



UPDATE – for period 27th November to 3rd December 2004

1 Board Meeting

Outcomes from the Board Meeting held on Wednesday 1st December included:

- Approval to proceed with establishing three more Electronic DIY Milk Recording Cells in spring 2005 subject to agreement with the relevant milk recording service providers for capital funding, funding of operations and operating arrangements.
- Approval to proceed with the provision of the AI Technician Handheld data recording system subject to detailed arrangements and services fees being agreed with the relevant AI Field Service Companies.
- Approval of the 2005 budget on the understanding that every effort will be made to avail of grant aid and subject to funding agreements with service providers for capital investments.
- Adoption of a recommendation from the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee on policy for reimbursement of Board member expenses and the Chairman's honorarium. This will be placed before the next Annual General Meeting for endorsement.
- Acceptance of the Irish Rotbunt Society Limited to membership as a Herd Book member subject to their recognition by DAF as a herd book.
- Adoption of the two recommendations:
 - a. That it be a recommendation to DAF that the reliability used to determine if a bull is proven change from the reliability for milk production to the reliability for EBI.
 - b. That the minimum EBI reliability for a bull to appear on ICBF's Active Bull List increase from 50% to 60% in steps of 2% units over the next five years with the first step occurring in February 2005.

2 Genetic Evaluation Consultation Meetings Next Week

- **Venue:** [Abbeyleix Manor Hotel](#)
- **Date & Time :** [Wednesday 8th December 2004 from 10.30 AM - 4.00 PM](#)
- **Agenda:**
 - a. **Morning Session (10.30 AM - 1.00 PM) - BEEF.** Developments in beef genetic evaluations including beef performance, calving performance, calving interval and survival. Developments in beef indexes. Any other business.
 - b. **Afternoon Session (2.00 PM - 4.00 PM) - DAIRY.** Developments in genetic evaluations for beef & calving performance traits. Economic values in the EBI - value of fat, value of beef & calving performance. National & international developments. Widespread usage & active bull list. Any other business.

3 Sire of Sons list under active consideration

At a meeting involving IHFA, Teagasc and ICBF on Tuesday 30th November a new type of Bull list was discussed. The features of this Bull list to be known as the **Sires of Sons List** include:

- Its purpose is to identify those AI sires available worldwide that would make the best sires of the future Holstein Friesian bulls needed for use in Ireland.
- The criteria for selecting bulls to go on this list would include EBI and other traits important to meet the long-term requirements of Irish Dairy Farmers. The list would be particularly valuable to pedigree breeders who are focused on providing bulls for entry to progeny test through AI and also bulls for use as stock bulls by dairy farmers.



- The quantity of semen required for a bull to qualify for the list would be relatively small as the industry requires a relatively small number of such bulls each year.
- In selecting bulls for the list consideration will be given to maintaining genetic variation in the Holstein Friesian breed.

IHFA & ICBF are developing these concepts with a view to having this list available in February 2005. The AI industry will be consulted during the development of the details.

This list would compliment the Active Bull List that is targeted at identifying bulls most suitable for breeding female replacements in the national herd. The concept has applications for all breeds.

4 Database Update

- 30 new herds added to the database.
- The AI handheld application is being used with an SWS AI technician this morning. Five farms were visited and 8 cows were inseminated. Four of the five herds were already signed up to the ICBF database, thus the animals records were available on the handheld. The tag numbers for the other herd had to be keyed.
- There has been a delay in terms of the delivery of the full compliment of handhelds from the supplier in order to get other technicians up and running. It now looks like it will be at least another week before delivery of those handhelds takes place. However, in the mean time, testing with the SWS technicians will continue.
- 1,650 permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients. The rate of return has slowed considerably in the past week. Development is continuing on the solution that will make farmer reports available on-line to those whom the farmer wishes to have access.
- The development web-server has been commissioned this week.
- The new secretary of the Belgian Blue Society (Brid Duff) received training on the IRIS database this week. This will enable the Belgian Blue Society to get fully up to date with their pedigree registrations.

