

## 1. Important Dates

- + **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2010, **10:00 to 14:00** – Portlaoise.
- + **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2010, **14:00 to 16:30** – Portlaoise.

## 2. Dairy Breeding Conference Meeting

The key outcomes (a copy of the presentations can be found in the publications section of our website – [www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com)) of the Consultation meeting held on Wednesday this week included:

- + The splitting of “beef” Sub Index into two parts giving a “maintenance” Sub Index and a “beef” Sub Index. This change separates the impact of liveweight on the cost of maintaining a dairy cow from its impact on the returns from sale of cull cows and surplus calves. At a future date it is expected that the “beef” Sub Index will be modified to incorporate evaluations based on Mart data for calf values and weights.
- + Revision of the economic weights in the EBI as a result of lower long term milk price projections (from the current €0.30/litre to €0.27/litre) and higher costs for fertilizer and replacements.
- + The impacts of these changes are summarized in the following table of “old” and the 2010 economic weights for traits included in each economic Sub Index.

Sub Index (€)	Trait	Old Economic Weight	2010 Economic Weight
Yield	Protein	6.91	6.26
	Fat	1.26	1.01
	Milk	-0.09	-0.09
Fertility	Survival	11.17	12.05
	Calving Interval	-11.97	-11.89
Maintenance	Cow weight	-	-1.49
Calving	Maternal	-1.73	-1.73
	Direct calving	-3.65	-3.52
	Direct gestation	-7.54	-7.49
	Calf mortality	-2.58	-2.58
Beef	Cull Cow carcass	-0.51	0.15
	Carcase weight	1.38	1.38
	Conformation	10.32	10.32
	Fat score	-11.71	-11.71
Health	Locomotion	1.13	1.13
	Udder	-57.21	-56.35

- + As a consequence of these changes the EBI will reduce on average by €7. Correlations between the new and old evaluations are very high and there will thus be little re-ranking of animals.
- + ICBF is to proceed with the implementation of these changes for the January 2010 evaluations.
- + Work on new fertility and calving evaluations is progressing with test runs to be reported to a further meeting of the Consultation Group in January.

## 3. Dairy Breeding Conference

On Thursday this week over 400 farmers attended a very successful ICBF dairy cattle breeding conference at Cork Mart Corrin facility near Fermoy. The morning session (copies of the presentations can be found in the

publications section of our website) which was sponsored by FBD Trust comprised five presentations covering developments in dairy genetic evaluations, HerdPlus and GENÉIRELAND.

The **FBD GENÉIRELAND® Awards** completed the morning program. The awards were as follows:

**Top Bulls:**

BREEDER NAME	BREEDER ADDRESS	AI CODE	BULL NAME	EBI	REL
JOHN O'SULLIVAN	LISDUFF, WHITECHURCH, CO CORK	LDU	LISDUFF MANFRED ET	205	69
ROBERT & SHIRLEY SHANNON	GURTEENAKILLA BALLYDEHOB CO CORK	BYJ	BALLYDEHOB JUSTICE	187	70
JOHN O'SULLIVAN	KNOCKNALYRE BLARNEY CO CORK	GYK	GARRYMARTIN KEET	184	69
DONALD BATEMAN	KNOCKKANE, BALLYLOOBY CAHIR CO TIPPERARY	SIZ	SHINE DANO	178	62
RICHARD FEENEY	GLACK, BALLIVOR, CO MEATH	VMG	BALLIVOR MANGO ET	176	70
MICHAEL DEMPSEY	JAMESTOWN BALLYBRITTAS CO LAOIS	VML	BARROWVALE MARTELL 12	166	63

**Top Data Recording Herds:**

Name	Address	Category	Score
THOMAS ALLEN	KNOCKKANE RIVERSTICK CO CORK	150+ cows	324
MICHAEL BATEMAN	KNOCKANROE CROOKSTOWN CO CORK	150+ cows	266
LEXIE BORLAND	RATHTHURLAS NENAGH CO TIPPERARY	150+ cows	235
MICHAEL EVERARD	FORTFIELD MOYNE THURLES CO TIPPERARY	80-150 cows	267
EAMON COUGHLAN	KILLEMERA GLANWORTH CO CORK	80-150 cows	235
JOHN O'SULLIVAN	BALLYWILLIAM KINSALE CO CORK	80-150 cows	201
DONNACHA TOBIN	CURRADARRA, AGLISH CAPPOQUIN CO WATERFORD	<80 cows	216
TOMAS MAHONY	COOLROE OLD PARISH DUNGARVAN CO WATERFORD	<80 cows	211
BERTIE O'CONNOR	URROHOGAL CURRANS FARRANFORE KILLARNEY CO KERRY	<80 cows	190

