

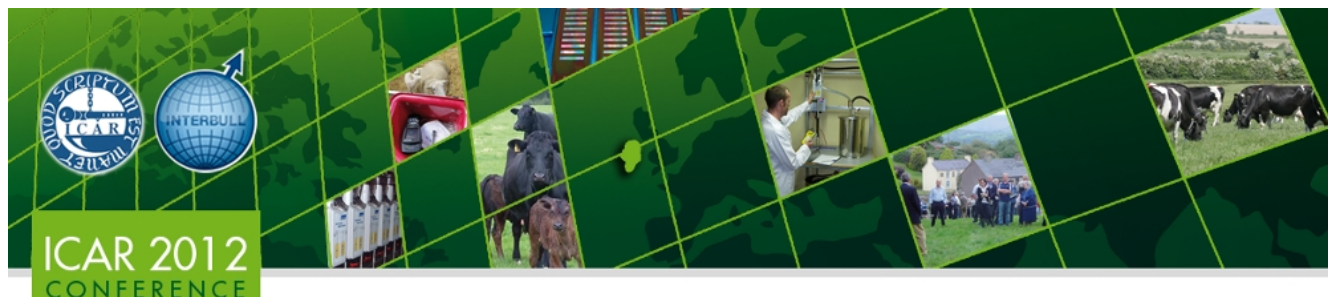
1 Important Dates

- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 15th September, 10:30 to 14:00 – ICBF, Highfield House, Bandon.
- ✚ **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 22nd September, 14:00 to 16:30 – ICBF, Highfield House, Bandon.
- ✚ **High Health Status Sale** – Saturday 15th October 2011 – 12:00 to 2:00 - Tully Performance Test Centre, Tully.

2 Reliability

- ✚ This week, as in most weeks, the importance of reliability in genetic evaluations for sheep as well as cattle, was further highlighted. The situation related to the genetic evaluation of rams. The young rams, born 2011, had a lower reliability than the breeder anticipated.
- ✚ Thierry Pabiou has conducted a nice analysis for the Vendéen breed showing the impact of not scanning on the reliability of genetic evaluations. A copy of Thierry's analysis can be found in the publications section of www.sheep.ie.
- ✚ The analysis was conducted to assess the importance of scanning data (weight, muscle depth, fat depth) in sheep genetic evaluations.
- ✚ To test the impact of scanning on genetic evaluations for the Vendéen breed, all scanning data was dropped, a genetic evaluation was computed, and results in accuracy and breeding values were compared to a current evaluation using all data.
- ✚ In summary, dropping scanning results in less accurate breeding values (up to 17% point reductions), and less genetic gain (up to 50% less in ram lambs).
- ✚ Reliability is simply a measure of the amount of information that has been used to compute the genetic evaluation. More information increases reliability. Less information results in lower reliability.
- ✚ Higher reliability also leads to more rapid genetic gain.
- ✚ Never use a genetic evaluation without looking at the reliability. If the reliability is low you need to ask why. A low reliability means there is little information available to determine the genetic merit of the animal for Irish conditions.

3 ICAR 2012



- ✚ It is time to give a little thought to your plans for 2012.

- ✚ Ireland is hosting the 2012 meeting of ICAR and Interbull from **Monday 28th May to Friday 1st June** in the city of Cork. You can find more information, including the outline draft program on the conference website www.icar2012.ie.
- ✚ To help us with planning and organising we would appreciate you taking a few minutes to complete a short questionnaire dealing with the program and with your intentions to attend. Please go to the website (www.icar2012.ie) and take the questionnaire using the link on the home page.

4 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ The main evaluations have now been completed and a new genomics run is currently underway. The official release is Monday 15th August at 3.00pm.
- ✚ ICBF is meeting with Herd Books next Thursday (18th August) to discuss technical aspects of the test runs for the potentially new evaluations for maternal weaning weight and beef cattle fertility traits.

