

Curtins Farm Walk Notes Tuesday 24-08-10

Low Stocking Rate Group (2.5 HF Cows/ha)

Critical Issues

- 1) Maintain post-grazing height at between 4.5 – 5cm
- 2) Achieve target autumn average farm cover.

Situation

Figure 1. Low Stocking Rate Feed Wedge

Moorepark Animal & Grassland Research and Innovation Centre		GrazePlan - Grass Measurement Report	
Group : TEAGASC RESEARCH FARMS		Date Produced 24-AUG-10	
Farm : Curtins Farm		Effect of stocking rate and calving date on animal performance	
Date : 23-AUG-10		Treatment : Low SR	
Rotation Length :	27	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha) :	489
Grass Allocation /cow (kg grass dry matter/LU)	14	Farm Cover (kg DM/LU) :	194
Concentrate Fed (kg/cow) :	4	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 :	33
N Application Rate (kg/ha) :		Farm Demand (kg DM/LU/day) ::	35
Residual Height :	5	Target pregrazing yield (kg DM/ha) :	951
Total Livestock :	23		

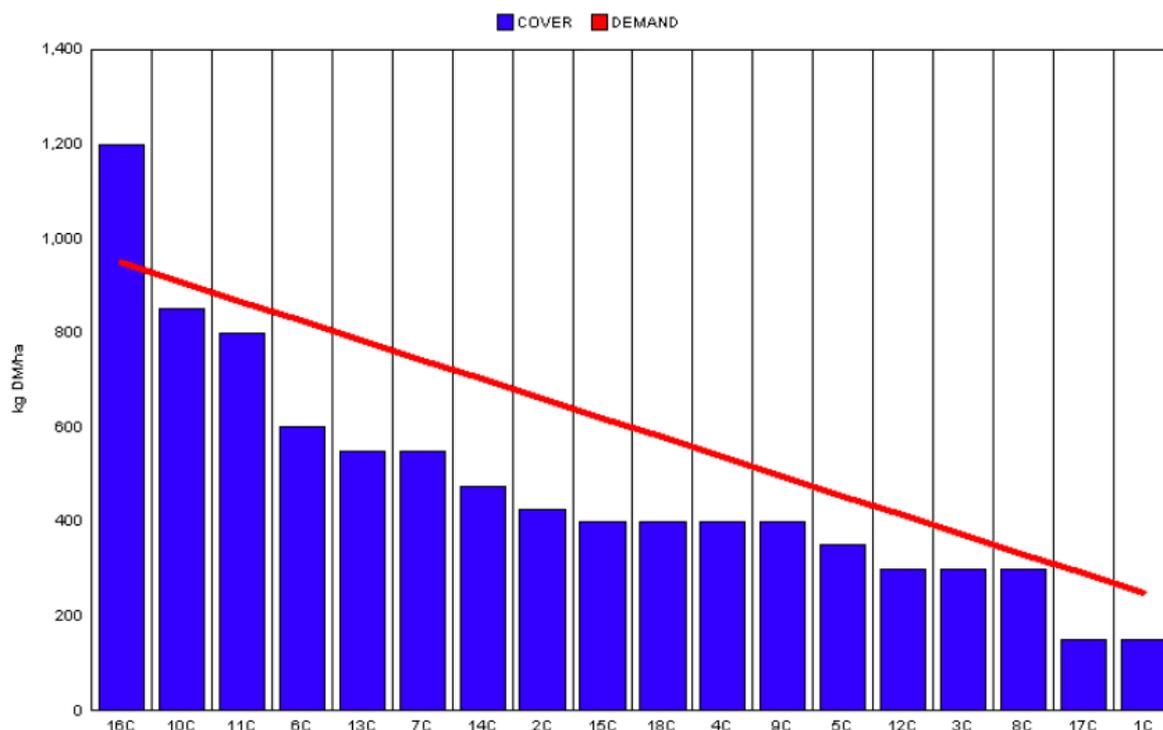
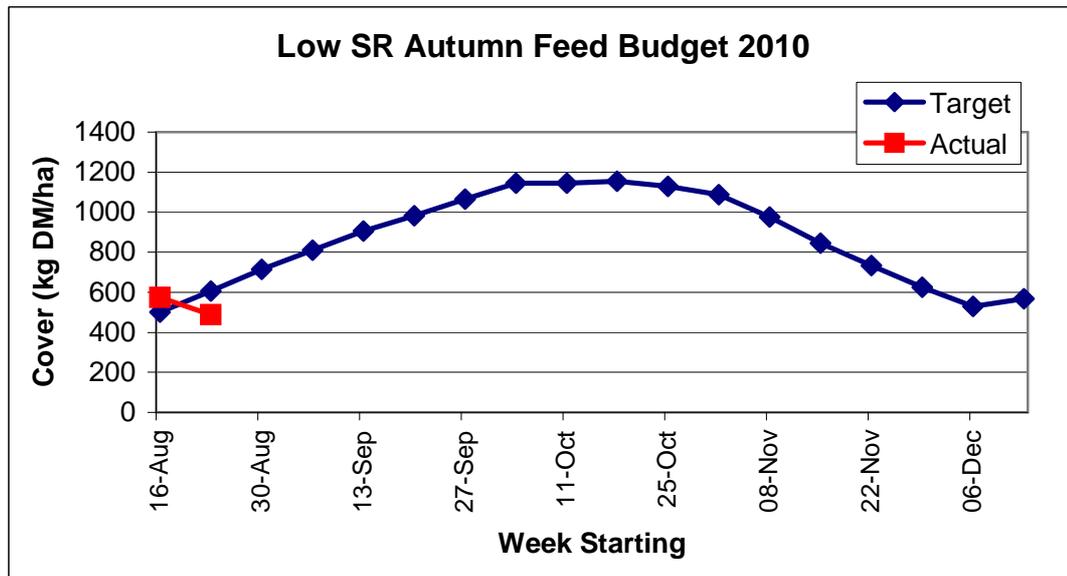


