

1. Important Dates

- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 21st October, 10:30 to 14:00 – Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 21st October 14:00 to 16:30 – Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise.

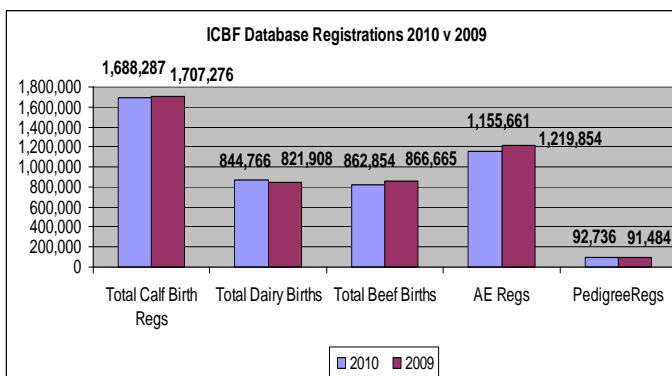
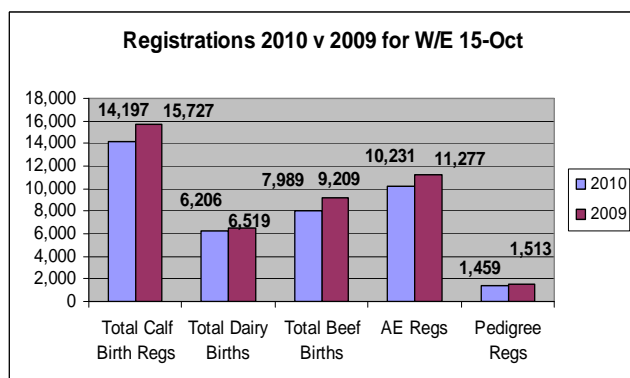
2. Best Practice in Cattle Breeding

This week and last weekend I have been involved in a number of discussions that come back to the fundamental question of “*what constitutes best practise in cattle breeding?*” Having reflected on the question here are some of the key elements, as I see them:

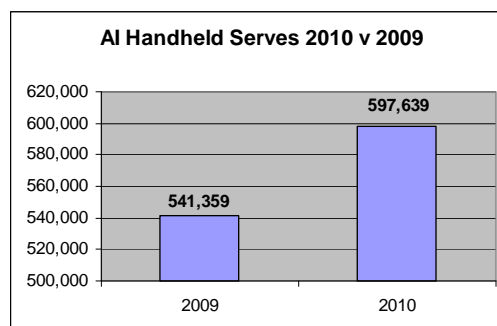
- ✚ The successful breeding of cattle to maximise farm profits depends heavily on the data recorded by breeders. If the data is poor quality then it is hard to breed more profitable cattle.
- ✚ For breeders the key is too record what actually happens and to do this when it happens. Eg record the actual calving date on the day it occurs. Anything else reduces the value of the recorded data.
- ✚ The most fundamental element of breeding profitable cattle is to distinguish the impact of genetics from that of environment. Genetic superiority (or inferiority) passes to future generations in a very predictable way. Environment does not.
- ✚ One of the main reasons that shows are of little value in breeding profitable cattle is that they do not distinguish genetics from environment. Another reason, is that they invariably involve the provision of very special treatment to a small number of selected animals.
- ✚ Performance data (milk yields, live weights) is only of value if the animals in a contemporary group are exposed to the same environment.
- ✚ Preferential treatment (eg extra feeding of only some animals in a group) causes serious errors in cattle breeding.
- ✚ To estimate the genetic merit of an animal the data on its relatives (progeny, sibs, ancestors) is useful in a predictable way.
- ✚ Breeding involves conflicts of interest. For example, an accurate record of a defect will reduce the value of an animal. It is a serious problem when breeders do not record defects, or poor performance.

As we face the task of improving dairy and beef profitability it is important that breeders follow “best practise”. We need to give serious consideration to ensuring those breeders that follow best practise are rewarded for doing so. There is increasing evidence that this is now happening in dairy and beef. Not only do such breeders enjoy good reputations but they also receive good prices for their cattle and achieve higher profitability from their farming operations. This is the ideal – follow best practise to make the best profits!

