



Telford Dairy Project

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Issue 10

Telford Dairy Farm
610 Owaka Highway

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Editor Ian Knowles
ian.knowles@telford.ac.nz
ph: 03 419 0304

Welcome

Telford Dairy Project has had another busy year. This season we teamed up with DairyNZ to host the Tight Management for Tight Times seminars. This provided farmers with the chance to discuss and debate the Telford Dairy financials, and use the lessons from this to improve the budgeting and management of their own farm.

Telford Farm has had an average autumn. The dry period in March really slowed things down, and we have been on OAD milking since mid April to reduce intakes and put condition on cows.

We have been granted funding from DairyNZ for the next year and have a range of research projects already underway, so we look forward to the year ahead.

This is the final newsletter for 2009/10. From everyone at the Telford Dairy Project, thank you for your interest and support. We hope you all get a chance to re-charge the batteries over winter and we look forward to the 2010/11 season.

A reminder to everyone that all the information on the Telford dairy project, including our field day notes, are available on the DairyNZ website, www.dairynz.co.nz. Our weekly production reports are available on the South Island Dairy Development Centre Website, www.siddc.org.nz

Email me if you would like to go on the email list. If your email has changed, please let us know.

Feed Situation

12th May

Av Farm Cover 1988kgDM/ha Av weekly growth 34kgDM/ha/day

The feed situation at Telford was tight this autumn. A dry March reduced our pasture growth rates below our feed demand so silage was required to fill the gap. This impacted on our MS production so low producing cows were dried off from mid April. Preliminary pasture data shows we have grown about 1tDM/ha less than last year. The dry autumn has impacted on our winter crops as well, with an average yield of 11tDM/ha (we budgeted for 15tDM/ha), so 150 cows will be wintered off-farm.

Cow Production

Our stocking rate dropped this season to 500 cows or 2.9 cows/ha. We peaked higher than last year and were on target to match last year's production with 10% less cows. However, per head production dropped markedly during the cold spell in December, and with less cows milked, we are now behind target. We are currently milking once-a-day, and have dried off the lighter and/or earlier calving AB cows. SCC is up around 350,000 now and needs careful management.

Milk solids targets for the 2009/10 season are:

Target:	195000 kgMS total,	1147 kgMS/ha	or 394 kgMS/cow
To date:	187860 kgMS total,	1105 kgMS/ha	or 380 kgMS/cow

Effluent Management

Effluent management has been easier this season with our improved system and more focus.

We will start the winter with ample storage, which is required since our window for safe application has been calculated between Mid September and Mid April. We have noticed a big boost in the general health and production of the clay downs pastures following application of effluent.



Mating

We improved our 6 week in-calf rate from 60% last year to 65% this season, which was pleasing. We hope to make similar process next season. Overall we had 12% MT cows, which is far too high. We aim to reduce this next season. The bull teams were rotated every three days and bulls removed after 13 weeks total mating period. With the wet period in January we found there were a lot of lame bulls and think this has created some fertility issues.

Young Stock

We are happy with the R2 heifers. They had an MT rate of 5% and have grown out very well. We trialed once a day calf feeding this season and have had mixed results. They are now at an average live weight of 185kg, which is on track for a cross-bred heifer. Extra feeding was required to get them back on target, as they did have a slower start compared to the twice a day fed calves the previous year.

Additional Projects

We have some new additional projects associated with the Telford Dairy Project:

1. The AgResearch Nitrous Oxide inhibitor research project (Eco-N & DCN type products). This is studying the impact on pasture production, measuring the reductions in nitrogen gas and leaching.
2. Another long-term project is the AgriSeeds cultivar and endophyte demonstration plots. This is comparing a wide range of Ryegrass cultivars available on the market, for cow preference and pasture persistence.
3. We are also assisting with two Sustainable Farming Fund projects on dairy cow wintering systems and effects of wintering on soils.
4. If you have any ideas for new projects you would like to see conducted at Telford for the following season please let us know.

Many thanks to our major sponsors:

