



UPDATE – for period 30th June - 6th July 2007

1 Important Dates

- # **Thursday 12th July, ICBF Board Meeting, Comfort Inn Portlaoise.**
- # **Tuesday 17th July.** Highfield House, Bandon. Database training for Herdbook office staff.
- # **August 24th to 30th.** Interbull and EAAP Annual Meetings, UCD, Dublin.
- # **August 29th.** EAAP Field Trip – Cattle Breeding in Ireland. UCD and a beef and a dairy farm.
- # **September 25th to 27th.** Ploughing Championships, Tullamore.

2 Beef Breeding Industry Meeting – Thursday 5th

Beef Breeding Service

Plans to re-open Tully, to launch an upgraded Linear Scoring & Weight Recording service and to extend HerdPlus[®] were presented and discussed. The session ended with a workshop examining the best ways of increasing farmer use of the services. A lot of good ideas were generated for use in the future.

The outlook for re-opening of Tully is very positive. The Breed Associations working with Dr Corridan, as a Special Liaison, are enthusiastic about getting Tully going again. They have agreed many of the key issues and want to see Tully operating as soon as possible and starting later in 2007. We have taken expert advice on the disease issues and will be taking steps to minimise the risk of another outbreak of IBR.

The industry is strongly supporting the upgraded Linear Scoring & Weight Recording service. It will be more efficient, more professional and will provide breeders with better information for breeding and management decision.

HerdPlus will be extended to beef breeding information. This service will operate along similar lines to that for dairy. A meeting with potential clients will be held shortly to refine the reports that are a key part of the service. Our objective is to provide a information that beef herds find extremely valuable. It is recognised that a lot of effort will be needed to ensure potential client can see the benefits of the service.

Genetic Evaluations

The following is a summary of key points from each of the presentations:

1. Peter Amer discussed various aspects of the index development in particular:
 - The **dairy beef value** of a beef bull. Often a dairy farmer buying a beef stock bull has different requirements than a suckler farmer buying a beef bull, especially with regards to calving traits. Also, a dairy farmer will be selling calves at a young age rather than finishing them so would like to get an indication of the quality of the young calf. The proposal is to include a dairy beef value in the Euro-Star format that accounts for calving traits, calf premium and replacement traits. Mart data on 3-6 week old calves will be required for development of the calf premium trait.
 - Review of **assumptions** of the index. A “watch and listen” approach was adopted to the current assumptions in light of recent changes in feed costs, weanling export market, and beef price.



- **Docility.** An economic value for docility was derived and presented. There is an option to include this in the beef index. Feedback on the desirability of including this in the index and in the assumptions/economics was requested from the industry.
2. An update on the linear type evaluations for beef cattle was presented. The main points of note are:
 - Further testing of models to enhance the accuracy of the breeding values.
 - Proofs to be released for feedback.
 - Official release on September 1st.
 - Run routinely until Feb 08, thereafter 4 times per year.
 3. An update on calving survey evaluations presented. The main points of note are:
 - Moving to new animal model
 - More information to be included
 - Work on potential refinements to the calving performance traits
 4. An update on the next evaluation in terms of data was presented:
 - New mart data
 - New slaughter data
 - Extra historical Tully data
 - Better accounting for the animal type at slaughter (e.g bulls, young bulls, steers)
 5. An update on the International evaluations for beef was presented:
 - Presentation of the work done on conversion equations between France and Ireland for Charolais & Limousine for the calving & beef traits. A spreadsheet application has been developed for converting French figures to Irish equivalents and this will be made available on the website shortly
 - AGBU in Australia is researching international evaluations for Herefords.
 - For Simmental, the work commenced earlier this year between the UK and Ireland will continue.
 - The next step will concern the other beef breed (Blonde d'Aquitaine, Salers, Aubrac, Parthenaise & Maine Anjou) and workshops will be held to start the process.
 6. Roel Veerkamp presented work on new software that will be used to estimate breeding values in the near future. Main points were
 - The new software will offer considerable operational advantages to ICBF in terms of the time taken to run evaluations, and the consolidation of several software packages that are currently required for different traits. For example calving traits can be evaluated in 2 ½ hours compared to the current time of 4 to 5 days. The beef run can be reduced from 2 days to ½ day. The new software can handle both direct and maternal effects.
 - The new software can potentially handle many more traits offering a chance to use better models for predicting breeding values.
 - Correlations for the various traits with the new software are very good for most traits, with further investigations necessary for some other traits.

