

1. Important Dates

- ✚ **AHI Conference on BVD** –Thursday 12th November 8:30 to 16:15 – Cork Marts, Corrin, Fermoy.
- ✚ **ICBF Audit & Finance Sub Committee** – Friday 27th November 10:30 to 14:00 – Horse & Jockey.
- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 3rd December
- ✚ **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 3rd December.
- ✚ **Dairy Breeding Consultation Meeting** – Wednesday 9th December, 10:30 to 15:00 – Moorepark.
- ✚ **GENEIRLAND® & HerdPlus® Dairy Conference** – Thursday 10th December, Cork Marts, Corrin, Fermoy.

2. Animal Health Ireland (AHI) Conference on Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD)

AHI is devoted to increasing the profitability of Irish herds by helping farmers to establish and maintain healthy herds. Under the Chairmanship of Mike Magan, AHI is still forming and sorting out its legal and funding structure. However, it has already made a lot of progress and Irish farmers will see outputs next week.

AHI's first major conference takes place next Thursday (12th November from 8:30 to 16:15) at Cork Marts Corrin, Fermoy. By providing leadership and co-ordination, AHI has been able to harness the knowledge and skills of Irish expertise on BVD. The outcome of this work is a clear and concise set of guidelines that farmers and their veterinarians can follow to create herds free of BVD.

The Conference will be opened by the Minister of Agriculture at 9:30 and includes case studies and an information resource that will be made available to farmers and veterinarians nationally.

If you would like to attend please **txt AHI to 51101**.

ICBF is fully supporting this initiative because:

- AHI and ICBF are both focused on improving the profitability of cattle farming in Ireland. We are focused on breeding and AHI is focused on health.
- Progress in cattle breeding is being hampered by a range of animal health issues. We want to see these solved so that cattle breeding can contribute more to the profitability of cattle farming.
- The ICBF database is being used to provide the information infrastructure for AHI. We see this as being a particularly efficient and effective tool for helping achieve healthy herds.

3. Dairy Breeding Consultation Meeting

The consultation meeting on Thursday this week focused mainly on the results of the research prioritised at the February and July meetings. A copy of all presentations is in the publications section of our website (www.icbf.com).

Topics covered in the meeting and key outcomes included:

- ✚ **Female Fertility.** Research has demonstrated that the fertility evaluations can be significantly improved by: making use of insemination records, revised editing of data to include, new genetic parameters, inclusion of additional lactations and the addition of calving to first service as a new trait. These findings will now be incorporated in genetic evaluation test runs.
- ✚ **Male Fertility.** Research has identified methods for providing more accurate estimates of the impact of bulls and technicians on conception rates. The models tested accounted for the influence of a range of factors including; bull, year, technician, herd-year, genetics and repeatability. There is considerable variation between bulls and technicians. The consensus was that the implementation of an improved

reporting system based on that developed in this research would be of substantial benefit to the cattle industry. It was also agreed that priority should be given to ensuring the recording of data on semen batch for both technician and DIY inseminations.

- ✚ **Health Traits.** Lameness and clinical mastitis records that have been collected over the last few years were used in a research study. The results of the study demonstrated clear benefits from an improved genetic evaluation system for animal health. It was agreed that priority should be given to increasing the recording of health traits. Further development should be a priority for 2010.
- ✚ **Calving Evaluations.** Research based on the very large amount of calving data collected since the current system was established has demonstrated a need to consider first and later calvings as different traits. A test-run using the research results will now be undertaken with a view to implementation early in 2010.
- ✚ **New Location Data.** The new location data that became available in July 2009 for animals that moved from recorded to non-recorded herds will be incorporated in dairy genetic evaluation test runs. The impact is expected to be relatively small for all traits.
- ✚ **Beef Evaluations.** Calf price data from Marts provides useful information on dairy sires. A test-run of evaluations using this data is planned and results should be available later in 2009.

The use of cow live weight data from Marts is also being considered. Results are expected in the new-year.

