

1 Important Dates

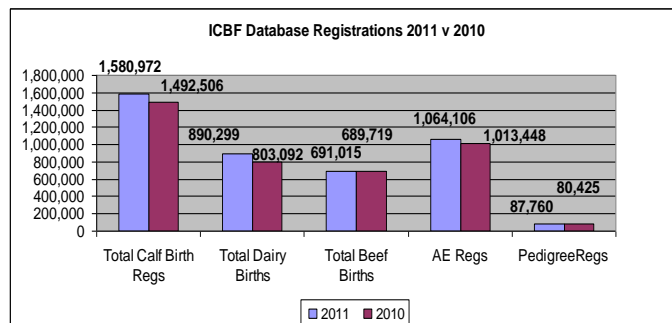
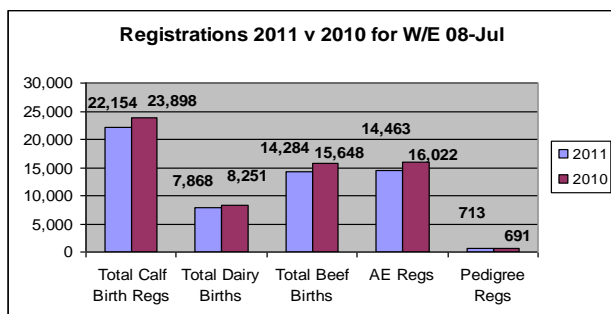
- + **Tully Advisory Committee meeting** – Monday 25th July, 10:00 to 14:00 – Tully.
- + **ICBF Dairy and Beef Industry meetings** – Wednesday 27th July, 10:00 to 17:00 - Killeshin Hotel Portlaoise. (Please note change of date).
- + **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 15th September, 10:30 to 14:00 – ICBF, Highfield House, Bandon.
- + **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 22nd September, 14:00 to 16:30 – ICBF, Highfield House, Bandon.

2 A Couple of Busy Weeks

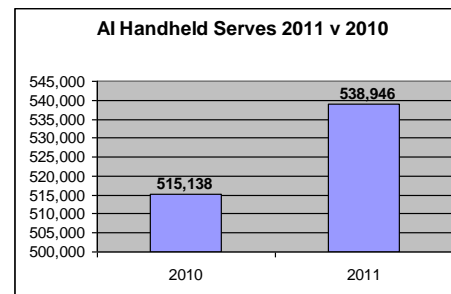
Over these last two weeks I have been involved in considerable travel within Europe and a number of very important and relevant discussions relating to cattle and sheep breeding. Key points to emerge included:

- + The OptiMIR project is gathering momentum as the potential value of MIR (mid-infra-red) spectrum data from milk samples becomes clearer. ICBF and Teagasc are participating in this joint project with similar organisations in France, Germany, Belgium, UK and Luxembourg.
- + Progress with semen sexing technology is such that Ireland needs to be ensuring it is undertaking research and evaluation of the best options for making this tool available to dairy and beef farmers. It appears that the technology will, in the near future, enable many farmers to choose semen for use in AI that will enable them to choose the sex of the resulting calves. The impact of such developments on cattle farming in Ireland will be dramatic.
- + ICBF has made excellent progress in beef cattle breeding relative to other countries. However, there now is a real need to employ innovative strategies: to improve data quality, to improve breeding decisions in bull breeder herds, and to ensure that those bulls with the greatest potential to increase genetic gain are progeny tested through AI.
- + It is very important that the potential of genomics in beef breeding be thoroughly researched and, if proven, implemented to improve the profitability of the national beef herd.
- + The level of collaboration between Sheep Ireland and Teagasc is improving rapidly. The outcome will be more effective use of existing resources and clearer messages to ram breeders and ram buyers on how to improve sheep farm profitability
- + Ram breeders who want to play a key role in the Irish sheep industry need to enrol in LambPlus now and to follow best practise in performance recording.
- + There is a lot of interest from other countries in how the Irish dairy, beef and sheep breeding industries are making such rapid progress.

3 Database



- ✚ The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFF AIM systems.
- ✚ In the Suckler scheme, the number of 2010 born calves with meal introduced is 621,034 with the number of animals weaned at 555,953.
- ✚ A more efficient mechanism for the batching of suckler forms being distributed to farmers will be completed this week.
- ✚ A number of updates continue to be made to the weight recording screens and outputs.
- ✚ Some revisions to the herd-book on-line functionality for herd books is taking place this week. The particular focus is on the presentation of the Eurostar values.
- ✚ Work is on-going in establishing electronic links to the commercial animal health laboratories.
- ✚ Some further work on the screens to support the transfer of genotypes to and from the ICBF database is on-going.
- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recoded on AI Handhelds in 2011 compared with 2010.



4 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Extracts have now commenced for the next routine evaluation.
- ✚ A new genomic evaluation has been completed.
- ✚ Initial work has been completed on estimating genetic parameters for test-day milk production. Estimates of heritability are consistent with expectations. We will continue to refine the models used for the parameter estimate before deciding on the final model to be used in the breeding value estimation.

