

Curtins Farm Walk Notes Tuesday 30-03-10

Low Stocking Rate Group (2.5 HF Cows/ha)

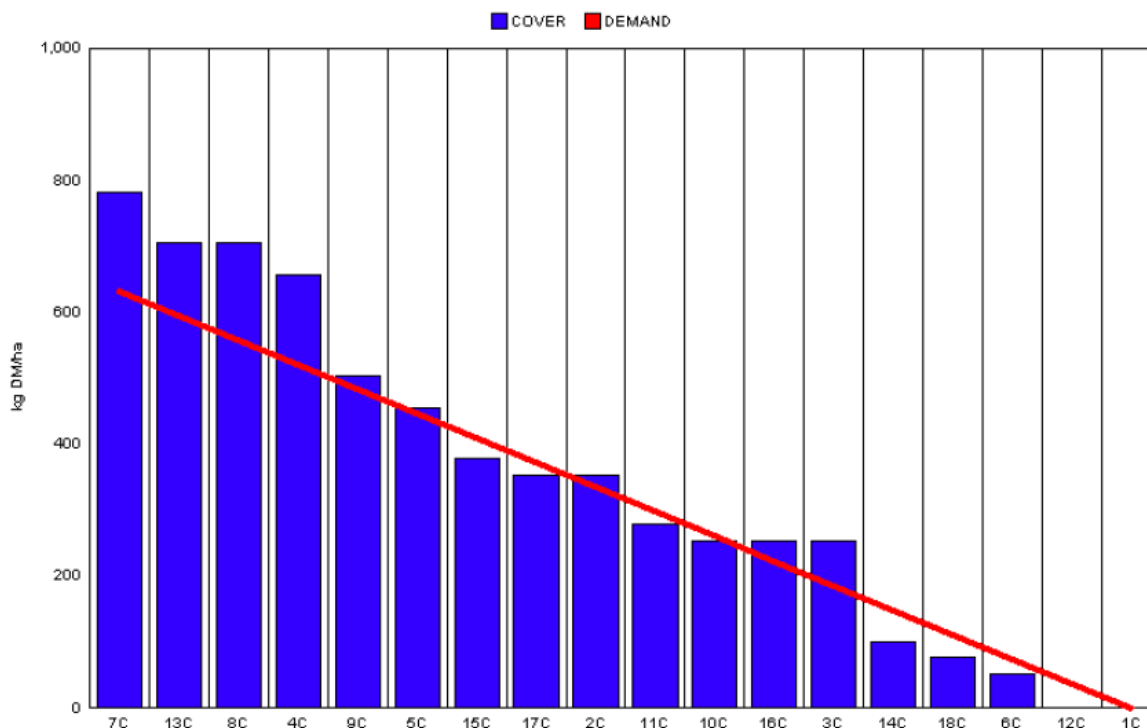
Critical Issues

- 1) Maintain post-grazing height at between 4 – 5cm
- 2) Avoid Poaching
- 3) Achieve high grass intakes

Situation

Figure 1. Low Stocking Rate Feed Wedge

Teagasc, Dairy Production Department, Moorepark		GrazePlan - Grass Measurement Report	
Group : TEAGASC RESEARCH FARMS		Date Produced 30-MAR-10	
Farm : Curtins Farm		Effect of stocking rate and calving date on animal performance	
Date : 29-MAR-10		Treatment : Low SR	
Rotation Length :	21	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha) :	351
Grass Allocation /cow (kg grass dry matter/LU)	12	Farm Cover (kg DM/LU) :	139
Concentrate Fed (kg/cow) :	6	Current Monthly Fertilizer Rate (kg/ha) :	
Silage Fed (kg DM/cow) :	0	Stock Rate (LU/ha) :	2.52
N Application Rate (units/acre) :		Growth Rate :	28
N Application Rate (kg/ha) :		Farm Demand (kg DM/LU/day) ::	30
Residual Height :	3	Target pregrazing yield (kg DM/ha) :	634
Total Livestock :	23		



