



UPDATE – for period 5th – 11th July 2008

1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Wed. 16th July, 10:30** – Interim Sheep Board Meeting, Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.
- ✚ **Thur. 17th July, 10:30** – ICBF Board Meeting, Comfort Inn Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Tue. 26th August, 10:30** – Beef Industry Genetic Evaluation Consultation Meeting. Venue to be advised.
- ✚ **9th to 11th October** – World Holstein Friesian Conference hosted by Ireland at Killarney & Millstreet. For details see www.ihfa.ie.
- ✚ **11th and 12th October** – International Beef Expo being hosted in Ireland at Kilkenny Mart.

2 Genomic Selection

One of the most exciting developments taking place in cattle breeding is the result of rapid advances in DNA testing. A system (the 56K SNP chip) is now available for testing individual animals for each of 56,000 SNPs (single nucleotide polymorphisms) at a cost of some €200. Research has established that these results can be used to predict the genetic merit for important production traits of new born calves. The accuracy of these predictions is similar to that achieved in a progeny test with 10 to 15 offspring. That is, when the heifer or bull calf is born we know as much about its genetics as we would find out by having 10 to 15 progeny with production traits fully recorded. The impact of this technology on cattle breeding, both dairy and beef, is expected to be dramatic. It means breeding decisions can be made on young animals and that some of the high costs associated with progeny testing can be saved.

Our priority is to ensure genomic selection is used to benefit Irish cattle farmers. We are working closely with TEAGASC, and other organizations focused on delivering benefits to Irish cattle farmers, to ensure the needed research is conducted and that the results are able to be used by the Irish breeding industry. The key issues currently being considered include:

- ICBF's role
- Research co-ordination
- DNA bank for use in research
- Facilities for DNA collection, storage, extraction and testing
- Extending the cattle breeding database to facilitate the research and the provision of genomic services to farmers and the breeding industry
- Inclusion of genomic information in Irish genetic evaluations
- The optimal breeding scheme design when using genomic selection.

The Board of ICBF will be considering genomic selection at its meeting next week.

3 Beef Genetic Evaluation Developments

On Wednesday this week the ICBF beef genetic evaluation research team met with the Beef Breed Associations to provide an update on current priorities and plans. Copies of the presentations are available in the publications section of the ICBF website (www.icbf.com).

Developments include:

- Testing of a new method for including foreign breeding values in the Irish evaluations. This new method is a further step towards our ultimate goal of full Interbeef evaluations which are expected in two to three years time. It is an improvement on current systems and implementation for a range of breeds and traits is planned for September 2008 in advance of the bull sale season.



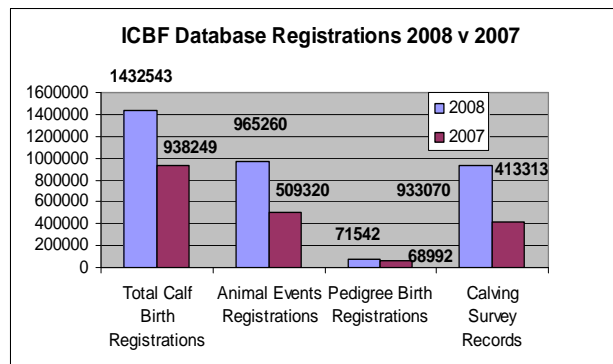
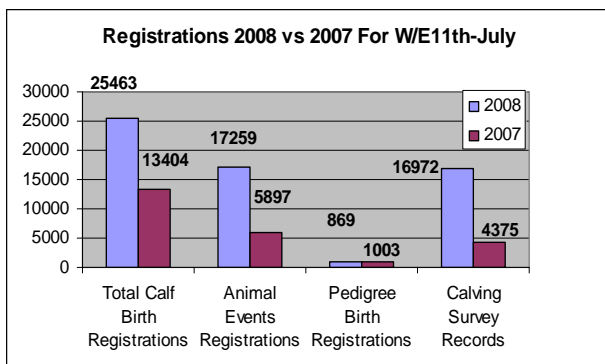
- Revision of the economic values used in the Euro-Star beef indexes. Recent changes in meat prices and production costs are expected to result in changes to the economic weights in the indexes.
- Proposals to include docility and horns (vs polled) in the Euro-Star indexes. Research indicates both traits are of considerable economic importance to Irish beef farmers.
- Across breed evaluations for linear traits. Plans are in place to implement these new evaluations, including use of foreign BVs, in September 2008.

A beef industry genetic evaluation consultation meeting (scheduled for Tuesday 26th August) will consider these developments prior to final decisions on implementation.