3. Database



- ✚ The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFF AIM systems.
- ✚ In the Suckler scheme, the number of 2010 born calves with meal introduced is 383,912 with the number of animals weaned at 128,549.
- ✚ Work is nearing completion on the new catalogue service to herdbooks and breeders. The dairy catalogue service will be formally launched this weekend at the Millstreet Dairy Show
- ✚ Vets wishing to begin interacting with the AHI/ICBF system can register at <http://www.animalhealthireland.ie/registerpage.php>.
- ✚ A development update to the Beef Slaughter report continued this week.
- ✚ The design of a new infrastructure to manage genotypes at ICBF is continuing. We expect to have the functional design completed next week.
- ✚ Work on a new infrastructure for communicating with marts is on-going, with a view to getting the data flows on a more efficient and effective basis.
- ✚ A development update to import milking speed data from the EDIY milk recording data handlers is in the process of being finalised. This should go live next week for two technicians.
- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2010 compared with 2009.



4. Sheep Ireland

CPT 2010

- ✚ The overall objective of the CPT program is to: ‘assesses large number of rams for economically important traits, through their progeny & link this information to an even wider number of animals throughout that Breeds Pedigree System’.
- ✚ The CPT is an extremely important part of Sheep Ireland as it provides a large volume of quality sheep breeding data that will benefit each of the breeds involved. The CPT is not a breed comparison but rather a ram and trait comparison. Genetic links between breeds in time will be used for evaluations across flocks and across breeds in Ireland.

CPT Summary

- 31(Highly Linked) rams entered the CPT.
- All rams passed initial health checks.
- Rams were put into isolation before entering the ‘ram shed’.
- Break down of the breeds – 9 Texel, 7 Suffolk, 8 Belclare, 5 Vendeen, 2 Charollais.
- AI began on CPT farms this week and finishes next week
- Successful trial carried out by Alan Fahey on the Lyons UCD Research flock to compare conception rates of fresh versus chilled semen.

5. GENÉIRELAND®

Beef

- ✚ The Autumn 2010 GENÉIRELAND Beef Catalogue was released at Tully last Friday.
- ✚ 16 Bulls from various breeds are now available.

- ✚ Euro-Star details and pictures of the bulls are now available on the G-EN-IR-ELAND section of the ICBF website.
- ✚ Active herd recruitment will begin next week.
- ✚ To order straws phone 1850 600 900 or 045 521573.
- ✚ Total straws sent out per bull so far are in the table below.

BREED	AA	BA	BB	BB	BB	CH	CH	CH	CH	HE	LM	LM	LM	PT	SA	SH
CODE	MLJ	KCE	KYR	BCZ	STQ	DEZ	GHX	LGL	CXY	GCT	ADX	NHL	CZH	CBQ	BHU	LYJ
# STRAWS	25	5	35	34	55	133	17	33	22	5	73	51	5	5	5	0

Dairy

- ✚ There are 50 herds now signed up to the Autumn programme.
- ✚ 350 letters and catalogues were posted this week targeting additional Autumn herds.

6. Genetic Evaluations

Dairy

- ✚ We submitted data to the Interbull test run for production for Jerseys and Red Dairy Cattle. While the number of common bulls between Ireland and other countries is low, there is sufficient data for Ireland to be included in the routine evaluation for production for these breeds. This will eliminate the breed and country specific conversion equations we were using for Jersey (from NZ) and Norwegian Red and breeding values for production will be available from all other countries that participate in those evaluations. We expect to submit data to the routine evaluation in December and International breeding values for production for these breeds will become official after this run. We will continue to use conversion equations for the other traits in the meantime.

Beef & Dairy

- ✚ Work continues on the improved fertility and calving evaluations.

