

## Curtins Farm Walk Notes Monday 13-04-09

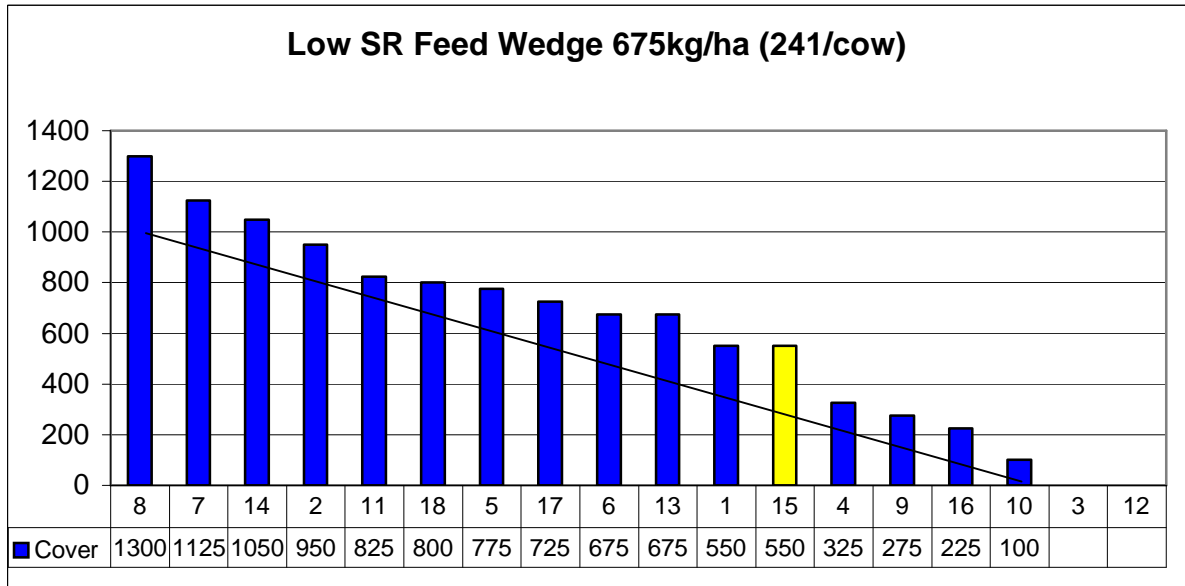
### Low Stocking Rate Group (2.5 HF Cows/ha)

#### Critical Issues

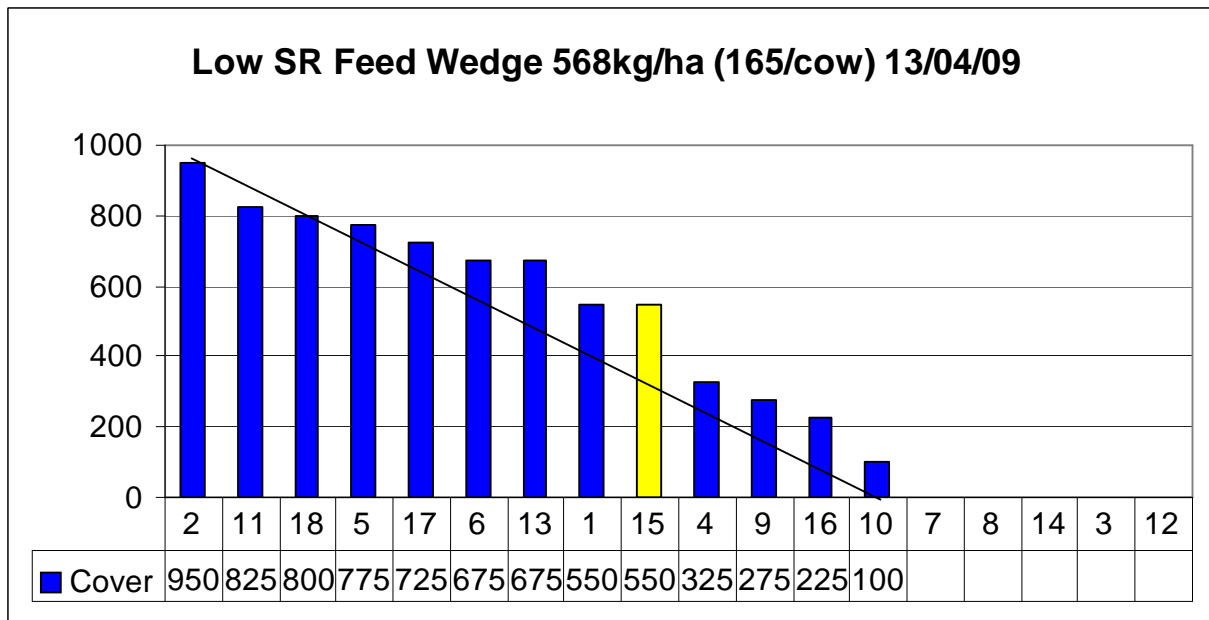
- 1) Maintain post-grazing height at 4cm
- 2) Identify any surpluses and maintain pre-grazing yield at 950kg

