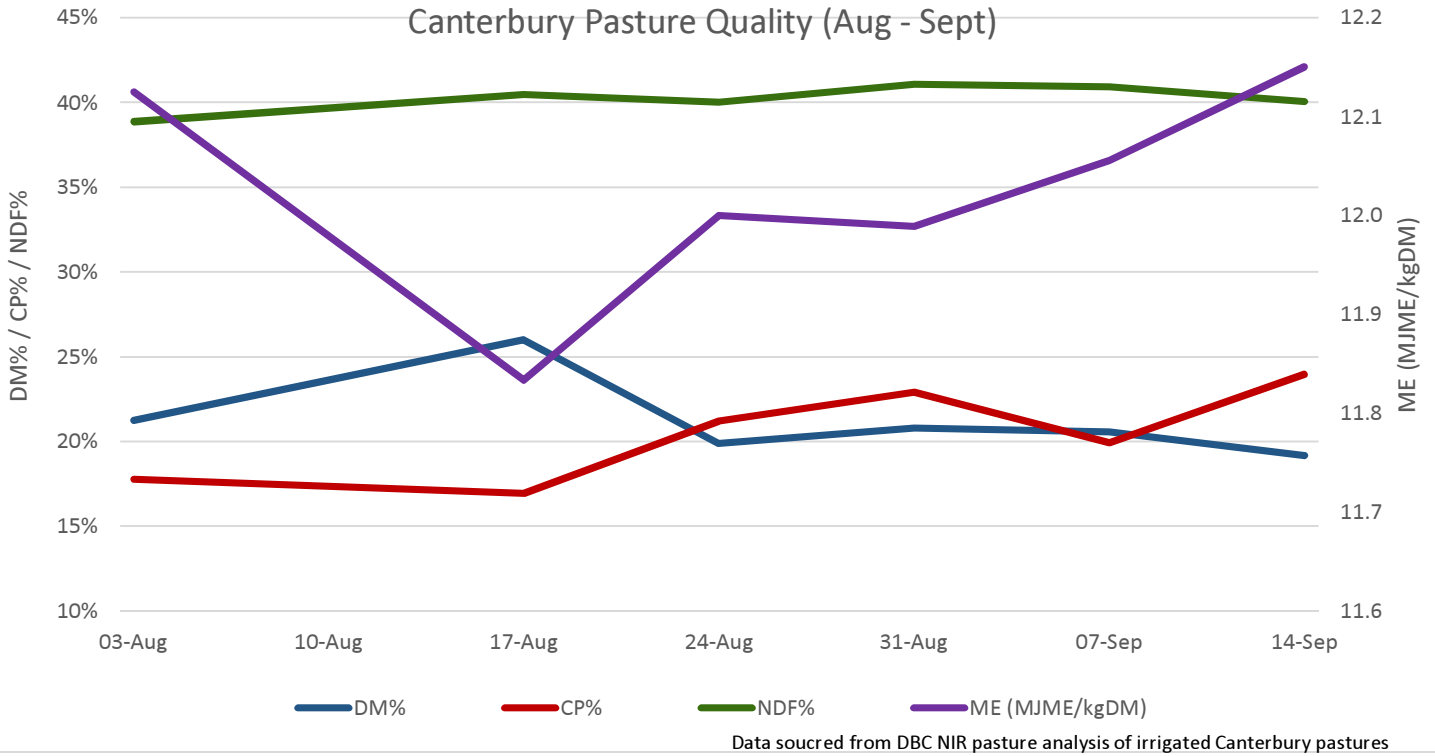
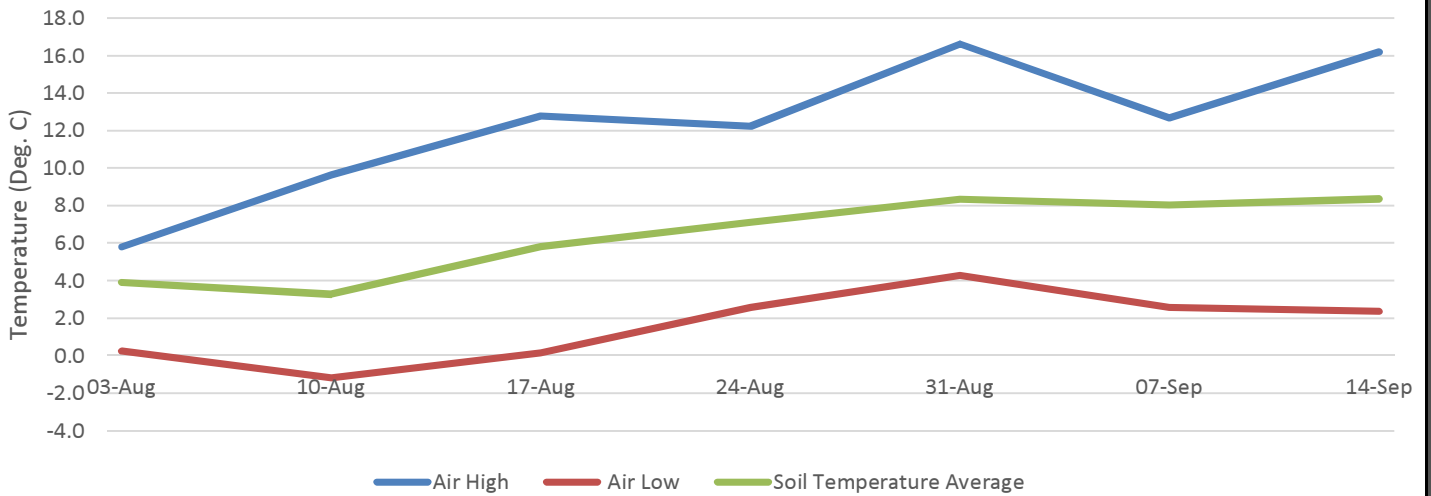


