



Update for period 1st – 8th September 2006

1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Tuesday 12th September** – TEAGASC Grange Open Day.
- ✚ **Wednesday 13th September** – EBI €100 Open Day on the farm of Jim Delahunty. Jim Delahunty, farms at Ballykinash, Carrig, Birr Co. Offaly. **The farm is located half way between Borrisokane, Co. Tipperary and Birr, Co. Offaly. HerdPlus** is being launched at the Open Day.
- ✚ **Thursday 14th September** – ICBF Board meeting, The Comfort Inn Portlaoise.
- ✚ **September 27th to 30th** - Ploughing. **HerdPlus** will be the main focus of the ICBF stand.
- ✚ **Wednesday 4th October** – Beef Breeding Consultation meeting - Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.
- ✚ **Thursday 11th October** – Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation meeting – Moorepark.

2 HerdPlus

- ✚ Herds are now signing up for the new breeding information service which has been branded as – **HerdPlus**.
- ✚ The **HerdPlus** help centre is operational and taking an increasing number of calls. The phone number for the help centre is **1850 600 900**.
- ✚ This week invitations to the EBI €100 open day and a **HerdPlus** brochure were sent to some 8,500 dairy herds.
- ✚ The launch of the **HerdPlus** service for dairy herds is a major step forward in the development of Irish cattle breeding. **HerdPlus** provides a whole herd information service that uses the power of the cattle breeding database to provide farmers with information that can be used to increase farm profits while at the same time reducing the amount of paper work. It is closely integrated with AI, Milk Recording and Herd Book services and makes these services even more valuable to farmers.
- ✚ That **HerdPlus** is a user-pay service is causing some comment. It is important to remember that user-pays is a very powerful tool for:
 - **Saving costs** – only those farmers that want the service enough to pay it, incur the cost of providing it. This saves ICBF the cost of sending information to farmers who do not want it.
 - **Improving service quality** - farmers can choose if they want the service and this is great motivation for ICBF to provide a service farmers find useful and valuable. This helps us focus our attention on the parts of the service which our customers find most valuable.
 - **Communicating costs** – **HerdPlus** is less expensive for those farmers that provide Animal Events electronically and receive reports electronically. This reflects that simple fact that ICBF's costs are less for these farmers. In this way farmers and ICBF both benefit from the reduced costs.
- ✚ The reason for introducing **HerdPlus** is simple:





- Our success with the database has meant the number of herds using it has gone from the initial 7,000 dairy herds to currently 30,000 dairy and beef herds. ICBF's costs have gone up without an increase in income to match. Something had to be done.
- **HerdPlus** will generate extra income from those herds that value the service and save costs for those that do not.

✚ To learn more about **HerdPlus** visit our website – www.icbf.com – examples of all the reports that are part of **HerdPlus** can be found there.

3 Database Update

✚ 35 new herds added to the database last week.

✚ The 150,000 inseminations mark has now been broken by those technicians using handhelds.

✚ Dairygold have taken more technicians live this week.