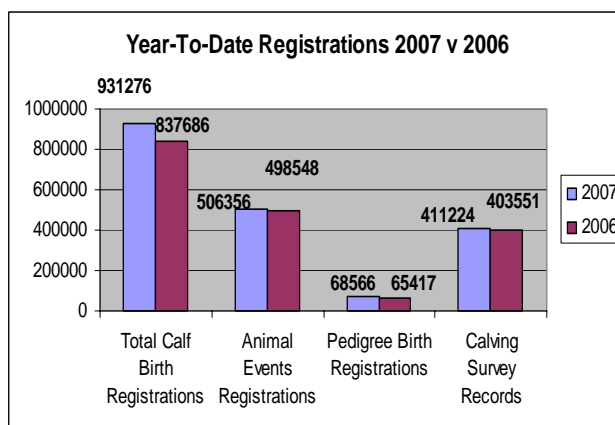
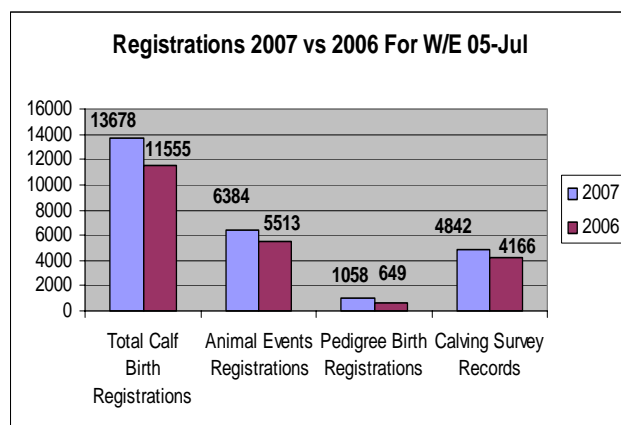


- Implementation will commence shortly and will be introduced on a phased basis.
7. John Hickey presented part of his PhD work on assessing the current data structure of the ICBF data in. Main points were
- Tool has been developed to assess the data structure of ICBF data.
 - It can assess the benefit of correlated information to a dataset e.g. will ultrasound scanning add much to the reliability of breeding values for carcass traits given the traits that are already recorded?
 - The tool can be used to study various research questions pertinent to ICBF and the Irish beef industry.

3 Audit & Finance Sub-Committee

The Committee met on Thursday 5th July after the Beef Breeding Industry meeting. It considered a proposal for the financing of the beef breeding services (Tully, Linear Scoring & Weight Recording, & HerdPlus) and has recommended that the Board accept the proposals. This is another important step in the process for ensuring the re-opening of Tully and improving the services provided to beef farmers by ICBF and its members.

4 Database Update



- ✚ 296,449 inseminations have been received from the AI Handhelds so far in 2007, compared with 121,353 in 2006 for the same period.
- ✚ Handhelds have been prepared for the technicians in the PG North East area, who will begin using them next week.
- ✚ Positive feedback has been received on the 'Herd-Book Online' – some further requests for search functionality are being investigated.
- ✚ Further modules are about to be released for the Herdbook application.
- ✚ The work on redesigning the loading processes of files received from the Department of Agriculture is continuing. This is with a view to (a) speeding the processes up and (b) having better tracking of errors.
- ✚ Work on Gene Ireland reports to track insemination recording process is almost complete.



5 Tully

- ✚ An update on the future of Tully was presented at the beef breeding consultation meeting yesterday.
- ✚ Maintenance of safety barriers and gates is continuing.
- ✚ Power washing and disinfection of sheds is underway.

6 Dairy Cow Fertility Conference

Attached is more information about a fertility conference being held in Liverpool. This conference is being held in conjunction with the EAAP (European Assn of Animal Production) at UCD. Anybody interested in attending should complete the attached and forward it to the organisers.

This will be a great opportunity to be brought up to date with the latest developments in the genetic and non-genetic influences on dairy cow fertility.

7 Milk Recording Processing this week

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2005 Cows Recorded 01/01/05 - 06/07/05	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 06/07/06	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 06/07/07	2007 vs 2006 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	142,357	147,949	157,992	6.4%
Dairygold	92,615	99,372	106,180	6.4%
Kerry	65,029	67,600	69,185	2.3%
SWS	52,806	56,590	58,448	3.2%
Tipperary	9,049	11,480	11,888	3.4%
Arrabawn	6,792	10,535	11,448	8.0%
Connacht	7,012	8,122	9,080	10.6%
Donegal	2,756	4,791	3,389	-41.4%
Total	378,416	406,439	427,610	5.0%

Milk Recording Organisation	2007 Herds Recorded Week 29/06/07 - 06/07/07
Progressive	216
Kerry	193
Dairygold	166
SWS	149
Arrabawn	22
Connacht	21
Tipperary	16
Donegal	10
Total	793

Application form Fertility in Dairy Cows Bridging the gaps

Please complete both sides of this form and return to
BSAS, PO Box 3, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 ORZ

Name.....Block

Address.....Capitals

.....Please

Tel No:.....

