

Future metrics for pasture production and utilisation

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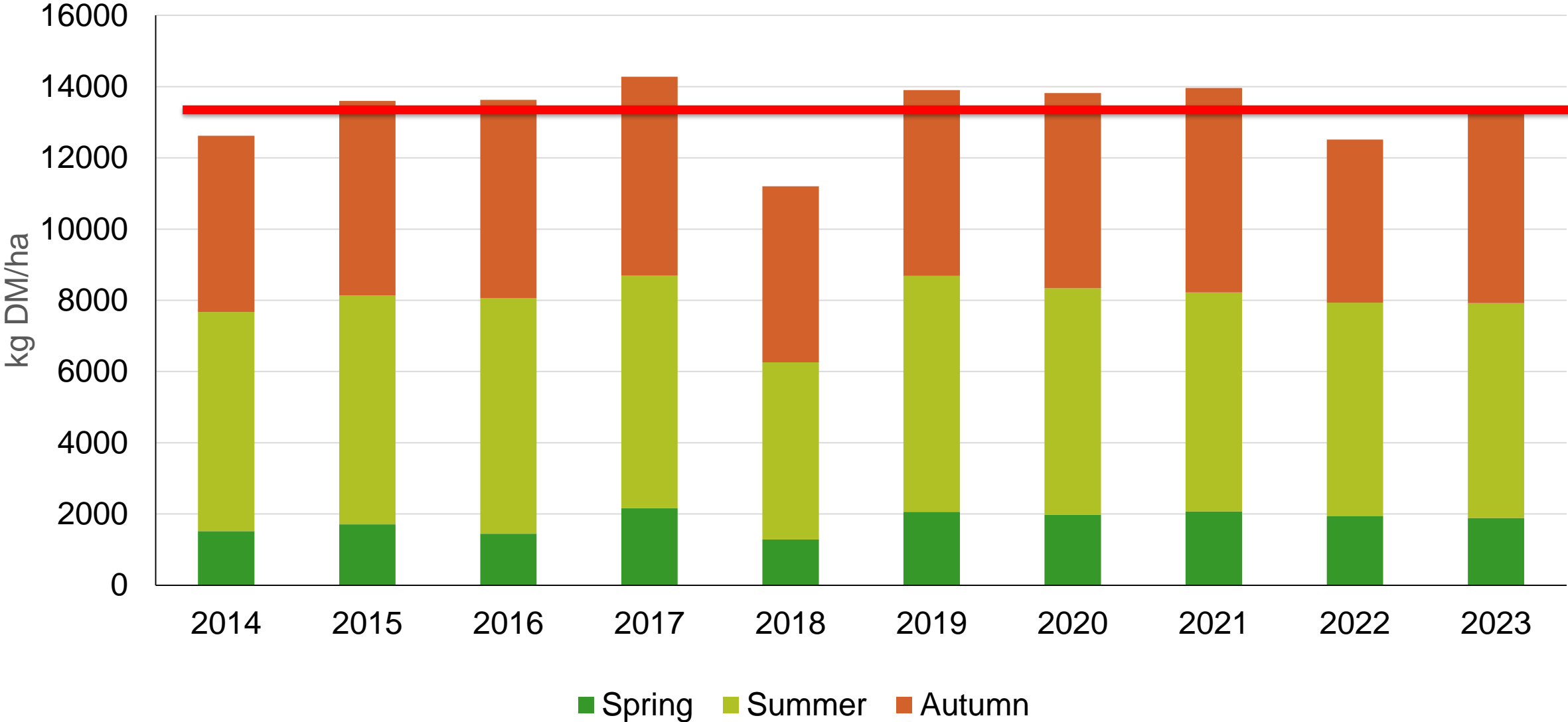


