



UPDATE – for period 5th – 11th July 2008

1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Wed. 16th July, 10:30** – Interim Sheep Board Meeting, Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.
- ✚ **Thur. 17th July, 10:30** – ICBF Board Meeting, Comfort Inn Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Tue. 26th August, 10:30** – Beef Industry Genetic Evaluation Consultation Meeting. Venue to be advised.
- ✚ **9th to 11th October** – World Holstein Friesian Conference hosted by Ireland at Killarney & Millstreet. For details see www.ihfa.ie.
- ✚ **11th and 12th October** – International Beef Expo being hosted in Ireland at Kilkenny Mart.

2 Genomic Selection

One of the most exciting developments taking place in cattle breeding is the result of rapid advances in DNA testing. A system (the 56K SNP chip) is now available for testing individual animals for each of 56,000 SNPs (single nucleotide polymorphisms) at a cost of some €200. Research has established that these results can be used to predict the genetic merit for important production traits of new born calves. The accuracy of these predictions is similar to that achieved in a progeny test with 10 to 15 offspring. That is, when the heifer or bull calf is born we know as much about its genetics as we would find out by having 10 to 15 progeny with production traits fully recorded. The impact of this technology on cattle breeding, both dairy and beef, is expected to be dramatic. It means breeding decisions can be made on young animals and that some of the high costs associated with progeny testing can be saved.

Our priority is to ensure genomic selection is used to benefit Irish cattle farmers. We are working closely with TEAGASC, and other organizations focused on delivering benefits to Irish cattle farmers, to ensure the needed research is conducted and that the results are able to be used by the Irish breeding industry. The key issues currently being considered include:

- ICBF's role
- Research co-ordination
- DNA bank for use in research
- Facilities for DNA collection, storage, extraction and testing
- Extending the cattle breeding database to facilitate the research and the provision of genomic services to farmers and the breeding industry
- Inclusion of genomic information in Irish genetic evaluations
- The optimal breeding scheme design when using genomic selection.

The Board of ICBF will be considering genomic selection at its meeting next week.

3 Beef Genetic Evaluation Developments

On Wednesday this week the ICBF beef genetic evaluation research team met with the Beef Breed Associations to provide an update on current priorities and plans. Copies of the presentations are available in the publications section of the ICBF website (www.icbf.com).

Developments include:

- Testing of a new method for including foreign breeding values in the Irish evaluations. This new method is a further step towards our ultimate goal of full Interbeef evaluations which are expected in two to three years time. It is an improvement on current systems and implementation for a range of breeds and traits is planned for September 2008 in advance of the bull sale season.



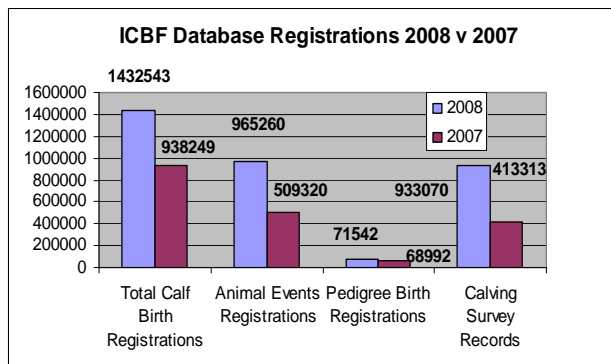
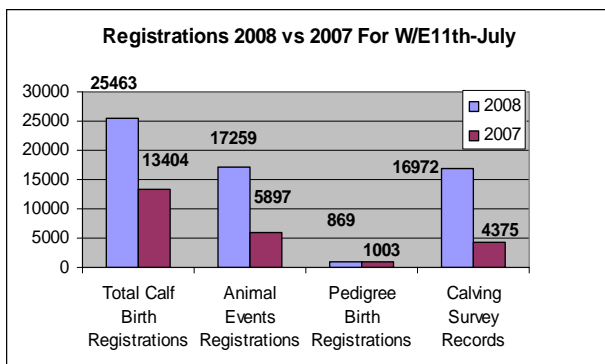
- Revision of the economic values used in the Euro-Star beef indexes. Recent changes in meat prices and production costs are expected to result in changes to the economic weights in the indexes.
- Proposals to include docility and horns (vs polled) in the Euro-Star indexes. Research indicates both traits are of considerable economic importance to Irish beef farmers.
- Across breed evaluations for linear traits. Plans are in place to implement these new evaluations, including use of foreign BVs, in September 2008.

A beef industry genetic evaluation consultation meeting (scheduled for Tuesday 26th August) will consider these developments prior to final decisions on implementation.

4 Tully

- ✚ Bulls for the next intake have entered Tully and pre entry isolation from the 8-7-08 and will be finished before the 16-7-08.
- ✚ The IBR testing of the bulls will take place on the 17-7-08.
- ✚ The final list of bulls that have entered Tully will be sent out to breed societies before the 17-7-08.

5 Database Update



- ✚ 441,158 inseminations have been received so far in 2008, compared with 303,716 in 2007 for the same period.
- ✚ The work on reviewing the AI software for next season is underway. We will be communicating the plans with the AI handheld users over the coming weeks.
- ✚ Over 482,000 birth registrations from new Animal Events users have been received as part of the Suckler Scheme. Over 27,500 herds have received pre-weaning forms. Over the coming couple of weeks, all herds will be receiving their pre-weaning forms.
- ✚ The re-designed linear scoring and weight recording report is now in the final stages of testing.
- ✚ A number of new developments have continued this week, including a revamp of the bull search output, further development of the GENÉIRÉLAND[®] application, and the update of the milk recording data entry screens.
- ✚ The EBI profile on the HerdPlus[®] screens has been updated with some new features.
- ✚ The extract process for the next evaluation run has begun on the database this week, and will be completed early next week.



