

1 Important Dates

- + **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 15th September, 10:30 to 14:00 – ICBF, Highfield House, Bandon.
- + **Sheep Ireland - LambPlus User Meeting** – Wednesday 28th September, 19:00 to 21 :00 – Hibernian Hotel, Mallow.
- + **Sheep Ireland - LambPlus User Meeting** – Thursday 29th September, 19:00 to 21:00 – Seven Oaks Hotel, Carlow.
- + **Sheep Ireland - LambPlus User Meeting** – Monday 3rd October, 19:00 to 21 :00 – Radisson Blu Hotel, Athlone.
- + **Sheep Breeding Consultation Industry Meeting** – Thursday 6th October, 11:00 to 14:00 – Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore.
- + **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 6th October, 14:00 to 16:30 – Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore.
- + **High Health Status Beef Bull Sale** – Saturday 15th October 2011 – 12:00 to 2:00 - Tully Performance Test Centre.

2 Breeding Consultation Meeting

The topics covered at the ICBF Breeding Industry Consultation meeting (a copy of the combined presentations is available in the publications section of www.icbf.com) held on Wednesday this week included:

Dairy

- + A genomics update from Donagh Berry covered:
 - Recent developments as reported at the Interbull & EAAP meetings held recently in Norway. These included reports: that increases in accuracy from the HD (800k) SNP chip are less than expected; the IGenoP database is showing great promise; and genomic selection is working much as predicted around the world for dairy breeding.
 - The need to examine and develop solutions for the slight over-estimation seen in genomic evaluations.
 - Results of testing of imputation using the new LD chip for Holstein-Friesians show much higher levels of accuracy than the 3k chip. When introduced later in 2011, the new LD chip will replace the current 3k chip. Prices will not change.
- + GENIreland update from Andrew Cromie covered:
 - Elite bull mother matings in 2011 have been completed with an improvement on uptake in 2010.
 - Progress is being made with the establishment of next generation research herds.
 - A proposal for genotyping all female calves in selected bull breeding herds is being developed for implementation in spring 2012.

Dairy & Beef

- + Cost:benefit analysis for beef breeding options was presented by Peter Amer. Key conclusions included:

- The most profitable and most future proof option for Irish beef breeding is an expanded Gene Ireland progeny test (100 beef bulls tested per year) coupled with a revamp of Tully to collect feed intake, health and meat quality data. It is essential that this scheme be tightly integrated with breeding in pedigree herds.
- Data quality is a very important aspect of ensuring confidence in beef cattle breeding.
- The current weighting on maternal traits is insufficient to prevent further declines in fertility and milk traits in the suckler herd.
- More widespread weight recording is required for achieving more rapid rates of genetic gain, especially for maternal milk traits.
- ✚ Birth weights – a project has been initiated to develop systems for facilitating more widespread recording of birth weights, or a measurement at birth which can be readily used to predict birth weight.
- ✚ Weight recording – a new infrastructure for weight recording is being developed by ICBF based on the use of load cells with wireless connections to handheld computers. This will enable HerdPlus database reports to be provided to herd owners within a short time (minutes) of weighing being completed.
- ✚ Data quality index – a prototype was discussed.
- ✚ GENÉIRÉLAND – a report from Andrew Cromie demonstrated that Ireland already has the capacity to progeny test 100 beef bulls per year on the basis of 50 daughters per bull. His report also showed that suitable bulls are readily available. The key issue now is to establish an operational system for getting semen from these bulls collected and distributed.
- ✚ Tully – a report from Stephen Conroy examined the practical issues associated with converting Tully into a progeny test facility. These are all surmountable and will result in some cost savings for a unit testing a much larger number of commercial progeny, than pedigree bulls, currently tested.
- ✚ Stock bull evaluation – Peter Amer gave a progress report on a research project examining the factors affecting stock bull performance on Irish farms.
- ✚ Economic indexes & presentation of indexes – Peter Amer gave a brief insight into the developments which have taken place since he first developed the philosophy behind the SBV index. The key concern is that the index with the current economic weighting is leading to a negative trend in maternal and milk traits. A process is to be followed with a view to having recommendations for the next round of consultation meetings.

