

## Curtins Farm Walk Notes Monday 23-03-09

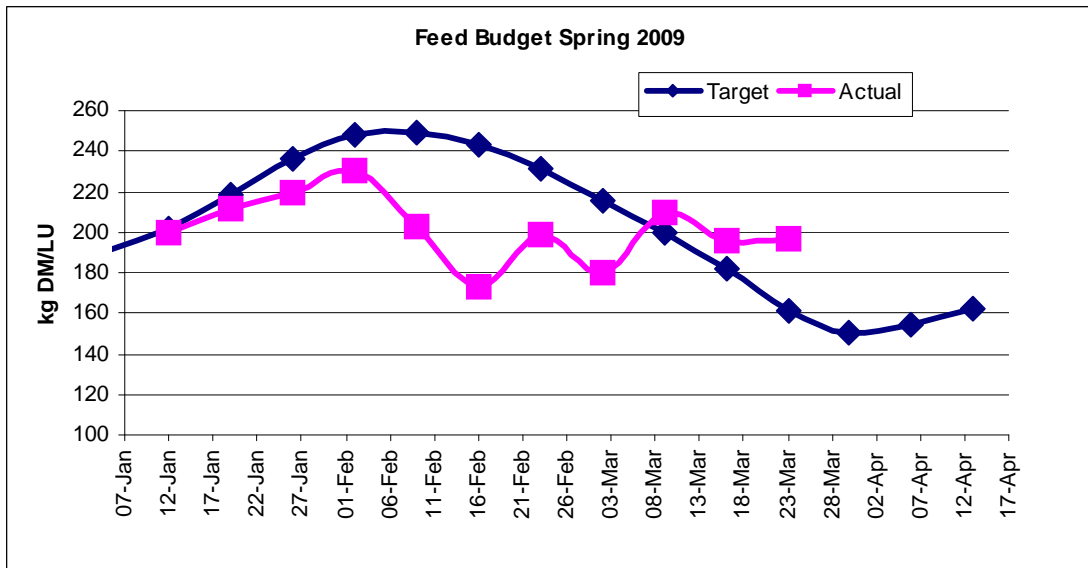
### Critical Issues

- 1) **Don't poach**
- 2) **Increase grass allocation to 15kg**
- 3) **Manage feed (pasture and concentrates) so that the cows are getting better feed each week.**

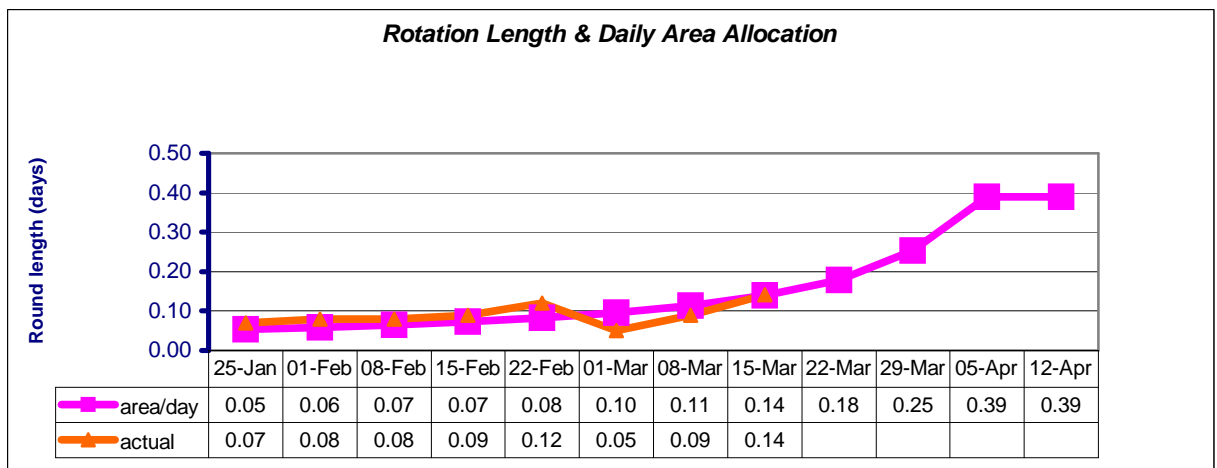
### On Farm Situation

1. Soil temperature today is 7.8°C, last week 8°C.
2. Total rainfall for the week was 0mm.
3. Average weekly growth was 32 kg/day, which is slightly below budget. Dry matter was 19.5%.
4. Grass supply is slightly above budget (197 kg/cow)