- ✚ **Genomics.** The availability of genomic evaluations had a big impact on AI in the spring of 2009. The current operations focus is on streamlining the systems for providing genomic evaluations. The focus of current research is on expanding the size of the training population.
- ✚ **EBI Economic Values.** The Moorepark economic model is being extended to incorporate the impact of live weight changes. Results will be presented at the next meeting.
- ✚ **Cross Breeding.** An economic analysis of Teagasc cross breeding research shows that for a 40 ha farm, using the Moorepark economic model, the benefit of hybrid vigor (in a herd of first crosses between Jersey and Holstein Friesian) is some €13,000 per year. The hybrid vigor benefit is split approximately equally between improved milk composition and improved fertility.

ICBF is giving priority to improving its evaluation systems and sire advice to fully incorporate the findings of this research.

- ✚ **Gene Ireland.** Gene Ireland is being enhanced through the streamlining of the procurement, genomics, and progeny testing components. These services are being moved towards cost recovery.

The most significant development for Gene Ireland is a research initiative to develop a service for improving the supply of high EBI bulls while maintaining genetic diversity. Teagasc research has indicated that diversity can be maintained and high rates of genetic gain achieved. The key is in ensuring the owners of the nations elite cows collectively make the mating decisions that are most beneficial for the industry in the longer term.

- ✚ **Plans.** A further consultation meeting will be held on Wednesday 9th December. Test run results will be considered at this meeting and changes for implementation in January 2010 finalised.

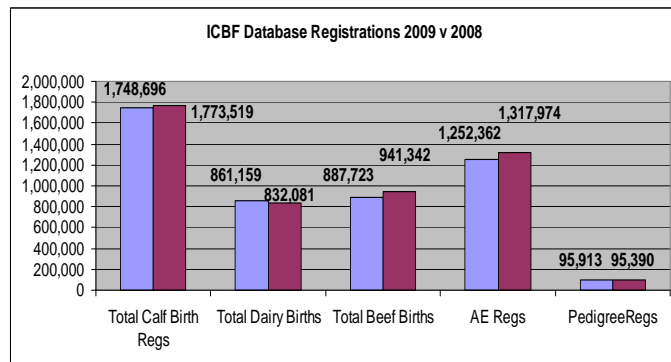
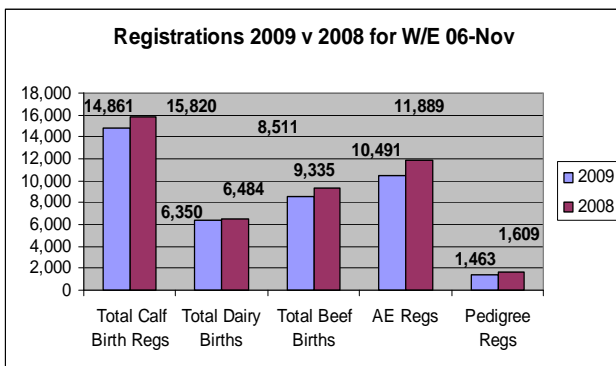
4. IFA – Conference

On Tuesday this week I participated in the IFA organised conference “*Harnessing Farming, Food & the Green Economy – A Smart Route to Recovery*”. The details of the event have been extensively reported in the media. For me there were a few very important messages including the following:

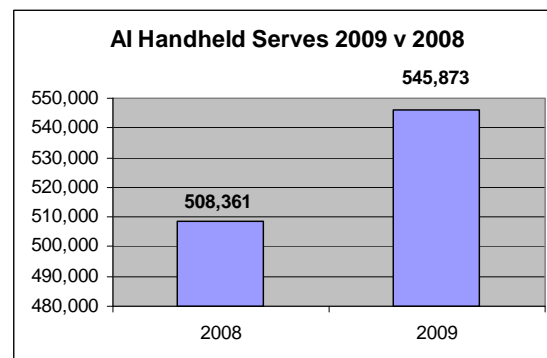
- ✚ Irish agriculture has potential to grow by some 50% over the next ten years and to make an important contribution to feeding the rapidly increasing world population – a new “Germany” is being added to the world population every year. This potential can only be realised if Ireland is “competitive”.