Beef

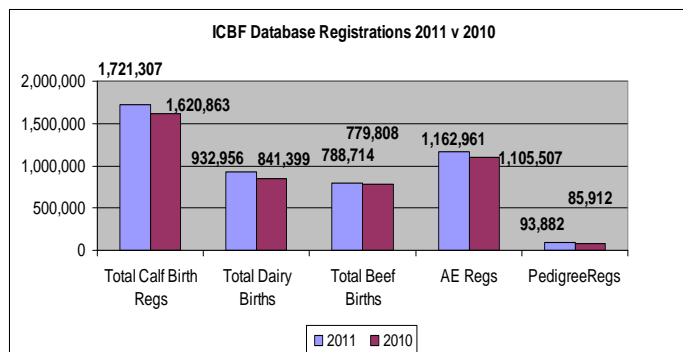
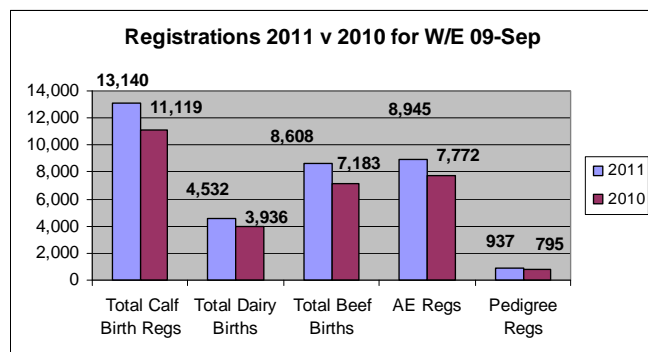
- ✚ Maternal traits (milk & fertility) – the report provided previously was tabled, but not discussed, since all in the audience had seen the material at a previous meeting.
- ✚ Genomics update – Donagh Berry provided a progress report on beef genomics research. Genotyping of some 2,500 bulls with the HD SNP chip is currently underway. Collaborations with other populations are being established.

Meeting Schedule for the remainder of 2011 and 2012 has been developed as here:

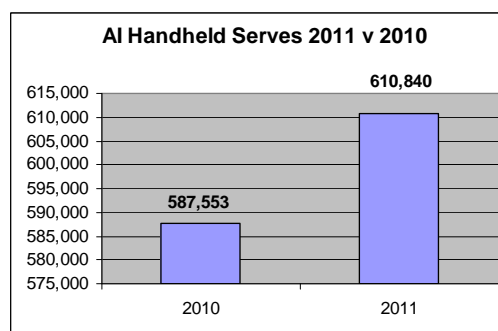
Date	Meeting
Tuesday 1 Nov 2011	Herd Book Technical
Thursday 17 Nov 2011	Breeding Consultation
Tuesday 28 Feb 2012	Herd Book Technical
Wednesday 14 Mar 2012	Breeding Consultation
Wednesday 27 Jun 2012	Herd Book Technical
Wednesday 11 July 2012	Breeding Consultation

Wednesday 22 Aug 2012	Herd Book Technical
Wednesday 12 Sept 2012	Breeding Consultation
Wednesday 31 Oct 2012	Herd Book Technical
Wednesday 14 Nov 2012	Breeding Consultation

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 656,801 with the number of animals weaned at 604,187.
- The health recording forms for the Dairy Efficiency Scheme (DEP) will be sent to farmers next week.
- Testing continues on the prototype of a new cattle weighing scales with blue-tooth integration to ICBF handheld software. It is intended to start field trials with it from October 1st.
- Work is on-going in building the systems that will support the up-coming national BVD eradication programme.
- The loading of the high density beef genotype files are currently being loaded to the ICBF database.
- The Eurostar and EBI reports for the latest evaluation run have been generated and are available on-line.
- The graph above shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2011 compared with 2010.



4 Sheep Ireland

- Ram sales are continuing across the country with strong interest in Euro-Star rams reported. Sheep Ireland will continue to drive the message as plans for this year's breeding season are finalised around the country.
- On Wed 28th Sept, Thurs 29th Sept and Mon 3rd of Oct, Sheep Ireland will be holding LambPlus user meetings whereby all current recording breeders will be invited to discuss the current service being provided and to identify the short medium and long term goals that need to be set by Sheep Ireland representatives to develop and progress the Euro-Star evaluations across the Irish sheep industry. The venues for the meetings are Mallow, Co. Cork (Wed 28th), Carlow (Thurs 29th) and Athlone (Mon 3rd). All meetings will be in the evening, with hotel venues yet to be confirmed (Invitations will be posted early next week).
- We have also planned to hold a wider Sheep Breeding Consultation Industry meeting on Thurs 6th Oct in Tullamore (11.00am to 2.00pm), venue will be confirmed in the coming week. We would urge anyone with an

interest in the future direction of sheep breeding in this country to attend and voice their opinion. Sheep Ireland has the best interests of the Irish Industry at heart and actively seek the opinions of all involved in the sector.

