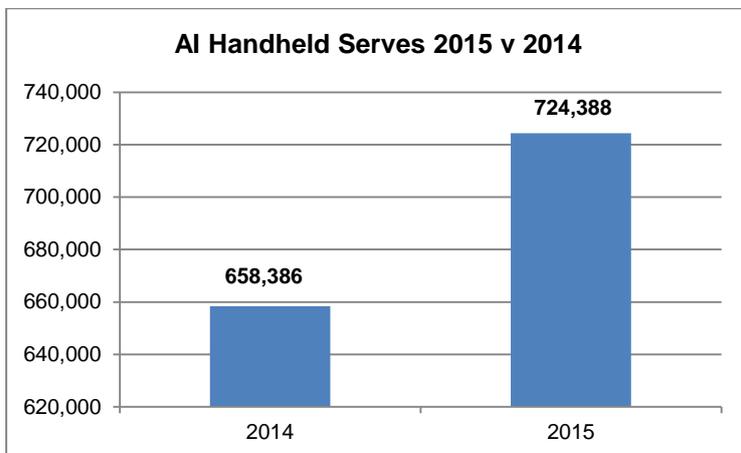
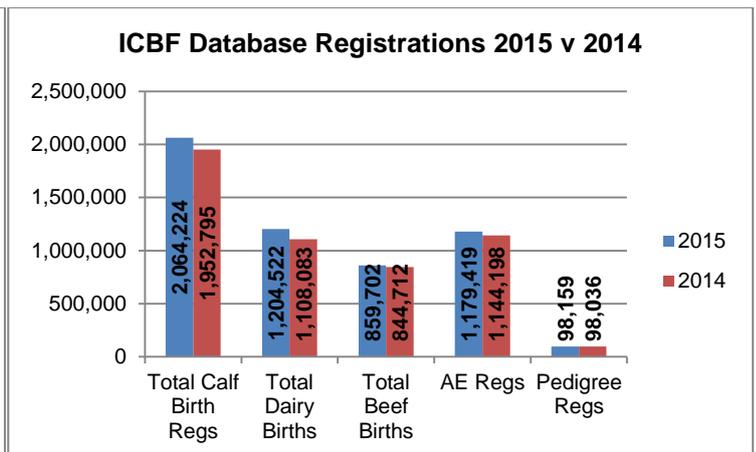
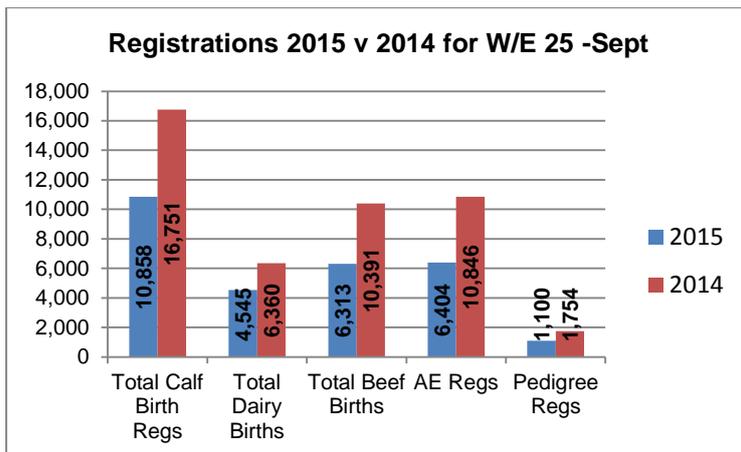


## ICBF Weekly Update 9th October 2015

### 1 Important Dates

-  **Audit & Finance Meeting** – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 10:30, Horse and Jockey Hotel, Thurles.
-  **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 10:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
-  **Sheep Board Meeting** – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 14:00, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.

### 2 Database



-  The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFM AIM systems.
-  BVD test results continue to be received at ICBF and are being processed accordingly. There have been 2.19 million results received since January 1<sup>st</sup>, of which 14,046 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 7.14 million results have now been received.
-  The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2014 compared with 2015.

