

1 Important Dates

- ✚ **HerdPlus[®] and GENÉIRELAND[®] User Day** - Wednesday 7th December, 10:00 to 14:00, Corrin Mart, Rathcormac.
- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** - Thursday 26th January, 10:30 to 14:00, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Sheep Board Meeting** - Thursday 26th January, 14:00 to 16:30, Portlaoise.

2 ICBF Board Meeting – Thursday 1st December

At its meeting this week the Board of ICBF:

- ✚ Adopted the Budget for 2012 as recommended by the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee.
- ✚ Agreed that the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee would be asked to examine the financial implications of any proposal in relation to Genetic Evaluations, Tully, and Breeding Schemes before a final proposal goes to the Board of ICBF.
- ✚ Agreed to implement the following changes to genetic evaluations:
 - Dairy Fertility** – new model, use of insemination data, use of more lactations, breed specific heterosis adjustments, use of data from herds not milk recording and computation of an evaluation for age at first calving.
 - Dairy genomic evaluations** – to include a bias adjustment.
 - Beef maternal weaning weight** – new model, use of predictor traits, more lactations, use of data from SCWS (Suckler Cow Welfare Scheme), and a modified trait definition.
 - Beef maternal fertility** – more lactations, new definition for contemporary groups, better statistical model and use of predictor traits.
- ✚ Received a progress report on on-going GENÉIRELAND[®] discussions.
- ✚ Received a report from Dr Andrew Cromie on his recent visit to New Zealand as part of a larger group that focused on dairy production.

Sheep Board Meeting – Thursday 1st December

At its meeting this week the Board of Sheep Ireland:

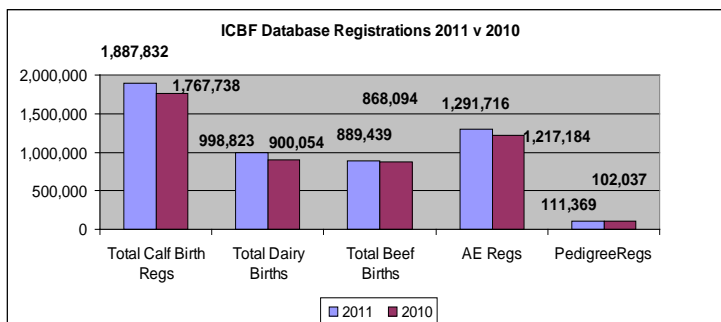
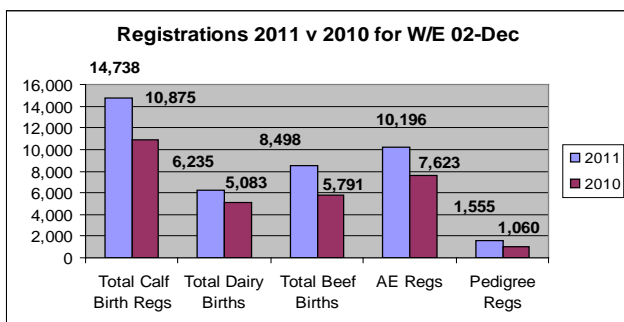
- ✚ Adopted the Budget for 2012 as recommended by the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee.
- ✚ Received a progress report from the Sheep Ireland team.
- ✚ Received a progress report on the development of a more permanent structure and encouraged high priority to be given to this work.

3 GENÉIRELAND[®]

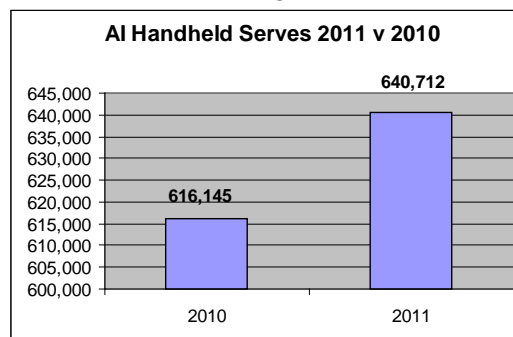
Dairy

- ✚ Five bulls will be tested this Autumn.
- ✚ Dispatches will recommence when all the straws are available mid-December.

4 Database



- The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFF AIM systems.
- In the Suckler scheme, the number of 2011 born calves with meal introduced is 514,093 with the number of animals weaned at 369,904.
- Around 5,570 herds have already completed their Dairy Efficiency Programme (DEP) health recording requirements for 2011.
- Testing continues on the prototype of a new cattle weighing scales with blue-tooth integration to ICBF handheld software.
- The development of a new 'Bull-Tracker' report for pedigree herds is on-going. The focus of the report is to show the performance of stock-bull offspring.
- Work is on-going in building the systems that will support the up-coming national BVD eradication programme.
- The loading of the high density beef genotype files to the ICBF database is on-going.
- The IGENOP application is now in the final stages of testing by some of our international partners.
- The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2011 compared with 2010.



5 Sheep Ireland

- Last Saturday Sheep Ireland was kindly invited to the Vendeen Sheep Society AGM in Tullamore. This was another great opportunity to brief the society on how LambPlus is progressing and to discuss aspects of the evaluation process. Breeder participation among the Vendeen Society is currently strong, and we have already signed up new Vendeen breeders for the coming year. We hope that 2012 will see further growth in numbers and that Sheep Ireland will continue to help the breed develop and expand in this country.
- On Thursday 1st December, Sheep Ireland met with representatives of the Belclare sheep society in Limerick to demonstrate the new web features which we can offer the society for the coming year. One of the most beneficial features will undoubtedly be access to a Belclare on-line flockbook, which will be available to all internet users via the Belclare society website. This will provide the society with an excellent marketing and promotional tool for their breed. As every Belclare breeder is currently participating in LambPlus, the potential

to progress the genetic merit of the breed is huge and Sheep Ireland will continue to give every help we can to deliver maximum benefit to the society.

- ✚ Sheep Ireland has also circulated our promotional leaflet to non-recording breeders this week. The objective of this literature is to help eliminate many of the misconceptions out there about the Euro-Star evaluations. If we can achieve this then we have no doubt that non-recording breeders will begin to acknowledge the potential benefit that genetic improvement can deliver to the industry. Hopefully this will translate into more sign-ups for the coming year also.

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