

**Curtins Farm Walk Notes Monday 04-05-09**

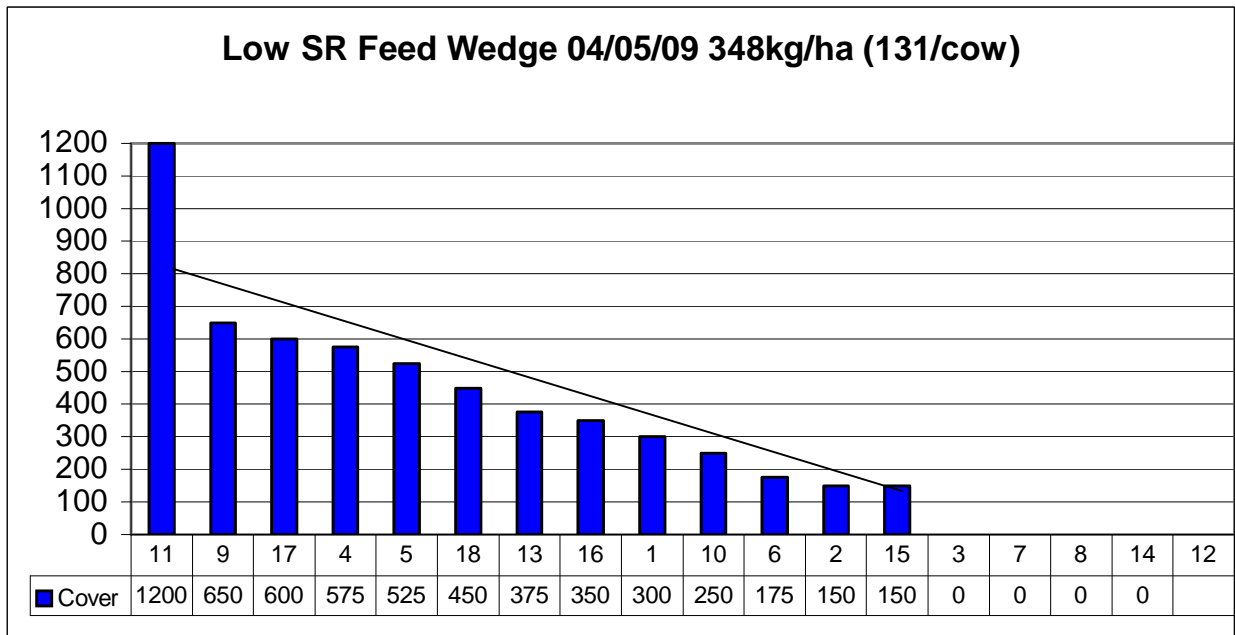
**Low Stocking Rate Group (2.5 HF Cows/ha)**

**Critical Issues**

- 1) **Maintain post-grazing height at between 4.5 - 5cm**
- 2) **Identify any surpluses and maintain pre-grazing yield at 800kg**

**Situation**

**Figure 1. Farm Feed Wedge 04/05/09**



- 1) As can be seen from Figure 1. Block 11 is way above the target line. However, we have not skipped this block because block 9 only has a cover of 650. We will graze block 11 which will last 2 days, by which time block 9 should have reached the target line. The ideal pre-grazing yield for this group is 810kg if their allowance is 17kg/day and rotation length is 18 days. Stocking rate is 2.65 cows/ha.
- 2) Blocks 3,7,8 & 14 were cut for silage on Monday and will be baled on Wednesday. These paddocks will now be topped up with either 30 units of urea or 2500gls slurry plus 15 units of urea per acre depending on the paddock.