4 Tully

- ✚ Bulls for the next intake have entered Tully and pre entry isolation from the 8-7-08 and will be finished before the 16-7-08.
- ✚ The IBR testing of the bulls will take place on the 17-7-08.
- ✚ The final list of bulls that have entered Tully will be sent out to breed societies before the 17-7-08.

5 Database Update



- ✚ 441,158 inseminations have been received so far in 2008, compared with 303,716 in 2007 for the same period.
- ✚ The work on reviewing the AI software for next season is underway. We will be communicating the plans with the AI handheld users over the coming weeks.
- ✚ Over 482,000 birth registrations from new Animal Events users have been received as part of the Suckler Scheme. Over 27,500 herds have received pre-weaning forms. Over the coming couple of weeks, all herds will be receiving their pre-weaning forms.
- ✚ The re-designed linear scoring and weight recording report is now in the final stages of testing.
- ✚ A number of new developments have continued this week, including a revamp of the bull search output, further development of the GENÉIRÉLAND[®] application, and the update of the milk recording data entry screens.
- ✚ The EBI profile on the HerdPlus[®] screens has been updated with some new features.
- ✚ The extract process for the next evaluation run has begun on the database this week, and will be completed early next week.



6 Genetic Evaluation Unit

- ✦ Members of the genetic evaluation unit were in Lelystad at the beginning of the week to discuss various aspects of current and future evaluations with a view to running evaluations on new software (MIX99) in-house in the near future. The outcomes of this trip included enhancements to existing evaluations and the ability to run the new software at ICBF.
- ✦ Staff participated in the beef breed association meeting on Wednesday, the outcome of which is documented above.
- ✦ A start on addressing issues arising out of the beef breed association meeting on Wednesday has been made.
- ✦ The data extracts for the next evaluation run are currently taking place and work has begun on the data editing procedure.

7 GENE IRELAND®



- ✦ Scores linked to Farmer Satisfaction, temperament and milking speed are being received from herd owners targeted for linear scoring. To date 90 herds have posted back their forms.
- ✦ The extract for the final round of payments for recorded inseminations for last years Autumn program has been taken. We plan to make payments towards the end of next week.

8 HerdPlus®



- ✦ Design of a new Herdplus 'Dairy Cow Report' has commenced. This report will be similar to the 'Suckler Cow Report' in terms of its overall presentation.
- ✦ A redesigned HerdPlus 'Calving Report' is currently being tested.

9 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 01/07/08 to 11/07/08.

| | 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 | 20 | 1,225 | 61 | 23.7 | 3.82 | 3.4 | 1.71 | 240 |
| CAVAN | 48 | 2,468 | 51 | 24.2 | 3.61 | 3.31 | 1.67 | 296 |
| CLARE | 39 | 2,058 | 53 | 24.8 | 3.69 | 3.3 | 1.73 | 273 |
| CORK STH | 270 | 16,039 | 59 | 22.7 | 3.82 | 3.39 | 1.64 | 290 |
| CORK NTH | 249 | 17,200 | 69 | 23.2 | 3.75 | 3.4 | 1.66 | 275 |
| DONEGAL | 12 | 1,127 | 94 | 24.6 | 3.82 | 3.38 | 1.77 | 277 |
| DUBLIN | 7 | 511 | 73 | 23.3 | 3.98 | 3.35 | 1.71 | 379 |
| GALWAY | 39 | 2,395 | 61 | 25.4 | 3.62 | 3.26 | 1.75 | 310 |
| KERRY | 134 | 8,585 | 64 | 24.5 | 3.7 | 3.3 | 1.72 | 321 |
| KILDARE | 14 | 1,101 | 79 | 25.5 | 3.61 | 3.41 | 1.79 | 366 |
| KILKENNY | 56 | 3,975 | 71 | 21.9 | 3.84 | 3.43 | 1.59 | 254 |
| LAOIS | 60 | 3,968 | 66 | 21.6 | 3.87 | 3.41 | 1.57 | 212 |
| LEITRIM | 7 | 384 | 55 | 26.2 | 3.64 | 3.23 | 1.80 | 301 |
| LIMERICK | 136 | 9,124 | 67 | 23.7 | 3.68 | 3.34 | 1.66 | 278 |
| LONGFORD | 9 | 456 | 51 | 24.8 | 3.85 | 3.44 | 1.81 | 204 |
| LOUTH | 15 | 1,215 | 81 | 22.6 | 3.54 | 3.33 | 1.55 | 300 |
| MAYO | 39 | 1,891 | 48 | 28.1 | 2.95 | 3.37 | 1.78 | 299 |
| MEATH | 56 | 4,382 | 78 | 24.6 | 3.85 | 3.34 | 1.77 | 337 |
| MONAGHAN | 47 | 2,613 | 56 | 26.1 | 3.62 | 3.28 | 1.80 | 234 |



