

1. Important Dates

- + **Tully Bull Sale** – Monday 3rd May 2010 11:00 to 16:00 – Tully Performance Test Centre, Tully.
- + **ICBF** - Thursday 27th May at the Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise:
 - 10:00 – 12:30 Board Meeting
 - 12:30 – 13:30 AGM
 - 13:30 – 14:30 Buffer Lunch
- + **Sheep Ireland** – Thursday 27th May at the Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise:
 - 13:00 - 14:00 Buffet Lunch
 - 14:00 - 15:30 Meeting with Flock Books - Election and Sheep Ireland progress report.
 - 15:30 - 15:45 AGM – Open to Directors only
 - 15:45 - 17:00 Interim Sheep Board meeting.
- + **ICAR and Interbull Meetings**, Riga Latvia 31st May to 4th June. Further details - www.icar2010.lv.
- + **Sheep 2010, Lyons Estate, UCD** – Saturday 26th June. This is a major day for the Irish Sheep industry.

2. Beef Breeding - Tully Bull Sale – SBV leads to greater profits - €200 million “prize” on offer

On Monday (3rd May) we will be holding a sale of the beef bulls that have recently completed their performance test at Tully. All bulls tested at Tully have been kept at the health status required for entry to AI. We made this commitment to minimise the risk of bulls failing health tests for their entry to AI. Only one bull from the current intake has been purchased for AI. This bull has already gone to the AI centre. Naturally, we are disappointed that so few of the very high merit bulls in this intake have been selected to go into AI. Beef cattle breeding in Ireland cannot make rapid genetic progress if these bulls do not get used in AI. We will be conducting a thorough review over the next few weeks of the issues resulting in such a low uptake by AI.

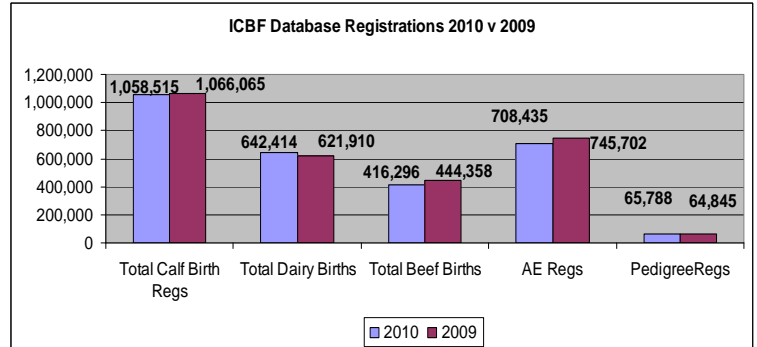
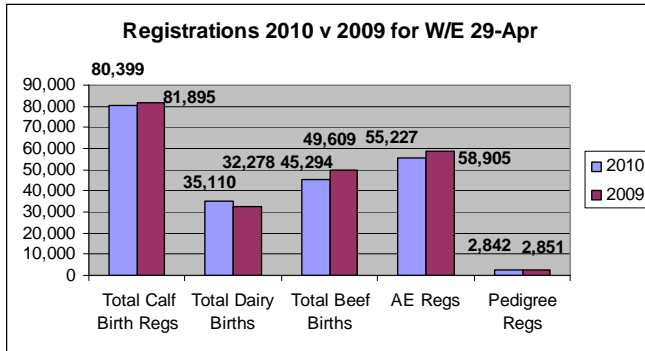
However, the loss to AI is an opportunity for herd owners to obtain very high merit stock bulls with a very high health status. Over half the bulls are five stars, within breed, for Suckler Beef Value (SBV) and thus represent the elite of young beef bulls in Ireland.

The benefit of using the SBV to select bulls was demonstrated in a recent study¹ of the economic returns from the progeny of five star vs one star bulls for SBV. The progeny of the five star bulls can be expected to return an extra €168 per animal compared to the progeny of one star bulls. The extra returns come from a combination of factors including: easier calving, greater weaning weights, greater carcass weights, better carcass grades, younger age at slaughter and daughters that produce extra milk, and survive longer. The great strength of the Euro-Star indexes is that they contain the information needed to select bulls with the strengths required by suckler herd owners and by bull breeders.

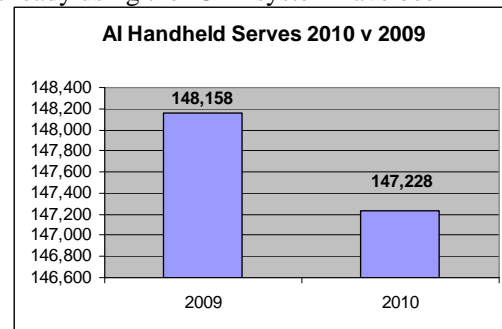
We are projecting that by 2020 an extra €200 million of profits could be delivered to the beef industry by better breeding. This is an incredible opportunity for beef farmers and breeders. If you are interested in seeing, or buying, the type of bulls that can deliver on this promise come along to the Tully Sale on Monday. We look forward to meeting you there and discussing the actions required enable beef farmers to capture the €200 million of extra profit that can be delivered by better breeding.

¹ See Best Practice in Cattle Breeding – page 13 Irish Farmers Journal 1st May 2010 and the publications section of www.icbf.com - Cromie et al *Potential for Beef Breeding. Some thoughts ...* - for details.

3. 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 626,131 with the number of animals weaned at 554,978.
- ✚ Work is on-going to update the ICBF website to handle the requirements of Animal Health Ireland, beginning with their BVD programme. All Vets who were already using the ICBF system have been migrated to the new infrastructure. Any Vets wishing to begin interacting with the AH/ICBF system can register at http://www.animalhealthireland.ie/ahi_register.php.
- ✚ The development of a new classification report for IHFA is on-going, and should be ready for testing at the end of next week.
- ✚ Updates to the Grow report (beef linear scoring) to include the sending of genetic evaluations are in the final stages of testing and should be live next week.
- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2010 compared with 2009.



