



## UPDATE – for period 28<sup>th</sup> June – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008

### 1 Important Dates

- ✚ **9<sup>th</sup> July 1.30-5.30pm** - Tentative: Beef Genetic Evaluation Consultation meeting with beef Herd Books
- ✚ **17<sup>th</sup> July, 10:30am** – ICBF Board Meeting, Comfort Inn Portlaoise.
- ✚ **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 Sheep

ICBF and DAFF hosted a meeting involving John McEwan of AgResearch, New Zealand and some 20 people with an interest in sheep breeding. John spoke about sheep breeding developments in NZ over the last fifteen years. He identified four key areas that are essential to a successful sheep breeding program. These being:

- **National identification** in which animals have a unique number which is used for all recording both on and off farm.
- A shared **database** which stores all data relevant to breeding and other aspects of sheep production.
- An **across breed genetic evaluation** system which is focused on breeding animals that are the most profitable for commercial producers. A national progeny test is needed to ensure good linkage between flocks and breeds.
- **Farmers have direct access** to add performance data to the database and receive information back from the database.

The Interim Sheep Breeding Board has been formed and will meet for the first time in mid July.

### 3 AFBI Visit

On Monday this week representatives of ICBF and TEAGASC Moorepark spent the day at the AFBI research facilities located in Hillsborough, NI. The visit is part of the ongoing collaboration in cattle breeding between the three organisations. Topics covered included:

- Dairy breeding objectives in both the north and south of Ireland.
- Areas for further collaboration.
- Beef breeding developments.
- Developments in TB genetic epidemiology.

### 4 Genomics

The visit by John McEwan provided an excellent opportunity for ICBF and TEAGASC to learn more about the approach being taken by AgResearch for the application of genomics to sheep breeding in New Zealand. Emerging from these discussions were a number of key points:

- The technology is developing rapidly.
- Sample collection and testing requires sophisticated and well resourced facilities.
- Genomic information has the potential to further increase the rate of genetic progress in NZ sheep.



## 5 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Work continues on the integration of foreign data into the Irish beef performance evaluations ahead of next weeks meeting with the beef herd books.
- ✚ Thierry Pabiou represented ICBF at the 15<sup>th</sup> World Hereford Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark on Monday and Tuesday of this week. Topics of the conference included international co-operation, sustainability of Hereford beef farming and consumer influence on breeding decisions.

## 6 GROW – Linear Scoring & Weight Recording



- ✚ Linear Scorers recently had a referencing session to ensure that all scorers are scoring on the same scale. This also coincided with an On-Farm meeting with the Belgian Blue Society to go through the various Breed Specific traits for their breed as well as giving a scoring demonstration. The Belgian Blue Breeders intend increasing the level of scoring & weighing in their breed.
- ✚ The June Scoring & Weighing statistics continue to show the dramatic increase in the level of weight recording.

For Example:

	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2007	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2008
<b>Scored</b>	6088	6773
<b>Weighed</b>	1973	4845
<b>% Scored &amp; Weighed</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>72%</b>

- ✚ The GROW Service is now at a stage where virtually all pedigree & commercial weanlings that are scored are also weight recorded (see graph).

For example, for the month of June 2008:

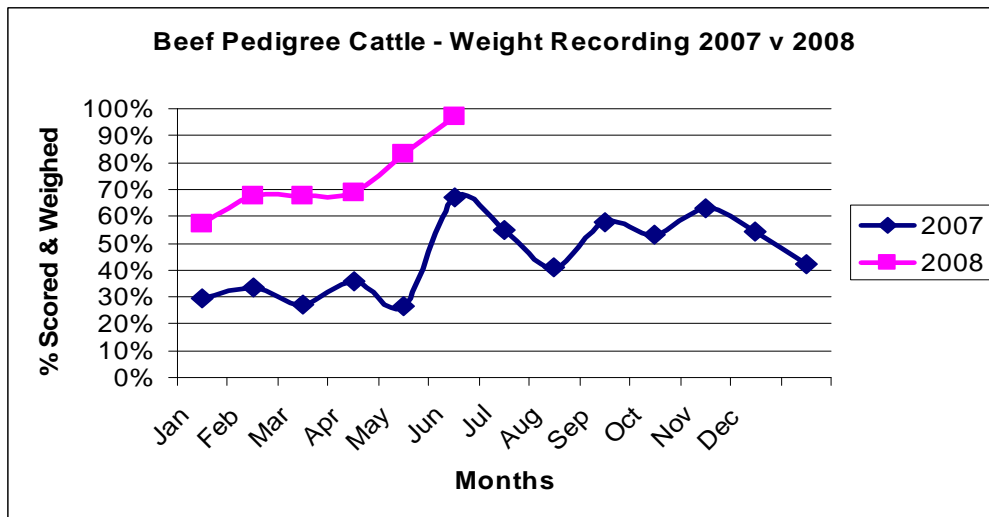
	<b>Pedigrees June 2008</b>	<b>Commercials June 2008</b>
<b>Scored</b>	943	298
<b>Weighed</b>	914	298
<b>% Scored &amp; Weighed</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>100%</b>