#### Situation

**Figure 1. Farm Feed Wedge 14/04/09 before removing surpluses**



**Figure 2. Farm Feed Wedge 14/04/09 after removing surpluses**



Block 15 (in yellow) is partly grazed

- 1) As can be seen in Figure 1, every block this week was above our target cover line and we were running into surpluses. This has enabled us to close some blocks for silage and shorten the rotation length to 16 days. The ideal

pre-grazing yield for this group is now 950kg if their allowance is 17kg/day. Stocking rate is now 3.43 cows/ha.

- 2) As can be seen in Figure 2, further surpluses are building and it is likely that another block will be closed next week.
- 3) Blocks 7, 8, 14 and 3 will be topped up with 23 units of urea/acre and cut for bale silage in 4 weeks time.

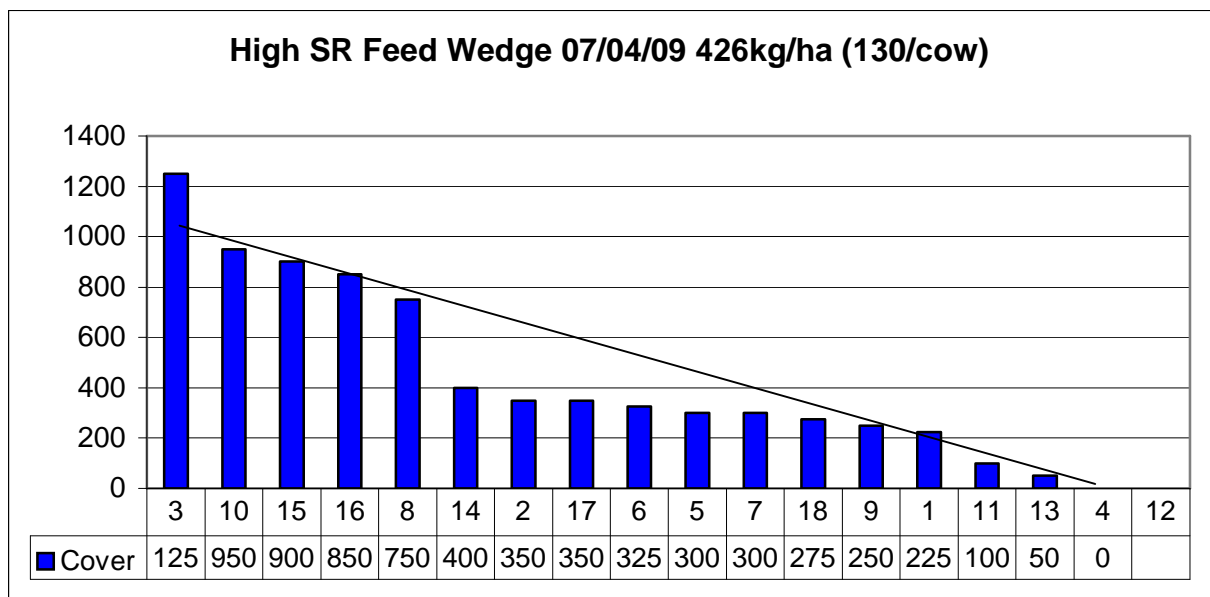
**High Stocking Rate Group (3.3 HF Cows/ha)**

