



## **UPDATE – for period 26<sup>th</sup> July – 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008**

### **1 Important Dates**

- + **Tue. 26<sup>th</sup> August, 10:30** – Beef Industry Genetic Evaluation Consultation Meeting. Venue to be advised.
- + **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August** – Sheep breeding consultation meetings, Tullamore Court Hotel.
- + **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September** – ICBF Board meeting 10:30 to 14:00.
- + **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September** – Interim Sheep Board meeting 14:00 to 17:00.
- + **23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> September** – Ploughing Championships, Kilkenny.
- + **9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> October** – World Holstein Friesian Conference hosted by Ireland at Killarney & Millstreet. For details see [www.ihfa.ie](http://www.ihfa.ie).
- + **11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October** – International Beef Expo being hosted in Ireland at Kilkenny Mart.

### **2 Genomic Selection**

Progress with the development of genomic selection this week included:

- + **Letter to DIY AI Licence Holders.** A list of bulls for which semen is being sought for use in the genomic research has been finalized. In conjunction with TEAGASC we are seeking a straw of semen from each of some 1,900 dairy bulls that have a progeny tested in Ireland. Our search of the stocks held by the AI organizations has not been successful for these bulls so a letter will be sent to all Licensed DIY operators next week. A copy of the list is available on our website - <http://www.icbf.com/services/genomic/index.php>.
- + **Genomic Selection** has been added to the services section on the home page ([www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com)) of our website. This provides a location for information relevant to our efforts to establish genomic selection for Irish cattle breeding.
- + **Facilities for supporting a tissue archive, DNA extraction and genotyping** are currently being sought. Meetings with potential suppliers have commenced and an evaluation of options has been initiated. Please refer any interested party to me ([bwickham@icbf.com](mailto:bwickham@icbf.com)) for further information.

### **3 HERD HEALTH**

A proposal for progressing herd health services has been developed jointly with the Pedigree Cattle Breeders Council of Ireland. Work on developing the details of the proposal has commenced and is expected to take several weeks to complete.

#### **CONCEPT**

The current problems being experienced with operating Tully according to best international practice highlights the need for a mechanism to enable bull breeders both:

- to proactively address IBR, BVD and Johne's; and
- to be rewarded for these efforts.

Bull breeders (dairy and beef) have expressed considerable frustration with the lack of progress in the establishment of a Herd Health scheme. In many ways the current vacuum is damaging the productive health interests of the Irish national herd.

The key issues are:

- There is currently no service which enables those breeders who are seriously addressing IBR, BVD and Johne's disease, to realise better returns when they are marketing breeding stock.
- Our competitors - breeders in Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and many other countries have ready access to such services.



- IBR, BVD and Johne's disease are endemic in Ireland and are directly reducing financial returns on Irish farms.
- Beyond TB and Brucellosis, there currently exists no mechanism to provide confidence of animal health status to the purchaser.

There are a range of steps that farmers can take to either prevent (if not present) or control (if present) IBR, BVD and Johne's disease in their herd. In each of these infectious diseases, biosecurity (including controls on the movement of animals onto the farm) is fundamental. Depending on the disease, testing, vaccination and on-farm husbandry practises can also be very important.

## PROPOSAL

It is proposed that steps be taken to establish the mechanism to enable risk-informed trading to operate in Ireland. This approach operates successfully in a number of other countries. The purpose of this scheme is:

- To enable buyers to make informed decisions about the health status of animals that they are buying.
- To provide vendors with the opportunity to sell animals on their merits, if relevant in terms of superior animal health status.

