

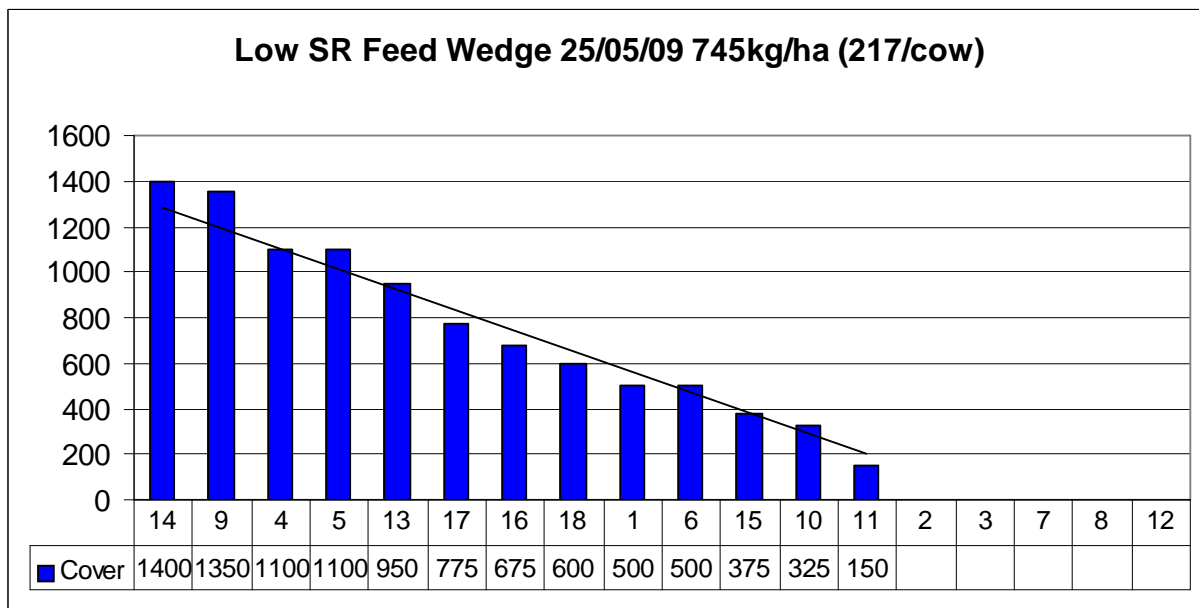
Low Stocking Rate Group (2.5 HF Cows/ha)

Critical Issues

- 1) **Maintain post-grazing height at between 4.5 - 5cm**
- 2) **Identify any surpluses and maintain pre-grazing yield at 1250kg**

Situation

Figure 1. Farm Feed Wedge 25/05/09



- 1) The big improvement in growth has come. This has allowed us to stop feeding concentrate and close blocks for silage. Blocks 2, 3, 7 & 8 had covers greater than 1400kg so were skipped. These will not be topped up with fertiliser but will be cut and baled next week.
- 2) The ideal pre-grazing yield for this group is 1050kg if their allowance is 17kg/day and rotation length is 18 days. Stocking rate is 3.44 cows/ha. However, because this group are leaving a post grazing residual of approximately 200kg the ideal pre-grazing yield is now 1250kg ($3.44 \times 17 \times 18 + 200$)

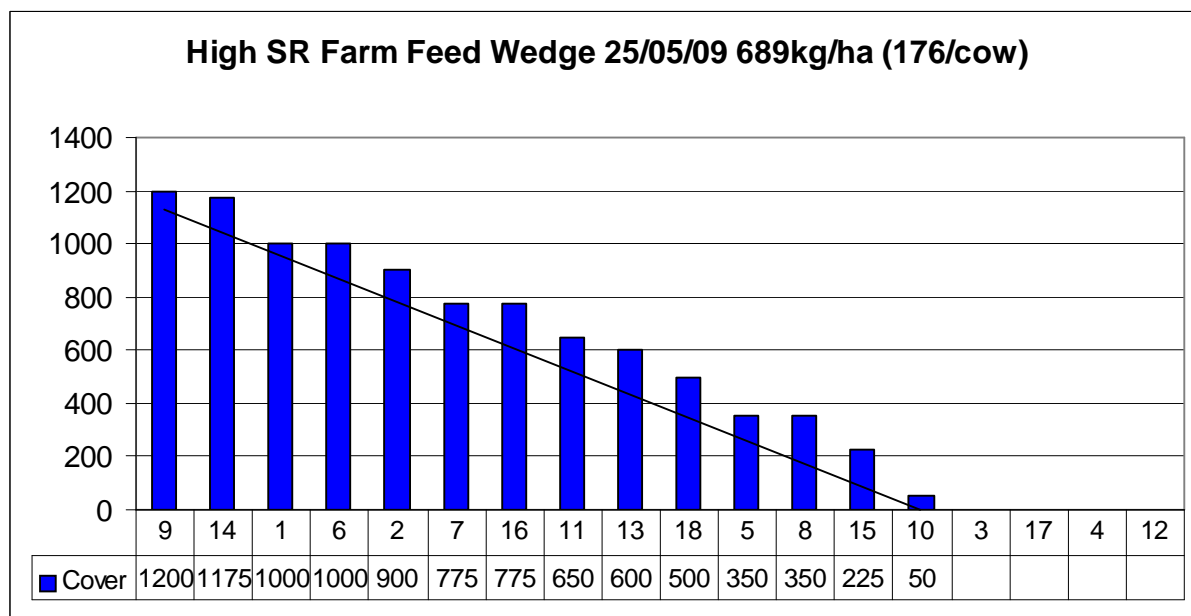
High Stocking Rate Group (3.3 HF Cows/ha)