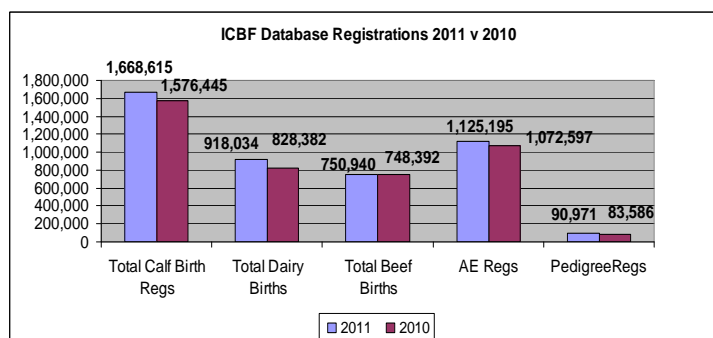
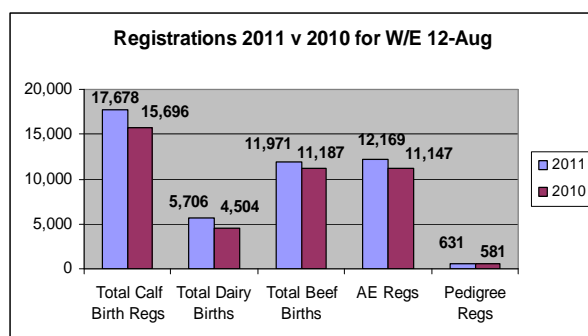
5 Sheep Ireland

- ✚ At a Malp meeting on Monday 8th August, plans for the coming year were discussed.
- ✚ A weekly conference call involving Teagasc and Sheep Ireland personal was instituted this week as a means for ensuring even more effective communications between the two organisations. This follows the long established practice for cattle.
- ✚ A series of LambPlus user meetings at locations convenient for flock owners is being scheduled for late September. The tentative dates are 27th, 28th and 29th of September. The focus of these meetings will be on helping LambPlus flocks to produce the rams which are of greatest value to commercial flocks. The meetings will also provide a forum for identifying ways in which the LambPlus service can be enhanced.
- ✚ A sheep industry meeting has been scheduled for Thursday 6th October to provide the industry with an update on the activities of Sheep Ireland. This meeting will be open to all stakeholders in the sheep industry. Invitations will be distributed in early September.
- ✚ Sheep Ireland were in attendance at the Suffolk Premier Sale in Roscrea last Saturday 6th Aug. There were some very good prices paid for rams on the day. Of the 184 entries in the sale, 74 were LambPlus recorded which illustrates the progress beginning to be made within the society. The photo is an example of a selection of these recorded rams which were presented for sale on the day from the flock of Susan O'Keeffe, Mallow, Co. Cork.
- ✚ Entries for our first ever LambPlus sale on the 22nd Aug were also finalised this week. With just under 120 entries covering seven different breeds it is a sale that appeals to a wide range of commercial producers. Minimum entry requirements for the sale were that all rams are to be 5 Star in at least one of the three sub-indexes that go to make up our Overall Sheep Value (Production, Maternal & Lambing). A minimum reliability of 15% was also required. There are some fantastic evaluation figures among the entries and we hope that ram buyers will realise the potential benefit that can be added to their flocks by purchasing breeding stock at the sale.

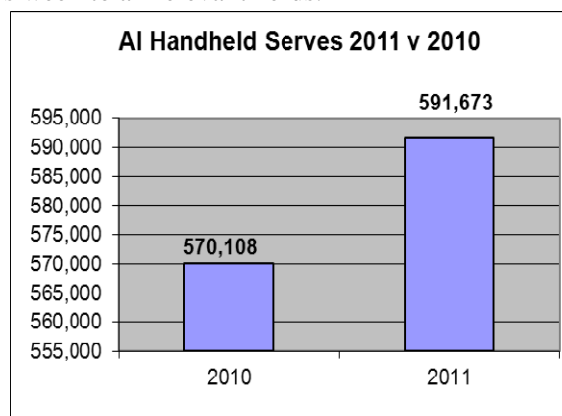


- Promotion of the sale is progressing well. The Farmers Journal carried a piece on Thursday 11th Aug and there is a full page submitted for the Farming Independent for Tuesday the 16th. We will endeavour to have some exposure in all media between now and the sale.
- This weekend will be a busy one with the Texel Premier show and sale taking place on Friday and Saturday (12th & 13th) and the Tullamore show on Sunday 14th. We hope to speak to as many breeders and commercial farmers as possible over the course of these important events.
- This week on our CPT farms, Faecal Egg Counting (FEC) commenced. This will ultimately contribute to our Health Index which we will be developing from this point forward. On Thursday 11th, 150 faecal samples were taken on the farm of Andrew Moloney, Edenderry. 15 samples were taken from the progeny of each ram used to AI Andrews ewes last October.