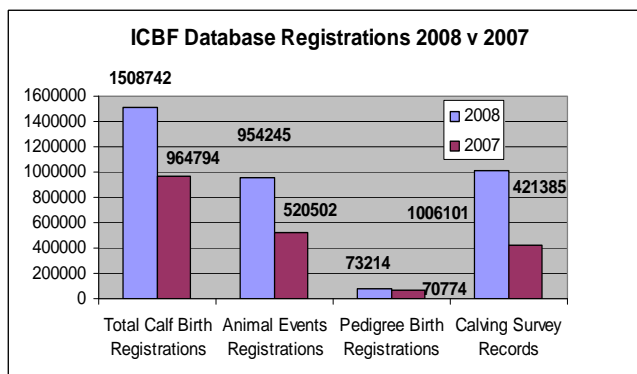
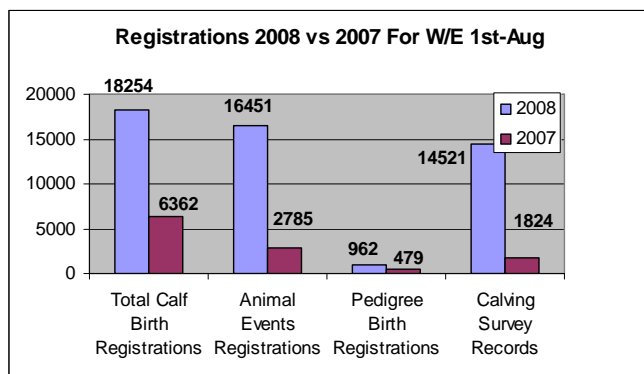
The system is based on a process of vendor declaration, with vendors providing true and correct information about aspects of the health status of their herd. Much work is needed to resolve the detail, but vendors may be required to provide information about:

- Herd test results
- Inward movement of animals (purchases, etc)
- Relevant on-farm practices, including vaccinations

This information, once collated, would be used as the basis of a 'disease risk score' (high to low), in a form that can be readily understood by bull buyers. With this information, farmers can make informed choices about disease risk before bulls are purchased.

Detailed discussion is needed with industry to determine whether/how credibility could be maintained. Some (but not all) of this information could come from ICBF (animal movements), veterinary laboratories (testing results) etc. In other countries in which these systems operate, vendor declarations have legal standing under fair trading legislation.

## 4 Database Update



- ✚ 469,049 inseminations have been received so far in 2008 from AI handhelds, compared with 318,290 in 2007 for the same period.
- ✚ The work on reviewing the AI software for next season is continuing. We expect to have a session with each of the AI organisations using handhelds in early September.



- ✚ Over 540,000 birth registrations from new Animal Events users have been received as part of the Suckler Scheme. All 49,000 herds that are part of the Suckler Scheme and have had a calving in 2008, have had Pre-Weaning forms posted to them.
- ✚ A number of revised screens for the recording of the Suckler Events will be available to farmers from early next week.
- ✚ New developments have continued this week, including a revamp of the bull search output, further development of the Gene Ireland application, and the update of the milk recording data entry screens.
- ✚ Work on updating the Dairy Calving report is complete and reports will be available on Monday next.

## 5 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Beef evaluation files have been prepared for the next routine evaluation which will commence next week. There will be an extra 135,423 new animals with data in this run spread across 15 beef performance traits. The total number of animals in the evaluation is now 822,717.
- ✚ Milk production, fertility, longevity and udder health files are also being prepared and will be submitted next week for the upcoming INTERBULL routine run.

## 6 Milk Recording

<b>National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows &amp; EDIY 01/08/08</b>						
<b>Milk Recording Organisation</b>	<b>Total Herds Recorded YTD 01/08/08</b>	<b>No. EDIY Herds YTD 01/08/08</b>	<b>% Herds EDIY</b>	<b>Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 01/08/08</b>	<b>No. EDIY Cows YTD 01/08/08</b>	<b>% Cows EDIY</b>
<b>Progressive</b>	2,212	887	40%	175,076	68,095	39%
<b>Dairygold</b>	1,641	589	36%	118,383	44,300	37%
<b>Kerry</b>	1,156	247	21%	77,842	16,113	21%
<b>SWS</b>	912	131	14%	60,398	8,992	15%
<b>Tipperary</b>	171	72	42%	12,837	5,662	70%
<b>Arrabawn</b>	165	137	83%	12,546	10,551	84%
<b>Connacht</b>	149	56	38%	9,194	3,289	36%
<b>Donegal</b>	49	49	100%	4,593	4,593	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,455</b>	<b>2,168</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>470,869</b>	<b>161,595</b>	<b>34%</b>

