

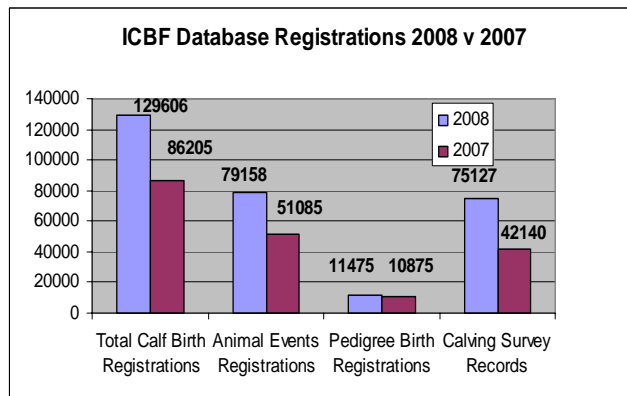
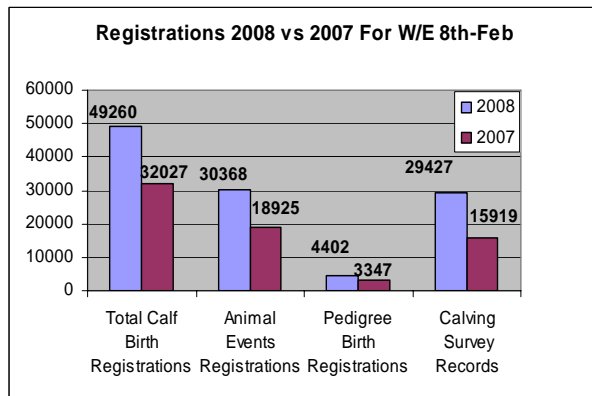


UPDATE – for period 2nd – 8th February 2008

1 Important Dates

- ✦ **Thursday 14th February.** 10:30 to 13:00 at Moorepark (conference room 3). **Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation meeting.**
- ✦ **19th to 21st February.** Cork International Airport Hotel. **International Cattle Breeders Round Table.**
- ✦ **6th March.** ICBF Board meeting. Portlaoise

2 Database Update



- ✦ 18,345 inseminations have been received so far in 2008 from the AI Handhelds, compared with 13,768 in 2007 for the same period.
- ✦ ICBF have received 35,607 suckler applicant details from DAF, which have been processed. Around 17,000 birth registrations from new Animal Events users have been received.
- ✦ Sire recording and calving survey recording on Animal Events is in excess of 90%.
- ✦ The generation of the Annual Milk Recording reports from the database has continued this week.
- ✦ Testing of the new loading solution for Animal Events Records continued this week and will continue for a number of weeks. This is a key piece of development work, given the additional volumes of data that will be received as part of the Suckler Scheme.
- ✦ Work is also continuing on the 'On-line Herdbook'.
- ✦ The new version of the AI handheld software for 2008 continued to be tested this week with number of technicians, in advance of a full roll-out in a few weeks.

3 Genetic Evaluations

Dairy

Official proofs were released to the Dairy Industry today. The following changes apply to these evaluations:

- ✦ The figures reflect the recent changes in economic values for traits in the EBI (see ICBF update from 30 Nov 07 for more information).
- ✦ The direct calving difficulty and maternal calving difficulty have 6% added to be consistent with the beef breeds. All bulls are now positive for calving difficulty and maternal calving difficulty % (see ICBF update from 30 Nov 07 for more information).
- ✦ Germany submitted fertility information to Interbull for the first time and these proofs are included for the relevant bulls.