Outline – farm strategies

1. Current grass production on farms
2. Total grass budget
3. How to set your stocking rate
4. Targets by season



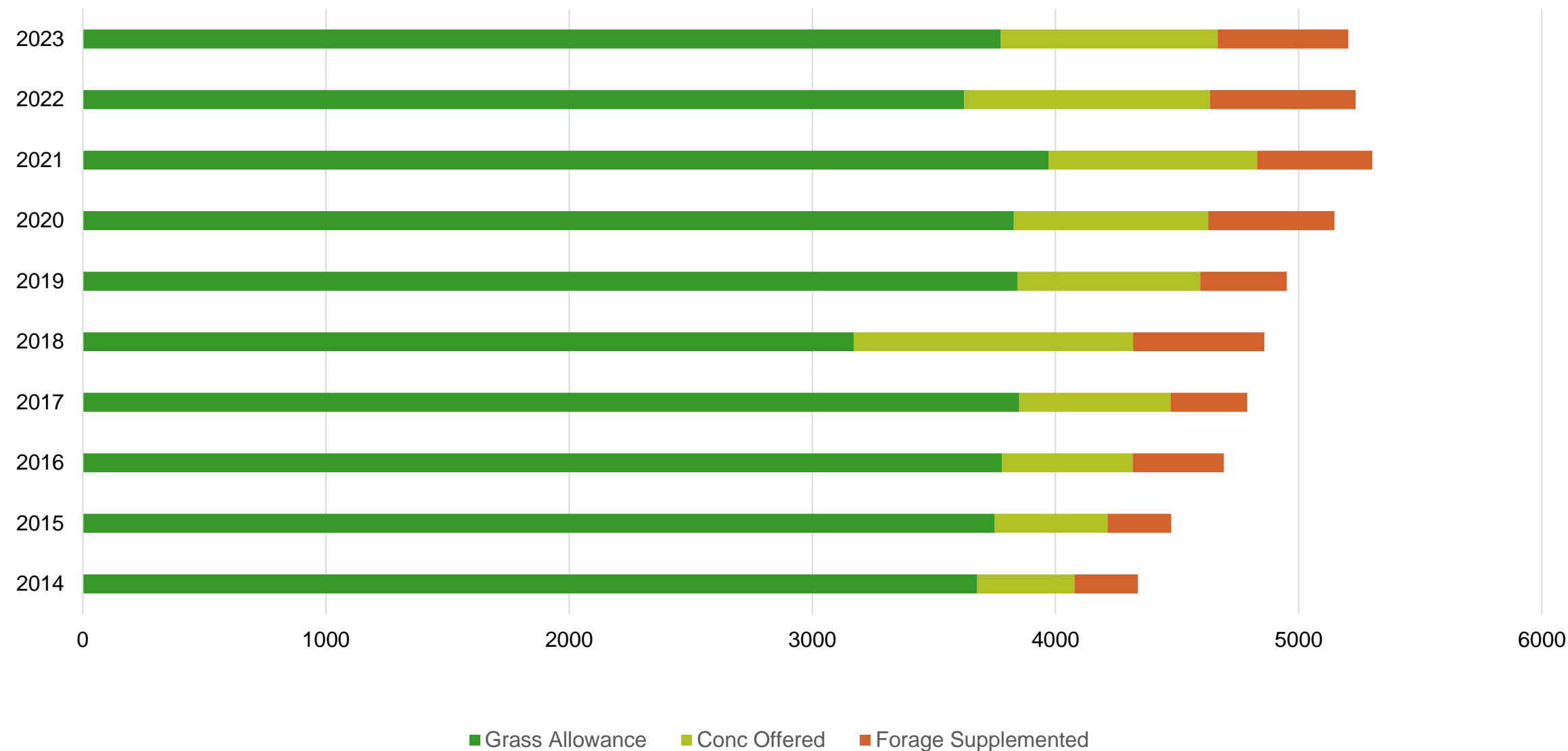
Dry Matter Production (Seasonally)



Grazing evolution of matched farms

Year	Grazing start date	Grazing end date	Days at grass	Second rotation start date	Opening farm cover (kg DM/ha)	Magic day
2014	Feb 21	Nov 22	274	April 8	680	April 18
2015	Feb 13	Nov 20	280	April 3	841	April 15
2016	Feb 11	Nov 21	284	April 2	980	April 20
2021	Feb 9	Nov 22	286	April 1	945	April 8
2022	Feb 4	Nov 27	296	April 2	997	April 15
2023	Feb 3	Nov 21	291	April 3	864	April 10
	-10 days	=	+12 days	-2 days	+100 kg DM/ha	-5 days

Feed allowance at grass per cow (2014 – 2023)



What are the lessons from PastureBase?