- To be competitive Irish agriculture must innovate rapidly. Innovation must be across all sectors – not only production, processing and marketing but also in regulations, energy supply and supporting services.
- Innovation is the responsibility of all organisations. Innovation cannot and must not be left to somebody else, especially not to the Government. While Government has a very important role to play the real drive for innovation must come from each of our organisation’s response to the needs of our customers.
- There are a number of major structural and regulatory impediments to the innovation needed for a more competitive Irish agriculture. These need to be identified and removed as part of a united effort to ensure that Irish agriculture grows and continues to be a major contributor to the Irish economy.
- The future of Irish rural communities depends to a large extent on a profitable Irish agriculture. However, there are a wide range of other opportunities for rural employment and wealth creation. These need to be developed in parallel with agriculture.

5. Database



- All suckler scheme herds with a calving in 2009 have now received their first pre-weaning form. The number of 2009 born calves with meal introduced is 438,000, with the number of animals weaned at 184,000.
- All four milk recording organisations are now live on the new Milk Recording system. We are continuing to update the software based on feedback from the organisations.
- Final updates to the Taurus application around pedigree cert generation have been completed this week and will be released to the herd-books next week.
- Further work has been completed on the discussion group reports.
- The graph shows Inseminations recoded on AI Handhelds in 2009 compared with 2008. There are more technicians using the handhelds in 2009 than there were in 2008, so even though the number of inseminations recorded is up, overall inseminations for the season will be down.



6. Tully

- ✚ On-farm inspections of bulls entered for the up-coming Tully intake were completed this week, with a total of 310 bulls inspected, around the country. 204 bulls passed inspection, which gave a pass rate of 65.5%. This is significantly higher than the pass rate of 55% for the previous intake.
- ✚ Breeders whose animals passed inspection can now carry out on-farm health testing. All health testing information, which included the list of animals required for blood sampling was posted this week, to both the bull owner and their Veterinary surgeon. A small number of bloods have already been received and these samples are being sent to Backweston for analysis. Blood samples are being tested for IBR, BVD, Johnes' and EBL.
- ✚ Preparation of facilities at Tully is near completion with all sheds and out door facilities power washed. Also, selected areas such as the weighing shed have been disinfected.
- ✚ Work has started this week on the off-farm isolation unit for Tully. The facilities consist of three large open sheds, with two of these sheds being divided into sections to allow bulls to be penned according to weight and size. This will help bulls to be less stressed in the first few days of entering their new environment.

7. GENIreland®

Dairy

- ✚ There are 113 herds now signed up to the Autumn 2009 program, taking a total of 4,253 straws.

Beef

- ✚ Sign ups are going well with 182 herds taking part so far.
- ✚ A new Simmental bull (HSY) with a SBV of €182 (top 1%) should be available next week. See picture on right.
- ✚ Total straws sent out per bull currently on the panel are in the table below.



BREED	CH	CH	LM	SI	BB	AA	BA	PT	SA	SH	HE
CODE	VHC	CWB	FL29	RWV	SEU	RWB	WOA	KCP	BHU	CZB	AGI
STRAWS	200	490	245	615	420	360	590	475	165	320	105

8. Genetic Evaluations

Beef

A new evaluation for beef linears has been completed and will form the basis of the new pedigree bull sales catalogue. A new docility evaluation has also been completed which will also be included in the new catalogue.

Sheep:

Mix99 has been tested and validated for breeding value estimation for sheep. A final step in the coming days will be to consolidate the current model adapted for Mix99 (test on herd-year-season).

9. HerdPlus®

The third quarter Dairy Herd Performance report was posted to 3,450 Glanbia milk suppliers. This reports combines the farmers milk collection data with ICBF data e.g. cow numbers. By combining the data from these two databases, we are able to generate reports which add real value to the farmer, by highlighting his cows' performance and also benchmarking the herds performance against the average supplier and top 10% of Glanbia suppliers.

See attached sample

10. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 27/10/09 to 06/11/09.