**Top Bulls' Awards Presented by Michael O' Shea (FBD Trust) and Brian Wickham (ICBF)**

John O'Sullivan Lisduff



Robert Shannon & son Stephen



John O'Sullivan Knocknalyre



Don Bateman



Richard Feeny



Michael Dempsey



#### 4. ACC Bank EBI Discussion Group Winners

- ✚ The €10,000 first prize in the EBI Discussion Group Competition was won jointly by the Damer Dairy Discussion based in the midlands and the Crookstown Dairy Discussion Group from Cork. The prize was presented to the winning groups in Fermoy, Co. Cork, on Thursday, 10 December. This is the first time there have been joint winners of the competition and reflects the higher performance being achieved by farmers. Both groups achieved 473 marks out of 500 in the competition. Over one thousand dairy farmers, members of seventy four dairy discussion groups from around the country participated in this hotly contested competition.
- ✚ County Tipperary was the winning county, with the highest number of groups participating in the competition. A prize fund of €5,000 will be shared by the eleven participating groups in county Tipperary. There were nine other category winners in the competition.
- ✚ The EBI competition promotes better breeding on dairy farms. Its €42,000 prize fund was sponsored by ACCBank and the competition is run in association with Teagasc, ICBF and the Farmers Journal. Speaking at the EBI awards Sean Farrell, National Agri Manager at ACCBank said “ACCBank is delighted to continue our sponsorship of the EBI Competition. The improvements in EBI being achieved in some herds throughout the country are an example to all milk producers of what can be achieved within local discussion groups.”
- ✚ Commenting on the event, ICBF chief executive, Brian Wickham complimented the increases in quantity and quality of dairy replacements achieved by group members. “The fact that both the number of AI bred

females (up from 26 to 30 females per 100 cows) and average EBI of bulls used (up from €131 to €146) had increased significantly, is a confirmation that the objectives of the competition are being achieved. Well done to all participants”.

- ✚ Speaking on behalf of the judges in the competition, Teagasc Dairy Specialist, George Ramsbottom said: “There is a strong link between high EBI and profitability on farms. The improvements that have flowed from the higher rate of adoption of the participating groups of better genetics, identified through genomic selection, is one of the most pleasing aspects of this years competition. “
- ✚ Judging in the competition took a new format this year. The groups underwent a three stage process;  
  
Stage 1 - Business Financial Exercise based on a cash flow case study.  
  
Stage 2 - Interview with three judges which focused on aspects of the groups breeding performance during the 2009 season.  
  
Stage 3 – Debriefing session where the groups met Teagasc dairy specialists to identify the three or four key take home messages from the competition.
- ✚ Jack Kennedy, Dairy Editor of the Irish Farmers Journal congratulated all the winning groups and those that participated in the competition. He said; “It was a huge undertaking to meet with 74 groups and over 1,000 farmers. However, the effort was entirely justified, especially when you see at first hand the improvements in performance that groups are now achieving. Well done to all of the groups involved in this years competition and we look forward to meeting more groups through a larger and expanded competition next year”.
- ✚ The Crookstown Group consists of 14 dairy farmers, is chaired by Liam Leahy and facilitated by Teagasc Adviser Seamus Lordan. Members have an average herd EBI for the group of €82. Milk sales for 2009 averaged 770 kilograms of milk solids per hectare at the end of September.
- ✚ The Damer Group consists of 23 dairy farmers principally from counties Tipperary and Laois and is chaired by John Butler from Templemore and facilitated by Teagasc’s Matt Ryan, Fintan Monahan and Michael Hogan. The average herd EBI for the group is €85. Milk sales for 2009 averaged 766 kilograms of milk solids per hectare at the end of September. .