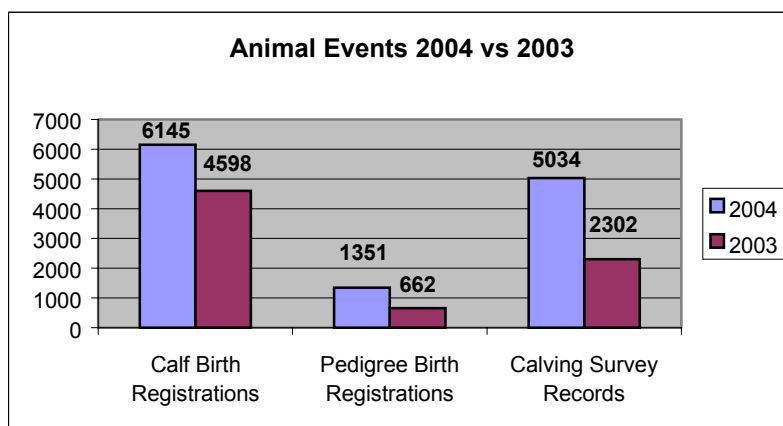


Figure 1. Handheld computer and printer under trial with SWS AI technicians.



- The interviews for the graduate trainee position have been completed and an offer of employment has been issued.

5 Beef Carcase Reports

- Much of ICBF's focus in the past few months has been in the area of beef recording and linking Animal Events data with carcass data from the meat factories (via the DAF CMMS link). This has resulted in unprecedented opportunities to develop new beef recording reports focused on "profitable beef production".
- One such report (the male beef carcass report - see attached) is due to be released to some 309 suckler beef owners (the suckler beef carcass report) and 3,747 dairy herd owners (the dairy beef carcass report) next week.
- Separate reports will be generated for; (i) bull beef, (ii) steer beef and (iii) heifer enterprises. The reports will cover animals slaughtered during the period 1st January 2004 - 30th June 2004 and will contain information on some 172,147 animals slaughtered from herds recorded on the ICBF database.
- Only herds with a minimum of 10 animals slaughtered during the period will be included in the reports. The reports have been developed in conjunction with Teagasc, and are designed to help Irish beef farmers benchmark their breeding and or finishing enterprises, with that of their peers.
- The release of these reports is part of ICBF's overall strategy to get more herds involved in beef cattle breeding activities. A summary of the overall statistics for female slaughterings are given in table 1.

Trait	Average	Top 15%	Btm 15%
Carcass weight (kg)	290	344	227
Carcass gain (kg/day)	0.44	0.59	0.30
Carcass conformation grade (% E, U, R)	85%	100%	69%
Carcass fat score (% 3, 4L)	76%	95%	54%
Carcass quality (% E3, E4L, U3, U4L, R3, R4L)	68%	92%	39%

Table 1. Summary statistics for beef females slaughtered during period 1st Jan 04 - 30th June 04. Statistics based on 156 herds with > 10 females slaughtered.

6 Tully

- Six Limousin bulls from the May '04 intake were sold at the Limousin sale at Tullow mart on Thursday 2nd December. The top performer at Tully was reserve overall male champion. Prices for the bulls out of Tully ranged from €2,200 up to €3,700 with an average of €2,600.
- A group of pedigree Breeders from England visited Tully on the 27-11-04 and were impressed with the standard of bulls at the station.
- A delegation of Japanese people from ICBF's sister organisation in Japan and from the Japanese ministry of agriculture visited Tully on Wednesday.
- Health test results for the December intake are due back from 7-12-04.



7 Milk Recording Processing

Milk Recording Organisation	Herds Recorded Week 26/11 - 02/12	Herds Recorded year to date 2004
Progressive	425	2,227
Dairygold	104	1,617
Kerry	80	1,098
SWS	139	964
Tipperary	6	147
Connacht	31	121
Arrabawn	17	120
Total	802	6,294

November 2004 Industry Test Turnaround	
No. Animals Recorded	199,283
No. Herd Tests Processed	4,168
Average Turnaround (No. days)	5.88

- The industry average turnaround has levelled off in the last quarter. November performance of 5.88 days is consistent with previous two months (Oct 6.07, Sep 5.97).
- The Organisation with the best turnaround time in November was **Kerry** which came in at 4.09 days.
- Each month Milk Recording Organisations get an ICBF Intranet report on their respective turnaround performance. This gives the Organisations the details on how much time is lost in the different steps in the milk recording process.