	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	10	542	54	17.9	4.29	3.77	1.44	277
CAVAN	51	2,451	48	17.0	4.11	3.59	1.31	414
CLARE	37	1,907	52	14.6	4.07	3.61	1.12	376
CORK STH	196	11,742	60	14.9	4.34	3.82	1.22	333
CORK NTH	229	15,235	67	16.0	4.52	3.86	1.34	358
DONEGAL	2	286	143	12.3	4.62	3.71	1.02	311
DUBLIN	2	95	48	27.8	3.80	3.39	2.00	422
GALWAY	16	905	57	17.7	4.22	3.56	1.38	311
KERRY	118	7,260	62	15.2	4.11	3.67	1.18	398
KILDARE	18	1,102	61	18.5	3.93	3.54	1.38	276
KILKENNY	37	2,245	61	12.7	4.35	3.88	1.05	416
LAOIS	55	3,930	71	12.9	4.52	3.76	1.07	396
LEITRIM	6	250	42	18.9	3.99	3.51	1.42	371
LIMERICK	90	5,744	64	14.9	4.18	3.76	1.18	391
LONGFORD	8	427	53	13.5	4.42	3.74	1.10	386
LOUTH	19	1,425	75	23.0	3.94	3.47	1.70	370
MAYO	30	1,757	59	19.3	3.76	3.66	1.43	377
MEATH	53	3,936	74	17.9	4.01	3.50	1.34	373
MONAGHAN	39	1,745	45	15.2	4.04	3.44	1.14	394
OFFALY	16	935	58	14.6	4.47	3.84	1.21	360
ROSCOMMON	4	317	79	14.2	3.97	3.52	1.06	438
SLIGO	11	582	53	17.9	4.07	3.76	1.40	276
TIPPERARY NTH	38	2,608	69	13.3	4.70	3.94	1.15	392
TIPPERARY STH	35	2,621	75	12.7	4.53	3.87	1.07	358
WATERFORD	42	3,221	77	13.2	4.70	3.95	1.14	311
WESTMEATH	20	1,254	63	15.7	4.11	3.43	1.18	387
WEXFORD	57	3,612	63	16.5	4.22	3.70	1.31	374
WICKLOW E	22	1,463	67	17.6	3.84	3.55	1.30	360
WICKLOW W	12	833	69	19.9	3.88	3.38	1.44	440

	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
National	1,273	80,430	64	16.4	4.20	3.66	1.29	367

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 27/10/09 to 06/11/09.

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
Munster	785	50,338	64	14.4	4.39	3.81	1.18	365
Leinster	329	21,799	66	17.6	4.14	3.61	1.36	372
Connacht	67	3,811	57	17.6	4.00	3.60	1.34	355
Ulster	92	4,482	49	14.8	4.26	3.58	1.16	373

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 06/11/09

Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 06/11/09	No. EDIY Herds YTD 06/11/09	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 06/11/09	No. EDIY Cows YTD 06/11/09	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,081	850	41%	178,953	72,511	41%
Dairygold	1,508	567	38%	117,145	46,262	39%
Kerry	891	66	7%	62,474	4,253	7%
SWS	857	114	13%	61,915	8,945	14%
Tipperary	137	56	41%	11,150	5,009	45%
Arrabawn	141	116	82%	11,891	10,131	85%
Connacht	144	53	37%	9,794	3,584	37%
Donegal	33	33	100%	3,918	3,918	100%
Total	5,792	1,855	32%	457,240	154,613	34%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 06/11/08	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 06/11/09	2009 vs 2008 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	183,550	178,953	-2.6%
Dairygold	126,335	117,145	-7.8%
Kerry	79,268	62,474	-26.9%
SWS	62,412	61,915	-0.8%
Tipperary	13,119	11,150	-17.7%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 06/11/08	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 06/11/09	2009 vs 2008 Year on Year Difference (%)
Arrabawn	12,944	11,891	-8.9%
Connacht	10,586	9,794	-8.1%
Donegal	4,793	3,918	-22.3%
Total	493,007	457,240	-7.8%

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Herd Owner: SAMPLE
Designator: IE1111111 / A111111
Supplier Number: 6000000 / Manufacturing

