

## Curtins Farm Walk Notes Monday 30-03-09

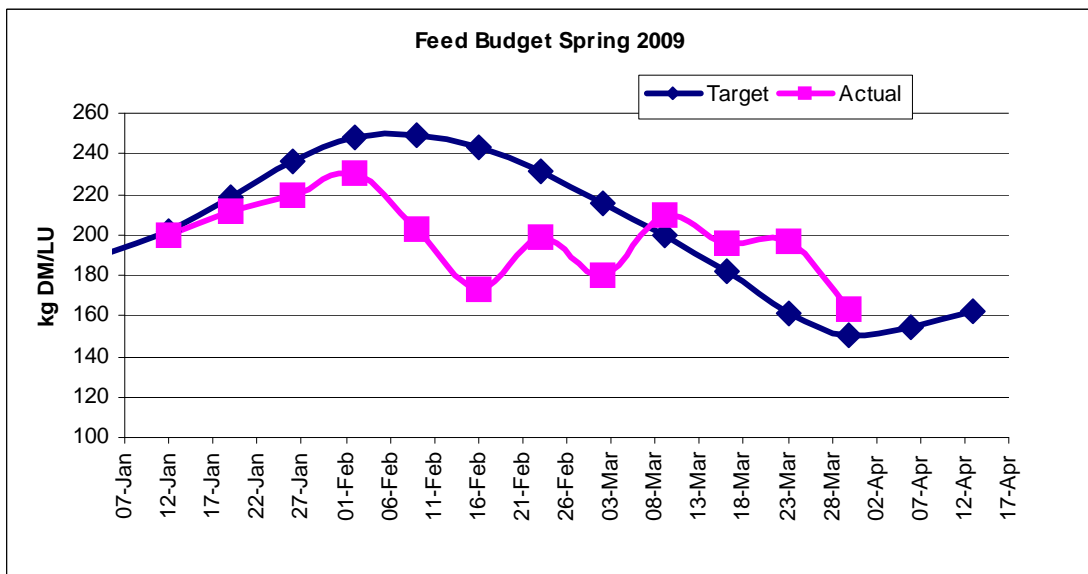
### Critical Issues

- 1) Maintain post-grazing height at 3cm
- 2) Maintain pre-grazing yield at 1200kg DM/ha

