

## Curtins Farm Walk Notes Monday 22-06-09

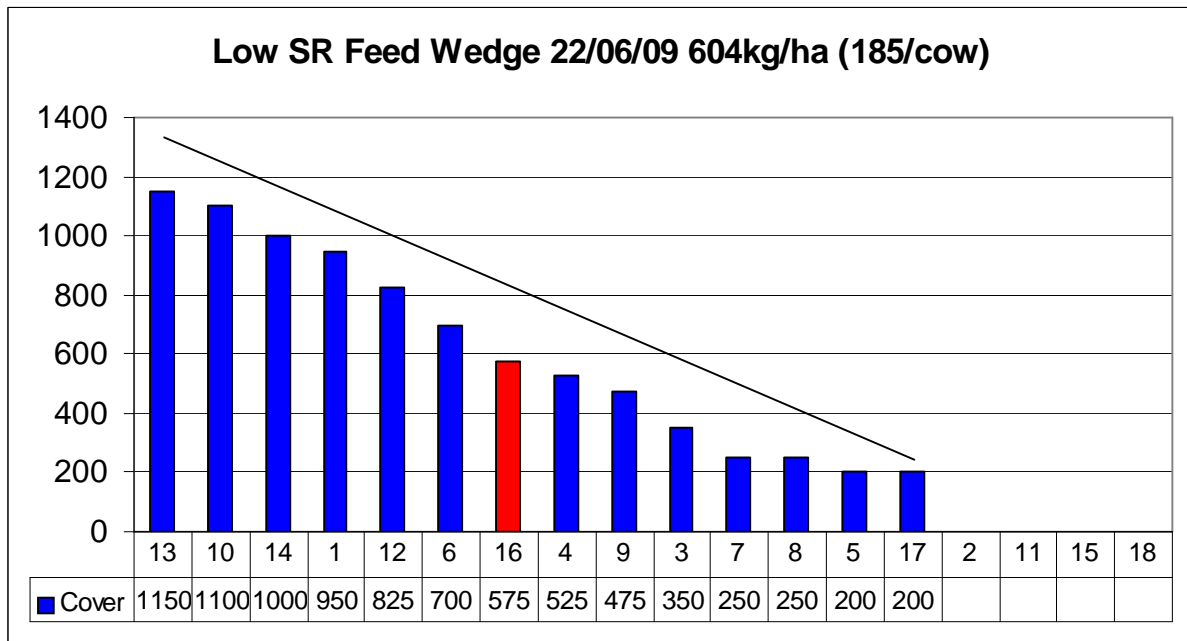
### Low Stocking Rate Group (2.5 HF Cows/ha)

#### Critical Issues

- 1) Maintain post-grazing height at between 5 – 5.5cm
- 2) Identify any surpluses and maintain pre-grazing yield at 1360kg

#### Situation

Figure 1. Farm Feed Wedge 22/06/09



(Block 16, in red is currently being grazed)

- 1) We have a perfectly shaped wedge this week, albeit below target. The stocking rate is currently 3.27 cows/ha as Blocks 11, 15 & 18 are closed for silage and will be cut on Wednesday. Block 2 was skipped over last Friday, it was topped up with 30 units of CAN and will be cut in 3 weeks.
- 2) Demand for this group is 56kg per day. Growth rate for the past week has been 67kg. We are setting this farmlet up for a 20 day rotation length as there is a risk of drought. As we are below our target covers in all paddocks, no blocks have been skipped this week.
- 3) 38% of the herd's silage requirement is now made.