### 3 Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP)

-  This week's Irish Farmers Journal page is at the end of this update. This week's article is on **Understanding Euro-Star ratings**

#### Information Meetings

-  The DAFM are hosting a series of information meetings on the Beef Data and Genomic Programme (BDGP) for scheme participants. Presentations will be made by the Department, Teagasc and ICBF.
-  In addition to the presentations and Q&A sessions at the meetings, officials will be available from 4pm on the day to address individual queries. Participants should bring along their individual ICBF report to discuss on the day.

Date	Participants in	Location
Mon 12 Oct	Kerry	Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney
Wed 14 Oct	Cork	Silver Springs Hotel, Tivoli, Co. Cork
Thur 15 Oct	Wexford/Waterford/ Kilkenny	Brandon House Hotel, New Ross
Tue 20 Oct	Galway	Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry, Co. Galway
Wed 21 Oct	Mayo/Sligo	Welcome Inn Hotel, New Antrim Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
Thur 22 Oct	Leitrim/Roscommon/Longford/Sligo	Landmark Hotel, Carrick on Shannon
Tue 27 Oct	Limerick/Tipperary	Ballykisteel Hotel, Limerick Junction, Co Tipperary
Wed 28 Oct	Cavan/Monaghan/Meath/Louth	Kilmore Hotel, Dublin Road, Cavan
Thur 29 Oct	Donegal/Sligo	Radisson Blu, Paddy Harte Road, Letterkenny Co. Donegal
Tue 03 Nov	Clare	Treacys West County Hotel, Clare Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Wed 04 Nov	Westmeath/Meath/Offaly	Mullingar Park Hotel, Dublin Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
Thur 05 Nov	Carlow/Kildare/Wicklow/Laois	Seven Oaks Hotel, Athy Road, Carlow

## 4 GENE IRELAND® Beef

### Autumn 2015 Beef Programme.

- ✚ Sign Ups have begun for the autumn 2015 Beef programme.
- ✚ 71 herds taking a total of 1250 straws have joined so far.
- ✚ The average order is 18 straws per herd.
- ✚ The catalogue is available to view at the link below  
[http://issuu.com/herdplus/docs/gi\\_beef\\_autumn\\_2015\\_catalogue](http://issuu.com/herdplus/docs/gi_beef_autumn_2015_catalogue)
- ✚ To learn more or to order straws please phone **1850 600 900**.
- ✚ Total straws ordered to date for the bulls are detailed below.

### List of Bulls Currently On-Test

Code	Name of Bull	Breed	Straws Ordered
AA2064	Carrigroe Kian	AA	80
AA2163	Liss Brendan	AA	50
AU2155	Slaneymill Jack	AU	85
CH2159	Bondi Jacob	CH	45
PDR	Dereskit Improver	CH	245
CH2154	Polar Joe 2	CH	25
HE2148	Ballyville Hamlet	HE	75
LM2150	Castleview Immaginable	LM	140
LM2156	Clonark Jumbo	LM	70
LM2151	Ballygarvan Stud Ike	LM	70
LM2116	Tomschoice Ironstone	LM	40
OEO	Ivoire	LM	35
ZKY	Kyle Herd Ivan	PT	250
PI2157	Kilree Leo	PI	70
SA2153	Highfield Odran	SA	100
SH2181	Coolvin Dominator	SH	0
SI2152	Curaheen Earp	SI	100
SI2158	Seepa Fionn	SI	60
KJG	Knockane Dag	SI	370
ETP	Curaheen Evolution P	SI	230

## 5 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Research work continues on incorporating genomic data into beef evaluations.
- ✚ Extracts for December evaluation are scheduled to commence this week.
- ✚ Support for various aspects of BDGP scheme continues.