6 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 633,190 with the number of animals weaned at 573,440.
- Suckler Scheme forms are being generated and distributed this week to all relevant herds.
- The first prototype of a new cattle weighing scales with blue-tooth integration to ICBF handheld software has arrived from the US. Initial testing shows promising results.
- Work is on-going in building the systems that will support the up-coming national BVD eradication programme.
- The current batch of Dairy Co-op milk solids reports have been generated. Distribution will be completed in the coming days.
- Some further work on the screens to support the transfer of genotypes to and from the ICBF database is on-going.
- The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2011 compared with 2010.



7 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 12/08/11						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 12/08/11	No. EDIY Herds YTD 12/08/11	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 12/08/11	No. EDIY Cows YTD 12/08/11	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,663	1,039	28%	299,197	94,012	31%
Progressive	2,362	892	38%	210,818	79,938	38%
Tipperary	144	64	44%	13,015	6,260	48%
Total	6,169	1,995	32%	523,030	180,210	34%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2010 Cows Recorded 01/01/10 - 12/08/10	YTD 2011 Cows Recorded 01/01/11 - 12/08/11	2011 vs. 2010 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	273,120	299,197	8.7%
Progressive	187,389	210,818	11.1%
Tipperary	11,742	13,015	9.8%
Total	472,251	523,030	9.7%

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 02/08/11 to 12/08/11.								
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	895	65,514	73	21.8	3.90	3.45	1.60	263
Leinster	393	31,413	80	22.3	3.85	3.36	1.61	291
Connacht	74	4,935	67	23.6	3.73	3.34	1.67	288
Ulster	95	5,875	62	21.1	3.94	3.40	1.55	316

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 02/08/11 to 12/08/11

	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	12	892	74	23.6	4.04	3.37	1.75	331
CAVAN	53	2,957	56	22.0	3.90	3.40	1.61	343
CLARE	24	1,251	52	23.8	3.67	3.39	1.68	240
CORK STH	261	18,246	70	21.3	3.94	3.48	1.58	226
CORK NTH	219	17,247	79	22.5	3.94	3.49	1.67	256
DONEGAL	8	785	98	19.1	4.17	3.50	1.46	311
DUBLIN	9	636	71	22.0	3.72	3.27	1.54	256
GALWAY	31	2,543	82	19.1	4.06	3.41	1.43	242
KERRY	139	9,147	66	21.5	3.79	3.41	1.55	286
KILDARE	21	1,310	62	23.0	3.81	3.37	1.65	302
KILKENNY	81	7,284	90	20.2	3.84	3.31	1.44	336
LAOIS	42	2,974	71	20.6	3.89	3.38	1.50	297
LEITRIM	9	456	51	25.8	3.65	3.32	1.80	265
LIMERICK	97	7,159	74	21.7	3.83	3.41	1.57	243
LONGFORD	10	521	52	21.0	3.75	3.39	1.50	188
LOUTH	25	2,528	101	25.7	3.83	3.39	1.86	313
MAYO	24	1,285	54	25.3	3.55	3.34	1.74	276
MEATH	53	5,072	96	21.4	3.83	3.31	1.53	378
MONAGHAN	34	2,133	63	22.2	3.76	3.30	1.57	294
OFFALY	27	1,945	72	22.5	4.02	3.39	1.67	272
ROSCOMMON	4	370	93	26.3	3.98	3.30	1.91	262
SLIGO	6	281	47	21.3	3.42	3.35	1.44	395
TIPPERARY NTH	47	3,705	79	22.0	4.05	3.46	1.65	310
TIPPERARY STH	58	4,566	79	20.1	3.90	3.45	1.48	295
WATERFORD	50	4,193	84	21.7	4.05	3.52	1.64	247
WESTMEATH	16	1,321	83	22.1	4.02	3.42	1.64	262
WEXFORD	60	4,475	75	21.9	3.85	3.48	1.61	278
WICKLOW E	21	1,364	65	20.6	3.75	3.37	1.47	253
WICKLOW W	16	1,091	68	25.1	3.84	3.28	1.79	320
	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	1,457	107,737	73	22.3	3.86	3.39	1.61	285

Brian Wickham (PhD) Chief Executive, ICBF & Sheep Ireland, Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon Co. Cork., Phone: +353 238 820 222, Mobile: +353 86 826 9911, Email bwickham@icbf.com.

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