

## 1 Important Dates

✚ **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January.** EBI discussion group awards. Corrin Mart, Rathcormac.

## 2 Change in our phone numbers

The ICBF phone numbers have changed. Our new numbers have “88” added to them after the area code (023). Please amend your files as soon as possible. The old numbers will continue to work for until May of 2009.

Old Number (example)	New Number (example)
Phone: 023 20222	023 <b>88</b> 20222
Fax: 023 20229	023 <b>88</b> 20229

## 3 ICBF Audit & Finance Sub Committee meeting - 4<sup>th</sup> December 2008

The Committee met on Thursday to consider the forecast for 2008 and budget for 2009. After discussion in which the following key points were discussed it was agreed to recommend adoption by the ICBF Board.

- ✚ The Strategies Adopted in 2006 to ensure the financial viability of ICBF have been effective. That is, full cost recovery of services and the introduction of the HerdPlus<sup>®</sup> service.
- ✚ The results in 2008 have benefitted from the ICBF team being able to extend ICBF services to support of the Suckler Cow Welfare scheme and Sheep Ireland.
- ✚ ICBF has been able to spread its overheads over a greater range of activities.
- ✚ 2008 budgets for established services have been met.

## 4 Board Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> December 2008

At the Board meeting on Thursday the decisions made included:

- ✚ To endorse the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee recommendation to approve the financial forecast for 2008 and the budget for 2009.
- ✚ To compliment the ICBF team on its achievements in 2008.
- ✚ To endorse the agreement with IHFA to increase the uptake of HerdPlus<sup>®</sup> services by dairy farmers.
- ✚ To endorse a modification to the draft Strategic Plan for 2009 to *lead a co-ordinated promotion campaign that results in farmers adopting best breeding practise for improving farm profitability.*
- ✚ To make an application to host and future ICAR & Interbull biennial conference.

## 5 Sheep Ireland

### Interim Sheep Board Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> December 2008

The Interim Sheep Board reviewed progress with the introduction of the Sheep Ireland service LambPlus. The Board expressed its appreciation of the rapid progress that is being made. A copy of the progress report can be found in the publications section of [www.sheep.ie](http://www.sheep.ie).

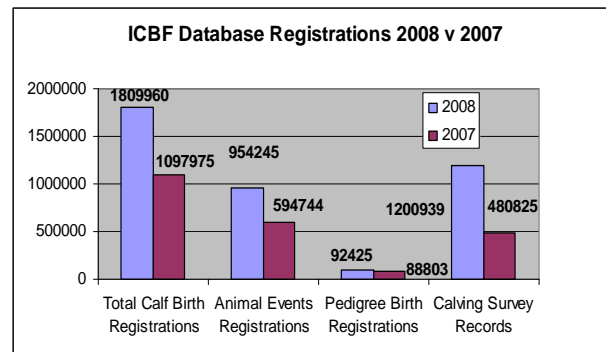
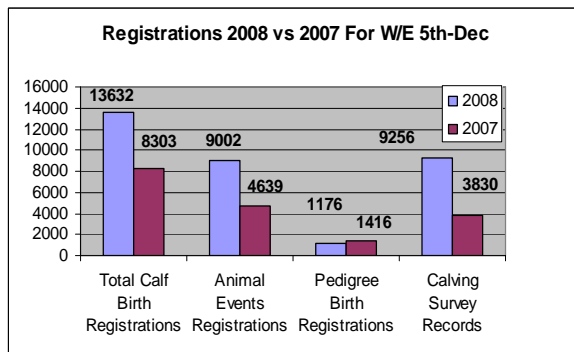
## Progress Report

- ✚ Further meetings have been happening with breed societies to present LambPlus and answer any questions.
- ✚ We are looking at a number of options for DNA parentage service providers, which is exciting. The technology and capability around is very good
- ✚ EID options in tags are still being explored for animals in the breeding schemes.
- ✚ Tagging and DNA sampling of MALP rams is due to start later next week.
- ✚ Sign up for the LambPlus service has been consistent.
- ✚ Extension continues with workshops planned for next week for those people that have signed up to LambPlus and anyone interested:

The venues and times are:

**Mon Dec 08<sup>th</sup>, AbbeyLeix Manor Hotel 1.30pm – 4.30pm**  
**Tue Dec 09<sup>th</sup>, Sligo Park Hotel, 1.30pm – 4.30pm**  
**Wed Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, The Clarion Hotel, Limerick 1.30pm – 4.30pm**

## 6 Database



- ✚ 518,077 inseminations have been received so far in 2008, compared with 367,129 in 2007 for the same period.
- ✚ The work on revamping the AI software for next season is continuing. Testing of the finalised solution continued this week and good feedback has been received from the organisations. Further users will receive the application next week.
- ✚ There continues to be a lot of activity in the Suckler Scheme. The number of calves with a meal feeding introduction has increased to 670,000, with just over 498,000 of these having been weaned.
- ✚ The revamp of the Milk Recording system continues. Work on the data inputting screens has begun this week.
- ✚ This week, work has continued on migrating the Sheep Performance system to the ICBF/Sheep Ireland database, and on building the systems to handle the flock reconciliation activities which will be undertaken in the coming weeks.
- ✚ Work is continuing on the Genomic Selection applications, working in conjunction with Donagh Berry at Moorepark.

## 7 EBI €100 Discussion Group Competition

Over the past few weeks, ICBF staff have been involved in preparing material for this years EBI€100 discussion group competition, sponsored by ACC bank. This year over 60 groups (some 800 farmers in total) entered the competition, with all groups initially evaluated on the basis of a breeding score card (see this weeks Irish Farmers Journal for more details).

The scorecards were compiled based on data available through the ICBF HerdPlus<sup>®</sup> discussion group application. Using the score cards, the competition judges (Jack Kennedy, George Ramsbottom and Andrew Cromie) were able to short-list 32 groups for interview. These interviews took place over 5 days and involved breeding and financial case study exercises (1 hour), followed by an interview with the judges (a further 1 hour), where all aspects of the groups breeding program (e.g., breeding objectives, bull selection and AI replacement strategy) were discussed. Again the ICBF HerdPlus discussion reports were instrumental in providing the judges with all the information required to ensure an excellent discussion with each of the groups involved. Feedback from participating groups and farmers has been very positive as evidenced by the email sent into ICBF from one of the farmers involved.

*“Andrew, George and Jack,  
I would just like to acknowledge your efforts in making the EBI competition a huge success. Speaking as a member of a participating group the lads were extremely happy with how the judging was conducted. Our group contains a number of shy and introverted people but excellent farmers none the less. As a result we had to put in a big effort to convince some of the lads of the value that would accrue from their participation in the competition. I was very impressed with the sensitive and gentle way the interview was conducted with no one being made feel awkward or inadequate and the lads were extremely happy afterwards. Your messages were very helpful and will be taken on board when given in such a manner. We are already looking forward to January 6<sup>th</sup> and whether we finish first or last it is a great way to finish off our discussion group year. I am a believer in saying thanks if and when it is due and I'm sure you will accept this email in the nature that it is intended. Thanks again”.*

As noted in the email, the competition culminates in the announcement of winners on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January, in Cork Marts, Rathcormac starting at 6 PM. All discussion groups that entered the competition will be invited to this event.