## 6 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 09/10/15						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 09/10/15	No. EDIY Herds YTD 09/10/15	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 09/10/15	No. EDIY Cows YTD 09/10/15	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,982	1,273	32%	364,513	125,521	34%
Progressive	2,500	1,068	43%	255,834	110,924	43%
Tipperary	125	53	42%	11,793	5,277	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,607</b>	<b>2,394</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>632,140</b>	<b>241,722</b>	<b>38%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2014 Cows Recorded 01/01/14 - 09/10/14	YTD 2015 Cows Recorded 01/01/15 - 09/10/15	2015 vs 2014 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	331,026	364,513	10.1%
Progressive	241,000	255,834	6.2%
Tipperary	9,982	11,793	18.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>582,008</b>	<b>632,140</b>	<b>8.6%</b>

## 7 Sheep Ireland

### Mating Screens Launched

- ✚ The Mating Screens have been launched this week which enables flock owners to record their flocks' mating information. This is critical information in relation to our breeding programme as this is currently the only feasible way to identify the parentage of lambs.
- ✚ We will be encouraging all breeders to input their mating information as soon as possible, while it is still fresh in their minds so that if any issues are identified they should be easier to solve at this time of year.
- ✚ The mating screen can be found under the Management tab at the top of their Sheep Ireland profiles. There is also a Help button available to breeders on the top right which they can consult if they need any guidance on how to navigate the mating screens.



### CPT Programme

- ✚ The first of the CPT flocks to be AI'd will be John Larges (Co. Tipperary) this Monday, followed by full schedule of AI over the following 7 days when over 2,300 ewes will be served. Most of the CPT rams have gone through their isolation period and are being trained to jump ewes this week in order to ensure that they will all be fit for supplying semen over the course of the next week.
- ✚ Below are photographs of SPRINGBRIDGE VICTORY (IE045005901701D) bred by T. Whelan Co. Wexford, this was the first ram that was trained to jump in the CPT this year.



### Ovigen Flock Visits

- ✚ Once the CPT mating is complete we will be commencing OVIGEN flock visits once again. Any breeder available for a flock visit after the 22<sup>nd</sup> October can contact **023 88 20154** to make arrangements.

**Sean Coughlan** Chief Executive, ICBF & Sheep Ireland, Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon Co. Cork., Phone: +353 238 820 222, Mobile: +353 872903121, Email [scoughlan@icbf.com](mailto:scoughlan@icbf.com), **Registered Office:** Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Society Ltd trading as "ICBF", Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co Cork. Registered Dublin, Ireland. Registration Number 4914R, Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 1893 to 1978. Web: [www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com).

**Registered Office:** Sheep Database Ltd trading as "Sheep Ireland". Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co Cork. Registered Dublin, Ireland. Registration Number 465004, Companies Acts 1963 to 2006. Web: [www.sheep.ie](http://www.sheep.ie).