Overall winners;  
Damer Group  
Crookstown Group

Regional winning groups each received a prize of €5,000.  
Connacht/Ulster - Killimor Dairy Group, Glaway  
Leinster - Navan Discussion Group, Meath  
Munster - Outrath group, Tipperary

Best County -€5,000  
Tipperary

Prizes of €2,000 each were awarded to  
Connacht/Ulster Development category – Scariff dairy discussion group, Clare  
Newly formed category – Cooraclare-Doonbeg group, Clare

## Leinster

Development category – Acorn group, Laois

Newly formed category – West Offally group

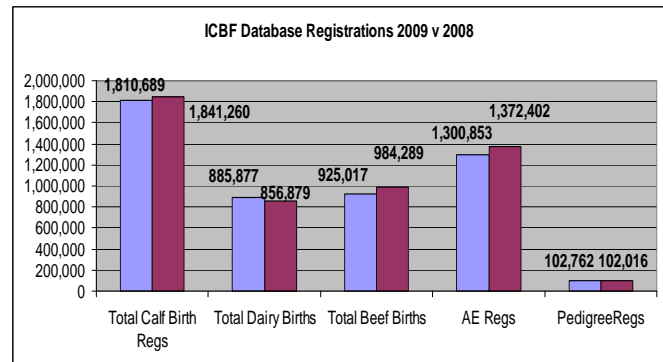
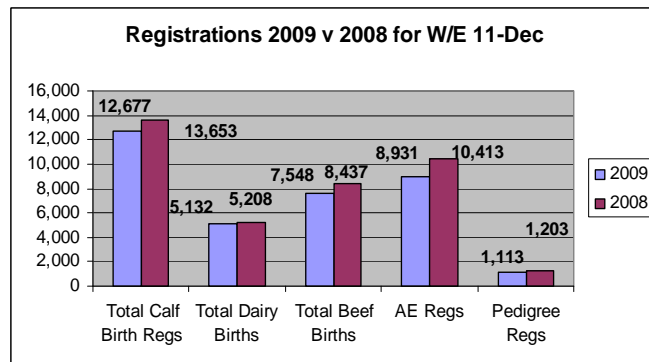
## Munster

Development category – Deise 1250 group, Waterford

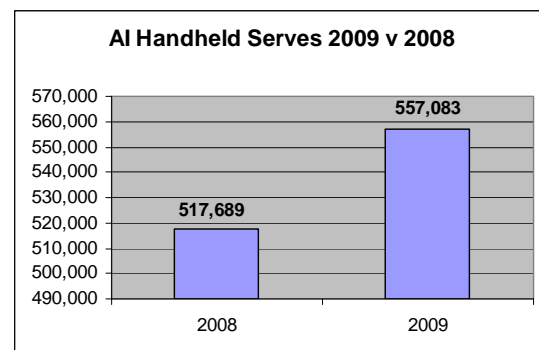
Newly formed category - Dairymis group, Cork

## 5. Database

- In the Suckler scheme, the number of 2009 born calves with meal introduced is 535,000, with the number of animals weaned at 376,000.
- The systems upgrade continued this week, with the testing and reporting environments upgraded. This week, we have been working tidying up any loose ends, and working with the various organisations to help smooth the transition.



- All four milk recording organisations are working well on the new Milk Recording system. We are continuing to update the software based on feedback from the organisations.
- There are a number of project currently being finalised. The AI Code application is now in test mode, and the final changes are being made to the Sheep application for Sheep Ireland.
- The graph shows Inseminations recoded on AI Handhelds in 2009 compared with 2008.



## 6. GENEIRELAND®

### Beef

- Sign ups are going well with 301 herds taking part in the Autumn programme so far (205 herds in Autumn 2008).
- We have now fully tested 18 bulls on Gene Ireland in 2009.

✚ Preparations for the 2010 season are underway with a number of interesting Tully tested bulls in the pipeline.

✚ Total straws sent out per bull currently on the panel are in the table below.

BREED	CH	LM	LM	SI	BB	BB	BA	PT	SA	AA	SH	HE
CODE	VHC	FL29	MBP	HSY	EVG	SEU	WOA	KCP	BHU	RWB	CZB	AGI
STRAWS	419	413	324	153	271	560	689	597	284	514	410	188

## 7. Tully

✚ A total number of 105 high index bulls are involved in the current intake (Table 1). This number is up nearly 50% on the same intake, last year. This is a very exciting intake, with most bulls being top of their respective breed in terms of Suckler Beef Value and blups. There is also some exceptional bloodlines for example a bull sired by Domino out of Ballydonnan Simone (one of the highest index cows in the Charolais breed), along with new genetics i.e. Texan GIE.

✚ All bulls are in isolation with the first of 3 weekly blood samples, testing for IBR, taken from each bull this week. Bulls will be in isolation till the New Year, where they will then start their 90 day performance test.