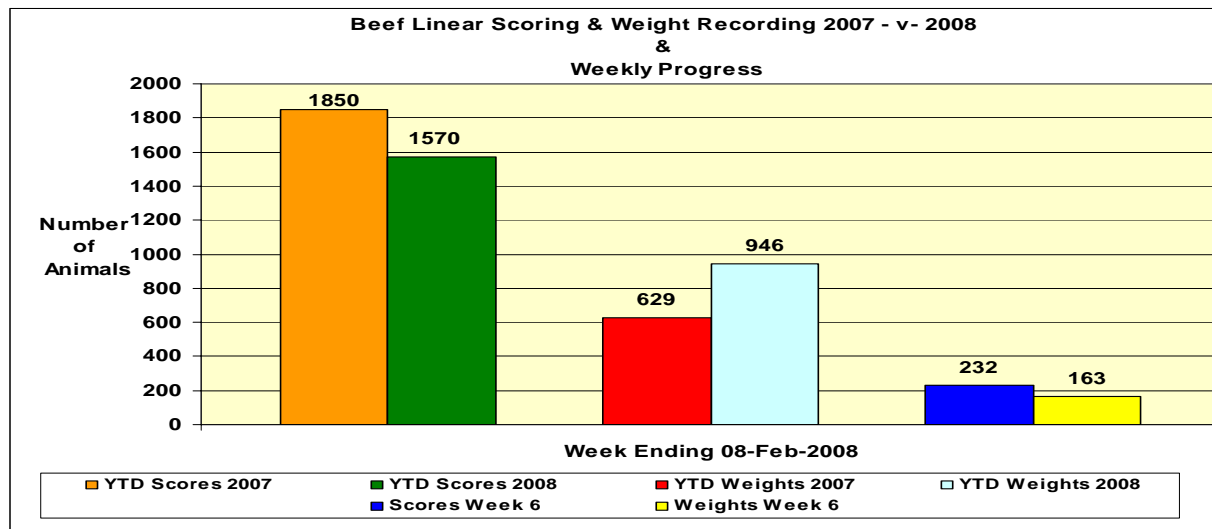


- We have included information for Jersey bulls based on conversions developed between Ireland and New Zealand for production and fertility traits. This means that New Zealand proof information is used for all Jersey bulls that have a reliability of less than 60% for either milk or fertility. This information replaces very unreliable parent average information on Jersey bulls that have no daughters in Ireland. These conversions are based on a limited number of bulls that have proofs both in Ireland and in New Zealand. We will continue to update the conversion equations at each evaluation with the latest information on NZ proofs and as the number of common bulls increase. Once we have reached the required number of bulls these evaluations will be done through Interbull.

Beef

- We had hoped to have beef proofs available for this week. However due to circumstances (outlined below) we now hope to have a provisional list available next week with official release the week after.
- The reason for this delay is that we have decided not to use the new **maternal weaning weight** evaluations and we need to reload the proofs from the last run.
- A new model and software was used to calculate maternal weaning weight this run, however we are not fully satisfied with the results. Further investigation and testing is required before we proceed with them. We hope to have updated maternal proofs for the next evaluation.
- Proofs for all other beef traits will be updated.
- The maternal weaning weight evaluation is hampered by lack of data but we are confident that the recent introduction of the suckler cow welfare scheme will help provide us with enough quality data to get more accurate maternal evaluations in the near future. We apologize for any inconvenience caused by this change to the schedule.

4 GROW – Linear Scoring & Weight Recording



5 EBI – Questions

Is the EBI simply a formula?

- Quite simply, **no**. The EBI is a philosophy for identifying the most profitable animals for Irish dairy farmers. Data from the way cows perform on Irish dairy farms is used to find those whose offspring are likely to be the most profitable. The EBI uses data for the traits affecting income and expense. The EBI system is being improved all the time. Farmers, Breed Associations, AI Companies and Scientists consult each year to consider ideas for making the EBI better.



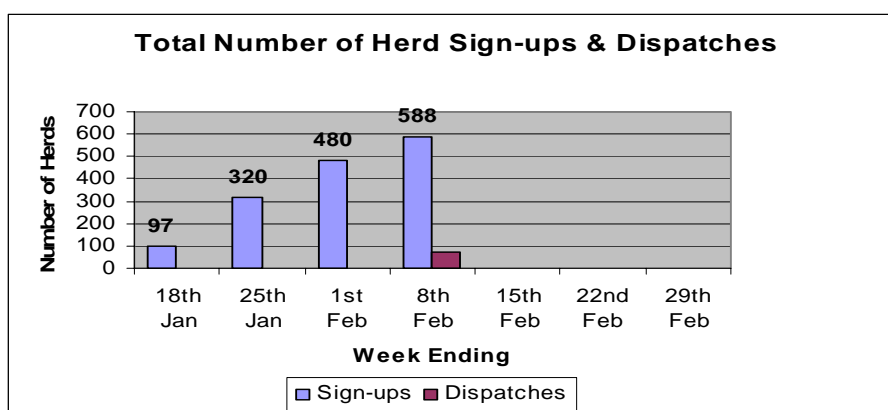
- The EBI is simply a way for using all available data on the performance of dairy cows in Ireland to identify the best bulls and cows for breeding replacements.

Will selection on the EBI, with its negative weighting on milk volume, lead to lower producing cows?

- No** – quite the opposite is happening. The active bull list does contain bulls with a –ve for milk volume. These bulls make it onto the list because their progeny are predicted to generate the greatest profits on Irish farms. How can offspring with reduced milk volume be more profitable? Very simply – the have a better combination of milk solids through their higher protein % and fat %, and fertility, than the progeny of most other bulls. The key, is that milk is mostly water. Water costs money to process and it adds nothing to the value of the resulting products. For this reason, cows that provide the same amount of protein and fat in a lower volume of milk, are valued more highly by the EBI than cows producing the same amount of protein and fat in a higher volume of milk.
- Selecting on EBI is leading to cows that are producing more protein and fat, in a reduced volume of milk, and are more fertile.