<b>Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison</b>				
<b>Milk Recording Organisation</b>	<b>YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 01/08/06</b>	<b>YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 01/08/07</b>	<b>YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 01/08/08</b>	<b>2008 vs 2007 Year on Year Difference (%)</b>
<b>Progressive</b>	151,247	161,474	175,076	13.6%
<b>Dairygold</b>	101,446	108,903	118,383	8.0%
<b>Kerry</b>	68,985	70,404	77,842	11.4%
<b>SWS</b>	57,924	59,498	60,398	1.5%
<b>Tipperary</b>	11,636	12,098	12,837	5.8%
<b>Arrabawn</b>	10,824	11,674	12,546	7.0%
<b>Connacht</b>	8,679	9,617	9,194	-4.6%
<b>Donegal</b>	5,008	3,840	4,593	16.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>415,749</b>	<b>437,508</b>	<b>470,869</b>	<b>7.1%</b>



**National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 22/07/08 to 01/08/08.**

	<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>
<b>CARLOW</b>	10	608	61	22.4	3.66	3.45	1.59	254
<b>CAVAN</b>	39	2,189	56	23.2	3.63	3.36	1.62	245
<b>CLARE</b>	27	1,497	55	22.4	3.69	3.50	1.61	262
<b>CORK STH</b>	248	16,034	65	21.9	3.85	3.47	1.60	251
<b>CORK NTH</b>	237	16,861	71	22.5	3.74	3.46	1.62	260
<b>DONEGAL</b>	14	1,174	84	19.5	4.02	3.36	1.44	338
<b>DUBLIN</b>	5	223	45	25.3	3.50	3.45	1.76	388
<b>GALWAY</b>	19	1,158	61	24.7	3.77	3.34	1.76	323
<b>KERRY</b>	125	7,945	64	22.4	3.71	3.40	1.59	288
<b>KILDARE</b>	16	1,162	73	22.0	3.86	3.41	1.60	333
<b>KILKENNY</b>	53	3,957	75	19.4	3.85	3.52	1.43	235
<b>LAOIS</b>	26	1,789	69	21.0	3.75	3.44	1.51	283
<b>LEITRIM</b>	6	319	53	28.1	3.55	3.31	1.93	210
<b>LIMERICK</b>	92	6,278	68	23.0	3.64	3.42	1.62	261
<b>LONGFORD</b>	8	383	48	24.9	3.67	3.38	1.76	192
<b>LOUTH</b>	24	1,989	83	24.8	3.60	3.43	1.74	268
<b>MAYO</b>	6	271	45	26.6	3.42	3.44	1.82	354
<b>MEATH</b>	63	5,653	90	21.3	3.81	3.39	1.53	297
<b>MONAGHAN</b>	30	1,588	53	24.0	3.76	3.31	1.70	296
<b>OFFALY</b>	27	2,094	78	21.6	3.89	3.46	1.59	297
<b>ROSCOMMON</b>	7	334	48	18.6	3.77	3.37	1.33	371
<b>SLIGO</b>	46	3,120	68	21.4	3.91	3.49	1.58	324
<b>TIPPERARY NTH</b>	58	4,188	72	20.0	3.91	3.49	1.48	259
<b>TIPPERARY STH</b>	58	4,674	81	21.5	3.90	3.45	1.58	236
<b>WATERFORD</b>	14	1,012	72	19.8	4.26	3.63	1.56	261
<b>WESTMEATH</b>	65	4,545	70	21.3	3.78	3.44	1.54	243
<b>WEXFORD</b>	16	1,205	75	22.2	3.34	3.38	1.49	222
<b>WICKLOW E</b>	5	427	85	21.0	4.20	3.44	1.60	405
<b>WICKLOW W</b>	12	1,095	91	21.2	3.90	3.43	1.55	307
	<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>
<b>National</b>	<b>1,356</b>	<b>93,772</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>3.77</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>285</b>

**National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 22/07/08 to 01/08/08.**

<b>Provincial</b>	<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>
<b>Munster</b>	859	58,489	68	21.7	3.84	3.48	1.59	260
<b>Leinster</b>	330	25,130	76	22.2	3.75	3.43	1.59	286
<b>Connacht</b>	84	5,202	62	23.9	3.68	3.39	1.69	316
<b>Ulster</b>	83	4,951	60	22.2	3.80	3.34	1.59	293

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