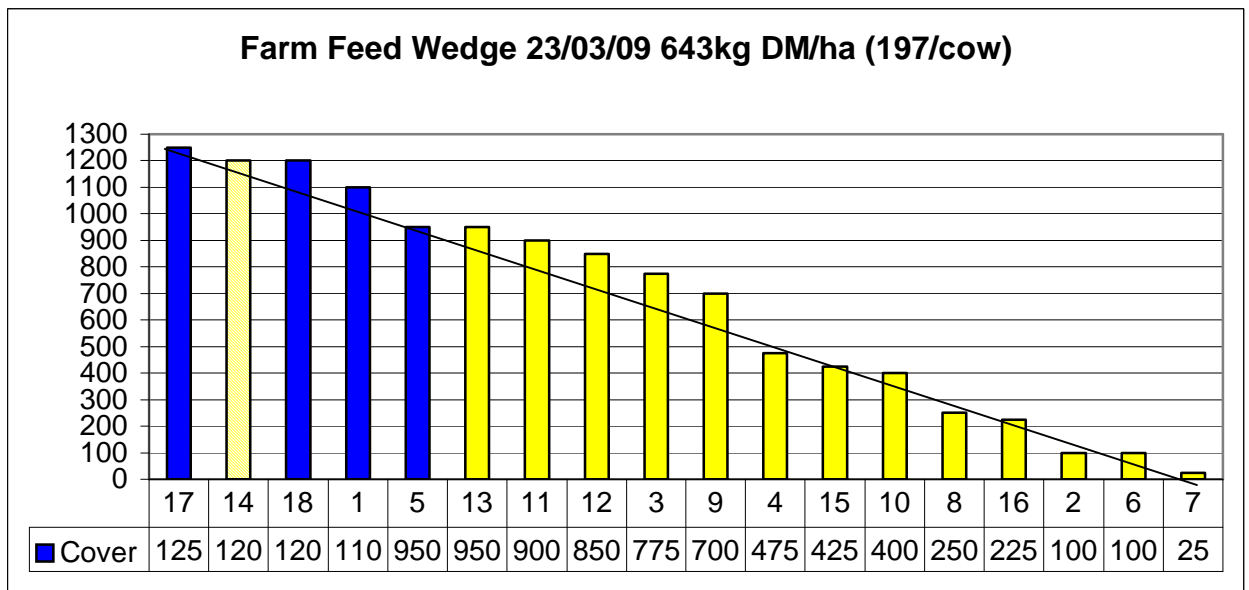
**Figure 1. Feed budget for spring 2009.**



5. The cover/cow is higher than budget (197 vs 161). This is worrying as it is possible that we will end up with too much grass of a poorer quality. In order to correct this, we have dropped concentrate from 4kg to 0 out and increased the grass intake to the cows by 5kg to 15kg DM/day.
6. We currently have 78% of the farm grazed which is on target.
7. This leaves 7 days to graze the last 22% of the farm and start the 2<sup>nd</sup> rotation on the 1<sup>st</sup> April. The risk now is that we will fail to graze this out and end up with surplus pasture in April.



**8. Farm Feed Wedge 23/03/09**



Yellow paddocks have been grazed this spring. Paddock 14 is partly grazed.

9. The wedge is now showing that we have a surplus building. The earliest grazed paddocks are now growing very well and if we do not get to them soon they will have more cover on than we would like and the quality would be less than ideal.

10. Post-grazing height on last grazed block has lifted slightly to 3.2cm which is just slightly lower than we would like.

11. Total N application per hectare to date is 43kg N/ha (38% of farm has received slurry)

12. 100% of the herd is calved, (mean calving date is 07/02/09)

13. Cows have been tail painted for pre-breeding heat detection.

14. Average milk yield is 23kg at 4.23% fat and 3.14% protein (1.69kg MS/cow),  
Lactose 4.69%, SCC 131k, TBC 17k, Thermoduric 780, Sediment A.

15. Critical Short-term Actions:

- a. Allocation is on 24 hr basis in square blocks to avoid pasture damage
- b. Post grazing height should be maintained at 3.5cm

## ***EXPERIMENTAL PROGRESS REPORT AS AT SUNDAY, 22/03/09***

*Objective: To compare the biological efficiency of alternative calving date and stocking rate combinations for Irish spring calving pasture-based production systems*

Herd Details	EBI (€)	MILK SI (€)	FERT SI (€)	CALVING SI (€)	HEALTH (€)
<b>Average</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>-3</b>

*(November 2008 ICBF)*

Calving Date Group Stocking rate Group	Early Calving			Late Calving		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Stocking rate (cows/ha)	2.51	2.92	3.28	2.51	2.92	3.28
Mean calving date	8/2	8/2	8/2	1/3	1/3	1/3
Ear-tag Colour	White	Blue	Orange	White	Blue	Orange
Band Colour	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue

<b>WE 15/3/09 Details:</b>						
Area allocated (m <sup>2</sup> /day)	2400	2000	1800	2400	2000	1800
Farmlet cover (kg DM/cow)	329	271	236	327	286	238
Pre-herbage mass (kg DM/ha)	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150
Residual grazing height (mm)	3.3	3.2	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.2
Diet (kg DM/cow/day)						
Grass	17	16	15	17	16	15
Silage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Concentrate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Milk solids (kg/cow/day)	1.62	1.66	1.47	1.47	1.16	1.34
Milk yield (kg/cow/day)	21.76	23.1	20.3	19.62	16.1	18.1
% Fat	4.4	4.24	4.25	4.29	4.28	4.36
% Protein	3.03	2.99	3.01	3.17	3.06	3.08
Bodyweight (kg)	501	490	486	467	450	467
Condition Score	3.13	2.95	2.94	2.95	2.99	2.93

<b>Cumulative:</b>						
Milk solids (kg/cow)	74	77	70	53	50	55
(kg/ha)	186	225	230	133	146	180
Milk yield (kg/cow)	910	953	854	654	612	666
% Fat	4.79	4.84	4.76	4.62	4.84	5.05
% Protein	3.37	3.29	3.49	3.52	3.44	3.4
Days in milk	48	47	48	38	41	43
Total supplement fed (kg/cow)						
Concentrate	155	155	155	70	70	70
Silage						
Conserved silage (kg DM /cow)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Farmlet area (hectares)	9.17	7.87	7.01	9.17	7.87	7.01
Number of cows calved	19	22	23	19	19	19
Number of cows in group	23	23	23	23	23	23

**NB: These are raw data that have not been statistically analysed and, therefore, no definite conclusions can be drawn from them.**