Fax No:.....

Email:.....

Organisation (for badge).....

Dairy Farmer Holding No.....

Special requirements (eg dietary)

Credit card details can also be faxed 0131 535 3120, or
telephoned to 0131 445 4508.

Number.....

Start date.....Expiry date.....

3 digit number on back of card.....

Please print name of
cardholder.....

To pay by bank/international bank transfer please
quote :

Account No 00823100

Sort code 801742

IBAN GB63 BOFS 80174200 8231 00

SWIFT BOFSGB21153

Bank of Scotland, 95 Clerk Street, Loanhead,
EH20 9RE, UK



*BSAS, PO Box 3, Penicuik,
Midlothian EH26 ORZ , UK
fax +44(0)131 535 3120
tel: + 44 (0)131 445 4508
Email: bsas@sac.ac.uk
Website: bsas@sac.ac.uk*



For further information email:
Dr Melissa Royal (mdroyal@liverpool.ac.uk)
or BSAS@sac.ac.uk

An International Meeting Fertility in Dairy Cattle

Bridging the gaps

August 30th and 31st 2007
Liverpool Hope University,
Hope Park Campus,
Lecture Theatre Complex

The now well documented decline in dairy cow fertility has prompted new research into reproduction in addition to development of new technology and its applications in the field. The meeting will cover a broad range of subjects and has three objectives: To discuss some of the controversial issues in cattle breeding and reproduction, to introduce new ideas and to promote fruitful exchange of knowledge that can be applied to the dairy industry at the farm level.

The meeting will include sessions dealing with the following topics:

- Factors predisposing reproductive disorders
- Impact of new on farm technologies
- Better indicators of reproductive ability



Topics will include presentations and discussions covering:

Thursday 30th August 2007

09:00 - 18:00 hours

- Reproductive challenges of the 21st Century
- Dry cow nutrition: Can maternal nutrition influence the future fertility of the offspring?
- Why is it getting more difficult to successfully AI cows?
- Effects of reproductive hormones on embryo quality and survival
- What are the effects of uterine infection on the whole cow?
- Various other short presentations

19:30 Dinner followed by Ceilidh
"Two Left Feet"

Friday 31st August 2007

08:45 - 17:10 hours

- How can on-farm hormone profiles help you?
- Can dietary fatty acid supplementation aid fertility?
- Crossbreeding
- Heat Detection: emerging technologies
- Sperm science - whats new?
- The body condition score story
- Underlying physiology of fertility
- Fact and fiction of kiwi cow fertility
- Can we predict the future fertility of our pre-pubertal heifer calves?
- Can we identify genes for fertility?
- Are we making the most of current fertility measurements: Experience from national recording schemes

(Detailed programme available at www.bsas.org.uk)



VENUE

Liverpool Hope University, Hope Park Campus, Lecture Theatre Complex. If consulting an internet route planner to find Hope Park, the relevant postcode is L16 9JD

ACCOMODATION

Excellent value and quality accommodation is available. This can be booked on the application form attached.

The audience and speakers will be an excellent mix of breeders, drug and dairy industry representatives, dairy farmers, scientists, veterinarians, consultants and students (eg vets/agrics/animal science) giving the opportunity for wide ranging discussions, exchange of ideas and knowledge and networking.



DAIRY FARMER APPLICATION FORM

Name of applicant.....

CONFERENCE FEE full £175.00

(one day rate includes £125.00
lunch) Thurs Friday

sub total.....

RESIDENT DELEGATE Includes B&B 30 August, lunch both days, dinner and Ceilidh £116.00

Other night/s please state which
@ £32.00 per night B&B

sub total.....

NON RESIDENT DELEGATE

Supplement to the full conference fee £60.00

Evening Ceilidh (including Dinner) £30.00

sub total.....

PROCEEDINGS

Discounted rate £40.00

sub total.....

Method of Payment **TOTAL**.....

- Mastercard
- Visa
- Debit Card
- Switch
- Bank Transfer (*reference FDC followed by delegate's last name*)
- Cheque Please pay by Euro or sterling cheque drawn on a British bank, made payable to BSAS.

Please also complete details overleaf and send to BSAS, PO Box 3, Penicuik, Midlothian EH26 0RZ, UK

continued/....