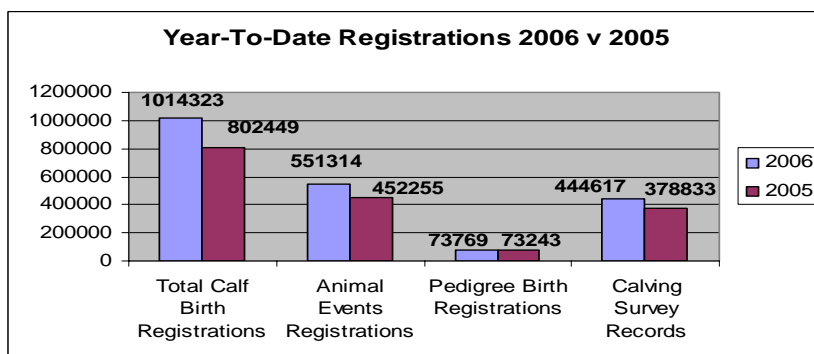
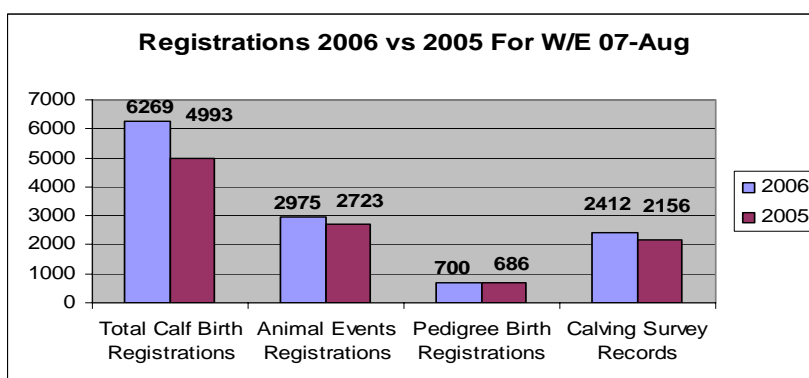
✚ Progressive Genetics are also making good progress in cleaning up the data before going live with the North East technicians.

✚ Good progress is being made on the development of the revised herd-book front end solution. This was originally planned for a 'go-live' pre-Christmas and this is still a realistic target.

✚ The EBI report re-design will be finalised next week and subsequently generated. Only those herds on HerdPlus will have access to those reports.

✚ The linear scoring of dairy progeny test heifers has begun this week, and the feedback from the scorers has been positive on the new software.

✚ The commercial beef scoring project also kicked off this week, with the scorers using internet enabled laptops to populate missing sire information.



4 Tully

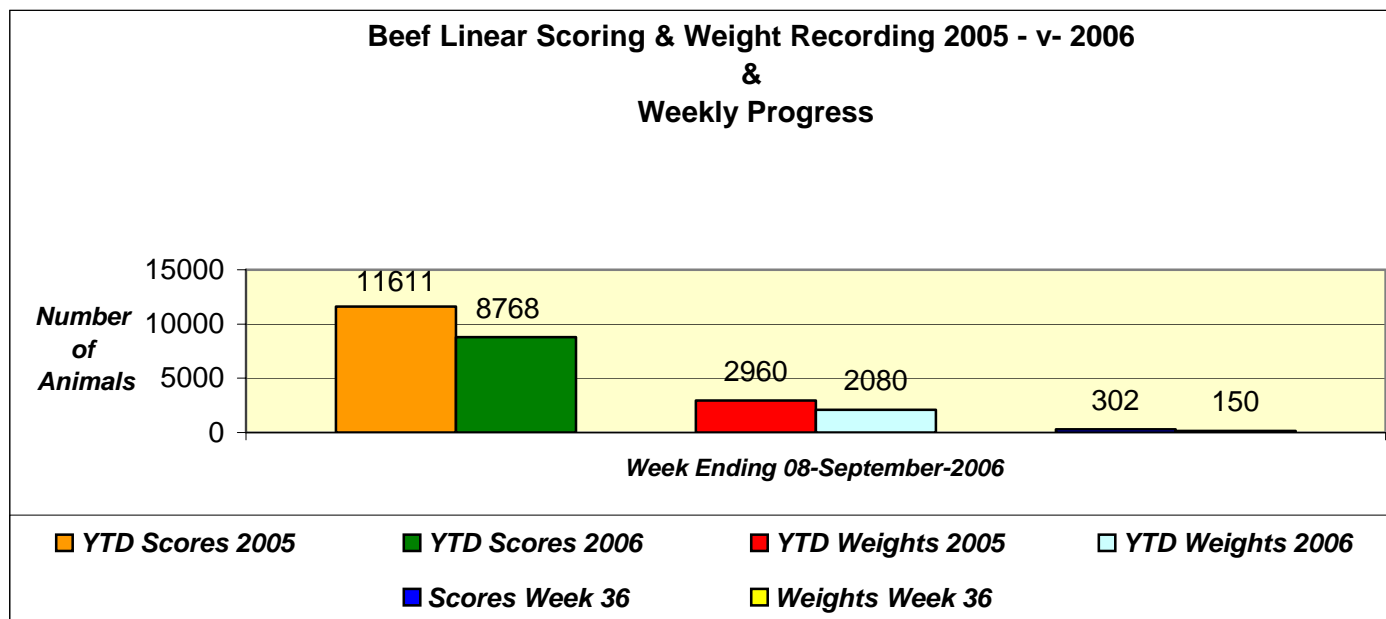
✚ A report of weights for the May intake will be sent out to breeders on the 11-9-06.