5 Beef HerdPlus®

- ✚ Design work has commenced on a new report for Pedigree Breeders. A new 'Bull Tracker Report' is being designed. This report will show Breeders how bull's that they have bred have gone on to breed. Summary Progeny statistics on Numbers of calves, Weight Gain, Carcass Grades & Daughter performance will be displayed.
- ✚ Once the design work has been completed, development work will then commence.

- ✚ Beef Herdplus attended the Teagasc/Dawn Meats dairy calf to beef project at Johnstown Castle, Wexford, yesterday. It was a very well attended event and the Herdplus stand was very busy throughout the day.
- ✚ Positive feedback is being constantly received about the recent 'Weight Recording' letter that was sent out. Work is continuing on developing an upload & download function for transferring weight data into the database.

6 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 08/07/11

Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 08/07/11	No. EDIY Herds YTD 08/07/11	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 08/07/11	No. EDIY Cows YTD 08/07/11	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,651	1,305	36%	293,401	91,776	31%
Progressive	2,338	877	38%	204,426	76,460	37%
Tipperary	143	63	44%	12,654	5,973	47%
Total	6,132	2,245	37%	510,481	174,209	34%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2010 Cows Recorded 01/01/10 - 08/07/10	YTD 2011 Cows Recorded 01/01/11 - 08/07/11	2011 vs 2010 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	267,052	293,401	9.0%
Progressive	181,323	204,426	11.3%
Tipperary	11,173	12,654	11.7%
Total	459,548	510,481	10.0%

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 28/06/11 to 08/07/11

	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	17	1,438	85	24.6	3.81	3.34	1.76	234
CAVAN	46	2,539	55	26.2	3.66	3.34	1.83	240
CLARE	44	2,513	57	24.1	3.76	3.38	1.72	213
CORK STH	296	21,965	74	24.2	3.89	3.36	1.75	269
CORK NTH	288	22,152	77	24.7	3.92	3.45	1.82	230
DONEGAL	16	1,335	83	24.6	3.77	3.31	1.74	244
DUBLIN	2	101	51	26.3	3.16	3.39	1.72	404

GALWAY	35	2,836	81	23.4	3.68	3.28	1.63	276
KERRY	132	9,001	68	26.4	3.70	3.32	1.85	293
KILDARE	13	1,037	80	25.3	3.97	3.32	1.84	295
KILKENNY	68	5,376	79	23.9	3.71	3.36	1.69	188
LAOIS	37	3,233	87	22.4	3.78	3.42	1.61	206
LEITRIM	4	192	48	25.2	3.80	3.19	1.76	300
LIMERICK	139	10,152	73	25.9	3.60	3.30	1.79	257
LONGFORD	8	389	49	27.7	3.56	3.27	1.89	184
LOUTH	15	1,341	89	27.4	3.51	3.35	1.88	257
MAYO	7	365	52	29.9	3.42	3.30	2.01	250
MEATH	44	4,089	93	25.2	3.67	3.24	1.74	234
MONAGHAN	33	1,813	55	25.8	3.38	3.27	1.72	273
OFFALY	28	2,114	76	25.3	3.74	3.37	1.80	186
ROSCOMMON	3	178	59	26.2	3.59	3.15	1.77	222
SLIGO	7	398	57	22.2	3.88	3.30	1.59	285
TIPPERARY NTH	50	4,005	80	22.9	3.74	3.37	1.63	248
TIPPERARY STH	71	6,539	92	22.9	3.85	3.43	1.67	256
WATERFORD	69	6,868	100	22.7	4.08	3.49	1.72	218
WESTMEATH	27	2,416	89	25.3	3.94	3.41	1.86	192
WEXFORD	70	5,958	85	23.6	3.72	3.47	1.70	255
WICKLOW E	20	1,393	70	23.4	3.56	3.36	1.62	231
WICKLOW W	13	968	74	23.5	3.83	3.34	1.68	268
	<i>No. Herds Recorded</i>	<i>No. Cows Recorded</i>	<i>Average Herd Size</i>	<i>Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow</i>	<i>Average Fat %</i>	<i>Average Protein %</i>	<i>Average F + P kg</i>	<i>Average SCC</i>
National	1,602	122,704	73	24.9	3.71	3.34	1.75	249

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 28/06/11 to 08/07/11.

Provincial	<i>No. Herds Recorded</i>	<i>No. Cows Recorded</i>	<i>Average Herd Size</i>	<i>Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow</i>	<i>Average Fat %</i>	<i>Average Protein %</i>	<i>Average F + P kg</i>	<i>Average SCC</i>
Munster	1089	83,195	76	24.2	3.82	3.39	1.75	248
Leinster	362	29,853	82	24.9	3.67	3.36	1.75	241
Connacht	56	3,969	71	25.4	3.67	3.24	1.76	267
Ulster	95	5,687	60	25.5	3.60	3.31	1.76	252

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