1. Average grass production 13 tonne/ha
2. No additional grazed grass allocation per cow
3. Opening average farm cover is too low for first rotation
4. Spring management is key

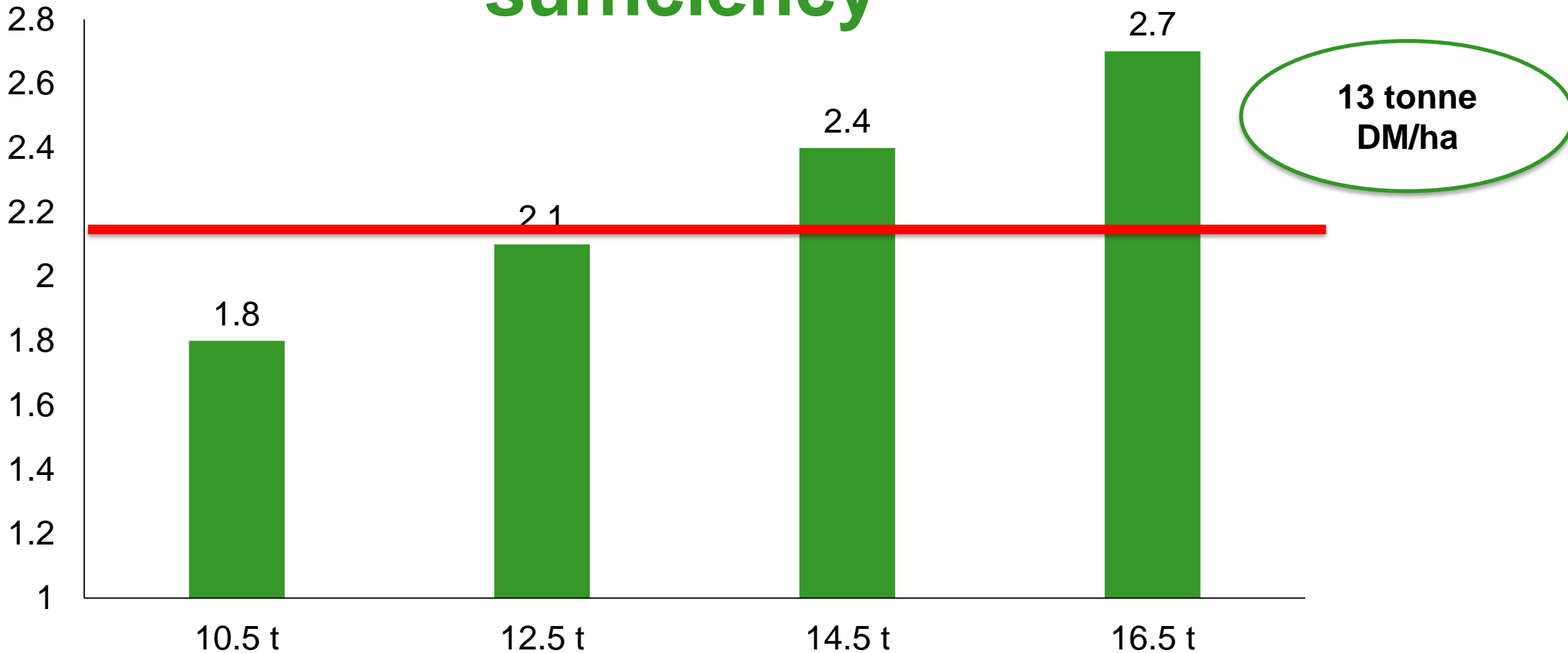


Total feed budget

	250 days at grass
Grazed grass utilised (t DM/cow)	3.8
Silage (t DM/cow)	1.4
Total herbage intake budget (t/cow)	5.2
Concentrate(kg/cow)	600