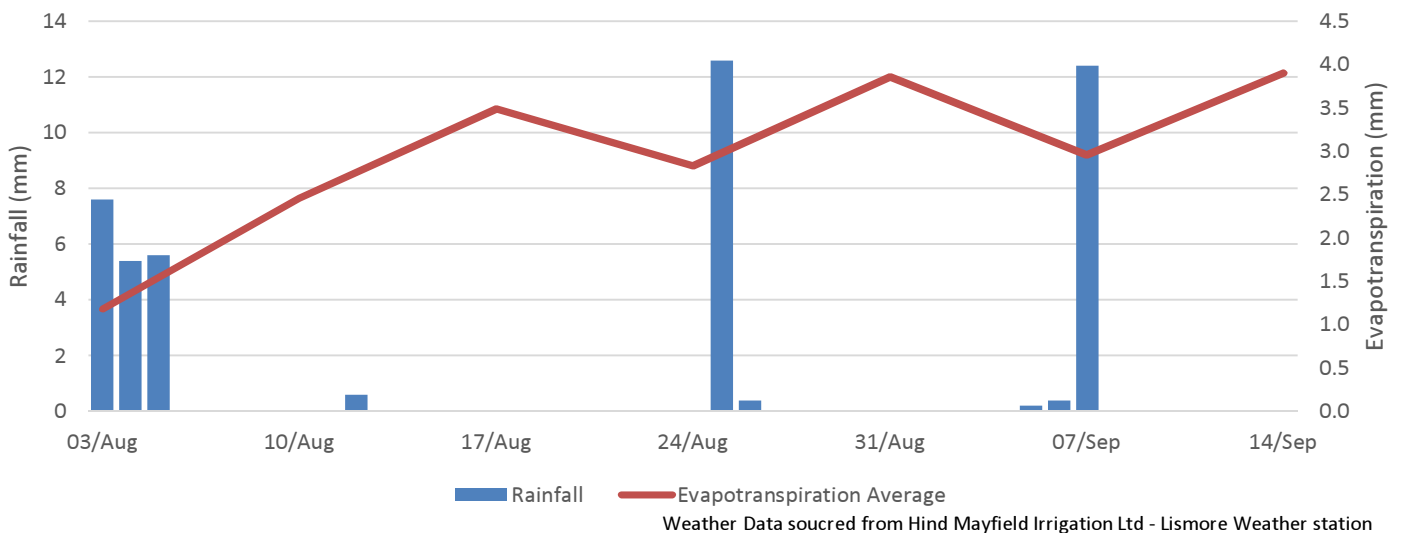
## Canterbury Pasture Quality (Aug - Sept)