8 Summary of Japanese delegation visit to Ireland

- Following presentations by ICBF staff at the recent ICAR meetings (June 2004) on the ICBF cattle breeding database we were approached by Yamato Atagi from the National Cattle Breeding Centre in Japan to organise a visit to Ireland for two people.
- On the basis of further material provided by ICBF, Japanese Ministry of Agriculture representatives joined the group. The itinerary for the group included DAFF, Superquinn HQ and one of their stores, Identigen, Tully, AIBP at Cahir and ICBF in Bandon.
- The consumer in Japan is very demanding and wants to know everything about the full history of an animal. Hence all details of

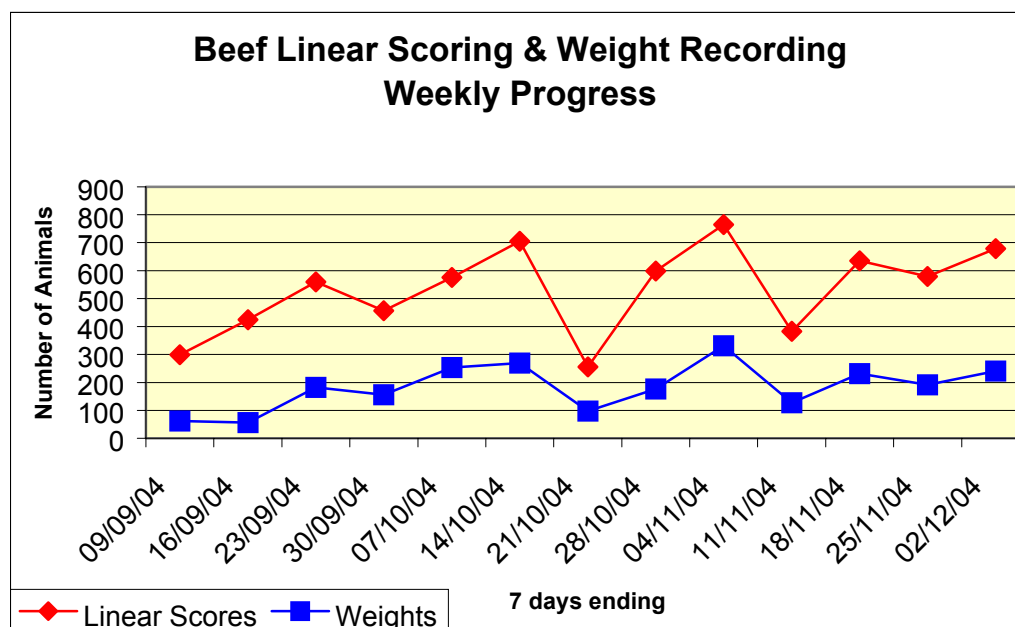




each animal are publicly available on the web by simply entering the animal ID number.

- The visit to the AIBP plant in Cahir appears to have really impressed them. The full linkage from animal on the farm through all of the production processes in the plant to packing and pricing for the Superquinn store where they had already been was clearly demonstrated by printing a full paper trail. They do not have meat plants to match the Cahir plant in scale and throughput. They were particularly impressed with the software systems, which logged all activities relating to products as they moved through the plant and those used by DAFF on site.
- The visit concluded by spending an afternoon at ICBF in Bandon. They found the concepts of single point of entry and the synchronisation of the I&R and the CMMS databases with ICBF's Database to be most impressive. Our plans to electronically link mechanical grading details (seen at AIBP) recorded at meat plants back to the breeding database were outlined.
- The Japanese systems are not integrated in any way, although the body responsible for Animal Identification is part of the National Livestock Breeding Centre. However, they are well advanced in electronic notifications of births. Post is not used on cost grounds. Recording methods are Fax (30%) key entry by phone (5%), PC (7%), a barcode reader procedure (28%), Email (14%) and FTP uploads from Co-op bodies (15%). They are developing a web based registration procedure, which they hope will be 100% accurate. Accuracy they argue is crucial to keep consumer confidence.
- The Japanese use the same tag as in Ireland and are now considering the use of the tag that samples for DNA, to meet consumer demand.
- Members of the Delegation were: **Yamato Atagi** from the National Livestock Breeding Centre and **Yasuhisa Masuda** from the Department of Cattle Identification which is part of the National Livestock Breeding Centre. MAFF in Japan have assigned cattle identification functions to the National Livestock Breeding Centre. **Hiroyuki Kaneda** Director of Livestock Improvement Association of Japan. **Munetaka Tomizawa** Deputy Director of the Livestock Industries Department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food in Japan.

9 Beef Linear Scoring & Weight Recording



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Beef Carcass - Male Summary Report

Herd Owner: Sample Herd
 Herd Number: IE1234567
 Report Period: 01-Jan-2004 to 30-Jun-2004
 Date Printed : 26-NOV-2004

Overall Summary - relative to all beef males, progeny of suckler beef cows, slaughtered in the period 1st Jan - 30th Jun 2004.