6 Genetic Evaluation Unit

- Members of the genetic evaluation unit were in Lelystad at the beginning of the week to discuss various aspects of current and future evaluations with a view to running evaluations on new software (MIX99) in-house in the near future. The outcomes of this trip included enhancements to existing evaluations and the ability to run the new software at ICBF.
- Staff participated in the beef breed association meeting on Wednesday, the outcome of which is documented above.
- A start on addressing issues arising out of the beef breed association meeting on Wednesday has been made.
- The data extracts for the next evaluation run are currently taking place and work has begun on the data editing procedure.

7 GENE IRELAND®



- Scores linked to Farmer Satisfaction, temperament and milking speed are being received from herd owners targeted for linear scoring. To date 90 herds have posted back their forms.
- The extract for the final round of payments for recorded inseminations for last years Autumn program has been taken. We plan to make payments towards the end of next week.

8 HerdPlus®



- Design of a new Herdplus 'Dairy Cow Report' has commenced. This report will be similar to the 'Suckler Cow Report' in terms of its overall presentation.
- A redesigned HerdPlus 'Calving Report' is currently being tested.

9 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 01/07/08 to 11/07/08.

	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	1,225	61	23.7	3.82	3.4	1.71	240
CAVAN	48	2,468	51	24.2	3.61	3.31	1.67	296
CLARE	39	2,058	53	24.8	3.69	3.3	1.73	273
CORK STH	270	16,039	59	22.7	3.82	3.39	1.64	290
CORK NTH	249	17,200	69	23.2	3.75	3.4	1.66	275
DONEGAL	12	1,127	94	24.6	3.82	3.38	1.77	277
DUBLIN	7	511	73	23.3	3.98	3.35	1.71	379
GALWAY	39	2,395	61	25.4	3.62	3.26	1.75	310
KERRY	134	8,585	64	24.5	3.7	3.3	1.72	321
KILDARE	14	1,101	79	25.5	3.61	3.41	1.79	366
KILKENNY	56	3,975	71	21.9	3.84	3.43	1.59	254
LAOIS	60	3,968	66	21.6	3.87	3.41	1.57	212
LEITRIM	7	384	55	26.2	3.64	3.23	1.80	301
LIMERICK	136	9,124	67	23.7	3.68	3.34	1.66	278
LONGFORD	9	456	51	24.8	3.85	3.44	1.81	204
LOUTH	15	1,215	81	22.6	3.54	3.33	1.55	300
MAYO	39	1,891	48	28.1	2.95	3.37	1.78	299
MEATH	56	4,382	78	24.6	3.85	3.34	1.77	337
MONAGHAN	47	2,613	56	26.1	3.62	3.28	1.80	234



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	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
OFFALY	34	2,156	63	22.6	4.01	3.4	1.67	306
ROSCOMMON	6	312	52	25.2	3.49	3.39	1.73	385
SLIGO	16	722	45	28.7	3.08	3.37	1.85	264
TIPPERARY NTH	46	3,483	76	22.5	3.95	3.46	1.67	299
TIPPERARY STH	68	4,831	71	22.8	3.89	3.43	1.67	259
WATERFORD	51	4,231	83	22.2	3.78	3.39	1.59	235
WESTMEATH	24	2,053	86	20.9	4.26	3.38	1.60	250
WEXFORD	65	4,432	68	23.1	3.59	3.4	1.61	232
WICKLOW E	18	1,320	73	23.4	3.33	3.32	1.56	270
	11	900	Average Herd Size	24.9	3.96	3.32	Average F + P kg	378
National	1,585	104,257	66	24.0	3.70	3.36	1.70	284

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 01/07/08 to 11/07/08.

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	993	65,551	66	23.3	3.78	3.38	1.67	279
Leinster	378	26,794	71	23.2	3.80	3.38	1.66	279
Connacht	107	5,704	53	26.7	3.36	3.32	1.78	312
Ulster	107	6,208	58	25.0	3.68	3.32	1.75	269

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

Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 11/07/08	No. EDIY Herds YTD 11/07/08	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 11/07/08	No. EDIY Cows YTD 11/07/08	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,205	876	40%	172,368	66,258	38%
Dairygold	1,607	556	35%	114,297	41,128	36%
Kerry	1,155	246	21%	76,993	15,939	21%
SWS	909	130	14%	59,469	8,737	15%
Tipperary	170	71	42%	12,598	5,521	69%
Arrabawn	165	136	82%	12,328	10,352	84%
Connacht	145	52	36%	8,834	2,958	33%
Donegal	45	45	100%	3,893	3,893	100%
Total	6,401	2,112	33%	460,780	154,786	34%



Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison				
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 11/07/06	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 11/07/07	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 11/07/08	2008 vs 2007 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	148,902	158,892	172,368	13.6%
Dairygold	99,464	106,791	114,297	6.6%
Kerry	67,996	69,563	76,993	9.7%
SWS	56,960	58,711	59,469	1.3%
Tipperary	11,502	11,997	12,598	4.8%
Arrabawn	10,650	11,549	12,328	6.3%
Connacht	8,300	9,145	8,834	-3.5%
Donegal	4,843	3,389	3,893	12.9%
Total	408,617	430,037	460,780	6.7%

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