## 8 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 05/12/08						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 05/12/08	No. EDIY Herds YTD 05/12/08	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 05/12/08	No. EDIY Cows YTD 05/12/08	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,246	938	42%	186,427	74,826	40%
Dairygold	1,698	644	38%	126,021	49,546	39%
Kerry	1,160	248	21%	79,586	16,317	21%
SWS	915	135	15%	63,096	9,986	16%
Tipperary	171	72	42%	13,076	5,781	44%
Arrabawn	166	138	83%	12,976	10,967	85%
Connacht	159	69	43%	10,484	4,435	42%
Donegal	49	49	100%	4,817	4,817	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,564</b>	<b>2,293</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>496,483</b>	<b>176,675</b>	<b>36%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 05/12/07	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 05/12/08	2008 vs 2007 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	171,291	186,427	8.1%
Dairygold	112,767	126,021	10.5%
Kerry	72,331	79,586	9.1%
SWS	61,481	63,096	2.6%
Tipperary	12,341	13,076	5.6%
Arrabawn	12,079	12,976	6.9%
Connacht	10,290	10,484	1.9%
Donegal	3,920	4,817	18.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>456,500</b>	<b>496,483</b>	<b>8.1%</b>

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 25/11/08 to 05/12/08								
	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	6	516	86	21.6	4.22	3.54	1.68	405
CAVAN	40	1,784	45	16.7	4.19	3.58	1.30	288
CLARE	9	425	47	26.4	3.99	3.48	1.97	299
CORK STH	177	8,545	48	17.9	4.37	3.67	1.44	341
CORK NTH	120	7,468	62	15.4	4.36	3.64	1.23	380
DONEGAL	3	168	56	14.1	4.60	3.36	1.12	250
DUBLIN	3	118	39	17.6	4.03	3.22	1.28	531
GALWAY	16	724	45	16.4	4.16	3.42	1.24	362
KERRY	60	3,021	50	16.1	4.18	3.58	1.25	439
KILDARE	24	1,690	70	20.5	4.30	3.55	1.61	367
KILKENNY	19	1,369	72	17.0	4.40	3.69	1.38	347
LAOIS	18	931	52	16.1	4.30	3.54	1.26	332
LEITRIM	6	260	43	13.9	3.87	3.25	0.99	274
LIMERICK	48	2,997	62	16.6	4.00	3.50	1.25	330
LONGFORD	5	187	37	11.8	4.40	3.56	0.94	324
LOUTH	19	1,445	76	19.4	3.78	3.47	1.41	380
MAYO	7	269	38	14.6	3.80	3.59	1.08	237
MEATH	58	4,697	81	19.5	4.25	3.57	1.52	322
MONAGHAN	36	1,413	39	18.8	4.00	3.38	1.39	347
OFFALY	8	392	49	17.4	4.20	3.45	1.33	451
SLIGO	5	218	44	14.4	3.70	3.42	1.03	377
TIPPERARY NTH	16	1,017	64	14.2	4.43	3.73	1.16	361
TIPPERARY STH	18	1,000	56	16.9	4.37	3.57	1.34	297
WATERFORD	21	1,817	87	14.9	4.72	3.83	1.27	371
WESTMEATH	8	465	58	16.9	4.02	3.44	1.26	406
WEXFORD	37	2,313	63	16.8	4.44	3.61	1.35	296
WICKLOW E	19	1,211	64	17.5	4.00	3.51	1.31	293
WICKLOW W	6	425	71	23.9	4.60	3.53	1.94	311
	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>National</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>47,237</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>1.33</b>	<b>345</b>

## 9 Genetic Evaluations



### International Beef Evaluation

The Limousine and Charolais pedigree & performance files have been sent to InterBeef in order to participate in the fall 2008 international beef genetic evaluation. ICBF has received and tested the software develop for Interbeef international file management; this software Pedistack allow a country to check and build its international pedigree file (502 file). The tests were successfully conducted at M. Lynch & T. Pabiou.

### Beef

Work has begun of calculating the genetic parameters for docility using the Suckler Cow Welfare Scheme data. On Tuesday 2nd December, R. Evan gave a talk at the RDS champion beef & dairy cattle; the main points of the talk were Genomic selection, docility, and carcass cut yields and a copy of the presentation is in the publications section of [www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com).

## 10 GENEIRELAND®

-  GENEIRELAND section of the ICBF website has been updated, reflecting the changes in place for 2009.
-  138 herds now partaking in the Autumn programme, taking 5,205 straws.



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