7. ICBF Beef Breeding Event

- ✚ A large crowd attended the ICBF Beef Breeding Event, held at Tully Performance Test Centre, on Friday last, 8th of October. Two seminars which started at 2pm and ran simultaneously to each other saw presentations given to the HerdPlus and G-EN-IR-ELAND beef users along with an International delegation.
- ✚ Andrew Cromie gave a presentation to the international delegates outlining beef breeding in Ireland and the different information systems available to beef farmers.
- ✚ A number of speakers including Martin Burke, Pat Donnellan and Niall Kilrane updated HerdPlus and G-EN-IR-ELAND beef users on the latest developments within the HerdPlus and G-EN-IR-ELAND programmes and the uses each program provides to help breeders increase profits from their breeding herds going forward into the future. Francis Kearney updated the crowd on the progress on genomics to date and its potential in the future, while Ross Evans presented key information about the Euro-Star indexes. A new commercial and pedigree catalogue facility was also launched at the event by Brian Wickham. Herdbooks, marts and individual farmers will be able to access the service. This facility will give a full breed history of animals along with a complete Euro-Star report.
- ✚ See below pictures from the event.



Nadia Gwynne with husband - Nadia is chairperson of the Welsh Simmental Club

Brian Wickham C.E. ICBF





Welsh
Simmental
visitors



8. Elite High Health Status Beef Bull Sale

- ✚ The autumn sale of performance tested beef bulls at Tully followed the seminars and started at 5pm. A large crowd attended the sale, many of those who had attended the seminars earlier in the day staying on to see the 49 bulls on offer.
- ✚ Buyers were very selective in their purchases with a little over 50% of bulls finding new homes and prices ranged from €1500 to €5000. Most bulls on offer were very strong in the indexes and all the top prices achieved were for bulls with 5 stars for Suckler Beef Value.
- ✚ The majority of bulls on sale were from the Limousin breed and they dominated the top prices achieved on the day.
- ✚ Top price of €5,000 was paid for Mount Scott Eric (Lot 47), an October 2009 Limousin bull owned by Michael Sexton, Ennis Co. Clare. This Ronick Hawk bull was out of Clonlara Vixen a full sister to the

Balmoral Spring Show 2010 Champion Limousin cow Clonlara Valance. Mount Scott Eric is a 5 star bull for Sucker Beef Value, Weanling Export, Beef Carcass and Daughter Milk.

- Next highest price was €4,800 for the Limousin Bull (Lot 35), Castleview Earthquake sired by of Fieldson Alfie and owned by Sean O'Sullivan, Castleisland, Co. Kerry. Again this bull was 5 stars for Sucker Beef Value, Weanling Export, Beef Carcass and Docility.



“Elite Erasmus Et was sold prior to the Tully sale to Dovea Genetics from the current intake, and was the Champion Limousin at the end of test.

Elite Erasmus ET was bred by Edward Tynan, Beechill farm, Doon, Mountrath, Co. Laois. This bull is sired by Elite Abel ET and is in the top 1% of the Limousin breed for Suckler Beef Value with a figure of €205.

Elite Erasmus ET is also in the top 1% for Weanling Export and Beef Carcass and top 2% for Daughter Fertility.”





Michael Sexton, Ennis, Co Clare with Limousin bull, Mount Scott Erick that sold for €5000.



John O' Sullivan, Castleisland, Co. Kerry with his bull Castleview Earthquake, which was purchased by Clive Jennings, Co. Cork.



Charolais bull that made €4200 and is pictured in the sales ring.



John Mc Donnell, Belmullet, Co. Mayo leading his bull Calry Earl around the sales ring. The bull was sold for €4200.



Blonde d'Aquitaine bull, Mountbrown Envoy that was sold for €3500.



Simmental bull, sired by Addinstown Alvin, which sold for €3500.



Blonde d'Aquitaine bull, Glack Darragh that was owned by Philip Doherty, Lifford, Co. Donegal and sold for €4000.



Limousin bull, Glebe Park Eugene, which sold for €3600, with breeder John Fahy, Tuam, Co. Galway.



