

Optimal grazing management to achieve high yields and utilisation of dryland lucerne

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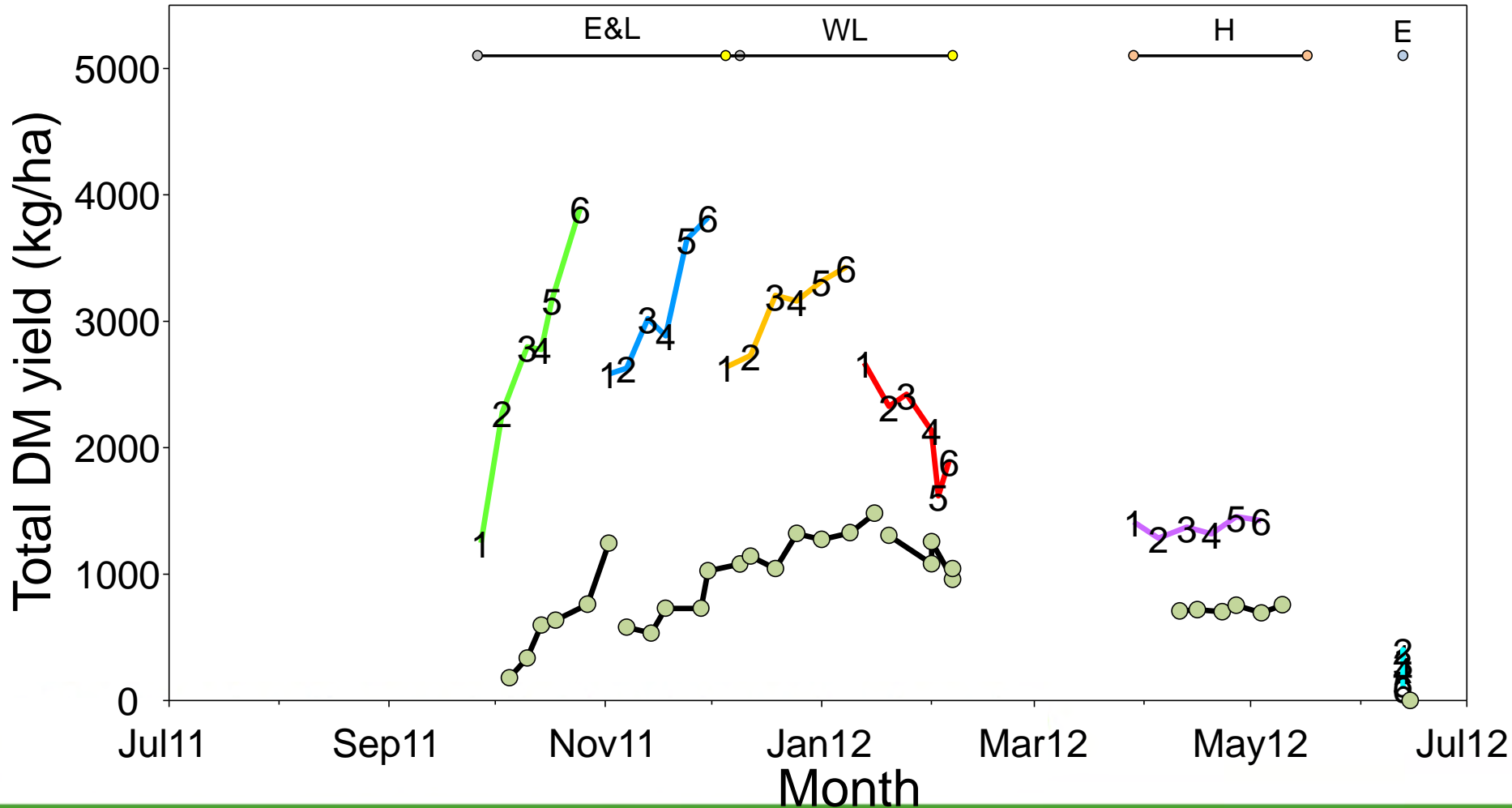
[Optimal grazing management to achieve high yields and utilisation of dryland lucerne.](#) *Journal of New Zealand Grasslands*, **78**, 27-33.

