

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 1620kg

Situation

Figure 1. Autumn Feed Budget

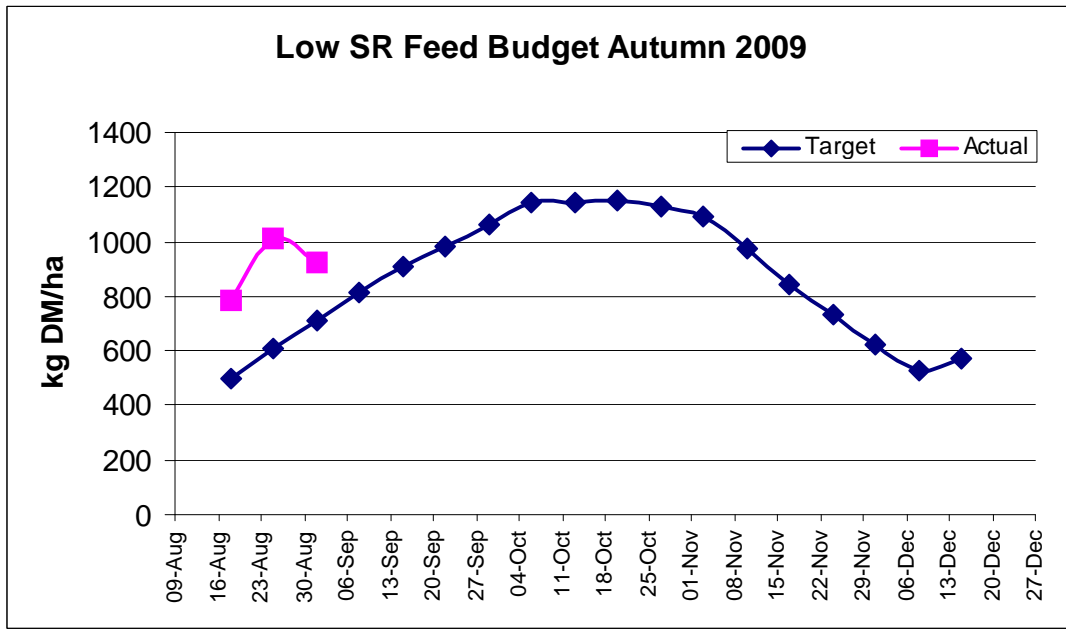
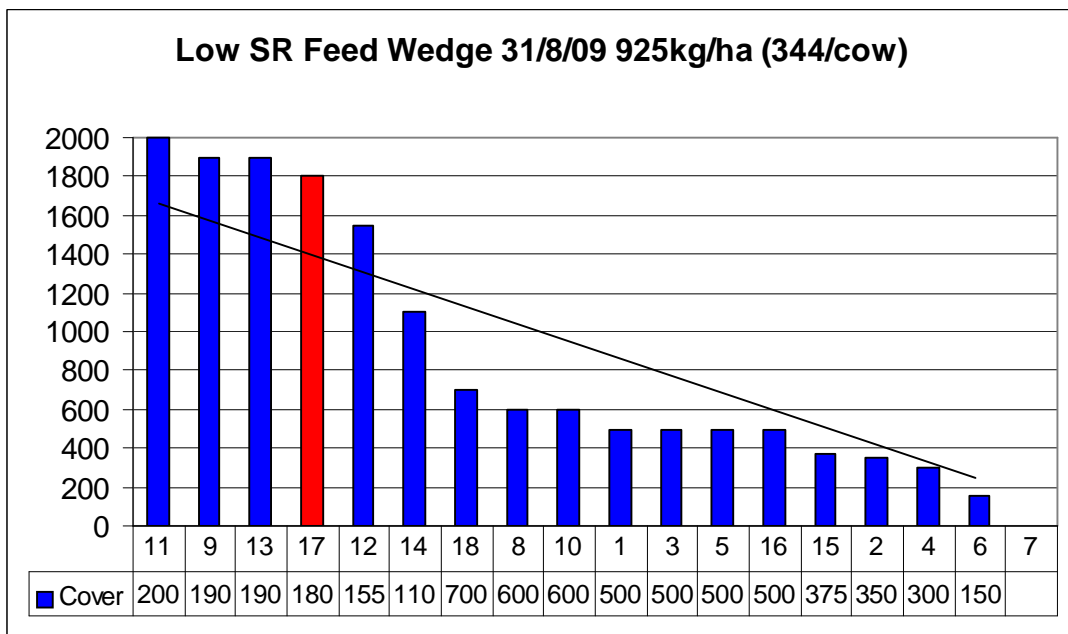


Figure 2. Farm Feed Wedge 31/08/09



- 1) As can be seen in the figure 1, we are still well above target in terms of farm cover but it is reducing and coming back on target. We have an uneven shaped feed wedge (Figure 2) with surpluses at the start but deficits in the centre so no blocks were skipped this week. The reason for the plateau in the centre of the wedge is that blocks 3, 4, 5 and 16 were cut for silage early last week and so are growing back at the same time and rate.