LoCall 1850 600 900

Table 1: Your Herds Milk Deliveries to Glanbia for 2008/2009

2009								2008						
Month	Milk (Ltrs)	Fat %	Ptn %	Total MS (kg)	SCC	Total Dairy Cows	MS/cow /day (all cows)	Milk (Ltrs)	Fat %	Ptn %	Total MS (kg)	SCC	Total Dairy Cows	MS/cow /day (all cows)
Jan	0	0%	0%	0	0	50	0.00	0	0%	0%	0	0	48	0.00
Feb	10,621	4%	3.2%	787	423	54	0.52	4,944	4.07%	3.45%	383	166	55	0.25
Mar	31,737	3.96%	3.16%	2,327	127	57	1.32	36,657	3.86%	3.36%	2,725	172	57	1.29
Apr	42,501	3.67%	3.29%	3,046	176	60	1.59	36,321	3.41%	3.26%	2,494	106	57	1.68
May	37,319	3.66%	3.25%	2,655	234	59	1.61	40,690	3.59%	3.28%	2,878	193	54	1.90
Jun	45,954	3.72%	3.26%	3,303	297	57	1.66	49,926	3.66%	3.3%	3,578	184	54	1.89
Jul	30,927	3.79%	3.29%	2,255	359	56	1.44	36,427	3.73%	3.33%	2,648	202	54	1.75
Aug	29,592	3.86%	3.39%	2,209	320	56	1.41	38,580	3.85%	3.38%	2,872	288	54	1.52
Sep	33,756	3.96%	3.59%	2,624	268	56	1.34	37,099	3.92%	3.55%	2,853	209	54	1.51
SubTotal	262,407	3.8%	3.31%	19,206	259	56	1.21	280,644	3.72%	3.35%	20,431	193	54	1.31
Oct								23,432	4.1%	3.81%	1,908	233	53	1.29
Nov								14,593	3.97%	3.55%	1,130	285	50	0.81
Dec								0	0%	0%	0	0	50	0.00
Total								318,669	3.76%	3.39%	23,469			
Avg/mth								26,556			1,956	200	53	1.16
Avg/cow								6,013			443			

FIG 1: Milk Solids per Cow per Day 2008-2009

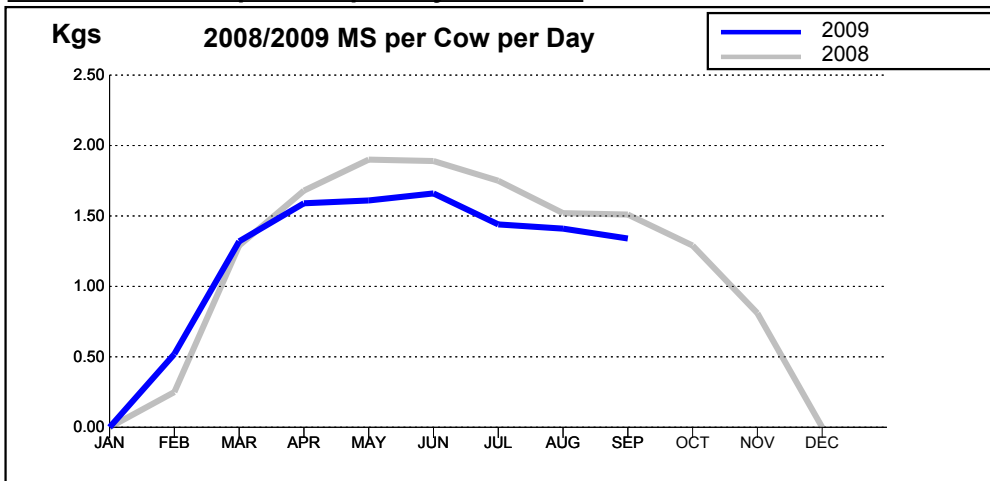
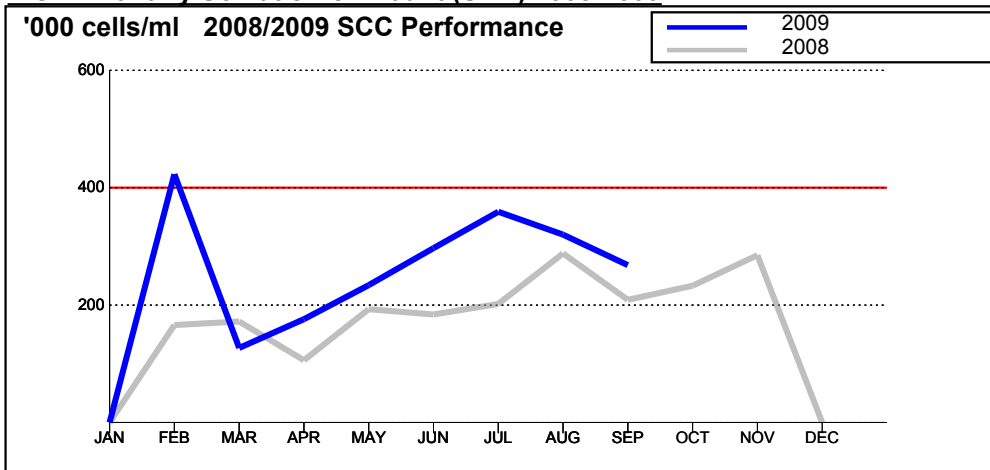