✚ At present, bulls are being built up gradually on ad-lib concentrates with bulls being fed on average around 6 kilos with 2 kilos dry matter of hay per head, per day. All bulls have received booster vaccinations for RSV and PI3 (strains of pneumonia), along with vaccination against Blackleg and various clostridia diseases. Also, all bulls were vaccinated on entry for Ringworm.

Table 1. Breakdown by breed of bulls in isolation at Tully

Breed	AA	AU	BB	CH	HE	LM	SA	SI	SP*
No of animals	13	1	4	26	5	40	4	10	2

\* Speckle Park

## 8. Milk Recording

### National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 01/12/09 to 11/12/09.

	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	6	281	47	21.0	4.48	3.59	1.69	312
CAVAN	37	1,464	40	16.7	3.99	3.45	1.24	354
CLARE	11	517	47	21.0	3.82	3.42	1.52	328
CORK STH	228	10,897	48	15.8	4.33	3.57	1.25	378
CORK NTH	114	6,231	55	17.0	4.33	3.59	1.35	373
DONEGAL	4	398	100	5.0	4.93	3.85	0.44	386
DUBLIN	4	193	48	26.1	3.01	3.21	1.62	268
GALWAY	23	1,264	55	17.5	4.30	3.44	1.35	347
KERRY	60	3,224	54	15.4	4.04	3.40	1.15	410
KILDARE	14	871	62	20.5	4.33	3.49	1.60	310
KILKENNY	16	1,086	68	17.8	4.20	3.71	1.41	375
LAOIS	13	809	62	16.4	4.29	3.61	1.30	371
LEITRIM	6	224	37	21.1	4.04	3.40	1.57	288
LIMERICK	48	2,604	54	17.0	4.10	3.48	1.29	396

LONGFORD	4	176	44	12.9	3.90	3.61	0.97	267
LOUTH	19	1,105	58	20.4	3.83	3.38	1.47	300
MAYO	14	893	64	16.9	4.13	3.55	1.30	512
MEATH	57	4,076	72	18.5	4.08	3.47	1.40	336
MONAGHAN	28	1,166	42	21.0	4.08	3.46	1.58	361
OFFALY	8	423	53	17.5	4.37	3.49	1.38	531
ROSCOMMON								
SLIGO	2	110	55	14.6	4.50	3.59	1.18	362
TIPPERARY NTH	12	824	69	15.1	4.18	3.56	1.17	454
TIPPERARY STH	4	365	91	16.6	4.07	3.59	1.27	379
WATERFORD	22	1,354	62	19.4	4.44	3.59	1.56	279
WESTMEATH	22	1,279	58	15.8	4.63	3.64	1.31	420
WEXFORD	43	2,425	56	19.0	3.98	3.48	1.42	357
WICKLOW E	17	1,310	77	19.9	3.87	3.45	1.46	341
WICKLOW W	15	1256	84	23.0	4.23	3.46	1.77	479
	<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	851	46,825	59	17.8	4.16	3.52	1.37	367

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 01/12/09 to 11/12/09.								
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	499	26,016	52	17.2	4.16	3.53	1.32	375
Leinster	238	15,290	64	19.1	4.09	3.51	1.45	359
Connacht	45	2,491	55	17.5	4.24	3.50	1.36	377
Ulster	69	3,028	44	14.2	4.33	3.59	1.13	367

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 11/12/09						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 11/12/09	No. EDIY Herds YTD 11/12/09	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 11/12/09	No. EDIY Cows YTD 11/12/09	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,087	852	41%	181,678	73,179	40%
Dairygold	1,508	567	38%	117,705	46,272	39%
Kerry	891	66	7%	63,815	4,253	7%
SWS	857	114	13%	62,346	8,945	14%
Tipperary	136	56	41%	11,263	5,013	45%
Arrabawn	141	116	82%	11,934	10,132	85%
Connacht	144	53	37%	9,838	3,594	37%
Donegal	34	34	100%	4,038	4,038	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,798</b>	<b>1,858</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>462,617</b>	<b>155,426</b>	<b>34%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 11/12/08	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 11/12/09	2009 vs 2008 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	186,889	181,678	-2.9%
Dairygold	126,968	117,705	-7.9%
Kerry	79,690	63,815	-24.9%
SWS	63,103	62,346	-1.2%
Tipperary	13,158	11,263	-16.8%
Arrabawn	12,982	11,934	-8.8%
Connacht	10,693	9,838	-8.7%
Donegal	4,820	4,038	-19.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>498,303</b>	<b>462,617</b>	<b>-7.7%</b>

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