- 1) 91% of the herd is calved. Grazing commenced on the 31st of January and the second rotation started on the 29th of March.
- 2) Farm cover is 351kg/ha (Figure 1) which is below target but it is an increase on last weeks figure (279kg)
- 3) Target rotation length is 21 days. Therefore, area allocation is 0.44ha/day [farm size/rotation length ($9.16/21 = 0.44$)]
- 4) Cows are currently grazing block 13, pre-grazing yield is 770kg and 200kg residual is left after grazing. Therefore, grass intake is estimated to be 12kg/day, [(570kg allowance*0.44ha)/21 cows calved]. Concentrate supplementation is at 6kg/day.
- 5) In order to sustain pre-grazing yields of 800kg we need a growth rate of 38kg/day, which is achievable.

High Stocking Rate Group (3.3 HF Cows/ha)

Critical Issues

- 1. Maintain post-grazing height at between 3 and 3.5cm**
- 2. Avoid poaching**
- 3. Achieve high grass intakes**

Situation

Figure 3. High Stocking Rate Feed Wedge

Teagasc, Dairy Production Department, Moorepark		GrazePlan - Grass Measurement Report	
Group : TEAGASC RESEARCH FARMS		Date Produced 30-MAR-10	
Farm : Curtins Farm		Effect of stocking rate and calving date on animal performance	
Date : 29-MAR-10		Treatment : High SR	
Rotation Length :	27	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha) :	400
Grass Allocation /cow (kg grass dry matter/LU)	8	Farm Cover (kg DM/LU) :	121
Concentrate Fed (kg/cow) :	6	Current Monthly Fertilizer Rate (kg/ha) :	
Silage Fed (kg DM/cow) :	4	Stock Rate (LU/ha) :	3.30
N Application Rate (units/acre) :		Growth Rate :	26
N Application Rate (kg/ha) :		Farm Demand (kg DM/LU/day) ::	26
Residual Height :	3	Target pregrazing yield (kg DM/ha) :	712
Total Livestock :	23		

