Tully high health status sale
(Friday, 8th October 2010)

Following the success of the Spring 2010 sale, Tully Bull Performance Testing Centre is holding an elite High Health status sale on Friday, 8th of October 2010 for the current crop of bulls. There will be 50 bulls on offer, which consist of 31 Limousins, 3 Charolais, 5 Angus, 1 Partanaise, 2 Belgian Blue's, 3 Blonde d'Aquitaine, 2 Shorthorn's, 1 Simmental and 2 Speckle Park. Bulls will be between 12 and 17 months of age on the day of sale. All 50 bulls boast high €uro-Star indexes and were pre-selected on-farm for muscular, skeletal and functionality traits. Also, the fact that all bulls selected for Tully are in the top of their respective breed for Milk and Fertility (M&F) ensures that, when used for breeding heifer replacements, selected bulls have the potential to produce a calf with superior weaning weights, excellent conformation and good growth rates.
The current 90 day performance test is due to finish on the 1st of October. Afterwards, bulls will have their concentrate offering gradually decreased leading up to the sale, to ensure they are acclimatised to their new on-farm environment. Performance and health testing allow us to accurately identify the bulls that are truly superior in both health status and also key profits traits such as weight for age, conformation and feed efficiency. Tully provides bulls to the beef industry that have elite genetics along with a high health status, allowing breeders to increase genetic gain in their herd. In 2009, eleven bulls were purchased by AI companies, with 9 and 2 being bought by NCBC and Dovea AI, respectively. To date in 2010 one bull has being purchased by NCBC AI station.

Strict health testing at Tully
What makes Tully bulls superior is not only that they are pre-selected, have elite genetics and high indexes, but the fact that these bulls have a very high health status. This is established by firstly:

On-farm health testing
This involves a maximum of 20 animals in the herd (including the candidate animal) being tested for IBR, BVD, Johne's and EBL, thereby building up a profile of the health status of the whole herd. The candidate bull(s) is then accepted into Tully on the basis that the health status of the herd is of a high standard and in all cases the candidate and its dam must be free of all diseases. Prior to leaving the farm, candidate bulls are tested for TB and Brucellosis and receive vaccinations for RSV, PI3, Pasteurella (strains of pneumonia), Blackleg and various other clostridia diseases.

Tully health testing
Bulls that meet the on-farm health testing criteria are accepted into Tully where they are isolated for a further 30 day period. Once in isolation, a blood sample is obtained weekly for three weeks, testing again for the various diseases to ensure no bull became infected during on-farm testing and entry into Tully. During isolation bulls are given boosters for the vaccinations that were carried out on-farm. They are also treated for lice, mange, immature and mature fluke, stomach and lung worms. While in isolation, bulls are gradually built up to an ad-lib concentrate diet (the acclimatization period).
During the performance test, strict monitoring of bulls takes place and on the first indication of illness, bulls are isolated. Nasal swabs and blood samples are then obtained to ensure that no major

diseases are at cause. Once the bull gets the all clear, it can then be allowed back in with other animals.

Performance testing and measurements

Performance testing at Tully involves exposing selected bulls to uniform feeding, housing and management conditions. This testing establishes the genetic potential of all bulls, in terms of feed conversion efficiency and growth efficiency.

During the performance test, bulls are weighed every 21 days with individual feed intake being obtained, daily. Other measurements taken at Tully include:

- ***Average daily gain (kg/day):*** A key indicator of growth rate, which is an important factor in all aspects of beef production.
- ***Feed conversion efficiency (DMI/ADG):*** The ratio describing the amount of feed consumed per unit of production. It is important to identify animals that are efficient users of feed.
- ***Scanned muscle and fat depth (mm):*** These traits are accurate indicators of meat and fat yield (very important with the new pricing GRID in place).
- ***Scrotal circumference (cm):*** Increased scrotal circumference is associated with earlier age at puberty, increased semen production and improved semen quality. It also has a favourable relationship with female fertility in daughters produced.

Location and contact details.

The testing centre is located in Tully, Kildare, Co. Kildare, of the M7 roundabout and minutes from Kildare town. For more information you can contact Stephen Conroy, manager of the test centre by email at sconroy@icbf.com or by phone at 045 521573.