**Critical Issues**

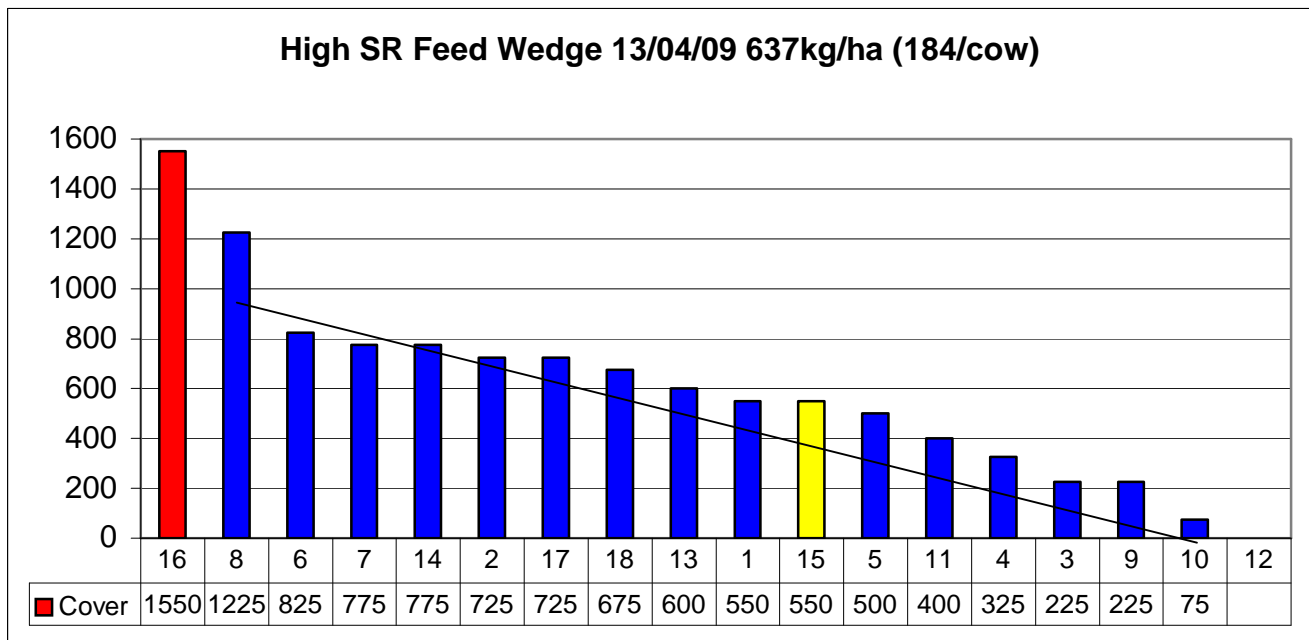
- 3) Maintain post-grazing height at between 3 and 3.5cm
- 4) Maintain pre-grazing yield at 950kg

**Situation**

**Figure 3. Last weeks Farm Feed Wedge (07/04/09)**



**Figure 4. This weeks Farm Feed Wedge 14/04/09**



Block 15 (in yellow) is partly grazed

1. On walking the farm last Friday, our decision to introduce supplement was reviewed as growth rates were increasing and farm cover was at 163/cow. In total, 7.5kg of supplement/cow was fed last week.
2. The extra supplement plus higher growth rates have allowed farm cover to rise this week to 184kg/cow and pre-grazing yield has gone above the target at 1550kg/ha. Therefore, Block 16 has been closed for silage and will be topped up with 23 units urea/acre and cut in 4 weeks time.
3. With Block 16 closed, stocking rate is now 3.72 cows/ha, with a 16 day rotation length and 16kg allowance the ideal pre-grazing yield is now 950kg. It is likely that further blocks will be closed for silage next week.

### Whole Farm Situation

1. Average soil temperature for the past week was 8.7°C, last week 7.9°C.
2. Total rainfall for the week was 36.6mm.
3. Average weekly growth this week was 59 kg/day, average for the previous 3 years was 49kg/day. As soil temperature is increasing the expectation is that growth rate could be close to 60kg/day this week.
4. Dry matter was 19% on Monday.
5. 23 units urea/acre is being spread after grazing
6. Total N application per hectare to date is 43kg N/ha (38% of farm has received slurry)
7. Cows have been tail painted for pre-breeding heat detection.

8. Block 12 is sprayed off for reseeding. Once weather conditions allow slurry and lime will be spread. The grass variety Bealey will be sown along with Crusader clover using a one-pass.
9. Latest milk quality test results from the milk processor are; Fat 3.71%, Protein 3.55%, Lactose 4.84%, SCC 204k, TBC 10k, Thermoturic N/D, Sediment A.
10. Critical Short-term Actions:
  - a. Allocation is currently on a 24 hour basis and cows move to fresh pasture once the desired post-grazing height is achieved. Cows are moved between milking if necessary.
  - b. Monitor weather forecasts daily, use 12-hour allocations when rain is forecast, use on/off grazing if necessary. Take all necessary steps to ensure that desired post-grazing height is reached while avoiding poaching.

## **EXPERIMENTAL PROGRESS REPORT AS AT SUNDAY, 05/04/09**

*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)	165	159	153	165	168	162
Pre-herbage mass (kg DM/ha)	950	1050	1225	950	1050	1225
Residual grazing height (cm)	3.1	3.5	4.3	4.1	3.4	2.9
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	1.46	1.28	1.39
Milk yield (kg/cow/day)	25.63	24.2	22.4	20.2	17.4	19.7
% Fat	4.27	4.24	4.22	3.85	4.10	4.02
% Protein	3.45	3.35	3.39	3.37	3.32	3.27
Bodyweight (kg)	489	481	460	490	487	475
Condition Score	2.94	2.8	2.73	2.92	2.83	2.75

<b>Cumulative:</b>						
Milk solids (kg/cow)	115	119	105	82	77	83
(kg/ha)	289	347	344	206	225	272
Milk yield (kg/cow)	1443	1509	1372	1056	978	1080
% Fat	4.65	4.62	4.61	4.29	4.54	4.62
% Protein	3.47	3.33	3.48	3.47	3.41	3.33
Days in milk	61	66	65	57	60	61
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	21	23	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.**