- ✚ The GROW logo is currently going through the trademark process.
- ✚ A new GROW report has been developed and is currently being tested. This report will be what a farmer gets back after a scoring & weighing visit. It will;
  - Give an overall summary & breakdown of weights & scores for the different age & sex categories of animals in the herd.
  - Give each animal's 'core trait' scores.
  - Give each animal's 'additional trait' scores.
  - Give each animal's weight & daily gain.
  - Rank the cows in the herd based on their progeny's daily gain.

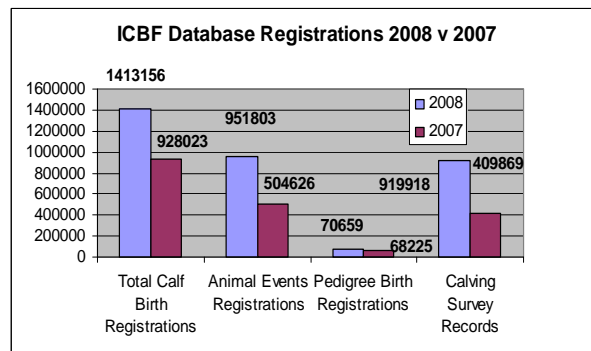
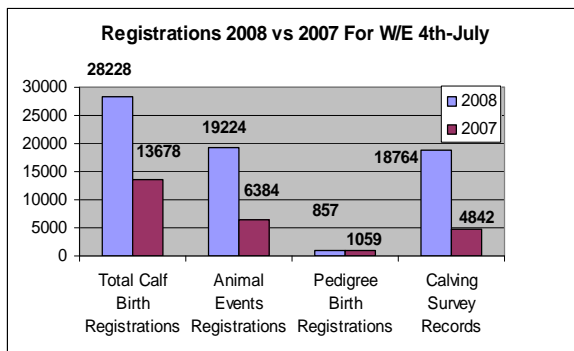


Pedigrees - 2007			
Month	Scored	Weighed	% Cattle Weighed
Jan	1850	544	29%
Feb	1494	504	34%
Mar	1333	363	27%
Apr	744	268	36%
May	380	101	27%
Jun	287	193	67%
Jul	642	351	55%
Aug	929	380	41%
Sep	718	413	58%
Oct	1314	699	53%
Nov	839	528	63%
Dec	345	187	54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,875</b>	<b>4531</b>	<b>42%</b>

Pedigrees - 2008			
Month	Scored	Weighed	% Cattle Weighed
Jan	1354	773	57%
Feb	1437	974	68%
Mar	1320	893	68%
Apr	941	645	69%
May	778	646	83%
Jun	943	914	97%
Jul			
Aug			
Sep			
Oct			
Nov			
Dec			
<b>Total</b>			



## 7 Database Update



427,837 inseminations have been received so far in 2008 from AI handhelds, compared with 294,877 in 2007 for the same period.



- ✦ The work on reviewing the AI software for next season is underway. We will be communicating the plans with the AI handheld users over the coming weeks.
- ✦ Over 470,000 birth registrations from new Animal Events users have been received as part of the Suckler Scheme. Over 15,000 herds have received pre-weaning forms. At this point, only a very small number of post-weaning forms (i.e. the calves have been weaned) have been processed, which is as one would expect.
- ✦ A re-designed linear scoring and weight recording report has been completed and is undergoing the testing process at the moment.
- ✦ A number of 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.
- ✦ The extract process for the next evaluation run will begin on the database next week.