FIG 2: Monthly Somatic Cell Count (SCC) 2008-2009



Useful Management Tips

- Use milk recording or CMT to pick out high SCC cows
- Dry off based on condition score
- Thin cows (BCS <2.75) need 80-100 days dry on good silage
- Fat cows (BCS >3.25) need only 40 days dry on restricted silage
- Close the farm at an average farm cover of 550-600kg DM/ha
- Monitor cows closely after drying off to catch new mastitis cases early

Table 2: Your Glanbia/ICBF Performance Score Card

	Your Herd	Glanbia Average	Glanbia Top 10%	Your Rank out of 100	Your Star Rating ¹
Your Milk performance for 2009 (Jan - Sep) based on Glanbia data					
Fat % to end September 2009 The weighted average Fat % from Jan - Sep 2009	3.80	3.73	3.87	77%	* * * *
Protein % to end September 2009 The weighted average Protein % from Jan - Sep 2009	3.31	3.31	3.41	51%	* * *
Fat + Protein (Kg/cow) Average Fat and Protein yield per cow for your herd (Table 1)	343	269	335	93%	* * * * *
Average Milk Value (cpl) Incl. VAT Average milk value received from Jan - Sep 2009, on your farm performance.	21.8	21.7	22.7	64%	* * * *
SCC (,000 cells/ml) The weighted average Somatic Cell Count for Jan - Sep 2009	259	251	144	41%	* * *
Your Fertility & Culling based on HerdPlus Calving Report					
Calving Interval (days) Average number of days between successive calvings for cows calved during the period	367	396	365	90%	* * * * *
Days to calve 50% of herd Start 28/01/2009 - Median 17/02/2009	21	37	16	83%	* * * * *
Culling Rate Number of cows culled (Factory/Died) in the period (7) as a proportion of eligible cows (58)	12%	14%	3%	56%	* * *
%AI bred replacements %female calves born in the period from dairy AI (20) as a proportion of eligible cows (58)	34%	14%	34%	91%	* * * * *
Your EBI Statistics based on Herdplus EBI Report Sep 2009					
Herd EBI (2009) Average EBI for cows with EBI data	€84	€61	€84	90%	* * * * *
Yearly EBI Gain (2009-2010) Gain in Herd EBI based on; 0-1yr old, 1-2yr old & 22% replacement rate	€4	€2.5	€6	77%	* * * *
EBI of 2009 Inseminations Weighted Average EBI of dairy AI bulls recorded in Spring 2009	€130	€127	€164	53%	* * *
¹ * = 0 - 20% ** = 21 - 40% *** = 41 - 60% **** = 61 - 80% ***** = 81 - 100%					
Table of Terms					
Glanbia Average	The average performance of all Glanbia herds for relevant Key Performance Indicator (KPI)				
Glanbia Top 10%	The top 10% cut off point of all Glanbia herds for relevant Key Performance Indicator (KPI)				
Your Rank out of 100	1% = Bottom Herd, 50% = Average Herd, 100% = Top Herd				
Your Star Rating	Your performance for the KPI displayed in stars e.g. 1 star is bottom 20% and 5 stars = top 20%				