

## 1. Important Dates

- + **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 10:30 to 14:00 – Highfield House, Bandon.
- + **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 14:00 to 16:30 – Highfield House, Bandon.
- + **Tully Bull High Health Status Sale** Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October, ICBF Tully Central Performance Test Centre.

## 2. “In the world of genomics phenotypes are king”

This quote from a prominent animal breeding scientist nicely encapsulates what is really important, and valuable, for the breeding industry to be able to exploit the benefits of the rapidly developing genomic technologies. What are phenotypes? They are nothing more than good measures of animal performance for the traits that matter to commercial producers. Examples are milk records, calving ease scores, clinical cases of mastitis, live weights and carcass grades. In the world of dairy cattle breeding the progeny performance for these traits, of a bull used widely in AI, can give a very accurate phenotype for the bull. This fact is exploited in the training of the genomic predictions which we now use for selecting young Holstein Friesian bulls and heifers. The SNP Chip results are of little value without the availability of good phenotypes.

The message here is very simple – accurate performance recording will continue to be one of the most important activities underpinning the genetic improvement of livestock into the future. DNA technologies are powerful and useful tools for helping breeders make selection decisions on young animals. However, the DNA technologies are just a sophisticated way of using performance information; they do not eliminate the need for excellent performance recording.

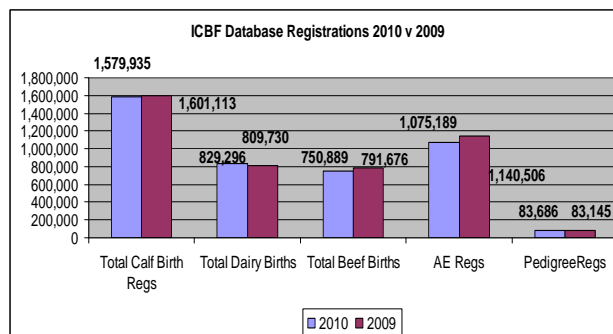
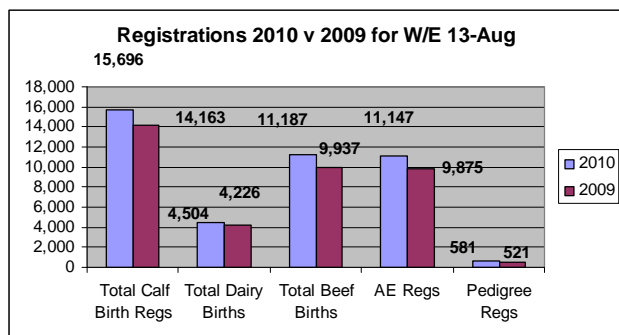
ICBF is leading an international effort to facilitate much greater sharing of SNP Chip results. We are doing this because the SNP Chip results are of little value in their own right. However, when they are used in association with the phenotypes held by performance recording organisations, it is possible to derive very valuable genomic predictions. By sharing SNP Chip results countries will be able to make more accurate genomic predictions and thus deliver greater genetic improvement for the benefit of their farmers. This is ICBF’s mission for Irish farmers.

## 3. Sheep Ireland

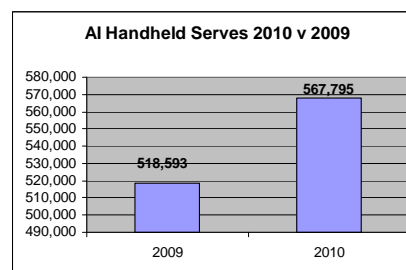
- + The Texel premier sale will be held tomorrow the 14<sup>th</sup> of August in Blessington mart (11am). Euro-Star evaluations will be available on the sheep that were recorded through LambPlus<sup>®</sup> for this sale.
- + Genetic linkage is defined as the use of common genetic material, usually via the use of a common ram, between flocks on a regular basis. An “*unlinked*” flock is a flock whose sheep are loosely related to other sheep in Sheep Ireland flocks. “*Unlinked*” flocks need to get “*linked*” if the breeder wants to extract the best value out of the Sheep Ireland breeding program.
- + Ways to get “*linked*” are as follows:
  - o Purchase of a highly “*linked*” ram from “*linked*” breeders or
  - o Use a CPT or MALP ram.
- + “*Unlinked*” breeders have been sent a ram list of suitable “*link*” rams.
- + **Purchasing a ram?** Accuracy shows how much confidence can be placed in the indexes. The accuracy of the Euro-stars of young rams is generally low due to them being based mostly on ancestry information. At this early stage in the development of Sheep Ireland the accuracy may also be low due to the low number of flocks currently involved. Sheep Ireland indexes should always be used with visual assessment of the animal

and never on their own. Equally, the use of visual assessment, on its own, can be very misleading without consideration of the performance of the animal and its relatives.

