

Curtins Farm Walk Notes Monday 15-06-09

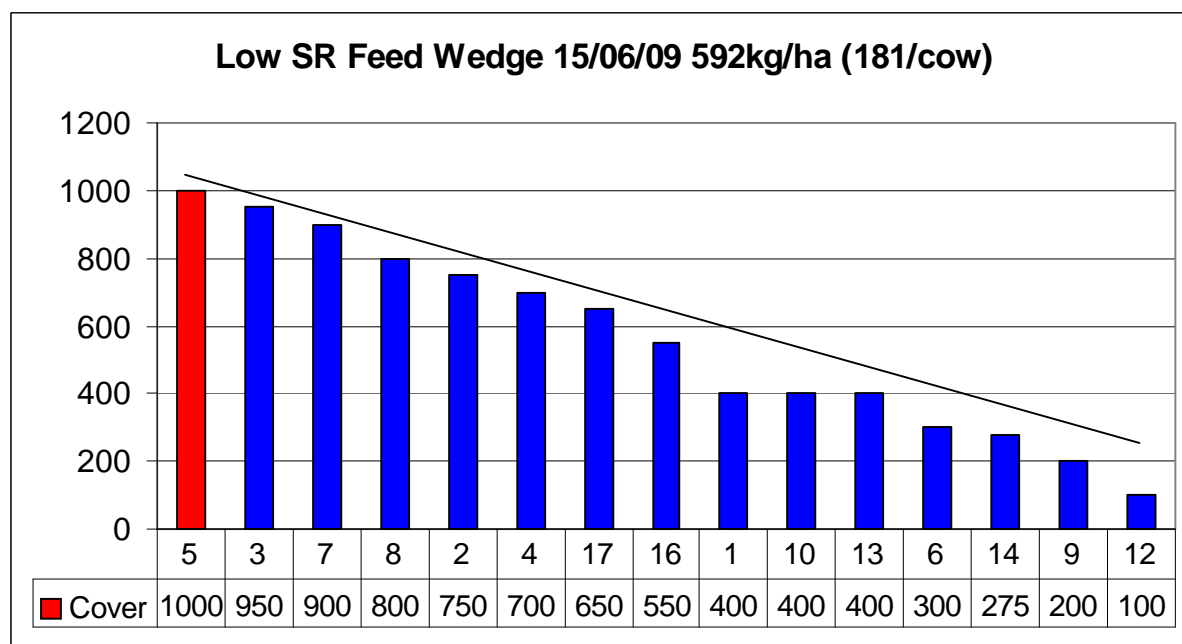
Low Stocking Rate Group (2.5 HF Cows/ha)

Critical Issues

- 1) Maintain post-grazing height at between 5 – 5.5cm
- 2) Identify any surpluses and maintain pre-grazing yield at 1028kg

Situation

Figure 1. Farm Feed Wedge 15/06/09



(Block 5, in red is currently being grazed)

- 1) We have a perfectly shaped wedge this week, albeit slightly below target. As predicted last week, we have set this farmlet up for a 14-day rotation length for the next two weeks. The stocking rate is currently 3.27 cows/ha as Blocks 11, 15 & 18 are closed for silage and won't be cut for two weeks. Demand for this group is 56kg per day. Growth rate for the past week has been 55kg and is expected to be higher this week because of more favourable weather conditions.
- 2) However, if growth remains at 55kg (conservative) we will still reach our ideal pre-grazing yield on a 14 day rotation length because $55\text{kg} \times 14 \text{ days} = 770\text{kg/ha}$ plus the residual $250\text{kg} = 1020$ i.e. on target.
- 3) 38% of the herd's silage requirement is now made.

