



Robert Craig
Dolphenby Farm
Penrith
Great Britain
2016

The herd

- 550 cross-bred cows
- 140 home reared heifers
- Spring 12 week block calving
- 6080 litres/cow/year
- 4.88% fat & 3.87% protein
- Average age at first calving: 24 months
- 544kg milk solids/cow from only 817kg of concentrates per cow
- Specialist rotational grazing system from early February until December
- Stocking rate 2.57 livestock units/ha

The farm

- Specialist dairy farm
- Workforce: 4 full time + 2 relief milkers
- 279 ha agriculture area
- 227 ha grazing platform
- Furthest paddock 2kms from the parlour

Innovations

- Progressive expanding business aiming to maximise milk from grass in a profitable simple system
- KPI's are set and achieved to drive high production from grass
- System depends on grazing through the year with in calf heifers outwintered on grass and monitored by regularly weighing
- Some dry cows are managed on deferred grazing and silage bales before being housed in free stalls
- Desired breeding traits include productivity, longevity and aggressive grazing
- Heat observation is done by staff three times per day during the mating period
- Staff management and motivation is delivered through regular attendance of courses and discussion groups
- Their moto is 'simple and enjoyable 😊'

Areas of interest/Aspirations

Socio-economics resilience / Resource efficiency / Biodiversity

- Soil management
- Externalities of farming and environmental impact
- Optimise grassland productivity to grow 14 t DM grass/ha annually
- Improve fertility parameters to achieve <10% empty rate
- Create surplus heifer stocks to sell as bonus cash flow
- Produce 11000 litres/ha or 910kg milk solids annually