Parthenaise bull, Kelties Echo, which sold for €3000



Angus Champion bull, Newstar Fabien that was sired by Idvies Paris B102 and sold for €1750

9. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 05/10/10 to 15/10/10

	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	9	552	61	18.8	4.36	3.77	1.53	409
CAVAN	37	2,099	57	18.6	4.16	3.72	1.47	354
CLARE	44	2,384	54	17.7	3.98	3.72	1.36	265
CORK STH	316	21,478	68	18.0	4.33	3.81	1.47	281
CORK NTH	289	20,345	70	17.8	4.40	3.91	1.48	279
DONEGAL	9	1,034	115	14.8	4.67	3.84	1.26	332
DUBLIN	3	131	44	24.9	3.78	3.46	1.80	388
GALWAY	27	2,062	76	15.3	4.56	3.80	1.28	388
KERRY	136	8,458	62	19.5	4.05	3.70	1.51	369
KILDARE	15	1,161	77	25.2	3.90	3.58	1.88	468
KILKENNY	52	4,007	77	16.8	4.13	3.82	1.34	308

LAOIS	41	3,378	82	18.7	4.42	3.73	1.52	347
LEITRIM	3	154	51	26.0	3.74	3.80	1.96	286
LIMERICK	144	10,669	74	18.5	4.16	3.79	1.47	289
LONGFORD	6	297	50	17.3	4.49	3.84	1.44	405
LOUTH	14	1,005	72	19.3	4.07	3.60	1.48	418
MAYO	26	1,447	56	21.5	3.83	3.75	1.63	290
MEATH	49	3,922	80	19.9	3.92	3.66	1.51	394
MONAGHAN	27	1,575	58	20.8	3.99	3.56	1.57	294
OFFALY	23	1,698	74	18.2	4.44	3.87	1.51	400
ROSCOMMON	5	375	75	17.9	4.09	3.55	1.37	276
SLIGO	9	423	47	17.8	3.88	3.75	1.36	348
TIPPERARY NTH	29	2,791	96	17.3	4.34	3.79	1.41	298
TIPPERARY STH	72	5,237	73	17.3	4.30	3.82	1.40	339
WATERFORD	61	5,735	94	17.2	4.67	3.96	1.48	253
WESTMEATH	21	1,364	65	19.4	4.17	3.71	1.53	377
WEXFORD	53	3,776	71	18.9	4.16	3.74	1.49	346
WICKLOW E	20	1,472	74	18.8	3.76	3.65	1.39	307
WICKLOW W	13	1,052	81	23.3	3.93	3.54	1.74	264
	<i>No. Herds Recorded</i>	<i>No. Cows Recorded</i>	<i>Average Herd Size</i>	<i>Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow</i>	<i>Average Fat %</i>	<i>Average Protein %</i>	<i>Average F + P kg</i>	<i>Average SCC</i>
National	1,553	110,081	70	19.2	4.16	3.73	1.51	337

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 05/10/10 to 15/10/10

Provincial	<i>No. Herds Recorded</i>	<i>No. Cows Recorded</i>	<i>Average Herd Size</i>	<i>Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow</i>	<i>Average Fat %</i>	<i>Average Protein %</i>	<i>Average F + P kg</i>	<i>Average SCC</i>
Munster	1091	77,097	71	17.9	4.28	3.81	1.45	297
Leinster	319	23,815	75	20.0	4.11	3.69	1.56	372
Connacht	70	4,461	64	19.7	4.02	3.73	1.53	318
Ulster	73	4,708	64	18.1	4.27	3.71	1.44	327

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 15/10/10

Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 15/10/10	No. EDIY Herds YTD 15/10/10	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 15/10/10	No. EDIY Cows YTD 15/10/10	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,557	1,000	28%	276,394	85,493	31%
Progressive	2,002	765	38%	177,218	67,146	38%
Tipperary	133	57	43%	11,936	5,766	48%
Connacht	151	59	39%	9,999	3,779	38%
Total	5,843	1,881	32%	475,547	162,184	34%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 15/10/09	YTD 2010 Cows Recorded 01/01/10 - 15/10/10	2010 vs. 2009 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	256,837	276,394	7.1%
Progressive	177,335	177,218	-0.1%
Tipperary	11,119	11,936	6.8%
Connacht	9,671	9,999	3.3%
Total	454,962	475,547	4.3%

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