Figure 2. Low Stocking Rate Autumn Budget



- 1) Farm cover is 498kg/ha or 194kg/cow which is lower than last weeks figure. As can be seen in Figure 1, we have a very significant deficit in the feed wedge with almost every paddock below target. Similarly in Figure 2, we are below target in terms of average farm cover for this time of year.
- 2) The reason for this is that growth rate dropped dramatically this week to 33kg while demand was at 45kg. Growth rate last week was 65kg. The reasons for this sudden drop in growth are unknown, possibilities include moisture, nitrogen or phosphorus deficiency or a combination of each.
- 3) In order to rectify this situation 4kg of concentrate (3-way mix of barley, citrus and gluten @ 14%CP) is being fed per day. The decision to feed 4kg is based on how far behind we are in terms of average farm cover compared to the targets in Figure 2. The target cover for this week is 607kg while we are at 489kg which leaves a deficit of 118kg/ha. If we aim to correct this over 2 weeks and if we presume that growth will equal current demand this means that we are short 8.43kg/ha/day (118kg/14 days). To convert this to per cow divide by the stocking rate which in this case is 2.5cows/ha or 3.37kg/cow, hence we are feeding 4kg/day.
- 4) Management decisions from here to closing will be based more on the autumn budget than the feed wedge as the feed wedge does not take into account the necessity to increase covers.
- 5) Total dry matter intakes are estimated to be 18kg/day.

High Stocking Rate Group (3.3 HF Cows/ha)

Critical Issues

1. Maintain post-grazing height at 3.5cm
2. Achieve target autumn average farm cover.

Situation

Figure 3. High Stocking Rate Feed Wedge

Moorepark Animal & Grassland Research and Innovation Centre		GrazePlan - Grass Measurement Report	
Group :	TEAGASC RESEARCH FARMS	Date Produced	24-AUG-10
Farm :	Curtins Farm	Effect of stocking rate and calving date on animal performance	
Date :	23-AUG-10	Treatment :	High SR
Rotation Length :	27	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha) :	638
Grass Allocation /cow (kg grass dry matter/LU	12	Farm Cover (kg DM/LU) :	193
Concentrate Fed (kg/cow) :	4	Current Monthly Fertilizer Rate (kg/ha) :	
Silage Fed (kg DM/cow) :	0	Stock Rate (LU/ha) :	3.30
N Application Rate (units/acre) :		Growth Rate :	51
N Application Rate (kg/ha) :		Farm Demand (kg DM/LU/day) ::	40
Residual Height :	3.5	Target pregrazing yield (kg DM/ha) :	1068
Total Livestock :	23		

