

1. Important Dates

- ✚ **Sheep 2010, Lyons Estate, UCD** – Saturday 26th June. This is a major day for the Irish Sheep industry.
- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 15th July, 10:30 to 14:00 – Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 15th July, 14:00 to 16:30 – Portlaoise.

2. ICAR & Interbull meetings, Riga, Latvia (May 31st – June 4th 2010)

Ireland's delegation at this week's meetings in Riga, Latvia included representatives from DAF, TEAGASC, ICBF, IFA, IHFA, Munster AI & Milk Recording, & Sheep Ireland.

ICAR (International Committee for Animal Recording) holds a full meeting every second year. Over 400 people from approx 50 countries attended the meeting in Riga. ICAR is responsible for the guidelines and rules that underpin EU cattle breeding regulations. It also plays an important role in facilitating communication and collaboration between organisations worldwide involved in all aspects of recording data and breeding of farm animals.

The highlights of the meeting included:

Genomic selection. Many countries have at this stage their own Genomic Selection programme well underway not least of all Ireland. Much discussion was around the advent of the 3k chip which is coming on stream late summer 2010 and how that will reduce the cost of getting animals genotyped. This should open up the market for more genotypes and therefore more scope for genetic improvement.

However the main focus of the international group at Riga was to seek better ways of **COLLABORATION** between countries to share genotypes thereby a) reducing duplication and expense and b) accelerate progress by expanding pool of genotypes available to all. Projects like IGenoP (in which ICBF and TEAGASC are deeply involved) are making good progress in international genomic co-operation.

On-farm Data Collection. In combination with electronic identification there has been a proliferation of devices for collecting data on dairy and beef cattle. As an examples in dairy, technology advancements were presented which enable “on farm” and “in line” analysis of fat and protein. Another example was the new and less intrusive approach to DNA collection through nasal swabs rather than traditional tail hair or ear plugs.

Milk Recording & Laboratory testing. The range of equipment and tests that can be conducted on milk and tissue samples is increasing rapidly and provide many opportunities for providing improved breeding, management and health services to farmers. Particular work is being done to provide more reproducible reference tests for SCC. Also on recording devices the advancement of robotics and electronic milking systems provide many data opportunities.

Meeting and discussing. The Irish delegation presented papers*, chaired sessions and also met a wide range of people from organisations involved in all aspects of recording and breeding in other countries. The knowledge accumulating will be very valuable in future decisions. (*Papers will be put up on www.icbf.com in next few days.)

ICAR 2010, Rochestown Park Hotel, Cork Ireland (May 28th – June 1st 2012). In two years time Ireland will have the honour of hosting the ICAR & Interbull conferences in Cork. We look forward to providing a top class event, worthy of our country's proud tradition & heritage in animal recording and genetics. We will keep the national and international community updated as the programme develops over the next year on our conference website www.icar2012.ie.

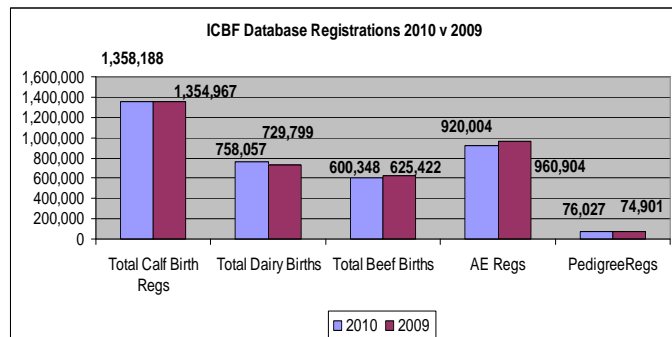
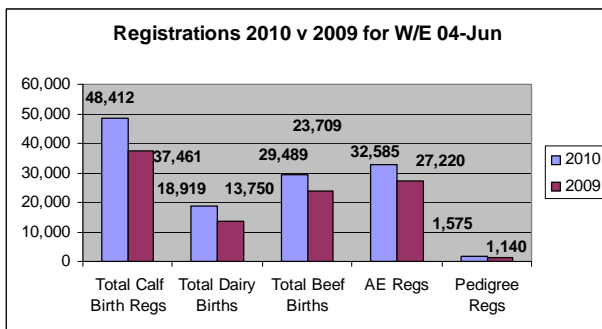
3. Sheep Ireland

- On Wednesday the 9th of June, a presentation on the latest genetic indexes from Sheep Ireland, based on data from both pedigree and commercial flocks will be given at the Irish Grassland Association Sheep Conference.
- Second round of weighing MALP and CPT lambs to begin this coming week.
- Preparations are on going for Sheep 2010 at Lyons Research farm UCD on the 26th of June. Sheep Ireland will demonstrate on the day various aspects of the Sheep Ireland Breeding Programme in operation in Ireland.
- Any LambPlus breeder still to upload data should do so immediately to avoid disappointment in not having Star Rating of their flocks for the coming sales.
- Work is ongoing on finalising the genetic evaluation software for the upcoming evaluation releases.
- The new Sheep Ireland Evaluation Output Catalogue is also nearing completion.

4. Genetic Evaluations

- The proofs from the May monthly beef evaluation update for animals linear scored from April 16 to May 15 were uploaded to the database on 1st June. Animals which were scored prior to this date and had a change in their pedigree since the last evaluation were also updated.
- Work continues on test runs for the calving evaluations, maternal weaning weight and female fertility.