@ 15 kg DM/cow grazed grass intake – 600 kg of concentrate supplementation for the lactation

Whole farm stocking rate requirements self sufficiency

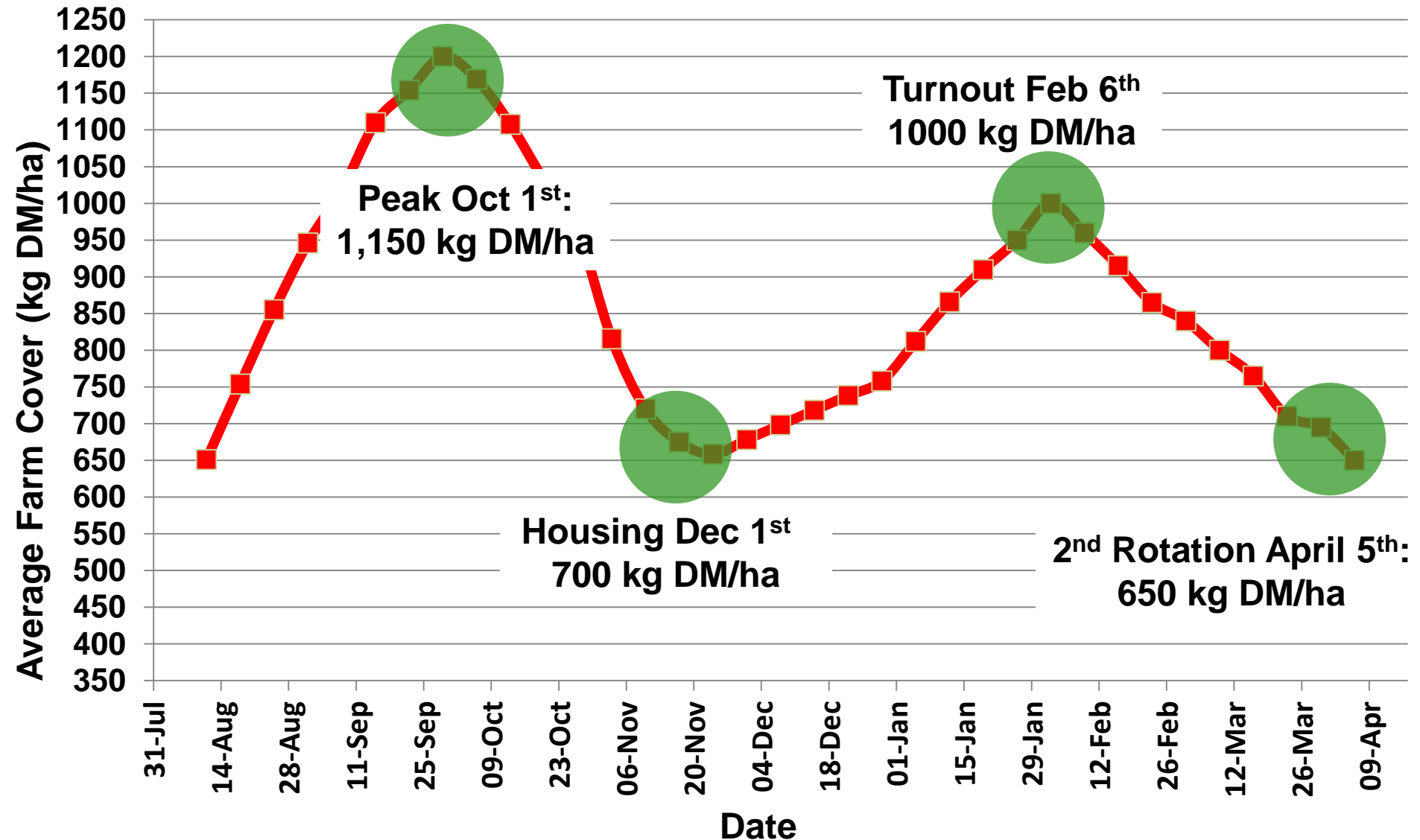


@ 15 kg DM/cow grazed grass intake – 600 kg of concentrate supplementation for the lactation