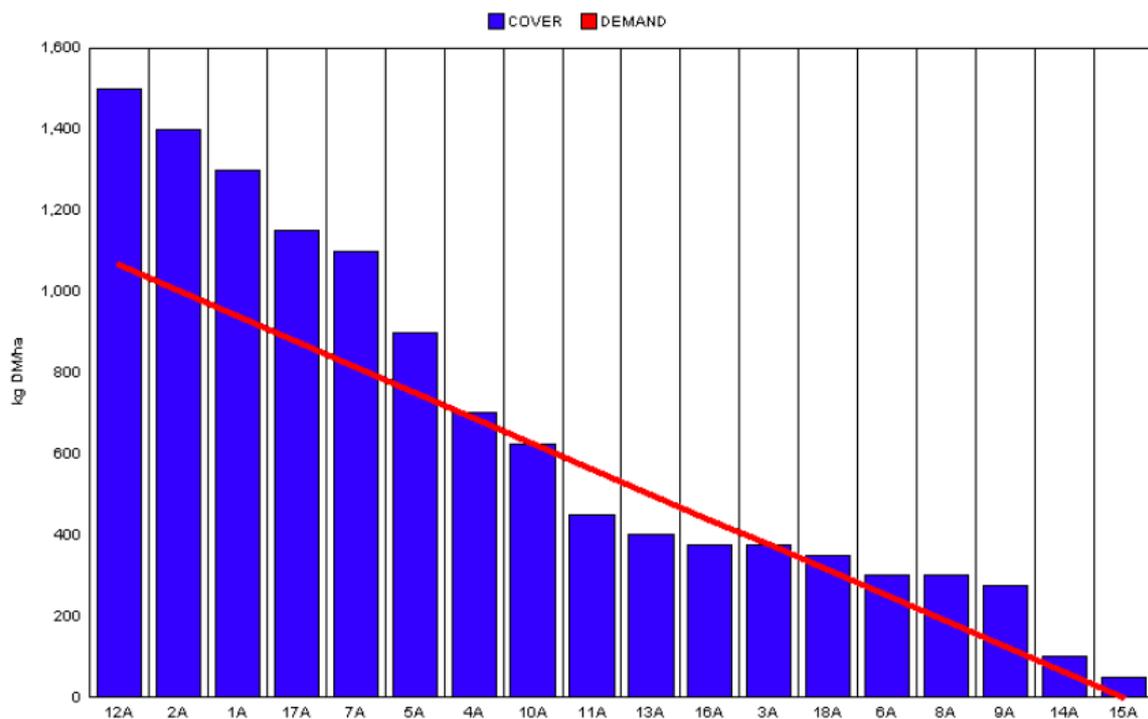
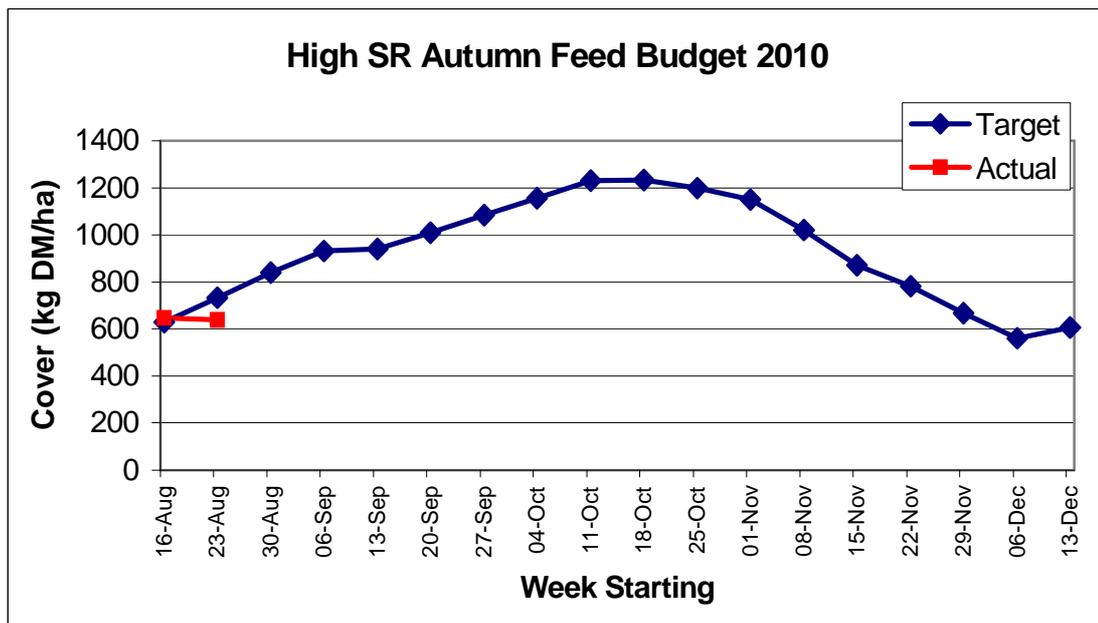


Figure 4. High Stocking Rate Autumn Budget



1. Farm cover is 638kg/ha (193/cow), which is almost identical to last weeks. As can be seen in Figure 3 we have a relatively even shaped wedge with a small deficit in the middle. However, we are considerably behind target in terms of average farm cover (734 vs 638kg, Figure 4). For this reason we are feeding 4kg of concentrate per day which is why the demand line in the feed wedge is artificially low.
2. Growth rate for this group is at 51kg/day while demand for the coming week is 40kg/day. The reasons why this farmlet is growing more than the low stocking rate farmlet are unknown.
3. Pre-grazing yields are between 1400 and 1600kg, cows are getting full paddocks and residency time is approximately 36 hours per paddock. Cows are moved on when desired post grazing residual is achieved (3.5cm).
4. Total dry matter intakes are estimated to be 16kg/day

Whole Farm Situation

1. Average weekly growth this week was between 33 and 51kg/day.
2. Dry matters were 13.9% on Monday morning.
3. Rotation lengths for all groups has been set at 27 days, rising to 30 days by the 1st of September.
4. 27 units of urea is being spread per acre after grazing. Total amount of nitrogen spread to 1st August is 231kgN/ha

5. Latest milk quality test results from the milk processor are; Fat 4.27%, Protein 3.68%, Lactose 4.60%, SCC 162k, TBC 11k, THD 0, Sediment A.
6. AI commenced on the 26th of April and ceased on the 7th of August.
7. Critical Short-term Actions:
 - a. Achieve desired post grazing heights for treatment groups, if this involves moving cows to fresh pasture between milkings it will be done.

Farmers and their advisors who wish to follow the progress of the High Stocking Rate group on the IFC Grass Program can do so by sending an invitation through the program to the username: Curtins Farm High SR