

PASTURE CONDITION SCORE TOOL

The Pasture Condition Score Tool helps determine what action to take to improve your pasture depending on its condition. Assess each paddock on the farm and give a score from 1 to 5 using the photos and descriptions below. Consider the suggested actions to develop an action plan for each paddock.

RANK

5.



DESCRIPTION: Whole paddock has dense sward of desired grasses and clovers

SUGGESTED ACTIONS: No action required, would be happy if the whole farm was in this state.

4.



DESCRIPTION: Parts of the paddock shows signs of low level damage, less vigorous grasses and some weeds.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS: Check fertility. Apply Autumn N to encourage tillering. Paddock probably OK for coming season.

3.



DESCRIPTION: Majority of paddock has low level damage, some weeds, and less vigorous grasses.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS: Apply N fertiliser. Undersow pasture with perennial ryegrass containing appropriate endophyte to thicken the ryegrass content of the pasture, and so suppress weeds.

2.



DESCRIPTION: Parts of the paddock have severe damage, a lot of weeds & bare ground.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS: There are three main options for this autumn if your pasture is either of these ranks:

(a) Sow into new perennial ryegrass pasture with appropriate endophyte; or

(b) sow with Italian or annual ryegrass for a winter crop, and plan to sow into crop (e.g. maize, chicory) in the coming spring; or

(c) sow with hybrid ryegrass with appropriate endophyte and plan to renew in next 2-3 years.

1.



DESCRIPTION: Entire paddock severely damaged.

Adapted from information supplied by DairyNZ

NOTE: Suggested actions are North Island based.