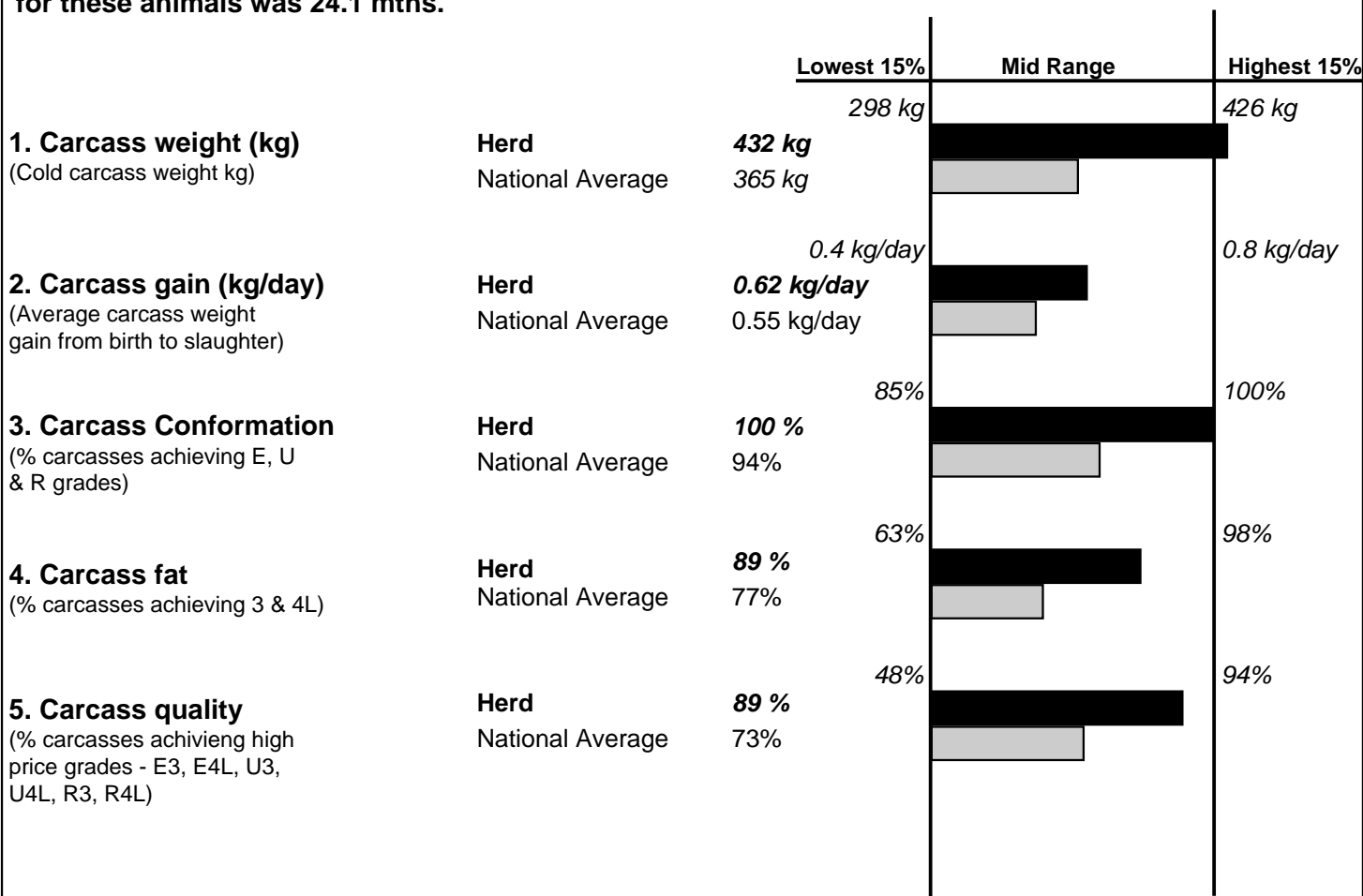
i. Farm & slaughter details

Total males slaughtered 73
Average age at slaughter 22.8 mths
Start slaughter date 30-Jan-2004
Range in age at slaughter 22 - 25 mths
End slaughter date 17-Jun-2004
Beef Cows 168

ii. Carcass breakdown

	E	U	R	O	P	Total
1						0
2						0
3	3	29	6			38
4L		24	3			27
4						0
4H		8				8
5						0
Total	3	61	9	0	0	73

Slaughter Statistics - relative to all beef males slaughtered in period. National summary statistics are based on 281 herds with more than 10 males slaughtered during the period. Average age at slaughter for these animals was 24.1 mths.



Notes: The report contains information on beef males slaughtered from herds involved in the ICBF cattle breeding database. Only animals that are the progeny of suckler beef cows have been included on the report.