Curtins Farm Walk Notes Tuesday 17-07-12

Low Stocking Rate Group (2.5 Cows/ha)

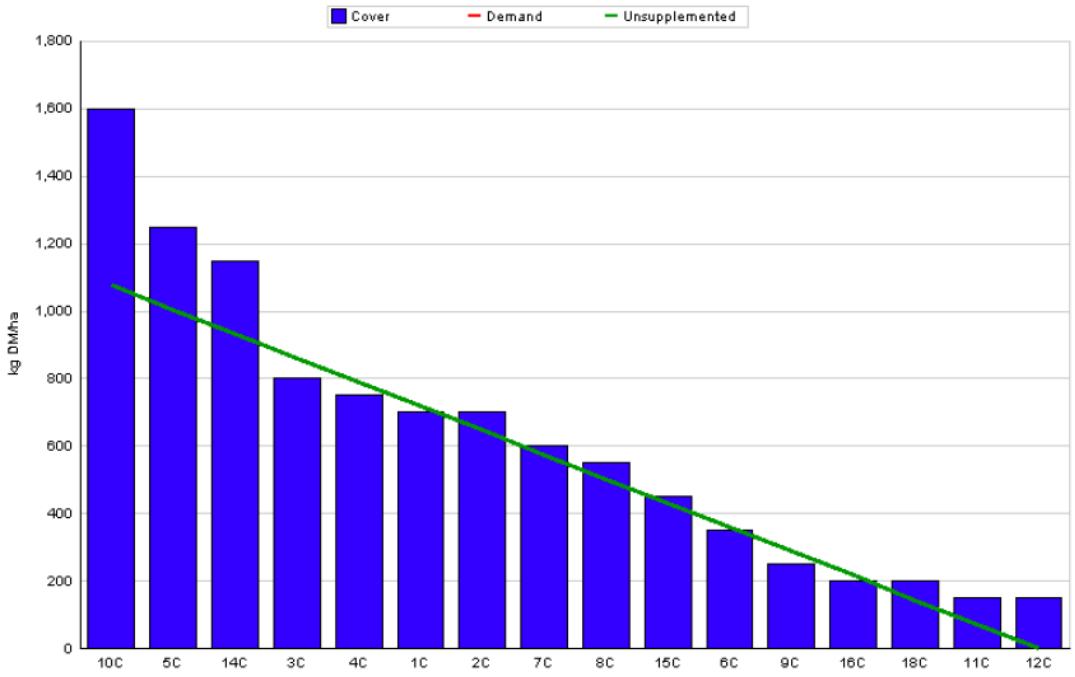
Situation

Figure 1. Low Stocking Rate Feed Wedge

Moorepark Animal & Grassland Research and Innovation Centre — **GrazePlan - Grass Measurement Report**

Group :	TEAGASC RESEARCH FARMS	**Date Produced**	15-JUL-12
Farm :	Curtins Farm	Effect of stocking rate and calving date on animal performance	
Date :	15-JUL-12	**Treatment :**	Low SR

Number of Cows :	23	**Grass Allocation /LU (kg DM/LU) :**	18
Grass Allocation /cow (kg grass dry matter/LU	18	**Farm Cover (kg DM/ha) :**	599
Concentrate Fed (kg/cow) :	0	**Farm Cover (kg DM/LU) :**	211
Silage Fed (kg DM/cow) :	0		
N Application Rate (units/acre) :		**Stocking Rate (LU/ha) :**	2.85
N Application Rate (kg/ha) :		**Growth Rate :**	60
Residual Height :	4	**Farm Demand (kg DM/ha/day) :**	51
Total Livestock (LU) :	23	**Target pregrazing yield (kg DM/ha) :**	1076



- Average Farm Cover for this week is 599kg/ha (211/cow). Growth rate for this group over the past 7 days was 60kg/day (56kg/day last week).
- As can be seen in Figure 1, we have a surplus at the top of the feed wedge. This is after removing one paddocks for silage. 12% of the farmlet is now closed for silage and this will be cut towards the end of next week.
- Cows are currently grazing block 10 and residency time per paddock is 36 to 48 hours.
- Pre-grazing yield is 1600kg.

High Stocking Rate Group (3.3 Cows/ha)