## National Milk Recording Results for the 10 day period, 30-SEP-2015 To 09-OCT-2015

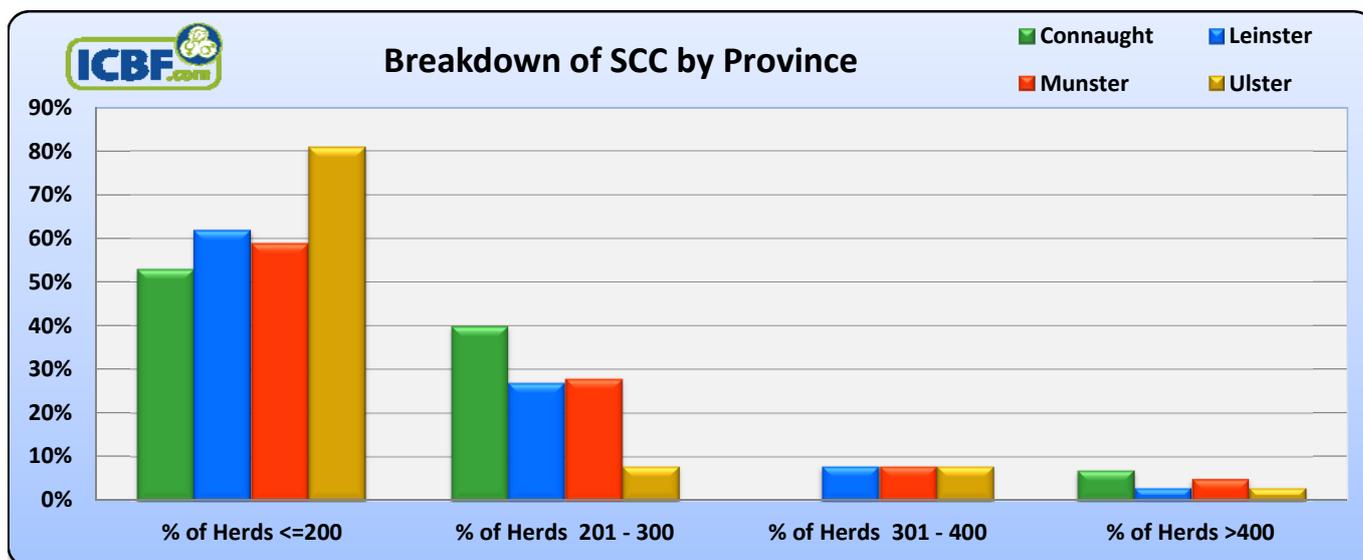
ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Avg Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F+P kg	Average SCC*
Connaught	15	1,087	72	20.5	4.34	3.83	1.66	165
Leinster	137	12,885	94	19.3	4.22	3.86	1.54	169
Munster	657	56,550	86	18.2	4.35	3.92	1.50	185
Ulster	36	2,405	67	19.8	4.10	3.73	1.54	158
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>72,927</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>4.32</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>1.51</b>	<b>181</b>

\* Geometric Mean Herd SCC

## SCC Distribution for the 10 day period, 30-SEP-2015 To 09-OCT-2015

ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	% of Herds <=200	% of Herds 201 - 300	% of Herds 301 - 400	% of Herds >400	Average SCC*
Connaught	15	1,087	72	53%	40%	0%	7%	165
Leinster	137	12,885	94	62%	27%	8%	3%	169
Munster	657	56,550	86	59%	28%	8%	5%	185
Ulster	36	2,405	67	81%	8%	8%	3%	158
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>72,927</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>181</b>