- 2) Block 17 (in red) is currently being grazed by cows.
- 3) Rotation length has increased to 30 days, target for end of September is 45 days.
- 4) Ideal pre-grazing yield is 1620kg ($2.69 \times 30 \times 17 + 250$)

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 1670kg

Situation

Figure 3. Autumn Feed Budget

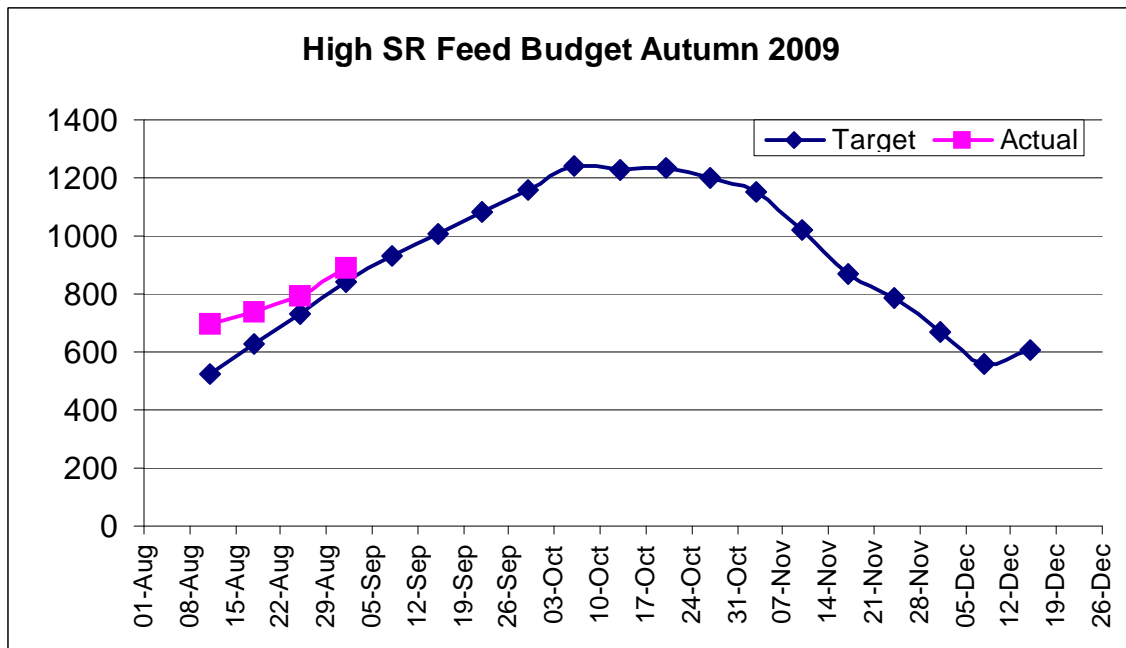
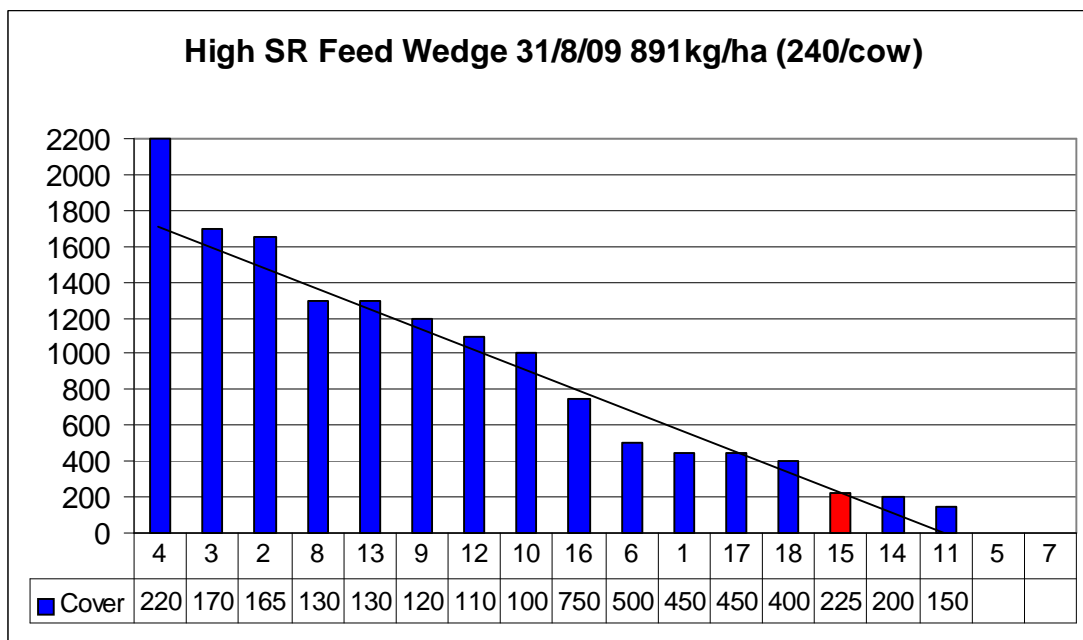


