

# OWL FARM - Pasture Condition Score Report

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Prepared by Emma Bell

## Present:

Doug Dibley, Murray Lane & Anna-Lena Wright (Ballance), Emma Bell & Kate Murray-Cawte (PGG Wrightson Seeds)

## Objective:

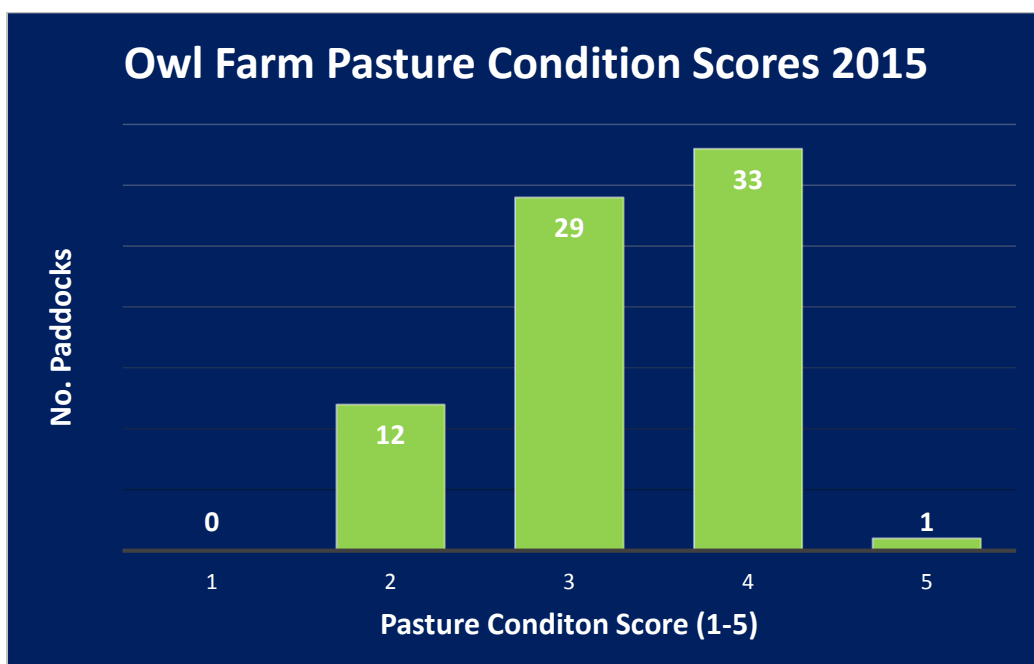
To formulate a re-grassing strategy on Owl Farm by pasture condition scoring every paddock using the Pasture Renewal Trust Criteria. This will identify underperforming paddocks, identify paddocks for spring cropping and autumn under-sowing, and highlight any other action that needs to be taken in the next 6-12 months. The scoring will become an annual event in order to track the farm improvements through new re-grassing policies, fertiliser programmes and weed control programmes.

## Pasture Condition Scoring Criteria:

- 1 – Entire Paddock is severely damaged
- 2 – Parts of the paddock have severe damage
- 3 – Majority of paddock has low level of damage, weeds, and less vigorous grasses
- 4 – Parts of the paddock show signs of low level damage, less vigorous grasses and some weeds
- 5 – Whole paddock has dense sward of desired grasses and clovers

## Results:

The number of paddocks in each Pasture Condition Score category (1-5) is represented in the graph below. Of the paddocks scored, twelve were a condition score of 2, twenty-nine paddocks were a condition score of 3, thirty-three paddocks were a score of 4, with one paddock scoring a 5.



The table below specifies the exact paddocks in each Pasture Condition Score category.

#### Paddock Identification for each Pasture Condition Score - 2015

Score	Paddock Number
1	
2	5,11,15,34,45,46,52,58,60,61,84
3	1,12,17,21,22,30,33,35,36,37,38,39,40,41,42,44,53,55,56,59,62,64,66,67,68,70,81,82,83,84
4	2,3,4,6,13,16,19,20,23,24,25,27,28,29,31,32,43,47,48,50,51,54, 62,63,65,69,71,72,73,74,77,80
5	3

#### Observations:

##### NEW GRASS PADDOCKS

- Two of the five new grass paddocks we looked had a Pasture Condition Score of 2 (**5 & 58**)
- Poor drilling combined with a high weed burden has compromised establishment of ryegrass and clovers in some of these paddocks
- Clover appears to have been drilled too deep in some new grass paddocks, so there may be opportunity to over-sow in spring (**28**)

##### PADDOCK SELECTION FOR SPRING CROPPING

- Paddocks with a Pasture Condition Score of 2 & 3 should be considered for spring cropping
- Chicory paddock selection should be considered with distance to the cow shed and also soil type – chicory performed better on the heavier soils last season than lighter soils
  - There may be an opportunity to run an experiment with the students looking at chicory growth rates throughout the season on different soil types so we can get some good information around this
- In order to feed 2.5kg/head/day over summer, approximately 14ha of chicory is required
- The following paddocks have been selected for Chicory in spring: **15, 11, 6, 5, 45, 46, 52, 56**

##### OTHER OBSERVATIONS:

- Couch grass was identified in paddocks **3, 34 & 39**
- Some paddocks had little or no clover, these paddocks should be looked at for clover over-sowing in spring (**28, 32, 38, 44, 45, 47, 48 & others**)
- A herbicide application in spring will be highly beneficial to target problem weeds on farm
- Soil testing will be constructive in order to highlight any fertility issues, particularly given the variation in soil type on farm

#### Key Actions:

- Spring weed spray with Baton & Valdo (as per a recommendation given to Doug)
  - **Avoid spraying paddocks that have been selected for spring cropping as this could compromise chicory crop**
- Identify paddocks for spring cropping and formulate a best practice plan to establish chicory
- Soil test paddocks selected for spring cropping
- Soil test paddocks with little/no clover to identify any underlying issues