks SDH Field Day at the Wallacetown Community Centre. Top left- Chris Smith and Dyland Ditchfield discuss hay bale grazing as winter feed. Top right: Dr Kirsty Verhoek explains the findings of the heat stress trial completed at SDH earlier this year. Bottom: Ryan Luckman of Veterinary Centre Waimate shares his learnings from the data coming out of Allflex Collars and how SDH is performing across transition, pre-mating and mating**