## 8 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 04/07/08						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 04/07/08	No. EDIY Herds YTD 04/07/08	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 04/07/08	No. EDIY Cows YTD 04/07/08	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,203	874	40%	170,666	64,873	38%
Dairygold	1,591	540	34%	112,794	39,976	35%
Kerry	1,154	245	21%	76,282	15,708	21%
SWS	909	129	14%	59,074	8,580	15%
Tipperary	166	69	42%	12,033	5,303	71%
Arrabawn	164	136	83%	12,155	10,218	84%
Connacht	142	50	35%	8,543	2,855	33%
Donegal	41	41	100%	3,518	3,518	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,370</b>	<b>2,084</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>455,065</b>	<b>151,031</b>	<b>33%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison				
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 04/07/06	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 04/07/07	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 04/07/08	2008 vs 2007 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	147,693	157,585	170,666	7.7%
Dairygold	98,760	105,932	112,794	6.1%
Kerry	67,594	69,034	76,282	9.5%
SWS	56,393	58,276	59,074	1.4%
Tipperary	11,310	11,860	12,033	1.4%
Arrabawn	10,459	11,303	12,155	7.0%
Connacht	8,052	9,059	8,543	-6.0%
Donegal	4,758	3,352	3,518	4.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>405,019</b>	<b>426,401</b>	<b>455,065</b>	<b>6.3%</b>



**National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 24/06/08 to 04/07/08.**

	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
CARLOW	23	1,556	68	22.8	3.68	3.36	1.61	286
CAVAN	45	2,465	55	24.8	3.75	3.32	1.75	272
CLARE	36	1,792	50	23.5	3.79	3.43	1.70	260
CORK STH	267	16,690	63	23.4	3.85	3.41	1.70	248
CORK NTH	316	22,314	71	24.3	3.76	3.38	1.74	283
DONEGAL	18	1,314	73	26.5	3.81	3.43	1.92	280
DUBLIN	5	486	97	22.4	3.91	3.38	1.63	426
GALWAY	21	1,560	74	21.2	4.16	3.42	1.61	408
KERRY	110	7,053	64	24.4	3.71	3.35	1.72	258
KILDARE	24	1,808	75	23.8	3.83	3.38	1.72	443
KILKENNY	60	4,526	75	22.1	3.77	3.42	1.59	245
LAOIS	37	2,738	74	22	3.93	3.42	1.62	215
LEITRIM	6	353	59	26.2	3.65	3.25	1.81	366
LIMERICK	150	9,987	67	24.7	3.62	3.32	1.71	285
LONGFORD	7	317	45	26.8	3.73	3.31	1.89	220
LOUTH	17	1,319	78	23.9	3.65	3.34	1.67	339
MAYO	15	869	58	27	3.19	3.33	1.76	379
MEATH	59	4,858	82	23.4	3.81	3.36	1.68	317
MONAGHAN	38	1,999	53	26.6	3.64	3.28	1.84	224
OFFALY	30	1,820	61	24.3	3.63	3.39	1.71	297
ROSCOMMON	5	271	54	25.7	3.44	3.38	1.75	398
SLIGO	5	215	43	31.4	3.05	3.33	2.00	155
TIPPERARY NTH	64	4,027	63	23.8	3.74	3.42	1.70	274
TIPPERARY STH	100	7,563	76	22.5	3.83	3.41	1.63	253
WATERFORD	66	5,946	90	22.6	3.87	3.4	1.64	290
WESTMEATH	22	1,714	78	25.8	3.9	3.34	1.87	332
WEXFORD	73	5,186	71	22.3	3.76	3.47	1.61	308
WICKLOW E	22	1,768	80	23	3.34	3.37	1.54	241
	17	1,505	Average Herd Size	22.8	3.82	3.37	Average F + P kg	368
<b>National</b>	<b>1,641</b>	<b>112,514</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>3.37</b>	<b>1.72</b>	<b>297</b>

**National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 24/06/08 to 04/07/08.**

Provincial	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
<b>Munster</b>	1109	75,372	68	23.7	3.77	3.39	1.69	269
<b>Leinster</b>	379	28,096	74	23.6	3.75	3.38	1.68	306
<b>Connacht</b>	52	3,268	63	26.3	3.50	3.34	1.80	341
<b>Ulster</b>	101	5,778	57	26.0	3.73	3.34	1.84	259

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