Grazing targets by season



Feed budgeting – achieving target covers



Important Autumn targets

- Autumn closing rotation is the beginning of the grazing season
- Peak farm cover in October
- Low peak cover = lower closing cover
- Target minimum 700-750 kg DM/ha AFC 1st of December

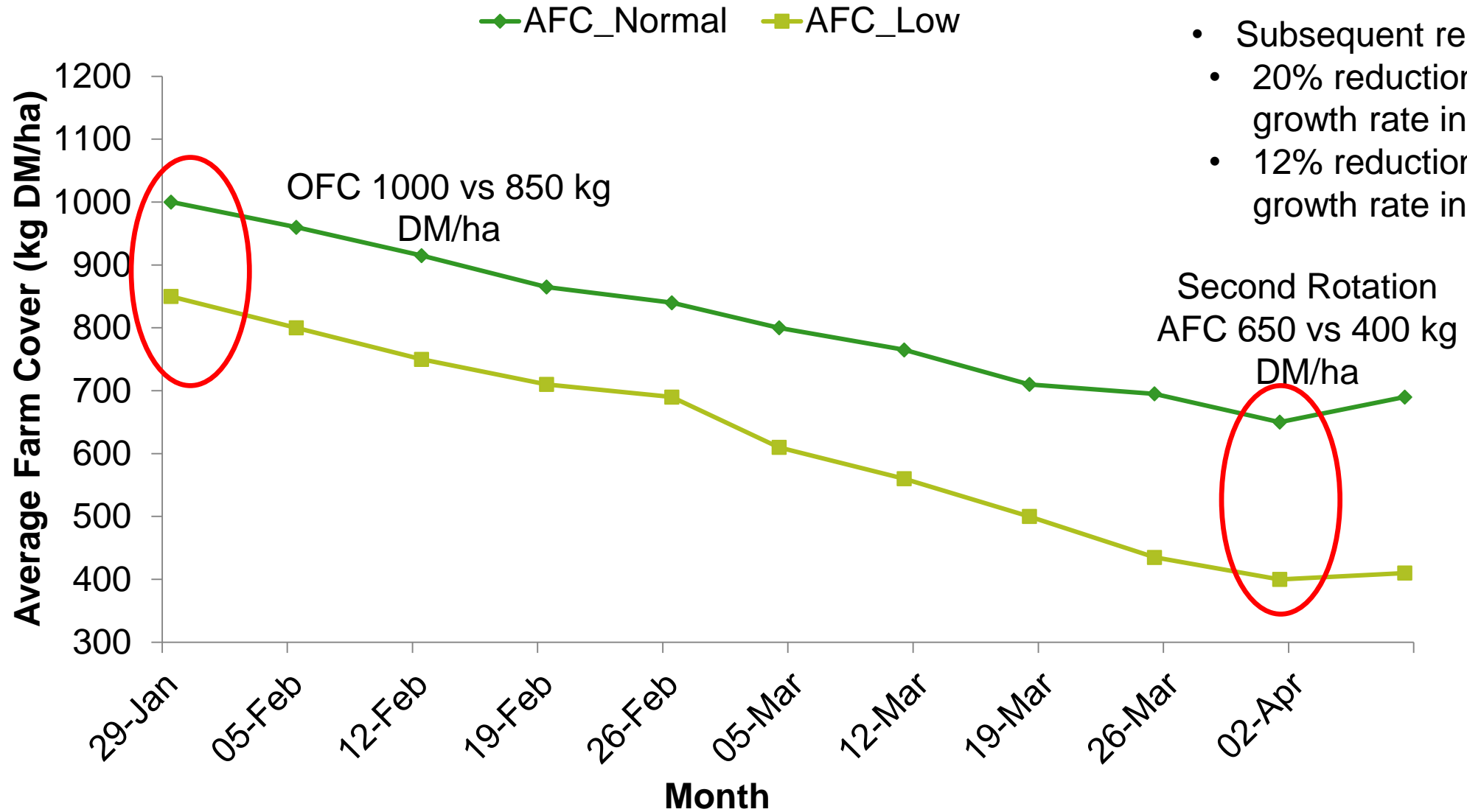


Important Spring targets

- Open at AFC +1000 kg DM/ha
- Monitor regrowth
- Organic and chemical nitrogen applications on time
- Finish first rotation 650 kg DM/ha AFC