National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 01/07/08 to 11/07/08.

| | No. Herds Recorded | No. Cows Recorded | Average Herd Size | Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow | Average Fat % | Average Protein % | Average F + P kg | Average SCC |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------|
| OFFALY | 34 | 2,156 | 63 | 22.6 | 4.01 | 3.4 | 1.67 | 306 |
| ROSCOMMON | 6 | 312 | 52 | 25.2 | 3.49 | 3.39 | 1.73 | 385 |
| SLIGO | 16 | 722 | 45 | 28.7 | 3.08 | 3.37 | 1.85 | 264 |
| TIPPERARY NTH | 46 | 3,483 | 76 | 22.5 | 3.95 | 3.46 | 1.67 | 299 |
| TIPPERARY STH | 68 | 4,831 | 71 | 22.8 | 3.89 | 3.43 | 1.67 | 259 |
| WATERFORD | 51 | 4,231 | 83 | 22.2 | 3.78 | 3.39 | 1.59 | 235 |
| WESTMEATH | 24 | 2,053 | 86 | 20.9 | 4.26 | 3.38 | 1.60 | 250 |
| WEXFORD | 65 | 4,432 | 68 | 23.1 | 3.59 | 3.4 | 1.61 | 232 |
| WICKLOW E | 18 | 1,320 | 73 | 23.4 | 3.33 | 3.32 | 1.56 | 270 |
| | 11 | 900 | Average Herd Size | 24.9 | 3.96 | 3.32 | Average F + P kg | 378 |
| National | 1,585 | 104,257 | 66 | 24.0 | 3.70 | 3.36 | 1.70 | 284 |

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 01/07/08 to 11/07/08.

| 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 | 993 | 65,551 | 66 | 23.3 | 3.78 | 3.38 | 1.67 | 279 |
| Leinster | 378 | 26,794 | 71 | 23.2 | 3.80 | 3.38 | 1.66 | 279 |
| Connacht | 107 | 5,704 | 53 | 26.7 | 3.36 | 3.32 | 1.78 | 312 |
| Ulster | 107 | 6,208 | 58 | 25.0 | 3.68 | 3.32 | 1.75 | 269 |

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 11/07/08

| Milk Recording Organisation | Total Herds Recorded YTD 11/07/08 | No. EDIY Herds YTD 11/07/08 | % Herds EDIY | Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 11/07/08 | No. EDIY Cows YTD 11/07/08 | % Cows EDIY |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Progressive | 2,205 | 876 | 40% | 172,368 | 66,258 | 38% |
| Dairygold | 1,607 | 556 | 35% | 114,297 | 41,128 | 36% |
| Kerry | 1,155 | 246 | 21% | 76,993 | 15,939 | 21% |
| SWS | 909 | 130 | 14% | 59,469 | 8,737 | 15% |
| Tipperary | 170 | 71 | 42% | 12,598 | 5,521 | 69% |
| Arrabawn | 165 | 136 | 82% | 12,328 | 10,352 | 84% |
| Connacht | 145 | 52 | 36% | 8,834 | 2,958 | 33% |
| Donegal | 45 | 45 | 100% | 3,893 | 3,893 | 100% |
| Total | 6,401 | 2,112 | 33% | 460,780 | 154,786 | 34% |



| Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Milk Recording Organisation | YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 11/07/06 | YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 11/07/07 | YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 11/07/08 | 2008 vs 2007 Year on Year Difference (%) |
| Progressive | 148,902 | 158,892 | 172,368 | 13.6% |
| Dairygold | 99,464 | 106,791 | 114,297 | 6.6% |
| Kerry | 67,996 | 69,563 | 76,993 | 9.7% |
| SWS | 56,960 | 58,711 | 59,469 | 1.3% |
| Tipperary | 11,502 | 11,997 | 12,598 | 4.8% |
| Arrabawn | 10,650 | 11,549 | 12,328 | 6.3% |
| Connacht | 8,300 | 9,145 | 8,834 | -3.5% |
| Donegal | 4,843 | 3,389 | 3,893 | 12.9% |
| Total | 408,617 | 430,037 | 460,780 | 6.7% |

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