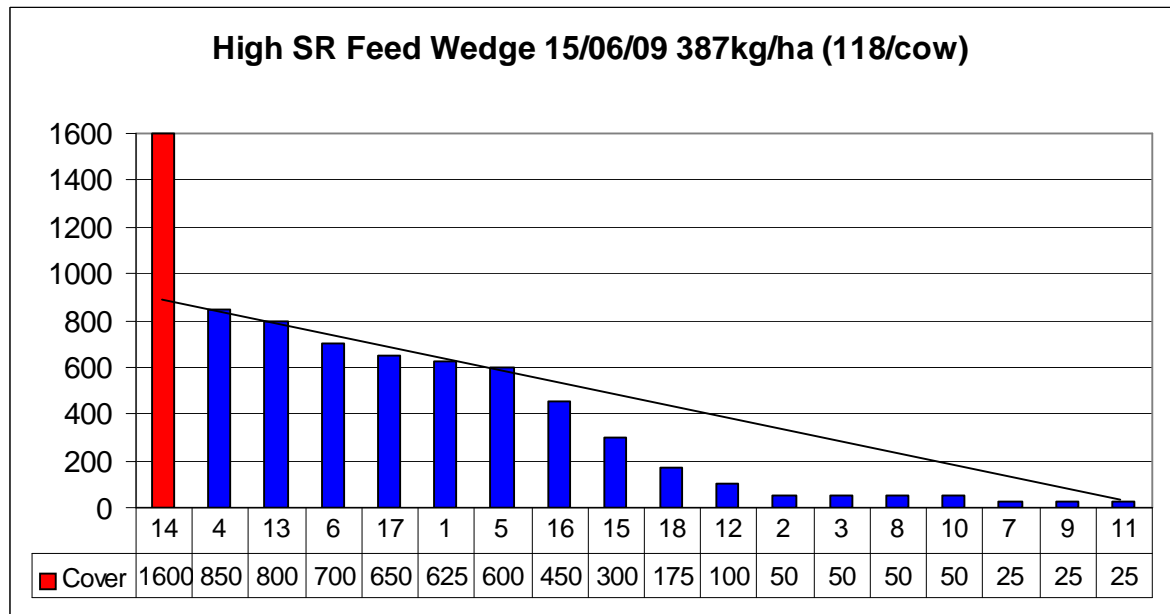
High Stocking Rate Group (3.3 HF Cows/ha)

Critical Issues

- 3) Maintain post-grazing height at between 3 and 3.5cm
- 4) Maintain pre-grazing yield at 900kg

Situation

Figure 2. Farm Feed Wedge 15/06/09



(Block 14, in red is currently being grazed)

1. Blocks 2, 3, 7 and 11 were cut for silage on Thursday of last week. With these blocks cut we are now back to our overall stocking rate of 3.28 cows/ha and with an 18-day rotation length our ideal pre-grazing yield is 900kg ($15 \times 3.28 \times 18$).
2. As can be seen in the wedge block 14 is way above this and there is also a dip in the second half of the wedge. We did not skip block 14 because it is still good quality and because of the dip in the wedge.
3. Demand for this group is 50kg/day, the expectation is that growth will exceed this so it is likely that surpluses will emerge over the next week..
4. 32.6% of the herd's silage requirement is now made.

Whole Farm Situation

1. Average soil temperature for the past week was 15.54°C, last week 15.1°C.

2. Total rainfall for the week was 7.2mm.
3. Average weekly growth this week was 55kg/day, average for the previous 3 years was 57kg/day.
4. Dry matter was 14% on Monday.
5. 30 units of CAN with 5 units Sulphur is being spread per acre after grazing. 112.6kg N/ha have been spread up to the 1st of June. We could get away with less nitrogen at the moment but we want to maximise growth as we will be short winter feed for the high and medium stocking rate treatments.
6. Breeding season commenced on Monday 20th April.
7. Latest milk quality test results from the milk processor are; Fat 4.14%, Protein 3.39%, Lactose 4.65%, SCC 151k, 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. At the moment, we are cutting silage after 3-4 weeks of growth with pre-cutting yields of approximately 1800-2200kg.
 - c. Achieve a high submission rate now to ensure compact calving next Spring, regular monitoring of cows and using tail paint will help us to achieve this.