- ✚ We plan to meet our MALP participants in the coming week to discuss the coming year and identify where we can further improve the MALP programme for the year ahead. The selection of our CPT rams is progressing nicely with very strong interest from breeders. This interest emphasises just how much breeders are realising the importance of linking their breeding rams to strengthen their accuracies. Each year in New Zealand, there is huge demand from breeders to enter rams in the countries CPT programme, with many breeders covering the considerable costs associated with entering a ram in these programmes, this further emphasises the benefits they see in having higher accuracies for their breeding stock.
- ✚ Sheep Irelands collaboration with Teagasc Sheep events continues this Sat 10th Sept, when we will attend the Monaghan Lamb Producer group/Teagasc farm walk to be held in Carrickmacross. We hope that this event will be as beneficial as all such events have been to date, educating the commercial farmer through this medium is ultimately going to drive the Euro-Star programme.

5 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Files have been submitted for the Interbull test run for fertility, survival and calving difficulty. It normally takes about 1 month before we have results, at which point it will be determined whether the changes are acceptable and data can go forward to a routine run.

6 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 09/09/11						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 09/09/11	No. EDIY Herds YTD 09/09/11	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 09/09/11	No. EDIY Cows YTD 09/09/11	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,669	1,041	28%	300,923	94,732	31%
Progressive	2,368	899	38%	212,901	81,224	38%
Tipperary	144	61	42%	13,069	6,297	48%
Total	6,181	2,001	32%	526,893	182,253	35%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2010 Cows Recorded 01/01/10 - 09/09/10	YTD 2011 Cows Recorded 01/01/11 - 09/09/11	2011 vs. 2010 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	274,764	300,923	8.7%
Progressive	189,760	212,901	10.9%
Tipperary	11,881	13,069	9.1%
Total	476,405	526,893	9.6%

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 30/08/11 to 09/09/11

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	1085	79,682	73	19.4	4.06	3.63	1.49	257
Leinster	392	29,857	76	21.1	3.86	3.48	1.55	290
Connacht	96	6,069	63	22.7	3.79	3.50	1.65	254
Ulster	89	5,204	58	20.9	3.91	3.48	1.54	289

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 30/08/11 to 09/09/11

	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	20	1,221	61	19.0	4.06	3.58	1.45	370
CAVAN	45	2,464	55	21.5	3.85	3.48	1.58	280
CLARE	48	2,907	61	20.0	3.94	3.62	1.51	248
CORK STH	310	21,244	69	19.3	4.20	3.69	1.52	237
CORK NTH	263	19,965	76	20.1	4.17	3.72	1.59	257
DONEGAL	12	1,065	89	19.6	4.15	3.63	1.52	272
DUBLIN	1	32	32	24.1	3.21	3.40	1.59	101
GALWAY	40	2,971	74	19.6	3.89	3.47	1.44	313
KERRY	148	10,026	68	21.3	3.86	3.57	1.58	266
KILDARE	19	1,502	79	22.2	4.06	3.51	1.68	427
KILKENNY	65	5,096	78	19.5	3.95	3.56	1.46	231
LAOIS	29	2,007	69	19.5	3.99	3.51	1.46	297
LEITRIM	7	348	50	24.9	3.73	3.38	1.77	236
LIMERICK	134	10,462	78	20.0	3.94	3.58	1.50	277
LONGFORD	7	528	75	22.5	3.76	3.41	1.61	181
LOUTH	30	2,473	82	22.8	3.47	3.37	1.56	299
MAYO	40	2,203	55	22.6	3.70	3.55	1.64	242
MEATH	70	6,113	87	20.8	3.92	3.41	1.52	305
MONAGHAN	32	1,675	52	21.5	3.74	3.33	1.52	315
OFFALY	24	2,098	87	20.9	3.99	3.43	1.55	325
ROSCOMMON	2	126	63	22.0	3.89	3.62	1.65	211
SLIGO	7	421	60	24.2	3.74	3.49	1.75	268
TIPPERARY NTH	48	3,929	82	18.5	4.06	3.60	1.42	291
TIPPERARY STH	68	5,742	84	17.4	4.12	3.59	1.34	258
WATERFORD	66	5,407	82	18.4	4.20	3.63	1.44	218
WESTMEATH	18	1,381	77	21.5	4.24	3.58	1.68	263
WEXFORD	70	4,884	70	19.2	4.07	3.59	1.47	279
WICKLOW E	21	1,457	69	19.6	3.70	3.55	1.42	327
WICKLOW W	18	1,065	59	22.1	3.88	3.39	1.61	367
	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	1,662	120,812	70	20.8	3.91	3.53	1.55	275
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