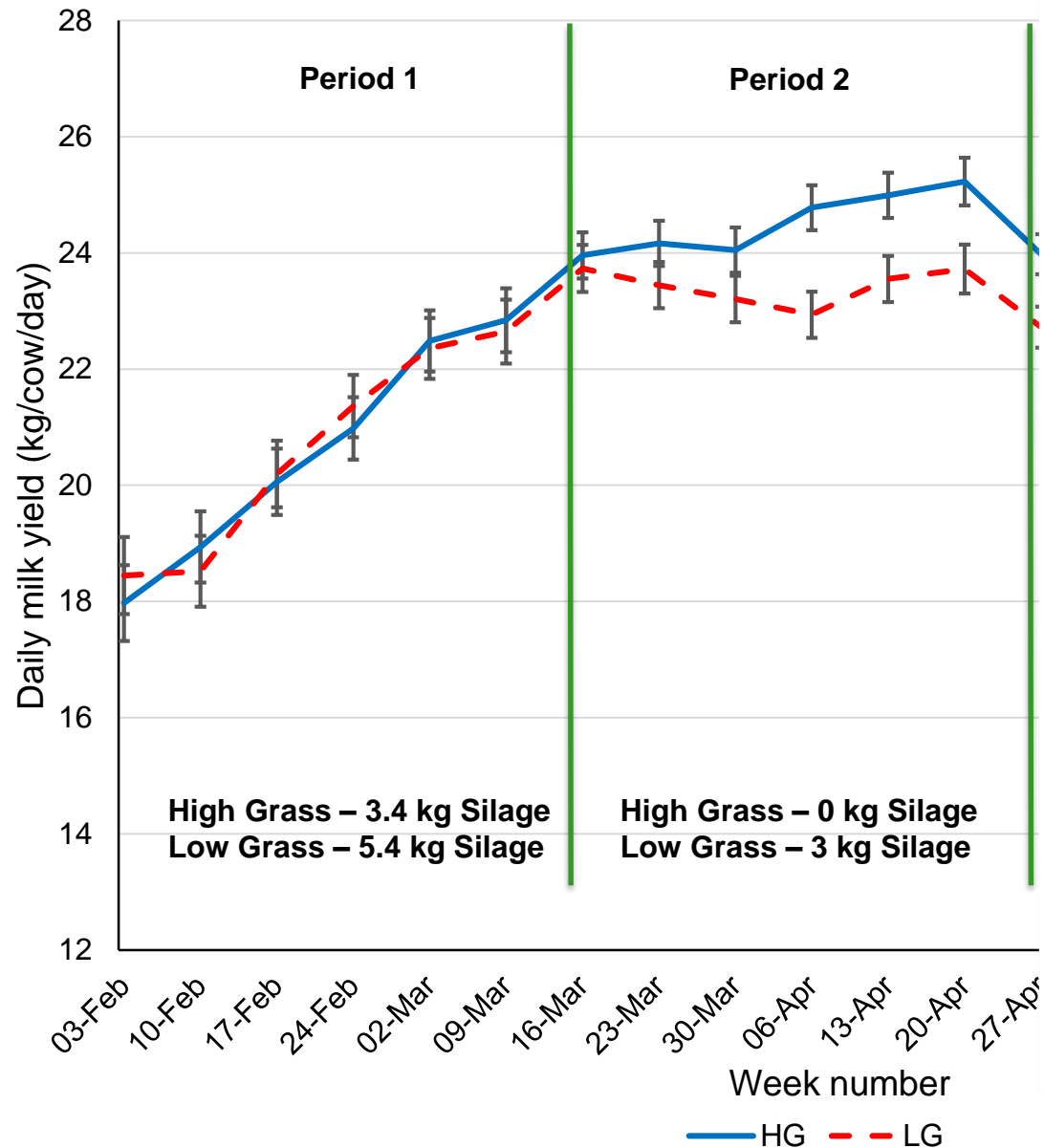


Managing Farm Cover



- Subsequent regrowth
- 20% reduction in daily growth rate in April
- 12% reduction in daily growth rate in May

Impact of Low Grass in Spring



- Pasture more ideal than silage economically