4. Genetic Evaluations

Beef

- ✚ The monthly update of beef performance, linear score and docility evaluations for animals scored and weighed from March 16th to April 15th were run this week. The new proofs for these animals will be loaded to the database over the weekend and will be available early next week.
- ✚ Work is continuing on improvements in the maternal weaning weight and the calving performance evaluations.

International Beef

- ✚ A file of 1,200 Hereford animals has been sent this week to the Hereford society in the UK. This file has been edited to gather animals that are present in the Irish database, but also in the UK database. The matching animals will have their UK proofs for direct and maternal weaning weight incorporated in the Irish Genetic evaluation as a correlated trait. The objective is to consolidate the genetic merit of animals well proven outside Ireland for these traits, into their Irish evaluations.

5. GENRELAND®

- All the available Holstein Friesian and Friesian straws have now been allocated. There is still some availability for the XBRED pack. We await the arrival of more Friesian straws next week.
- Across all available breeds 600 herds have taken 22,816 doses so far.

6. Sheep Ireland

- LambPlus breeders continue to add lambing and weighing data daily, any breeders who have not done so are urged to do so as soon as possible.
- Breeders should contact Donegal Farm Relief Service (074-9145386), to organise ultra sound scanning for fat and muscle depth to be carried on their Lambs at 120 to 140 days old.
- Preparations are ongoing for the Sheep 2010 day at Lyons UCD – 26TH June. Sheep Ireland will have a demonstration on the day that will focus on the various aspects of the Sheep Ireland Breeding Program.

7. HerdPlus

- ICBF attended the recent Kilkenny Agricultural Society Multibreed Bull Sale.
- HerdPlus Reports were on display and there was good interest at the stand.
- €uro-Stars were also displayed on the day for the Beef Bulls at the Sale.
- EBI Indexes were also displayed for the Dairy Bulls.
- Aberdeen Angus, Charolais, Hereford, Limousin & Simmental, Holstein & Friesian Bulls were on offer.
- The Index information allowed Purchasers to concentrate on the particular Breeding Goal that interested them (see photo).
- There was a positive correlation between index figures and sale price on the day.
- Beef Bulls - for 37 Limousin Bulls with recorded bid prices the following correlations were found between Price bid and Overall SBV & Muscle BLUP:



Price Bid correlation with:

Suckler Beef Value 0.50

Muscle BLUP 0.74

8. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 20/04/10 to 30/04/10

	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	17	1,022	60	25.5	3.70	3.37	1.80	256
CAVAN	30	1,588	53	30.4	3.86	3.17	2.14	377
CLARE	38	1,899	50	27.9	3.47	3.24	1.87	264
CORK STH	289	18,335	63	27.0	3.68	3.37	1.90	255
CORK NTH	300	19,725	66	26.7	3.65	3.36	1.87	262

DONEGAL	10	879	88	19.3	3.74	3.35	1.37	263
DUBLIN	7	361	52	26.3	3.56	3.33	1.81	384
GALWAY	19	1,375	72	26.0	3.81	3.35	1.86	342
KERRY	137	7,868	57	28.9	3.56	3.30	1.98	325
KILDARE	30	2,310	77	27.7	3.80	3.33	1.98	321
KILKENNY	61	4,590	75	26.0	3.75	3.31	1.84	263
LAOIS	43	3,191	74	25.2	3.78	3.30	1.78	340
LEITRIM	4	192	48	27.2	3.88	3.32	1.96	354
LIMERICK	127	8,572	67	27.6	3.53	3.30	1.89	307
LONGFORD	10	640	64	26.3	3.90	3.36	1.91	375
LOUTH	21	1,479	70	27.6	3.64	3.27	1.91	352
MAYO	20	922	46	25.2	3.47	3.58	1.78	467
MEATH	45	4,318	96	23.0	3.94	3.32	1.67	389
MONAGHAN	16	835	52	26.2	3.74	3.21	1.82	305
OFFALY	36	2,377	66	24.7	3.86	3.31	1.77	411
ROSCOMMON	4	265	66	29.4	4.32	3.27	2.23	263
SLIGO	5	159	32	28.7	3.64	3.32	2.00	359
TIPPERARY NTH	45	3,700	82	25.2	3.90	3.37	1.83	298
TIPPERARY STH	70	5,386	77	24.6	3.78	3.27	1.73	332
WATERFORD	64	5,438	85	25.7	3.77	3.38	1.84	291
WESTMEATH	18	1,156	64	27.2	3.92	3.29	1.96	311
WEXFORD	56	3,646	65	25.1	3.76	3.37	1.79	280
WICKLOW E	23	1,484	65	25.2	3.50	3.36	1.73	351
WICKLOW W	3	353	118	29.7	3.93	3.25	2.13	227
	<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	1,548	104,065	67	26.4	3.75	3.32	1.87	322

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 20/04/10 to 30/04/10								
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	1070	70,923	66	26.7	3.67	3.32	1.87	292
Leinster	370	26,927	73	26.1	3.77	3.32	1.85	328
Connacht	52	2,913	56	27.3	3.82	3.37	1.96	357
Ulster	56	3,302	59	25.3	3.78	3.24	1.78	315

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.

Registered Office: Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Society Ltd trading as "ICBF", Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co Cork. Registered Dublin, Ireland. Registration Number 4914R, Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 1893 to 1978. Web: www.icbf.com.

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.