✚ Inspections for the September intake have finished. Health testing letters will be sent out to breeders on the 11-9-06 and testing will be finished on the 16-9-06.

✚ A group of Ag science students from Belfast will visit Tully on the 11-9-06.



5 Beef Linear Scoring



6 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Work continues on the development of beef genetic evaluations, including work on the maternal sub-index, linear type and international evaluations.
- ✚ Interbull reported back that the current quantity of information available for Jerseys is insufficient to provide meaningful across country genetic evaluations therefore we will not be getting Interbull figures for Jerseys in the short term.

7 Milk Recording Update

Milk Recording Herds and Cows Year To date 2006 versus Year to date 2005

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2005 Herds Recorded 01/01/05 - 08/09/05	YTD 2006 Herds Recorded 01/01/06 - 08/09/06	Year on Year Herds Difference(%)	YTD 2005 Cows Recorded 01/01/05 - 08/09/05	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 08/09/06	Year on Year Cows Difference(%)
Progressive	2,076	2,095	1%	146,379	153,444	5%
Dairygold	1,520	1,547	2%	96,567	102,421	6%
Kerry	1,064	1,074	1%	66,667	69,445	4%
SWS	935	958	2%	53,963	58,570	9%
Tipperary	141	168	19%	9,284	11,747	27%
Arrabawn	109	157	44%	7,073	10,915	54%
Connacht	110	137	25%	7,245	8,937	23%
Donegal	34	56	65%	3,540	5,142	45%
Total	5,989	6,192	3%	390,718	420,621	8%



Milk Recording Stats week ending 08/09/06

Milk Recording Organisation	2006 Herds Recorded Week 01/09/06 - 08/09/06
Progressive	265
Dairygold	259
Kerry	165
SWS	161
Arrabawn	18
Tipperary	16
Total	884

Industry Test Turnaround August 2006.

Industry national average for Aug 2006 was 6.1 days. Nationally 3,690 tests were processed covering some 220,931 animals. Sep 05 had a turnaround of 6.7 days. The Organisation with the best turnaround in Sep 06 was Kerry with an average of 4.9 days. Dairygold, SWS and Arrabawn were also under 5.5 days. Each Milk Recording Organisation (MRO) is furnished with an Intranet Report on their respective turnaround performance. This gives the Organisations the details on how much time is taken in the different steps in the milk recording process.

€DIY Herds Turnaround.

For the subset of 710 €DIY recorded herds in Aug, the average turnaround time for coded €DIY herds was 5.1 days. MROS that went into the €DIY stat for Aug 06 were;

- Kerry – 1 cell did 53 herds on €DIY & averaged 3.7 days.
- Dairygold – 3 cells did 273 herds on €DIY & averaged 3.9 days.
- Arrabawn – 0.5 cell did 68 herds on €DIY & averaged 4.9 days.
- Tipperary Co-op – 0.5 cell did 47 herds & averaged 5.1 days.
- SWS – 1 cell did 58 herds on €DIY & averaged 5.9 days.
- Progressive – 3 cells (with recorder codes) did 176 herds & averaged 5.9 days.
- Connacht Gold – 1 cell did 35 herds & averaged 7.1 days (lab not testing MR daily – MB addressing).