- Early lactation (<6 weeks) grass by day - no effect of elevated silage on milk production or BCS
- Continued silage feeding will reduce milk production

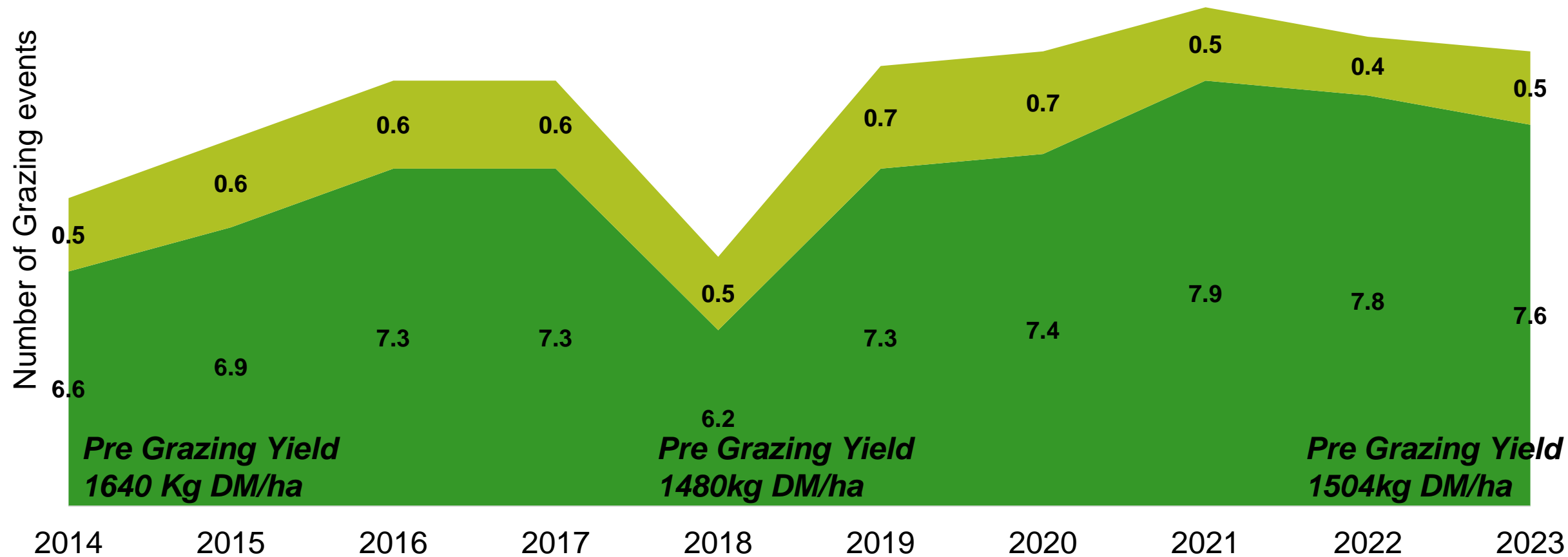
Important Summer targets

- 1400 kg DM/ha pre-grazing cover
- 160-190 kg DM cover/cow
- 6 rotations between April and August