Critical Issues

- 3) Maintain post-grazing height at between 3 and 3.5cm
- 4) Maintain pre-grazing yield at 1125kg

Situation

Figure 2. Farm Feed Wedge 25/05/09



1. Improved growth rates have allowed us to remove concentrate from the diet and close blocks for silage. Blocks 17 and 4 have covers greater than 1300, these will be baled next week.
2. Block 3 was originally intended for silage but was grazed 10 days ago at a cover of approximately 2500kg. This block was poorly grazed in wet weather, it currently has a cover of 775kg but is poor quality and stemmy. This will be skipped and made into silage in 2 weeks time.
3. This group are given an allowance of 15kg, are on an 18 day rotation and stocking rate is currently 4.17 cows/ha so ideal pre-grazing yield is 1125kg ($15 \times 4.17 \times 18$)
4. As can be seen from the wedge, nearly every block is above the target line so it is likely that more paddocks will be skipped over the next week. Pre grazing yields will be watched closely and if it is above 1125kg the block will be skipped.

Whole Farm Situation

1. Average soil temperature for the past week was 12.6°C, last week 11.2°C.
2. Total rainfall for the week was 29.6mm.
3. Average weekly growth this week was 80kg/day, average for the previous 3 years was 78kg/day.
4. Dry matter was 15.5% on Monday.
5. 30 units urea/acre is being spread after grazing.
6. Breeding season commenced on Monday 20th April.
7. Latest milk quality test results from the milk processor are; Fat 3.93%, Protein 3.26%, Lactose 4.79%, SCC 225k, TBC 10k, Thermoduric N/D, Sediment A.
8. Critical Short-term Actions:
 - a. Cows are on 24-hour allocations and move to new pasture as soon as desired post grazing height is achieved. Cows are moved between milkings if necessary.
 - 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, 24/05/09

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 (€)
Average	112	59	45	20	-3

(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	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

Week Details:						
Area allocated (m ² /day)	2400	2000	1800	2400	2000	1800
Farmlet cover (kg DM/cow)	217	169	164	243	173	171
Pre-herbage mass (kg DM/ha)	1250	1200	1000	1250	1200	1000
Residual grazing height (cm)	4.81	4.7	3.46	5.1	5.1	3.76
Diet (kg DM/cow/day)						
Grass	17	16	15	17	16	15
Silage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Concentrate	4	4	4	4	4	4
Milk solids (kg/cow/day)	1.6	1.49	1.42	1.66	1.46	1.59
Milk yield (kg/cow/day)	22.4	20.3	19.3	23.1	21.3	22.6
% Fat	3.79	4.04	4.05	3.81	3.73	3.83
% Protein	3.39	3.31	3.3	3.40	3.19	3.27
Bodyweight (kg)	481	474	460	488	491	491
Condition Score	2.83	2.72	2.73	2.91	2.85	2.73

Cumulative:						
Milk solids (kg/cow)	185	165	160	160	145	159
(kg/ha)	464	482	525	402	423	522
Milk yield (kg/cow)	2420	2152	2096	2144	1947	2172
% Fat	4.24	4.38	4.28	4.05	4.16	4.32
% Protein	3.40	3.35	3.39	3.43	3.35	3.35
Days in milk	104	100	101	93	89	93
Total supplement fed (kg/cow)						
Concentrate	215	224	220	167	170	172
Silage	63	111	119	20	37	43
Conserved silage (kg DM /cow)	223	100	100	223	100	100

Farmlet area (hectares)	9.17	7.87	7.01	9.17	7.87	7.01
Number of cows calved	23	23	23	23	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.