5. Database

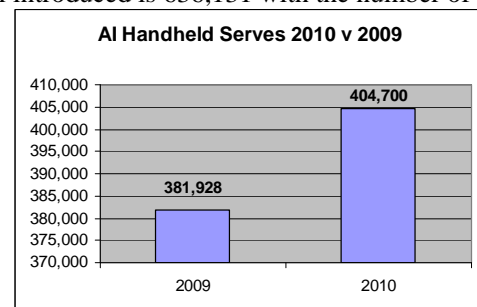


- The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFF AIM systems.
- In the Suckler scheme, the number of 2009 born calves with meal introduced is 636,131 with the number of animals weaned at 570,978.

- Vets wishing to begin interacting with the AHI/ICBF system can register at <http://www.animalhealthireland.ie/registerpage.php>.

- The new call logging system for herd-books continued this week, and will help provide improved transparency on the status of requests from herdbooks.

- Design work continued this week which will allow those involved in the Embryo transfer process to view/input data. The aim is that this will facilitate better recording of data, and more accurate fertility evaluations for donor cows.



- Further updates were made to some of the window server infrastructure, beginning the process of a move to a more resilient infrastructure for email, file servers, etc.

✚ The graph above shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2010 compared with 2009.

6. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 25/05/10 to 04/06/10								
	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
CARLOW	16	1,166	73	28.8	3.22	3.26	1.87	346
CAVAN	41	2,152	52	28.2	3.41	3.27	1.88	290
CLARE	45	2,501	56	27.7	3.47	3.30	1.88	255
CORK STH	278	19,286	69	26.5	3.64	3.40	1.87	251
CORK NTH	297	21,972	74	28.0	3.61	3.44	1.97	249
DONEGAL	24	2,009	84	27.0	4.13	3.40	2.03	242
DUBLIN	3	175	58	28.4	3.46	3.45	1.96	337
GALWAY	20	1,150	58	29.0	3.66	3.31	2.02	286
KERRY	154	9,225	60	28.0	3.53	3.29	1.91	316
KILDARE	23	1,782	77	28.2	3.47	3.23	1.89	336
KILKENNY	47	3,348	71	26.2	3.46	3.34	1.78	240
LAOIS	25	1,835	73	24.4	3.70	3.36	1.72	353
LEITRIM	6	290	48	22.0	3.72	3.17	1.52	471
LIMERICK	106	7,652	72	28.3	3.52	3.34	1.94	263
LONGFORD	11	666	61	26.6	3.72	3.39	1.89	301
LOUTH	16	1,982	124	28.8	3.63	3.29	1.99	319
MAYO	30	1,660	55	30.2	3.19	3.48	2.01	366
MEATH	61	6,230	102	26.3	3.54	3.29	1.80	313
MONAGHAN	36	2,060	57	28.8	3.19	3.19	1.84	307
OFFALY	17	1,354	80	27.5	3.95	3.39	2.02	345
ROSCOMMON	2	94	47	25.9	3.62	3.44	1.83	332
SLIGO	8	302	38	29.4	2.93	3.51	1.89	307
TIPPERARY NTH	43	3,564	83	24.3	3.61	3.32	1.68	379
TIPPERARY STH	52	4,005	77	25.1	3.57	3.32	1.73	257
WATERFORD	64	5,623	88	25.4	3.78	3.41	1.83	243
WESTMEATH	17	1,225	72	26.4	3.54	3.33	1.81	278
WEXFORD	70	5,373	77	26.1	3.43	3.36	1.77	265
WICKLOW E	20	1,357	68	26.0	3.12	3.40	1.70	296
WICKLOW W	11	882	80	26.1	3.65	3.27	1.81	325
	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
National	1,543	110,920	70	27.0	3.53	3.34	1.86	306

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 25/05/10 to 04/06/10								
Provincial	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
Munster	1039	73,828	71	26.7	3.59	3.35	1.85	277
Leinster	337	27,375	81	26.9	3.51	3.34	1.84	312
Connacht	66	3,496	53	27.3	3.42	3.38	1.86	352

Ulster	101	6,221	62	28.0	3.58	3.29	1.92	280
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National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 04/06/10						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 04/06/10	No. EDIY Herds YTD 04/06/10	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 04/06/10	No. EDIY Cows YTD 04/06/10	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,492	964	28%	249,890	75,452	30%
Progressive	1,929	707	37%	156,278	55,581	36%
Tipperary	127	53	42%	10,305	4,698	46%
Connacht	136	51	38%	8,350	2,929	35%
Total	5,684	1,775	31%	424,823	138,660	33%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 04/06/09	YTD 2010 Cows Recorded 01/01/10 - 04/06/10	2010 vs. 2009 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	228,507	249,890	8.6%
Progressive	155,003	156,278	0.8%
Tipperary	9,766	10,305	5.2%
Connacht	7,443	8,350	10.9%
Total	400,719	424,823	5.7%

Brian Wickham (PhD) Chief Executive, ICBF & Sheep Ireland, Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon Co. Cork., Phone: +353 238 820 222, Mobile: +353 86 826 9911, Email bwickham@icbf.com.

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Registered Office: Sheep Database Ltd trading as "Sheep Ireland". Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co Cork. Registered Dublin, Ireland. Registration Number 465004, Companies Acts 1963 to 2006. Web: www.sheep.ie.