## Average Weekly Air & Soil Temp



## Daily Rainfall & Average Weekly ET



## Pasture Quality Trend (September 2016)

We have had a warm winter which has allowed covers to increase, this has been very helpful through early lactation. However, we have had a reasonably cool August where soil temperatures have not increased as fast as usual and some farms have been caught out with slower growth rates. Cold Start ASN is still providing great results for farms needing an urgent boost in production.

### Dry Matter (DM) (%)

Pasture has been relatively high in DM as it has come through winter as the frosts drive up DM%. DM% has been dropping as soil warms up, N kicks in, and pasture growth improves. As the pasture gets into its rapid vegetative growth it will draw up more water and N. If pasture DM% drops below 16% then it is well worth while considering pre-graze mowing up to 6 hours in front of the cows to let the pasture wilt and loose that excess moisture. Excess weight from water in the rumen will give feedback to the cow that she is full and stop grazing. By wilting the pasture; we reduce the water consumed, and increase ease of intake, generally resulting in an increase in total pasture intake, and pasture intake rate. Be cautious when pre-mowing poorer quality pasture as cows then cannot select parts of pasture to graze and will take in overall, poorer quality pasture, which will slow intake and production. This will be typical of clumpy, winter saved pasture, it will be best to allow cows to pick through these paddocks and expect higher residuals that you can deal with the mower at a later date.

### Crude Protein (CP) (%)

Crude Protein is on the rise as we would expect as the pasture comes out of the winter. Frosts drop the protein to very low levels, now pasture starts taking its rapid vegetative growth and protein levels increase quickly. Protein has been limiting many farms throughout the spring so far as we see with low milk ureas and milk protein percentages. Low protein reduces the drive for pasture intake so with very low CP% pastures, milk production is limited through a lack of intake, as well as CP deficiency. Feeding canola (\$555/t delivered mid canty) will improve the drive for intake. Canola complements the amino acid profile the microbes provide from pasture due to its high bypass protein content to increase milk production. Expect paddocks that are growing well to have an increasing CP%, the lack of protein can turn into an excess of N or CP very quickly.

### Neutral Detergent Fibre (NDF) (%)

Despite the lack of change in the NDF %, a lot has been happening. Through winter, frosts break up the NDF and reduce levels that would usually be high in older pasture. Pasture is going from this to actively growing spring pasture with lowered NDF levels due to growth stage. This can be expected to drop as production ramps up. First round pasture will test reasonably low in NDF, but ADF and therefore palatability will be lower as it is older pasture, this will reduce the drive for intake. Look at offering ad lib straw per cow in the lane or the paddock on top of their current ration as the pasture heats up and cows manure become loose and bubbly, DBC Spring Loose Lick will settle the rumen.

### Metabolisable Energy (MJME/kg DM)

ME is improving. Now is the time of year that you need to get as many MJME into the cows as possible. For every 1 extra litre you get now (~6MJME), the cows will pay you back 200-250 l over the rest of lactation. This period is the main opportunity to set cows up for a good season, you will not be able to recover lost opportunity by feeding extra to increase production later in the season.