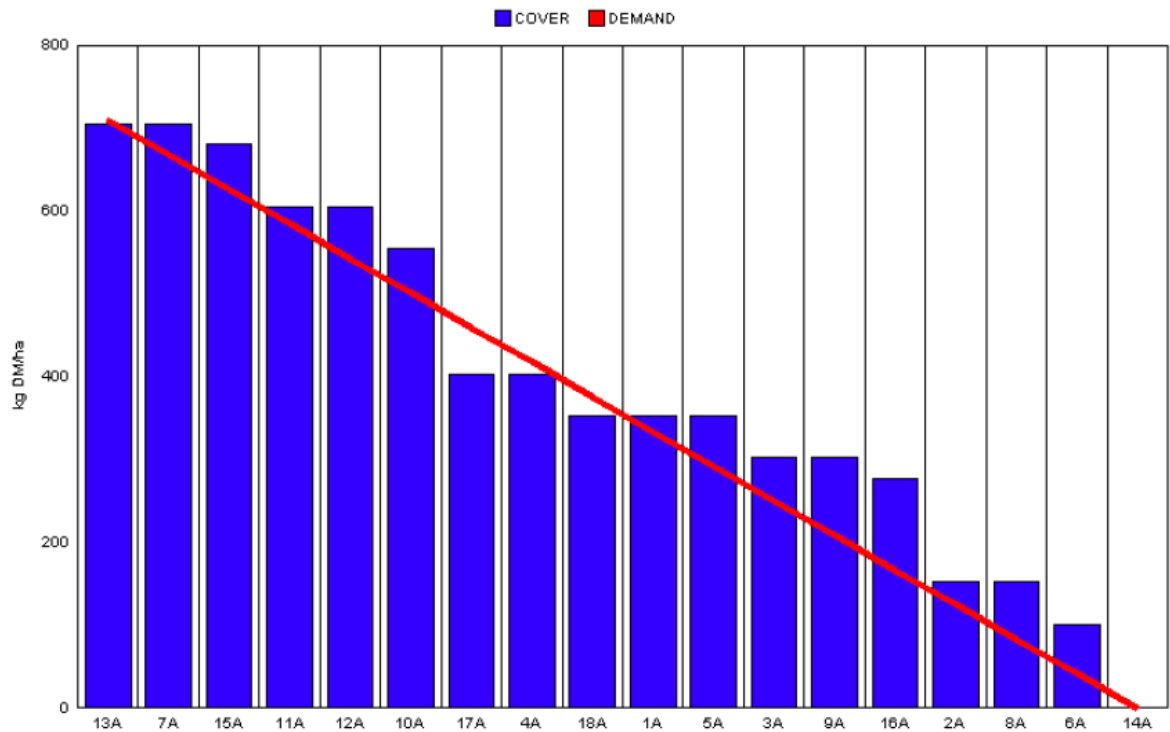
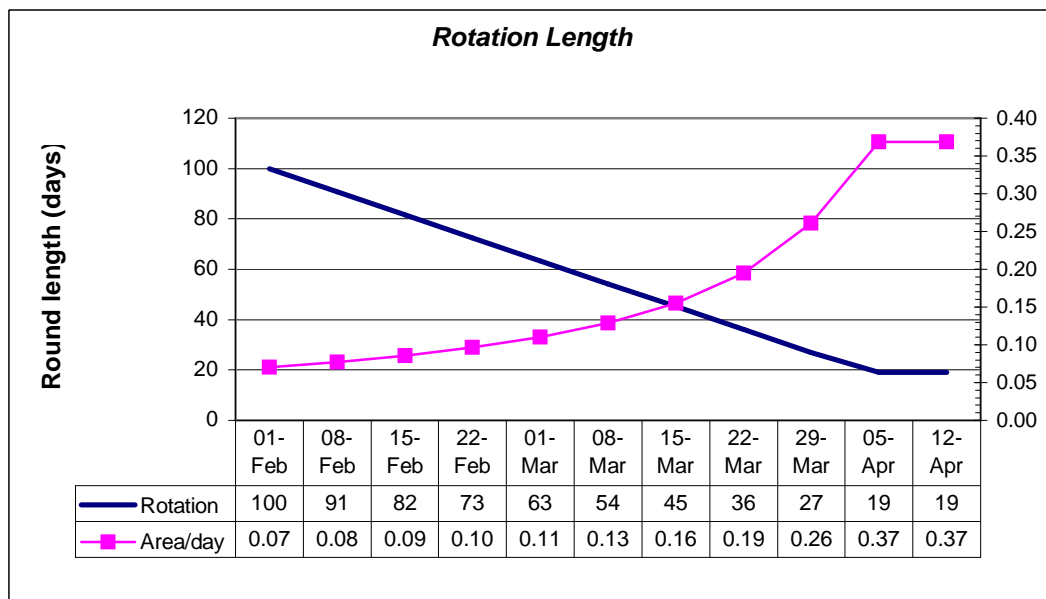


Figure 5. Spring Rotation Plan for High Stocking Rate



1. 95% of the herd is calved and grazing commenced on the 10th of February, 10 days later than planned. 88% of the farmlet was grazed on the 29th of March.
2. Pre-grazing yield is 700kg and area allocation is 0.26ha/day. Therefore, grass intake is estimated to be 8kg [(700kg*0.26ha)/22 cows calved]. 6kg of concentrate is being fed along with 4kg of high quality bale silage.
3. If pre-grazing yields increase further the silage will be removed from the diet.
4. Farm cover is 400kg/ha.

Whole Farm Situation

1. Average weekly growth this week was 28kg/day.
2. Dry matters were 14.8% on Monday morning.
3. So far this year, the farm has received 60 units of nitrogen/acre, in the form of slurry and urea. 30units of N will be spread after grazing in the second rotation.
4. Latest milk quality test results from the milk processor are; Fat 4.37%, Protein 3.23%, Lactose 4.72%, SCC 227k, TBC 18k.
5. Freshly calved cows are on 4kg of concentrate for 5 days after calving, this is then increased to 6kg thereafter.
6. Critical Short-term Actions:
 - a. Cows getting grass are on 12 or 24-hour allocations depending on weather.
 - b. Avoid poaching, we are back fencing and are using on/off grazing when required.
 - c. Monitor cows closely for signs of ill health and treat early.