#### 4. Database



- ✚ The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFF AIM systems.
- ✚ In the Suckler scheme, the number of 2009 born calves with meal introduced is 661,592 with the number of animals weaned at 601,721.
- ✚ Batches of Suckler pre-wean forms for 2010 continue to go out this week.
- ✚ Work is continuing on the design of the new catalogue service for both beef and dairy animals.
- ✚ Vets wishing to begin interacting with the AHI/ICBF system can register at <http://www.animalhealthireland.ie/registerpage.php>.
- ✚ Work on a new Dairy Replacements discussion group report continued this week.
- ✚ Work is almost complete on the web tool to help manage the storing of samples used in the genomics process at ICBF.
- ✚ Updates to the Beef Calving Report continue this week.
- ✚ Work is ongoing on the window server infrastructure, involving a move to a more resilient infrastructure for email, file servers, etc.
- ✚ Work on a new infrastructure for communicating with marts is on-going, with a view to getting the data flows on a more efficient and effective basis.
- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recoded on AI Handhelds in 2010 compared with 2009.



#### 5. Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ The current routine evaluations for dairy and beef are on-going and will continue into next week. Official release date is expected to be 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

## 6. Milk Recording

### National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 03/08/10 to 13/08/10

	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	10	781	78	22.6	4.13	3.34	1.69	645
CAVAN	34	1,911	56	22.9	3.47	3.16	1.52	402
CLARE	16	971	61	22.7	3.66	3.40	1.60	392
CORK STH	242	17,215	71	21.1	3.86	3.44	1.54	287
CORK NTH	234	16,970	73	21.8	3.88	3.46	1.60	276
DONEGAL	13	1,745	134	22.8	4.25	3.43	1.75	328
DUBLIN	2	78	39	27.3	3.81	3.36	1.96	548
GALWAY	18	1,138	63	22.7	3.79	3.41	1.63	295
KERRY	114	6,941	61	22.2	3.69	3.36	1.57	339
KILDARE	15	1,127	75	27.2	3.49	3.29	1.84	675
KILKENNY	39	3,578	92	19.3	4.00	3.48	1.44	351
LAOIS	26	1,886	73	23.9	3.68	3.41	1.69	362
LEITRIM	8	437	55	22.2	3.66	3.34	1.55	403
LIMERICK	95	6,687	70	21.9	3.74	3.38	1.56	263
LONGFORD	8	401	50	22.1	3.58	3.34	1.53	288
LOUTH	14	1,630	116	22.2	3.55	3.33	1.53	392
MAYO	23	1,617	70	25.5	3.31	3.45	1.72	303
MEATH	51	4,376	86	21.8	3.73	3.41	1.56	473
MONAGHAN	40	2,197	55	24.4	3.52	3.25	1.65	374
OFFALY	22	1,777	81	22.5	3.98	3.38	1.66	514
ROSCOMMON	3	207	69	23.1	3.36	3.02	1.47	393
SLIGO	8	314	39	21.8	3.80	3.47	1.58	337
TIPPERARY NTH	26	2,452	94	20.6	3.97	3.43	1.52	325
TIPPERARY STH	56	4,240	76	20.2	3.89	3.43	1.48	250
WATERFORD	58	4,895	84	19.9	3.87	3.40	1.45	331
WESTMEATH	10	720	72	21.3	4.19	3.43	1.62	435
WEXFORD	61	4,560	75	20.6	3.72	3.40	1.47	393
WICKLOW E	21	1,561	74	19.9	3.49	3.35	1.36	367
WICKLOW W	13	1,008	78	18.9	3.79	3.38	1.36	604
	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
<b>National</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>93,420</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>3.37</b>	<b>1.59</b>	<b>391</b>

### National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 03/08/10 to 13/08/10

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	841	60,371	72	21.3	3.82	3.41	1.54	308
Leinster	292	23,483	80	22.3	3.76	3.38	1.59	465
Connacht	60	3,713	62	23.1	3.58	3.34	1.60	346
Ulster	87	5,853	67	23.4	3.75	3.28	1.64	368

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 13/08/10

Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 13/08/10	No. EDIY Herds YTD 13/08/10	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 13/08/10	No. EDIY Cows YTD 13/08/10	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,553	996	28%	273,355	84,520	31%
Progressive	1,993	759	38%	172,573	65,136	38%
Tipperary	132	56	42%	11,744	5,608	48%
Connacht	150	59	39%	9,838	3,707	38%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,828</b>	<b>1,870</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>467,510</b>	<b>158,971</b>	<b>34%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 13/08/09	YTD 2010 Cows Recorded 01/01/10 - 13/08/10	2010 vs 2009 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	248,237	273,355	9.2%
Progressive	169,281	172,573	1.9%
Tipperary	10,736	11,744	8.6%
Connacht	8,659	9,838	12.0%

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