

Season to Date

Soil moisture appears adequate for most areas and even as we head into July temperatures are still mild and farmers are finding that if they don't make adjustments they are seeing feed build up in front.

Leaf Emergence Rates (LER) Week 2 June 2015 (based on max and min air temperatures).

Serpentine	Bunbury	Margaret River	Albany
13	14	14	13

Pasture Management

The LER suggests that the round length is still out at 39 days and even longer in some areas. The interesting observation is that the mild and relatively dry conditions are seeing feed building up in front. This effectively means that if you have been diligent in maintaining round length based on leaf emergence rates and you have not adjusted cow intakes of grain/silage/hay then you might find you are staying longer in the daily allocated area to get your residuals down. This effectively means you have extended the round length beyond the three leaf stage and that tomorrow's allocation is over three leaves. If you look at a previously grazed tiller you will find a fourth leaf beginning to poke its head out. The oldest leaf will start its decay process. This might not be visible to the eye but fibre levels in that leaf are building and it has less nutritive value than before the decaying process set in. It is always difficult to know what to do in the case where pasture growth rates exceed demand as we head through winter because conditions can change in a week and everything slows down. Of course we all know what to do when the surplus happens in spring. The options we have for the short term through winter are to leave things as they are and we will find we will be wasting tucker or we address the demand side of the equation. We reduce the amount of other feed and let the cows have more pasture on **the daily allocation based on LER** so that they achieve the desired residual. This will sound anathema to many. What about production?? Well if we target cows in mid and late lactation to receive a lower daily allocation of grain (i.e. reduce the daily allocation by 2-4 kg DM/cow/day), you might be surprised that there is no reduction in yield. We can forget that three-leaf grazed ryegrass will not be far behind wheat in metabolisable energy (ME) and it certainly will have more crude protein and fibre than wheat. Substitution rates will be close to 1:1 where quality ryegrass is in the diet. It will pay to just check the ration neutral detergent fibre (NDF) levels wherever you change the ration but increasing pasture ryegrass intakes at the expense of grain will result in a higher ration NDF and if this is not excessive then it should be fine for mid and late lactation cows.

COMING EVENT FOR YOUNG FARMERS

The YDNWA is putting on a quiz night later in August for all young farmers. It will be a fun evening, cost you \$20 and you get a meal, liquid refreshments, catching up with others and great prizes. More details will follow. Visit the facebook page and get involved. You will have FUN!! Contact Jess Andony as per her details in the footer.

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