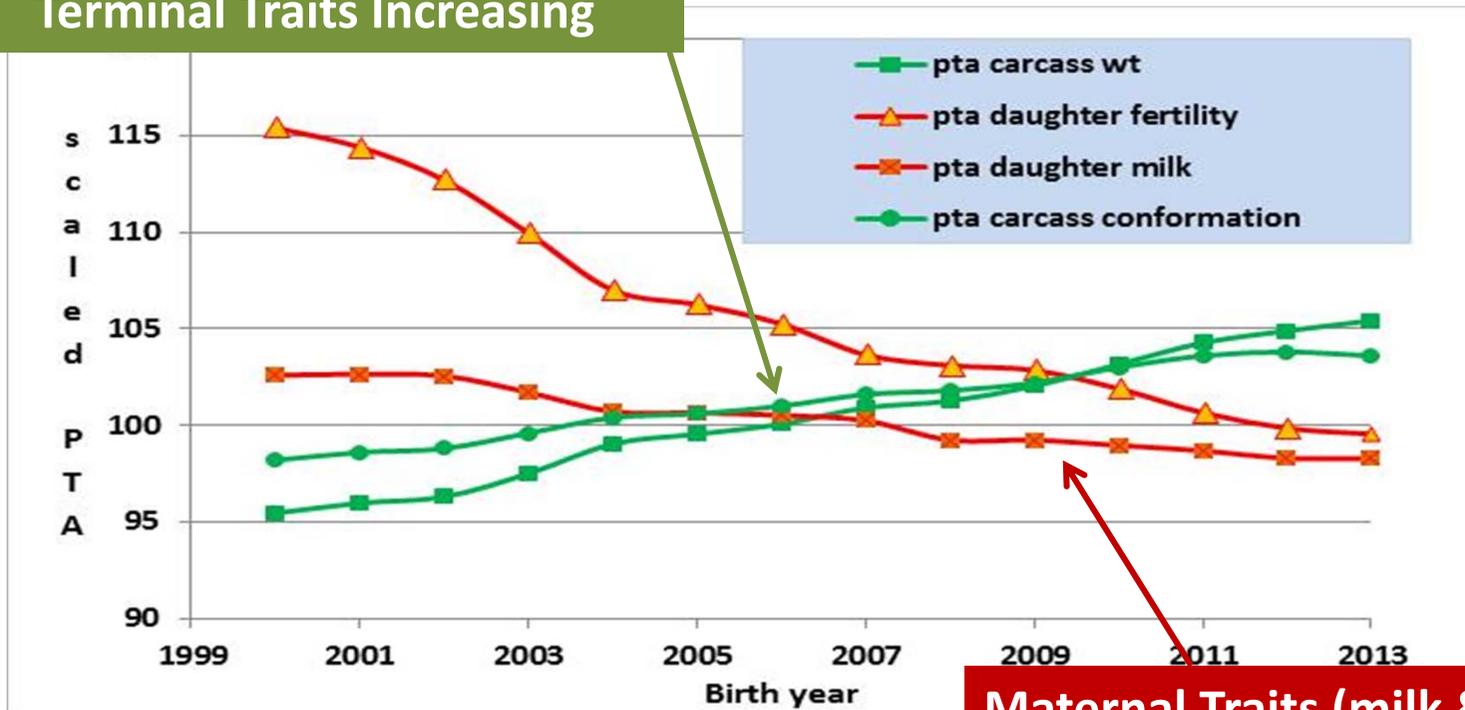


# Why Gene Ireland?

## Terminal Traits Increasing



Genetic trends of the national suckler herd from 2000-2013.

**Maternal Traits (milk & fertility) in Rapid Decline**

### Past

- Huge emphasis on terminal traits
- Breeding heavier cattle with more muscle
- Maternal traits have suffered dramatically

### Future

**Gene Ireland**  
Breeding Profitable Suckler Cows

# What is the Goal?

Reverse the decline in maternal traits in the  
national suckler herd

*Milk*



*Fertility*



*Calving Ability*



*Docility*



***Profitable Suckler Cows***

# How Will this be Achieved?

Identify the best genetics in pedigree herds to breed  
maternally strong bulls



Disseminate these genetics to commercial herds via AI and  
stock bulls

# GENE IRELAND Overview



# 1. Pedigree Breeders

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- **Over 5000 Pedigree Beef Breeders in Ireland** (12 breeds)
- **Producing over 10,000 pedigree bulls/annum**
- **Program is open for Pedigree Breeders to join at any time.**
- **Committee set up for each breed – made up of:**
  - Commercial Suckler Farmers
  - Pedigree Breeders
  - Breed Societies
  - Teagasc

# 1. Pedigree Breeders

- **Currently 225 Breeders signed up to the program**  
(Jun'14)

<b>Breeders</b>	<b>Breeds</b>
38	Angus
9	Aubrac
3	Belgian Blue
4	Blonde d'Aquitaine
45	Charolais
9	Hereford
60	Limousin
10	Parthenaise
5	Saler
6	Shorthorn
23	Simmental



# 1. Pedigree Breeders

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- Pedigree breeders undertake to do two things:
  - 1. Record high levels of accurate data on their pedigree stock.*
  - 2. Place more emphasis on maternal traits when choosing bulls to mate with their cows.*
- Pedigree Breeder's Data records are checked for their accuracy e.g. insemination records etc.
- The Stamp is awarded when the herd's data reaches a certain level.