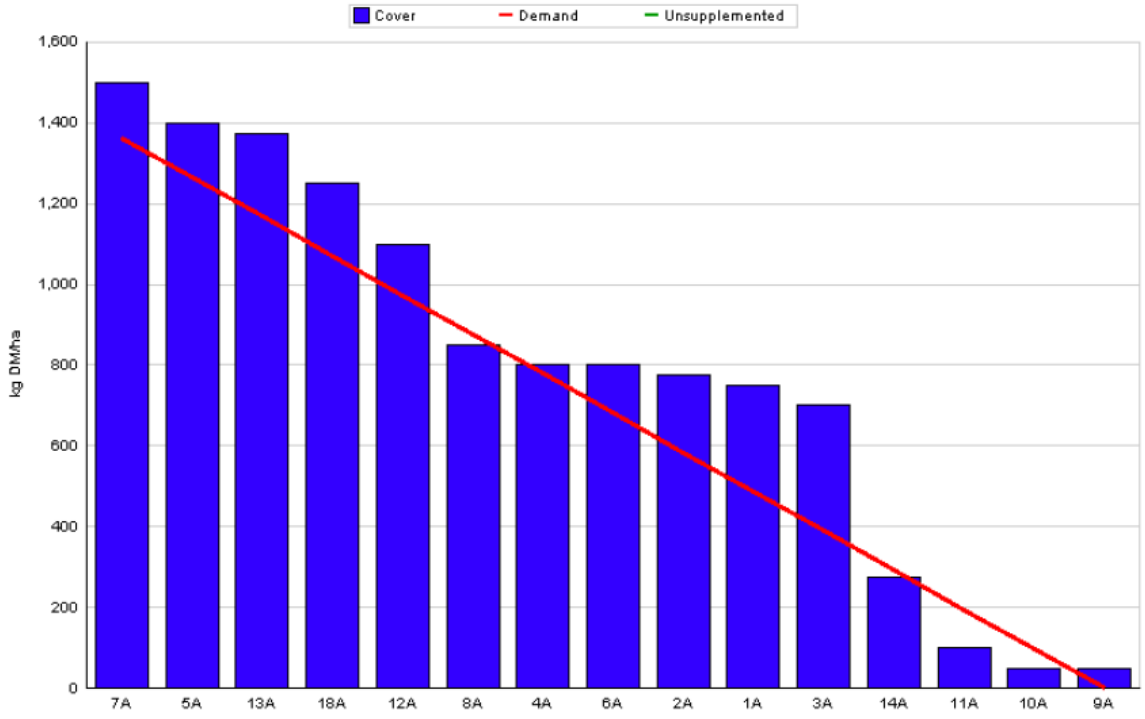
Situation

Figure 2. High Stocking Rate Feed Wedge

Moorepark Animal & Grassland Research and Innovation Centre — **GrazePlan - Grass Measurement Report**

Group :	TEAGASC RESEARCH FARMS	Date Produced	15-JUL-12
Farm :	Curtins Farm	Effect of stocking rate and calving date on animal performance	
Date :	15-JUL-12	Treatment :	High SR

Number of Cows :	23	Grass Allocation /LU (kg DM/LU) :	16
Grass Allocation /cow (kg grass dry matter/LU	16	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha) :	784
Concentrate Fed (kg/cow) :	0	Farm Cover (kg DM/LU) :	193
Silage Fed (kg DM/cow) :	0	Current Monthly Fertilizer Rate (kg/ha) :	
N Application Rate (units/acre) :		Stocking Rate (LU/ha) :	4.06
N Application Rate (kg/ha) :		Growth Rate :	65
Residual Height :	3	Farm Demand (kg DM/ha/day) :	65
Total Livestock (LU) :	23	Target pregrazing yield (kg DM/ha) :	1363



- Average farm cover this week is 784kg/ha (193/cow). Growth rate over the past 7 days was 65kg per day (last week 68kg/day).

- As can be seen in Figure 2., we have a surplus throughout the wedge with a noticeable step in the middle of the wedge. These are aftergrass paddocks which are all coming back at the same rate. One paddock was skipped for silage this week and will be cut towards the end of next week. 19% of this farmlet is now closed for silage.
- Cows are currently grazing block 7 and residency time per paddock is 36 to 48 hours.
- Pre-grazing yield has risen to 1500kg.

Whole Farm Situation

1. The biggest issue facing the farm at present is grass quality. As a result of the prolonged wet spell with poor growth rates and decreased utilisation a high proportion of the farm is now noticeably stressed with stemmy pasture and seed heads dominating the sward.
2. It is unlikely that grazing alone will improve the pastures for the next and subsequent rotations so some form of mechanical intervention is required. While topping is not an activity that we normally advocate, in these exceptional circumstances it may play an important role in improving quality. However, our preference is to improve quality by cutting these poor pastures for silage. As outlined above, we have made the decision to cut a number of these paddocks in 10 days time. The pre-cutting yield will not be a concern, of greater concern will be to get them cut and get them back growing leaf. With this in mind we intend to adopt an intensive silage cutting strategy over the next few weeks.
3. 26 units/acre of sulCAN was blanket spread across the farm last week excluding paddocks stopped for silage which will get 15 units/acre. The next fertiliser application will occur in mid August.
4. Latest milk composition details from the processor are: Fat 4.80%, Protein 3.63%, Lactose 4.78% and SCC 135k.
5. Magnesium, selenium, cobalt, copper, zinc, iodine and phosphorus are being supplemented daily through the water supply via a Dosatron pump at a cost of 31c/cow/day.
6. Mating started on the 26th of April. 36% of the bulls being used were Norwegian Red (BSJ & EKE), 35% were Friesian (MWH, KNW, MJD, MOK, TJF) and 29% were Jersey (HWY, ASV, WTL, TIO). 90% of the herd was submitted in 24 days. Dairy AI was used until the 21st of June. Mating End Date is July 26th (13 weeks)