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

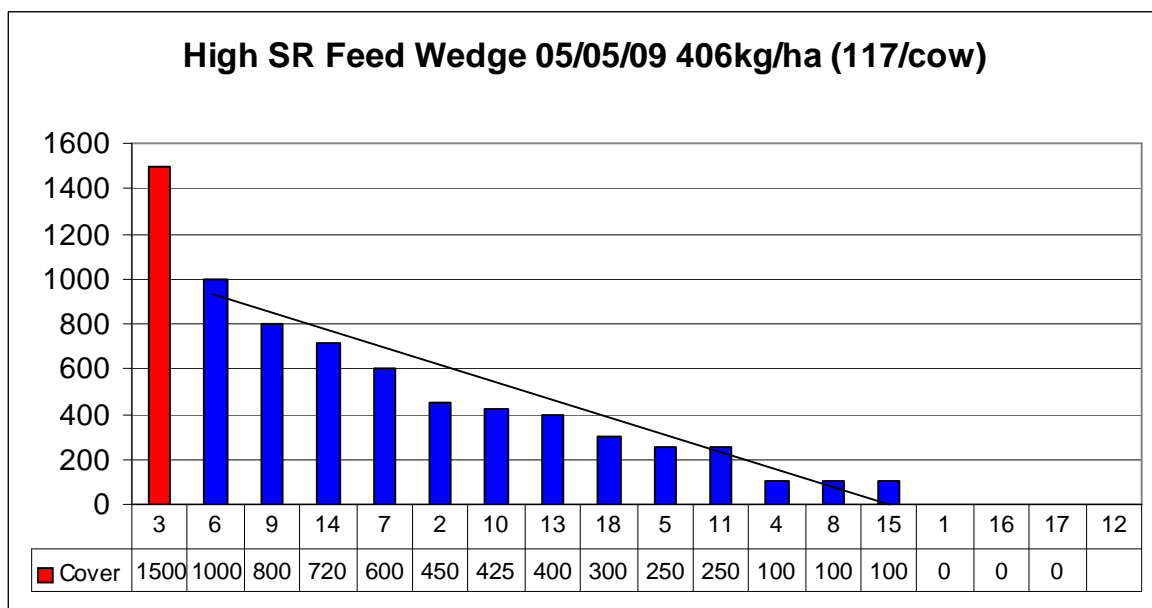
**Critical Issues**

- 3) **Maintain post-grazing height at between 3 and 3.5cm**

#### 4) Maintain pre-grazing yield at 950kg

##### Situation

**Figure 2. Farm Feed Wedge 04/05/09**



1. Block 3 had a cover of 1500kg so was skipped and will be cut for silage in the next two weeks. While the rest of the wedge is slightly below the target line, this is not a concern as blocks 1,16 & 17 have been cut for silage and are back growing, plus the demand is only 52kg/day and growth rates are expected to be well above this for the coming week.
2. With the silage ground back in, stocking rate is now 3.46 cows/ha. With an 18 day rotation length and 15kg allowance the ideal pre-grazing yield is now 950kg.

##### Whole Farm Situation

1. Average soil temperature for the past week was 11.08°C, last week 10.6°C.
2. Total rainfall for the week was 10.2mm.
3. Average weekly growth this week was 52kg/day, average for the previous 3 years was 76kg/day. The poor growth is a result of the amount of rain last week. As mild and humid weather is forecast the expectation is that growth rate should be close to 80kg/day this week.
4. Dry matter was 18% on Monday.
5. 15 units urea/acre is being spread after grazing. 30 units urea/acre is being spread after silage. Some paddocks that were low in P & K at soil sampling will receive 2500gls slurry per acre and 15 units urea/acre after silage.
6. Breeding season commenced on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April.
7. Latest milk quality test results from the milk processor are; Fat 4.13%, Protein 3.31%, Lactose 4.72%, SCC 250k, TBC 10k, Thermoduric N/D, Sediment A.

8. Critical Short-term Actions:

- a. Catch up on fertiliser spreading - we didn't spread on the grazing paddocks for a number of days during the wet spell last week.
- b. Cut silage before the base begins to turn white. This reduces the lag period between cutting and growing, thereby increasing growth and allowing aftergrass back into the grazing rotation faster. We can achieve this after 5/6 weeks of growth.
- c. Achieve a high submission rate now to ensure compact calving next February, regular monitoring of cows and using tail paint will help us to achieve this.

## ***EXPERIMENTAL PROGRESS REPORT AS AT SUNDAY, 03/05/09***

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

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

*(November 2008 ICBF)*

<b>Calving Date Group</b>	<b>Early Calving</b>			<b>Late Calving</b>		
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Stocking rate Group</b>						
Stocking rate (cows/ha)	2.51	2.92	3.28	2.51	2.92	3.28
Mean calving date	9/2	12/2	11/2	19/2	24/2	21/2
Ear-tag Colour	White	Blue	Orange	White	Blue	Orange
Band Colour	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue

<b>Week Details:</b>						
Area allocated (m <sup>2</sup> /day)	2400	2000	1800	2400	2000	1800
Farmlet cover (kg DM/cow)	131	141	117	141	137	121
Pre-herbage mass (kg DM/ha)	1200	1200	1000	1200	1200	1000
Residual grazing height (cm)	5.1	4.6	3.4	5.7	5.1	3.7
Diet (kg DM/cow/day)						
Grass	17	16	15	17	16	15
Silage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Concentrate	3	3	3	3	3	3
Milk solids (kg/cow/day)	1.61	1.50	1.46	1.64	1.60	1.63
Milk yield (kg/cow/day)	22.9	20.6	19.8	22.7	22.2	21.7
% Fat	3.69	3.90	4.01	3.81	3.87	3.94
% Protein	3.37	3.35	3.34	3.43	3.3	3.24
Bodyweight (kg)	469	446	437	464	470	458
Condition Score	2.92	2.84	2.74	2.96	2.88	2.90

<b>Cumulative:</b>						
Milk solids (kg/cow)	151	134	130	126	113	121
(kg/ha)	379	391	426	316	330	397
Milk yield (kg/cow)	1952	1721	1677	1664	1485	1551
% Fat	4.38	4.57	4.37	4.18	4.40	4.44
% Protein	3.41	3.40	3.45	3.47	3.44	3.47
Days in milk	82	82	84	70	69	69
Total supplement fed (kg/cow)						
Concentrate	180	186	182	129	132	134
Silage	63	111	119	20	37	43
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	22	23	23
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.**