6 GENÉIRLAND®

Dairy – Spring 2008



- New proofs have been released for this springs panel of bulls. The new averages for the Holstein/Friesian programme is now: EBI €42, Milk SI €66 and Fertility SI €56. Work is still being done on the other breed packs but will be available shortly. The latest figures on all HOFR test bulls will be available on the ICBF website later today.
- With the release of the new proofs the first test group published a couple of weeks ago has changed slightly. The revised group is presented below. Dispatch of this group commenced this week with 75 herds being packed to date.

REVISED TEST GROUP 1 - currently being dispatched.						
AI CODE	NAME	SIRE	MGS	EBI	MILK	FERT
DXR	DERRYCOOLE CAMS	BGZ	GMI	132.2	64.0	59.1
DZG	BALLYBRIDE DANGLE PIPER	LPP	UYC	149.9	79.6	59.1
KMA	KNOCKSOUNA MARS	MAU	LLO	135.4	59.0	63.8
NBU	CNOCEEN BUNT RUUD	RUU	MBH	160.6	61.0	64.4
VEW	MOATVIEW S BARTHO	LBO	NHS	135.0	76.3	44.9
				€142.6	€ 68.0	€ 58.3



- The next group of bulls to be dispatched will be the 49 straw pack (7 bulls x 7 straws each). This group consists of the following bulls:

TEST GROUP 2 - 49 straw pack						
AI CODE	NAME	SIRE	MGS	EBI	MILK	FERT
GMO	CASTLEGALE MONDO	LLO	ELG	121.8	49.3	66.3
USJ	UACHTARLANN SJOERD	NHS	ESZ	118.0	90.4	22.8
RXU	RAHEENVAREN RUUD 808	RUU	MAU	161.0	66.1	61.6
RXR	MONAMORE ROMERO ET	OJI	Durham	156.3	75.1	54.1
KYF	KEALFINCHEON ROYCE	RUU	SLW	174.2	65.9	77.5
SPH	SPARTA HARLEY	TIH	MAU	137.5	35.3	84.9
SXR	CAPPAUNIAC STERLING	STX	GMI	128.2	75.4	34.0
				€142.4	€ 65.4	€ 57.3

Beef

- Sign ups ongoing for Spring beef programme.
- 92 herds and 1942 straws.
- 4 Bulls fully tested so far.
- Working with all breed societies to get bulls onto the panel.
- Phone: 045-521573 to learn more.

7 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 08/02/08						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 08/02/08	No. EDIY Herds YTD 08/02/08	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 08/02/08	No. EDIY Cows YTD 08/02/08	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	910	137	15%	49,483	8,355	17%
Dairygold	167	10	6%	7,714	419	5%
Kerry	199	4	2%	8,948	325	4%
SWS	317	8	3%	12,306	607	5%
Tipperary	14	0	0%	479	0	0%
Arrabawn	11	3	27%	431	167	39%
Connacht	69	10	14%	2,818	383	14%
Donegal	3	3	100%	136	136	100%
Total	1,690	175	10%	82,315	10,392	13%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison				
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2005 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 08/02/06	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 08/02/07	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 08/02/08	2008 vs 2007 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	58,530	56,685	49,483	-14.6%
Dairygold	10,362	7,467	7,714	3.2%
Kerry	9,204	10,028	8,948	-12.1%
SWS	13,767	13,070	12,306	-6.2%
Tipperary	850	366	479	23.6%
Arrabawn	581	516	431	-19.7%
Connacht	2,744	3,007	2,818	-6.7%
Donegal	105	0	136	0.0%
Total	96,143	91,139	82,315	-10.7%



8 HerdPlus®

BEEF

- ✚ Training of GROW Scorers on laptops and new web tools continued this week.
- ✚ ICBF staff presented Euro-Star & GROW information to Limousin Club Meeting held Thursday night in Limerick.

DAIRY

- ✚ HerdPlus® staff supported Teagasc In-Service Training (Dairy) held in Moorepark Wed & Thu this week. Some 90 Teagasc advisors were updated on the latest on Dairy breeding. The two areas that we covered in detail were the Sire Advice Web programme and GENÉIRÉLAND®. A Workshop was held on picking suitable bulls for different scenarios with the Sire Advice programme being the cornerstone in the decision making process.
- ✚ See this week's Irish Farmers Journal "Breeding for Profit" article on Page 19 - featured HerdPlus®, Milk Recording and AI use.

9 Tully

- ✚ Linear scoring of the December intake to Tully took place on the 7-2-08. Final blup figures will be available from the 21-2-08.
- ✚ Weighing of the December intake will take place on the 21-2-08. Weights will be sent out to breeders and breed societies on the 22-2-08.
- ✚ Construction of the viewing area will be completed before the 21-2-08.

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