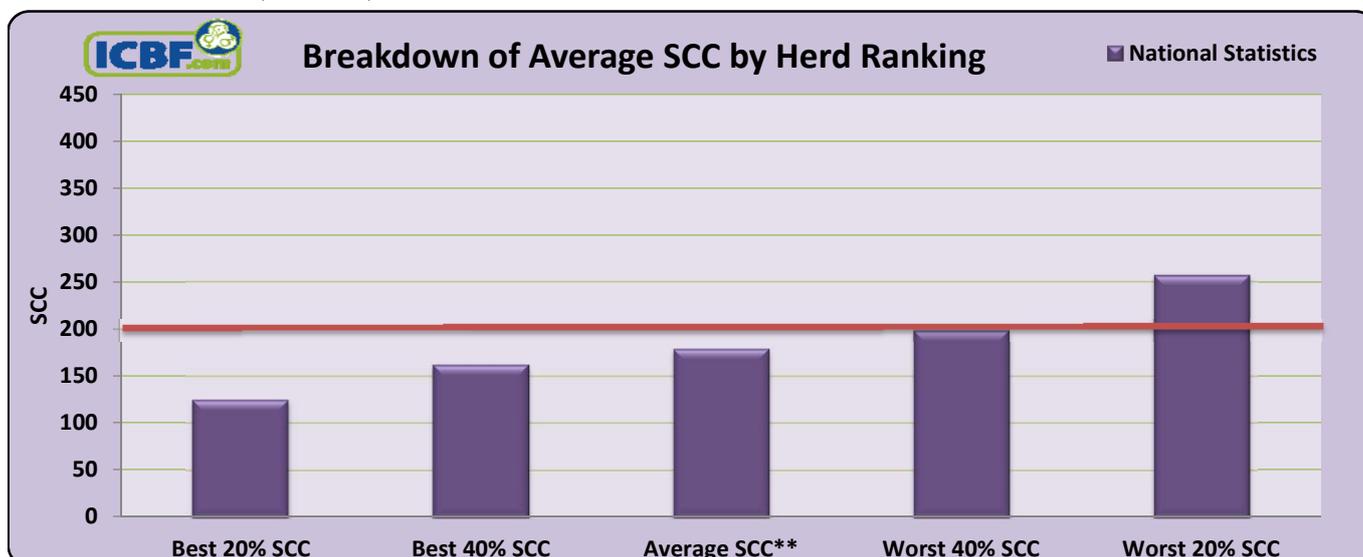
\* Geometric Mean Herd SCC



## % Herd Breakdown for the 10 day period, 30-SEP-2015 To 09-OCT-2015

ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Best 20% SCC	Best 40% SCC	Average SCC**	Worst 40% SCC	Worst 20% SCC
Connaught	15	1,087	72	118	176	189	210	254
Leinster	137	12,885	94	117	150	164	196	253
Munster	657	56,550	86	128	163	181	203	262
Ulster	36	2,405	67	128	159	168	179	199
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>72,927</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>257</b>

\*\* Percentile Herd SCC Rank (Median SCC)



## Understanding Euro-Star ratings

Recent data from the ICBF and Teagasc has indicated that 5-star cows leave an additional €120 more profit/progeny than an average suckler cow. To appreciate more fully how this benefit is derived for farmers, we must first understand the ICBF beef Euro-Star system.

The ideal suckler cow can be simply defined as a cow that calves each year (for many years), has a high-quality beef calf and has enough milk to rear that calf. Based on data recorded in the ICBF database (from farmers, marts and meat processors), ICBF is able to provide an assessment of the genetic merit of all suckler cows in the national herd. This assessment is termed a Euro-Star value. The Euro indicates the additional profit per progeny, while the star indicates the cow's ranking relative to other animals in the suckler cow population.

An animal ranking in the top 20% is deemed a 5-star animal, while an animal ranking in the bottom 20% is deemed a 1-star animal. Average animals (mid 20%) are deemed 3-star on the Euro-Star system. In the future, this Euro-Star value will also include genotype data, thereby providing an even more accu-

rate assessment of an animal's genetic merit.

**Does the system work?** Yes. Recent work by the ICBF and Teagasc has indicated that, on average, 5 star cows leave €120 more profit/progeny than average cows. This is through a combination of better performance across a range of key profit traits. Table 1 shows that on average 5-star cows, calved younger, had more progeny, had shorter calving intervals, lasted longer on farms, produced heavier calves at weaning and had animals that slaughtered at a younger age but with a higher carcass weight. So while farmers will raise concerns about ratings for individual cows (and bulls), a more complete analysis based on multiple cows on their own farms, or across many farms (as per Table 1), will clearly confirm the benefits of the Euro-Star system. So the strong advice to scheme participants is to have confidence in the Euro-Star system.

While the figures will be new to many, they are the culmination of almost 10 years of data, starting with the Suckler Cow Welfare Scheme in 2008.

They will have a profound impact on the profitability of your farm in the future.

**Table 1**  
Comparative performance of 5-star versus 3-star cows.

	5-Star cows	3-Star cows	5-Star versus 3-Star cows
Replacement Index (€)	€124	€64	
Number progeny to date	4.33	3.82	0.51 more progeny
Age 1st calving (days)	971	1000	29 days younger
Calving Interval (days)	399	409	10 days less
% Alive after seven years	72%	62%	10% alive
Growth rate of calves (kg/day)	1.17	1.09	0.08 kg/day
Carcass weight progeny (kg)	363	358	5 kg
Age at slaughter progeny (days)	752	784	32 younger

\* Above analysis was based on 97,723 suckler cows that were born in 2008, in herds that joined BDGP

### DATES FOR THE DIARY

**9th Oct:** Teagasc, BDGP Farm Event, Edward & Richard Butler's Farm, Danesfort, Co Kilkenny, 11am.

**13th Oct:** Teagasc National Beef Conference, Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone at 3pm.

**12th-29th Oct:** DAFM, ICBF, Teagasc BDGP Nationwide Information meetings. All meetings to start at 8 pm with DAFM & ICBF staff available from 4pm to deal with scheme queries.