## 2. Identify Bull Mothers

- All females in participating pedigree herds are Scored & Weighed.
- Extra data collected on them:
  - Udder Suspension
  - Teat Size
  - Teat Placement
  - Width & Length of



# 2. Identify Bull Mothers

Animal Details			Ancestry Details							Euro-Star Index						
Jumbo: WANDA			Sire's Sire: HCJ HILLCREST JEROME ET							Within Breed	Economic Indexes	Index	Rel%	Across Breed		
Official Tag: IE311030820481										Sire's Dam: IECNWQ0066E MONADUFF JESSE						
Animal Name: MARSHA WANDA			Sire: IE271822950043 CLOONDROON NUGGET													
Date of Birth: 15/01/2008										Dam: IE291364110185 BOYHER SNOWFLAKE						
Breed: SI (100%)			Dam's Sire: IE121285520112 CORLESMORE KIRK													
Herdbook: Pedigree Registered										Dam's Dam: IEYVMF0018E BOYHER HELEN						
Scored: 19/08/2008			BLUP Index (Reliability 45%)													
Weighed: 19/08/2008										MUSCLE						
SKELETAL			DOCILITY													
107										104						
Calving & Fertility Performance																
Calving Date	Tag Number	Calving Survey	Calving Interval	Sex	Current Status	Sire	Sire Breed	Age days	Weight Kgs	Growth Kg/Day*	Price/Kilo	Calf Quality	Docility	Age at Slaught. (months)	Carcass Conf. & Fat	Carcass Weight
1	03/07/2010	S1184		ET	M	Exported	S682	SI	185	321	1.52		Excellent	V. Quiet		
2	05/07/2010	IE171059830281		ET	F	Sold	S682	SI	183	320	1.53		Excellent	V. Quiet		
3	15/09/2010	IE171059880286	Normal		F	Sold	S749	SI	274	365	1.19		V. Good	Quiet		
4	19/09/2011	IE171059890337	Difficult	368	F	In herd	AIF	SI	276	423	1.39		Excellent	V. Quiet		
5	06/10/2012	KDZ	Normal	382	M	Sold	S682	SI	243	427	1.59		Excellent	V. Quiet		
6	02/10/2013	IE171059810461		ET	F	In herd	S682	SI	190	331	1.53		V. Good	V. Quiet		
7	13/02/2014	IE171059810486	Normal	494	M	In herd	S1037	SI								

Marsha Wanda – the dam of one of the 2014 Gene Ireland Young Bulls - KDZ

## 2. Identify Bull Mothers



- **Curaheen Dickens (KDZ) — Curaheen Warrior x Marsha Wanda.**
- **Ploughing Championship 2013 - Norbrook Champion Bull**
- **Gene Ireland Youngbull Spring 2014**
- **Milk in the backpedigree – Hillcrest Jerome.**
- **Bloodline has bred well.**
  - Full Brother: Curaheen Buck - €6100 to the pedigree Simmental Jalex herd in Antrim.
  - Full Sister: Auroch Belle - €8000 to the pedigree Simmental 'Hillcrest herd in Offaly.
- **Full Sister: Curaheen Elegance (Born: 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2013).**

# 3. Identify Bull Fathers

- Each Committee selects Maternally strong AI Sires



Repair

- Proven Maternal Sire
- French Maternal Index: 111
- Easy Calving
- 4.5 Stars – Replacement Index
- 5 Stars – Daughter Milk



On-Dit

- Proven Maternal Sire
- French Maternal Index: 121
- Easy Calving
- 5 Stars – Replacement Index
- 5 Stars – Daughter Milk

# 3. Identify Bull Fathers



- **ICBF has 5 Herd Liaison Officers to assist Breeders:**
- **Selecting what bulls to use on their cows.**
- **Ensuring that their data is recorded accurately.**
- **Liaising with Breeders over all aspects of the program.**

## 4. Select the Young Bull

1. Young Pedigree Bull calves with high Indexes identified
2. Breed Committee decides on the selection criteria:
  - Replacement Index
  - Back Pedigree
  - Physical Appearance
3. Bulls meeting the criteria are inspected.
4. Results of inspections reviewed by each committee.
5. Preferred Bulls purchased for progeny testing.
6. AI Company Bulls that meet the same criteria are also included.



