



Conon Kynoch
549 Black Road
Ashley Clinton
Winter 2020
Case study Progress Report

20 July 2020

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AgFirst Pastoral Ltd
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The combination of adverse weather conditions and Covid-19 restrictions have caused major problems for some farmers. In response B+LNZ commissioned a series of case studies around New Zealand, to examine the issues, analysis and management options considered and implemented by farmers. MPI has subsequently funded the ongoing updates of these case studies.

Farm Details

The property is located in the Ashley Clinton district, 30 kilometres west of Waipukurau in Central Hawke’s Bay. Nestled under the Ruahine mountains the farm ranges from 430- 530m above sea level with an average rainfall of 1540 mm pa. The property has a total land area of 794ha, of which there is an estimated 606 ha effective. The majority of the farm is either steep or very steep in contour.

Summary of Position

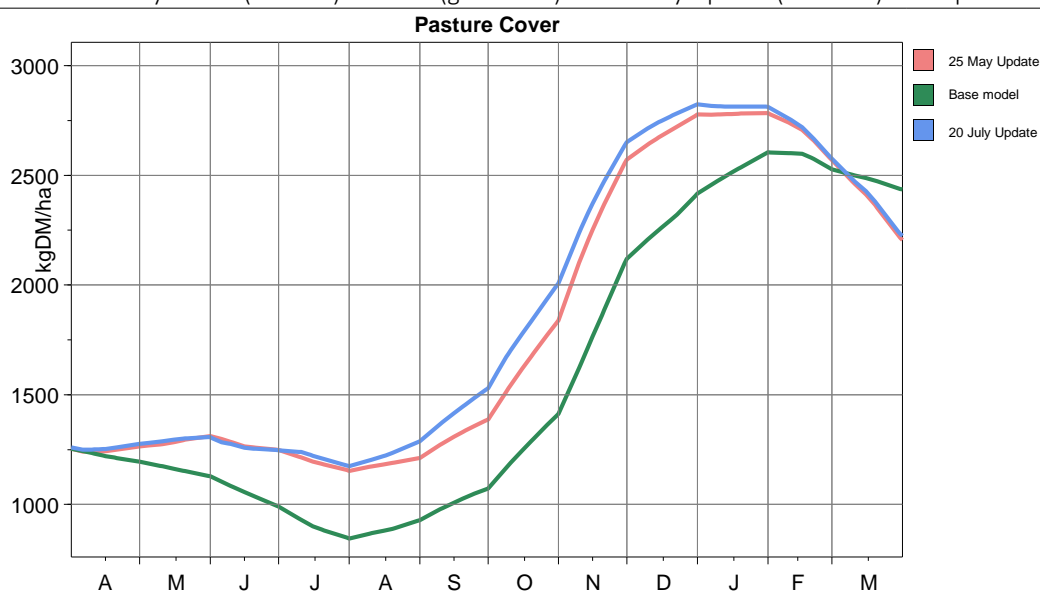
The farm was originally visited on the 11th of May by AgFirst consultant Lochie MacGillivray, and together with Conon Kynoch the pasture covers were calibrated and recorded as well as the liveweight of the ewes reassessed.

Building covers prior to winter onset was one of the first objectives described in the management plan of early April. Pasture covers at that time were estimated to be 1275 kgs dm/ha and had a predicted end of May cover of 1308 kg dm/ha.

It was identified that the critical period would be towards the end of July when covers were predicted to decline and get low as 1,150 kgs dm/ha before lifting to 1400 kgDM/ha with mitigating strategies being introduced.

Since the 11th of May the strategies implemented along with pasture growth rates above that predicted have lifted pasture covers to an estimated 1,174 kg DM/ ha at the end of July. The comparisons of the various modelled scenario pasture covers are shown below.

Table 1: 25 May model (red line) vs initial (green line) vs 20th July Update (blue line) cover profiles.



Model Growth rate comparisons – predicted and actuals (kgs DM/ha/day)				20 July Update Percentage difference in growth	
Month	Initial (base)	Update 25 May	Update 20 July	From base	From 25 May
May	12.0	11.6	11.7*	- 3%	1%
June	9.0	8.4	8.9*	-1%	6%
July	6.5	7.0	7.3	+12%	4%

* Farmax derived actuals

The older ewes have scanned at 184%, and Conon is expecting the MA ewes to now scan at 175% with the two toothers predicted to be 150%. The feeding of concentrates to these animals stopped in June. They will be shorn in early August.

All the cows are now home, as are the 400 hoggets (not mated) that were grazed off farm in the Wairarapa. This has meant that Conon has been able to retain all his replacement animals.

An application of nitrogen is scheduled to be applied on 60 ha on the Front Country in mid-August. We expect a 12:1 response from this application.

The increase in pasture covers as well as the continual pasture cover monitoring and modelling through Farmax has meant that Conon can now take the opportunity to purchase 100 yearling bulls at their current relatively low purchase price. This indicates a substantial turnaround in the circumstances of the Kynoch property, from being in a dire position in April and then doing a substantial plan ahead involving the implementation of a series of management mitigation steps, to be in a position where Conon has once again taken firm control of the helm and looking ahead to next year's income.

In the next and final report, and once all the results are known, a review and analysis of the management mitigations will be detailed.