Figure 4. Farm Feed Wedge 31/08/09



1. We are almost exactly on target in terms of farm cover (Figure 3). Blocks 6 and 18 were cut for bale silage last week. Blocks 4 and 5 were above the target line in Figure 4 this week but we decided to only skip block 4. The reasons for this are that weather is very unsettled and there are no guarantees that we would get it cut this week and secondly if we removed Block 4 we would be below our target farm cover (762kg vs 891kg).
2. Block 15 (in red) is currently being grazed by cows
3. Rotation length is currently at 30 days and like the low stocking rate will increase weekly up to 45 days by end of September.
4. Stocking rate is now 3.71 cows/ha and with a 30 day rotation length our ideal pre-grazing yield is 1670kg ($15 \times 3.71 \times 30$).

Whole Farm Situation

1. Average soil temperature for the past week was 14.94°C, last week 16.6°C.
2. Total rainfall for the week was 45.2mm.
3. Average weekly growth this week was 73kg/day, average for the previous 3 years was 55kg/day.
4. Dry matters were 12% on Monday morning during rain.
5. 20 units of CAN is being spread per acre after grazing. 205kg N/ha have been spread up to the 1st of August.
6. Breeding season commenced on Monday 20th April and ceased on Monday 20th of July (13 weeks).
7. Latest milk quality test results from the milk processor are; Fat 4.52%, Protein 3.71%, Lactose 4.53%, SCC 312k, TBC 18k, Thermoturic 7, Sediment B.
8. Critical Short-term Actions:
 - a. Cows are on 36-hour allocations.
 - b. If ground conditions deteriorate we will move to 12-hour blocks.

- c. Cut silage as soon as weather conditions allow.
- d. Maintain post-grazing height at desired level. As pre-grazing yields are increasing this is becoming increasingly harder to achieve.

EXPERIMENTAL PROGRESS REPORT AS AT SUNDAY, 30/08/09

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	26/2	24/2	22/2
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)	345	287	205	365	280	204
Pre-herbage mass (kg DM/ha)	2000	2000	2200	2000	2000	2200
Residual grazing height (cm)	5.10	3.82	3.95	5.40	4.19	3.77
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)	1.34	1.13	1.07	1.34	1.12	1.13
Milk yield (kg/cow/day)	16.7	14.0	12.4	16.8	14.7	13.6
% Fat	4.25	4.38	4.80	4.19	4.09	4.52
% Protein	3.85	3.79	3.91	3.84	3.67	3.82
Bodyweight (kg)	540	497	490	537	503	498
Condition Score	2.95	2.77	2.71	2.89	2.79	2.62

Cumulative:						
Milk solids (kg/cow)	327	295	279	296	272	289
(kg/ha)	821	861	915	743	794	948
Milk yield (kg/cow)	4292	3818	3681	3973	3712	3826
% Fat	4.15	4.32	4.15	3.98	3.97	4.18
% Protein	3.48	3.42	3.45	3.48	3.36	3.37
Days in milk	202	198	199	184	187	189
Total supplement fed (kg/cow)						
Concentrate	215	224	220	167	170	172
Silage	63	111	119	20	37	43
Conserved silage (kg DM /cow)	921	631	581	921	631	581
Bought in Silage (kg DM /cow)	417	417	417	417	417	417

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.