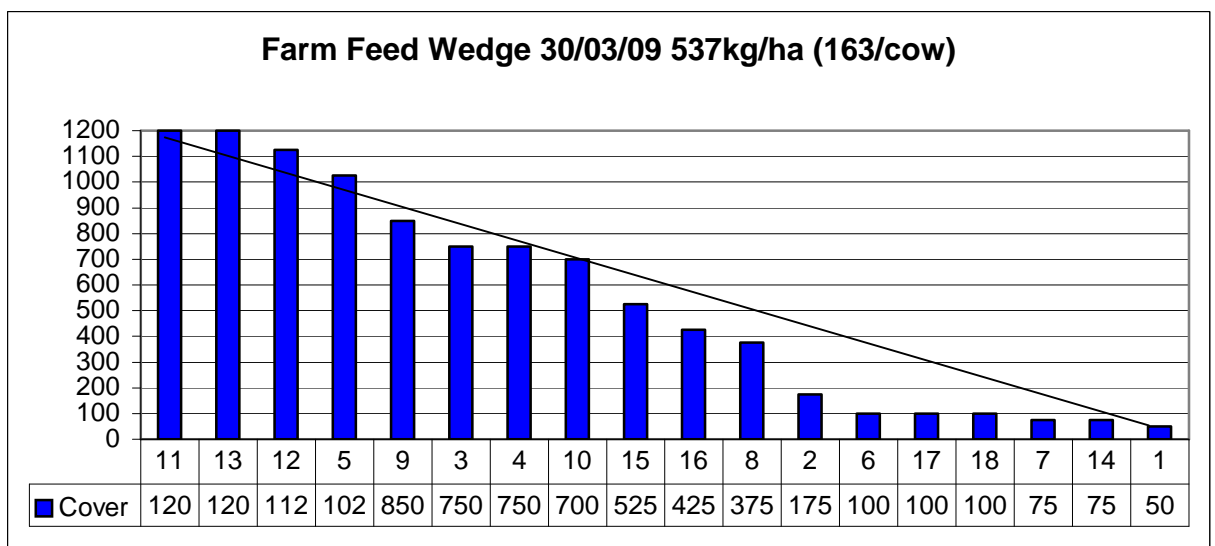
### On Farm Situation

1. Soil temperature today is 7.3°C, last week 7.8°C.
2. Total rainfall for the week was 9.3mm.
3. Average weekly growth was 27 kg/day, which is below budget due to lower than normal soil temperatures. Dry matter was 14.5%.
4. Grass supply is slightly above budget (163 kg/cow)

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



5. The cover/cow dropped substantially this week from 197 to 163 as a result of dropping the concentrate and increasing the grass allocation to the cows. It is still slightly higher than budget (163 vs 150) but growth rates are less than budget (27 versus 40kg this time last year) so it is expected to drop further this week.
6. We started the second round in block 11 on Tuesday morning, 1 day ahead of planned but with the ideal pre grazing yield.
7. Farm Feed Wedge 09/03/09



8. Post-grazing height on last grazed block was 3cm. Our intention is to maintain this residual as we found that grazing to 3.5cm is leaving too much good quality leaf behind. However, it is expected that stem elongation will occur as we progress further into the second and third rotations, when this happens post-grazing height will be lifted to 3.5cm and held at this level for the duration of the year. This will ensure that cows are only grazing excellent quality leafy grass at all times.
  
9. Total N application per hectare to date is 43kg N/ha (38% of farm has received slurry)
  
10. 100% of the herd is calved, (mean calving date is 07/02/09)
  
11. Cows have been tail painted for pre-breeding heat detection.
  
12. Block 12 has been sprayed with glyphosate. This block will be reseeded late next week. The grass variety Bealey will be sown along with Crusader clover using a one-pass.
  
13. Average milk yield is 22.4kg at 4.18% fat and 3.35% protein (1.69kg MS/cow), Lactose 4.83%, SCC 220k, TBC 20k, Thermoduric 2600, Sediment A.
  
14. Critical Short-term Actions:
  - a. Allocation is on 36 hr basis and cows move to fresh pasture once post-grazing height is at 3cm. Cows are moved between milking if necessary.

- b. Graze Block 12 (sprayed off) with milking cows on Friday, 5 days after spraying.

## ***EXPERIMENTAL PROGRESS REPORT AS AT SUNDAY, 29/03/09***

*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)	220	185	163	219	198	170
Pre-herbage mass (kg DM/ha)	1,675	1,400	1,200	1,675	1,400	1,200
Residual grazing height (cm)	3.5	3.4	2.7	3.5	3	3.3
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)	1.97	1.83	1.69	1.4	1.28	1.33
Milk yield (kg/cow/day)	25.6	24.2	22.4	19.4	17.4	19.7
% Fat	4.27	4.24	4.22	3.85	4.1	4.03
% Protein	3.44	3.35	3.39	3.38	3.33	3.27
Bodyweight (kg)	506	466	452	487	451	468
Condition Score	3.13	2.95	2.94	2.95	2.99	2.93

<b>Cumulative:</b>						
Milk solids (kg/cow)	88	94	86	59	59	64
(kg/ha)	221	274	282	148	172	210
Milk yield (kg/cow)	1084	1170	1058	744	734	805
% Fat	4.78	4.77	4.72	4.46	4.69	4.84
% Protein	3.49	3.33	3.52	3.5	3.45	3.36
Days in milk	48	52	51	43	46	47
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	23	23	23	20	20	20
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.**