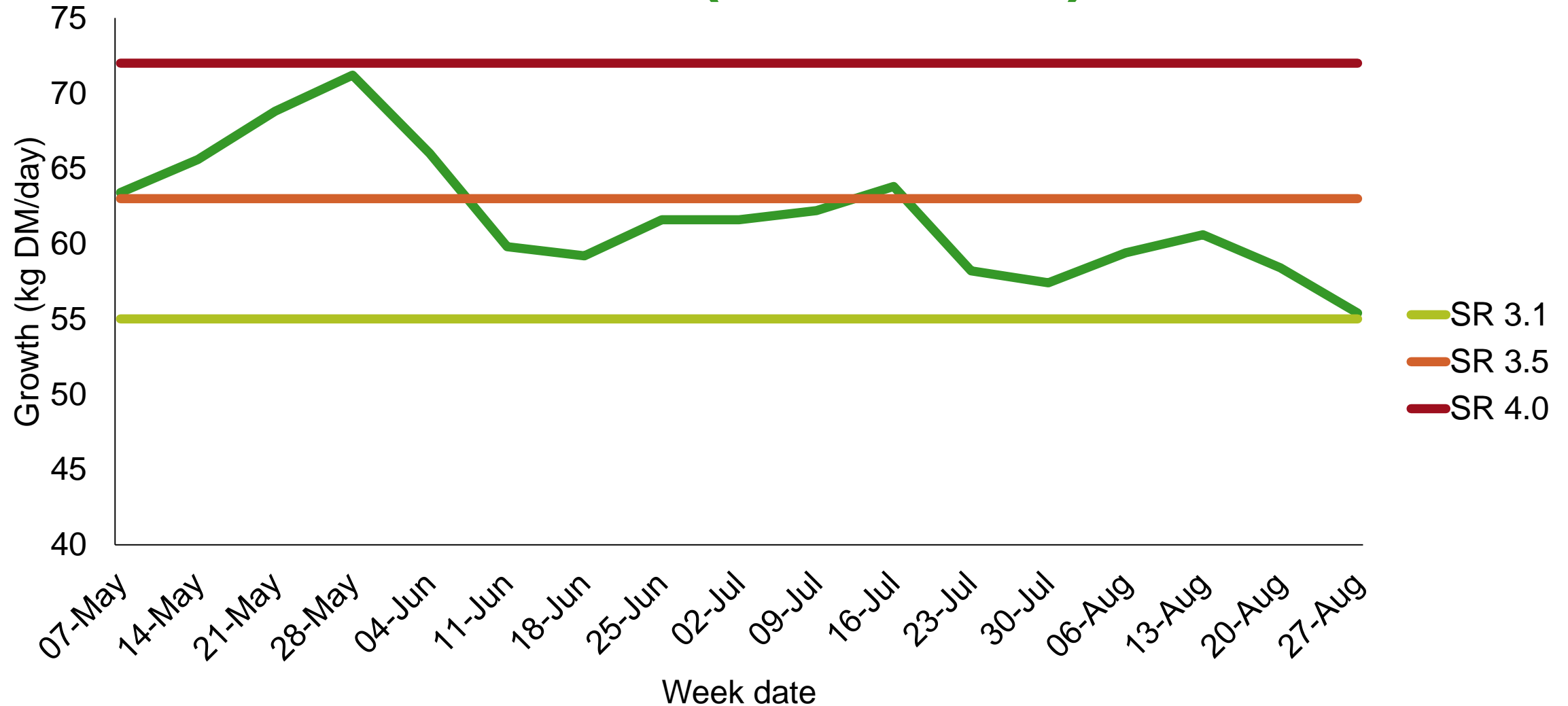


Grazing/silage events on farm

No of grazings No of silage harvests



Mid-season growth/demand – PastureBase Ireland (2019-2023)



Take home message

1. Grass growth can vary by up to 20% between years
2. Grazing targets need to be better achieved to insulate such variability
3. Cows are not being allocated sufficient grass – dependence supplemented feed
4. Grazing stocking rates need to better aligned with grass growth
5. Are you achieving your grassland targets?

Thank you! Any questions?