# 5. Progeny Test

**After Bull is purchased by Gene Ireland:**

- 1. Health Tested for entry into AI Station.**
- 2. 1000 doses collected off each bull.**
- 3. 500 straws made available for progeny testing.**
- 4. 500 straws stored away for future pedigree breeding.**
- 5. Following semen collection the bulls are sold.**



# 5. Progeny Test



- Over 20 young beef bulls have been sourced from participant's herds so far in 2014.
- 500 straws from the best of these – after the progeny test, will only be available to Bull Breeder Herds.

# 5. Progeny Test

- YCM – Clewbay Highmaster
- Selected by the Charolais Breeding Committee



- Purchased by Gene Ireland
- 1000 straws collected off him
- Why was Gene Ireland interested in him?

# 5. Progeny Test

## • Dam of YCM – Clewbay Daisy

Animal Details			Ancestry Details				Euro-Star Index									
Jumbo:	371		Sire's Sire:	FR5898106514 ORIENTAL		Within Breed	Economic Indexes	Index	Rel%	Across Breed						
Official Tag:	IE272285830371			Sire's Dam:	FR7194109870 JACOBINE		★ ★ ★ ★ †	Maternal	€89	35%	★ ★ †					
Animal Name:	CLEWBAY DAISY		Sire:		SLV BOVA SYLVAIN		★	Terminal	€96	31%	★ ★ †					
Date of Birth:	12/12/2008			Dam:	IERLHK0089Q LOUISBURGH ORGAN			Dairy Beef		Expected Progeny Performance						
Breed:	CH (100%)		Dam's Sire:		KCEM009 CLONKEEFY MACINERNY			Calving Difficulty (%3&4)	7.2%	37%						
Herdbook:	Pedigree Registered			Dam's Dam:	LOB004 LOUISBURGH BRONAGH		★ ★ ★ ★ †	Docility (1-5 scale)	+0.10	47%	★ ★ ★ ★ †					
Scored:			BLUP Index (Reliability 37%)				★	Carcass Weight (Kg)	+26 Kg	32%	★ ★ ★ †					
Weighed:				MUSCLE	SKELETAL	DOCILITY	†	Carc Conf. (1-15 scale)	+1.57	30%	★ ★					
			97	107		Expected Daughter Breeding Performance										
							Daught Calv Diff (%3&4)	3.7%	32%							
						★ ★ ★ ★	Daught Milk (Kg)	-4.2 Kg	57%	★ †						
						★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Daught Calv Int. (Days)	-3.73 Days	32%	★ ★ ★ ★						
Calving & Fertility Performance										Weanling & Carcass Performance						
Calving Date	Tag Number	Calving Survey	Calving Interval	Sex	Current Status	Sire	Sire Breed	Age days	Weight Kgs	Growth Kg/Day*	Price/Kilo	Calf Quality	Docility	Age at Slaught. (months)	Carcass Conf. & Fat	Carcass Weight
1	23/09/2011	IE272285810411	Normal		M	Exported	PTE CH	265	408	1.39		Excellent	V.Quiet			
2	20/09/2012	YCM	Normal	362	M	Sold	REP CH	179	264	1.25		Average	V.Quiet			
3	28/08/2013	IE272285830446	Normal	341	M	In herd	RRZ CH	196	352	1.59		Excellent	V.Quiet			

# 5. Progeny Test

- Sire of YCM – ‘Repair’



**‘Maternal’ Bulls can have good beefing ability as well!**

# 5. Progeny Test

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**What happens the 500 straws of YCM?**

- 1. Herds are signed up to take the Testbull semen.**
- 2. Semen orders are dispatched.**
- 3. Inseminations take place & calves are born.**
- 4. Calves are followed up on**
  - 1. Calving Survey**
  - 2. Weight Gain – % of his weanlings are weight recorded.**
  - 3. Feed Efficiency - % of his weanlings are purchased for finishing here in Tully.**
  - 4. Carcass Merit – The cattle killed through Tully have their carcasses assessed.**
  - 5. Daughter Performance – Daughters are monitored in progeny test herds for:**
    - 1. Growth – weight gain & conformation of their progeny.**
    - 2. Milk & Fertility of his daughters.**

# 5. Progeny Test - Beef



- **Weight Gain**
- **Feed Intake**
- **Carcass Conformation**



# 4. Progeny Test – Milk

2 Commercial Bulls born in the same herd on the same day & sired by the same Sire



**651**  
(85% LM/ 15% BB)

**317Kgs**

**Dam: 471**



**652**  
(85% LM/ 15% CH)

**367Kgs**

**Dam: 471**



**50Kgs  
Difference - a  
portion of  
this is the  
milk of their  
dam's**

# 5. After the Progeny Test

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## Proven Bulls

- Bulls that return to the programme as elite bulls after the progeny test will be used as future bull fathers.
- Semen from these bulls will be used by bull breeder herds to breed the next generation of elite young bulls for testing.
- By repeating the process again and again and again the result is:

## Genetic Gain