► **Mon 12 Oct:** Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney

► **Wed 14 Oct:** Silversprings Hotel, Cork

► **Thur 15 Oct:** Brandon House Hotel, New Ross

► **Tue 20 Oct:** Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry

► **Wed 21 Oct:** Welcome Inn Hotel, Castlebar

► **Thur 22 Oct:** Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon

► **Tue 27 Oct:** Ballykisteen Hotel, Limerick Junction

► **Wed 28 Oct:** Kilmore Hotel, Cavan

► **Thur 29 Oct:** Radisson Blue Hotel, Letterkenny

Three more venues may be announced for the start of November. See next week's page for updates.



Michael with one of the Kelly's best cows. This SI x cow sired by Harum (HUZ) has a Replacement Index of €196 (5 stars - top 1%). She is seven years old, first calved at 24 months and has had six calves with an average calving interval of 371 days. She is due to calve again mid Jan 2016 to KJB.

## Q&A

### Q. How is a Euro-Star index generated for an animal?

When a calf is born, provided its ancestry is recorded, it receives a Euro-Star index based on those of its parents. As data is recorded on an animal throughout its life - eg weights, docility, performance of progeny, etc - its index will start to change to reflect its own performance. The reliability figures show to what extent the animal's index is influenced by its own performance. Reliability figures will be explained in more detail next week.

### Q. Are all beef cross heifers coming from the dairy herd automatically 4 or 5 stars?

No. While these heifers receive a substantial boost in their index figures due to the milk effect of their dairy dams, it will not guarantee good fertility. Also, beef traits are negatively affected. The net effect is that only about half of the current first-cross beef animals from the dairy herd are 4 or 5 stars for replacement index.

### FARMER FOCUS: MICHAEL KELLY

## 'Euro-Star indices can be powerful'

**Name:** Anne, Tom and Michael (son) Kelly, Killaule, Co Tipperary.

**Farming system:** Suckler to beef.

**BDGP cow reference No:** 77

**4 and 5 star females:** Cows 52; Heifers 39.

**Stock bull or AI:** 95% AI.

**Replacement strategy:** Breed all of our own.

**Why did you join the BDGP?** We have been using a lot of AI in the herd down through the years. As a result, the herd is already on course to meet the replacement targets for the scheme, so we were in no doubt that it made sense to join. Also, while the primary return will be the additional profit from better breeding, the financial supports are significant and cannot be ignored.

**Do you feel it will deliver for the national suckler herd?** I think it will. The extra information that will be provided through better data recording will increase the reliabilities on indexes. Add to this the impact of genomics and it will make the Euro-Star indices a powerful tool for farmers to select breeding stock.

**What replacement strategy do you plan to implement in light of the scheme?** We plan to continue breeding our own replacements. Our strategy at the moment is to match the best cows to high Replacement Index bulls. We have been using maternal bulls for a number of years now and despite what many might think, this hasn't had any negative impact on our beef performance.

**Do you use the Euro-Star indices when selecting AI bulls?** We always do. The overall indexes (Replacement and Terminal) give a good indication as to what a bull will do. We also keep a close eye on the reliability of the figures. The more herds that participate in schemes like the



Michael Kelly

BDGP and the more data that's recorded, the more reliable the Euro-Star indexes will become.

**Do you know much about genomics?** A certain amount. I did a degree in science so I'd be reasonably familiar with the terminology. We've read a lot of the information provided by the ICBF and this has been helpful. Having more information on the genetic makeup of each animal and getting a better prediction as to how that animal will breed in the future has to be seen as a positive.