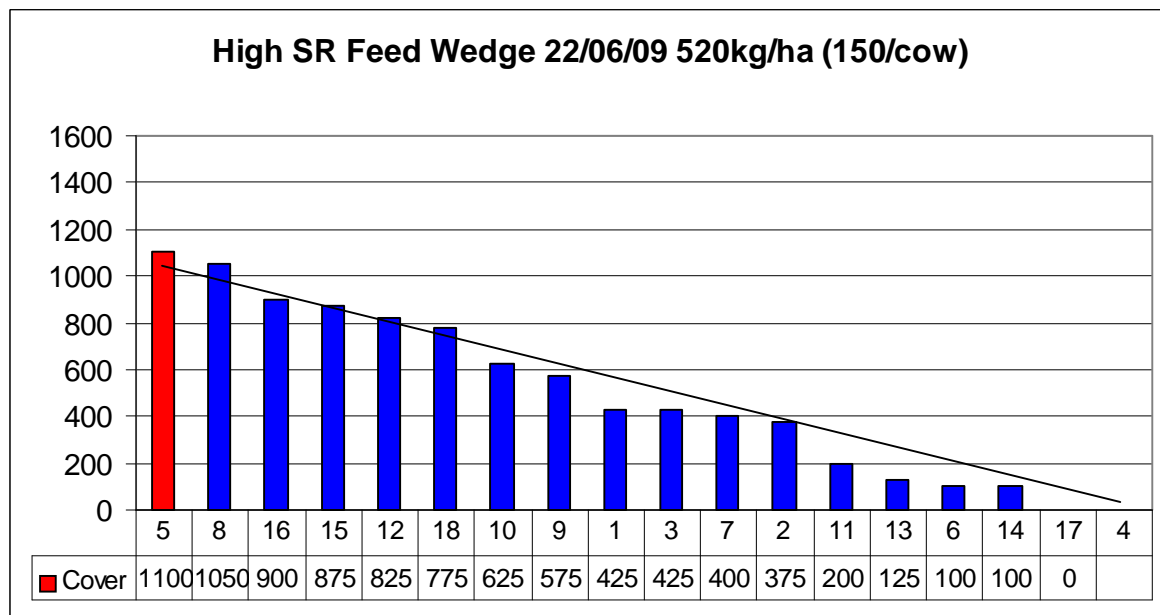
### High Stocking Rate Group (3.3 HF Cows/ha)

#### Critical Issues

- 3) Maintain post-grazing height at between 3 and 3.5cm
- 4) Maintain pre-grazing yield at 1038kg

#### Situation

**Figure 2. Farm Feed Wedge 22/06/09**



(Block 5, in red is currently being grazed)

1. Block 4 was skipped for silage last Friday and will be cut on Wednesday. Stocking rate is now 3.46 cows/ha and with a 20-day rotation length our ideal pre-grazing yield is 1038kg (15\*3.46\*20).
2. Demand for this group is 52kg/day, growth over the past 7 days was 67kg/day. The expectation is that growth will continue at this rate for the next week so it is likely that surpluses will emerge by next week.
3. 32.6% of the herd's silage requirement is now made.

### Whole Farm Situation

1. Average soil temperature for the past week was 15.8°C, last week 15.54°C.
2. Total rainfall for the week was 20.6mm.
3. Average weekly growth this week was 67kg/day, average for the previous 3 years was 60kg/day.
4. Dry matter was 17.3% on Monday.
5. 15 units of CAN with 5 units Sulphur is being spread per acre after grazing. 112.6kg N/ha have been spread up to the 1<sup>st</sup> of June.
6. Breeding season commenced on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April.
7. Latest milk quality test results from the milk processor are; Fat 4.01%, Protein 3.44%, Lactose 4.68%, SCC 231k, 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.

## **EXPERIMENTAL PROGRESS REPORT AS AT SUNDAY, 21/06/09**

*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	9/2	12/2	11/2	26/2	24/2	22/2
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)	185	175	150	198	169	147
Pre-herbage mass (kg DM/ha)	1150	1350	1050	1150	1350	1050
Residual grazing height (cm)	5.78	4.73	3.66	5.73	4.68	3.23
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)	1.5	1.38	1.38	1.55	1.25	1.52
Milk yield (kg/cow/day)	20.0	17.1	18.2	21.4	18.2	19.8
% Fat	3.97	4.72	4.09	3.73	3.71	4.43
% Protein	3.59	3.37	3.48	3.53	3.22	3.36
Bodyweight (kg)	511	479	486	514	488	510
Condition Score	2.91	2.76	2.78	2.98	2.84	2.70

<b>Cumulative:</b>						
Milk solids (kg/cow)	226	203	197	191	182	201
(kg/ha)	567	593	646	479	531	659
Milk yield (kg/cow)	2984	2658	2610	2579	2480	2650
% Fat	4.19	4.31	4.18	3.99	4.02	4.24
% Protein	3.41	3.34	3.38	3.39	3.31	3.31
Days in milk	132	128	129	114	117	119
Total supplement fed (kg/cow)						
Concentrate	215	224	220	167	170	172
Silage	63	111	119	20	37	43
Conserved silage (kg DM /cow)	380	326	336	380	326	336

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.**