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Outline

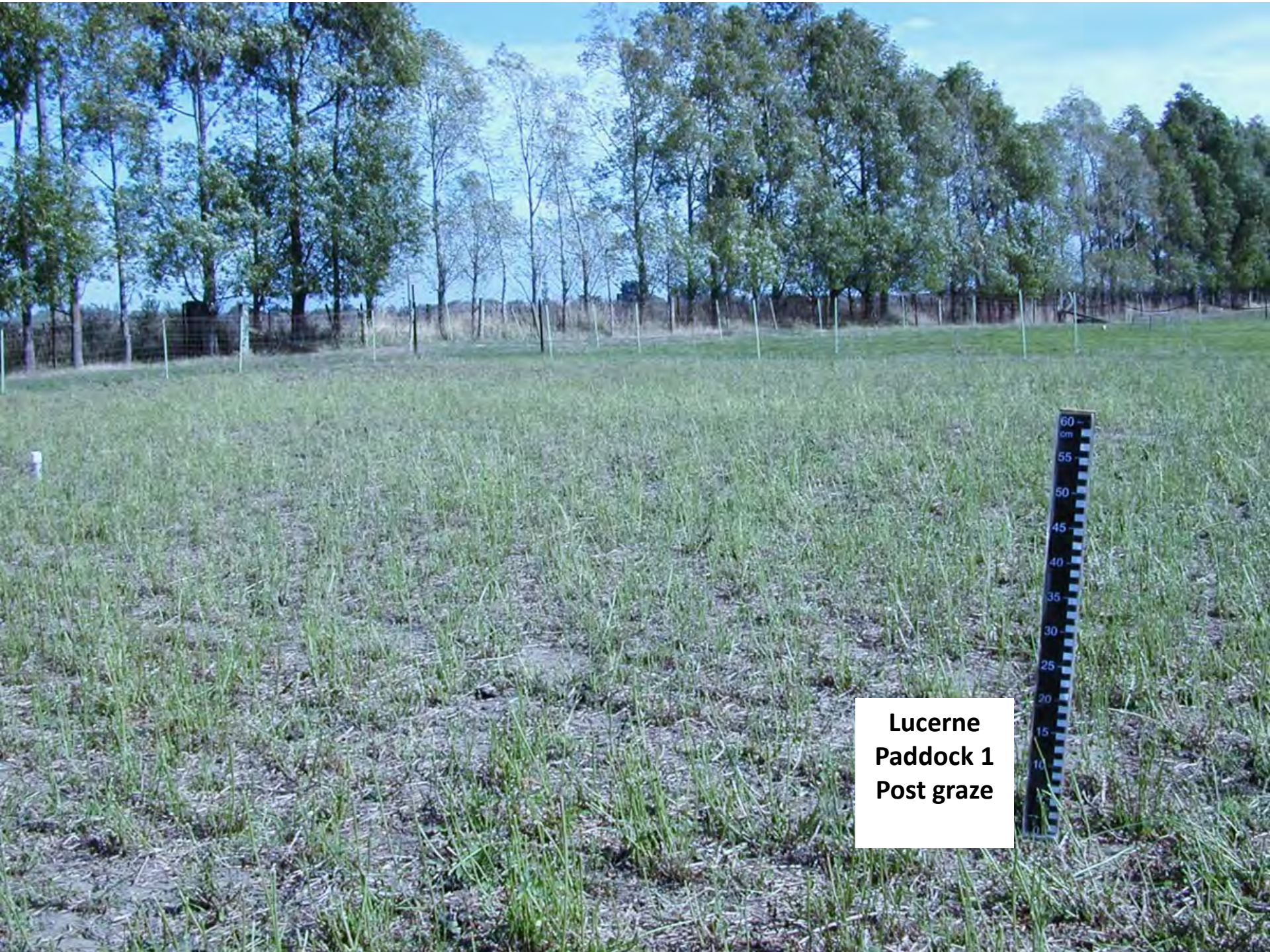
- To quantify the DM production and utilisation by sheep of individual lucerne paddocks within a six paddock rotation
- Focus on the 2011/12 season
- Ewes and lambs, weaned lambs, hoggets and ewes

2011/12 DM production





**Lucerne
Paddock 1
Pre graze**



**Lucerne
Paddock 1
Post graze**



**Lucerne
Paddock 6
Pre graze**



**Lucerne
Paddock 6
Post graze**

Annual dry matter production and consumption of the 2011/12 season

Stock class	Pre-graze DM yield (kg DM/ha)	DM consumed (kg DM/ha)	Utilisation (%)
Ewes & lambs	2897	2195	77
Weaned lambs	2629	1493	54
Hoggets	1378	656	47

Days to return to each paddock in spring by year

Year	Return interval
2009/10	-
2010/11	35.0 _a
2011/12	29.7 _b
2012/13	34.3 _a
2013/14	35.8 _a
2014/15	-
Grand Mean	33.7
SEM	1.17
Significance	0.009

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Summary

- Commence grazing in spring at lucerne height of ~15 cm (1.5 t DM) for rotation 1, ~30 cm (2.5-3.0 t DM) for Rotation 2
- Utilisation differs with stock class – target lower entry DM for weaned lambs
- Grazing interval important to ensure new shoots developing to full potential without limiting stand production

Acknowledgements



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