

## 1. Important Dates

- ✦ **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009.** Beef Genetic Evaluation Consultation Meeting, Abbeyleix Manor Hotel 10:30 – 14:00.
- ✦ **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009.** Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation Meeting, Moorepark, 10:30 – 14:00.
- ✦ **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009.** ICBF Board Meeting, Moorepark, 2:00pm – 4.00pm. (*This replaces the Board Meeting scheduled for Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March in Portlaoise*).
- ✦ **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009.** Sheep Ireland Board Meeting, Portlaoise. 14:00 – 16:30.

## 2. Genomic Selection - Important Decisions for 2009

On Thursday next week we will be finalising details of the way our information services will be amended to incorporate genomic data. The decision making process will involve a consultation meeting with the dairy breeding industry followed by a meeting of the ICBF Board.

### Active Bull List

- ✦ The key issue being addressed is the ICBF Active Bull list. This list has become the focal point for identifying the bulls widely available in AI that have the greatest potential to increase farm profitability. The bulls on the list are the best available in Ireland to breed dairy replacements.
- ✦ Our role is to assemble information that enables farmers to make good decisions. We judge our effectiveness through the rate at which the EBI of dairy replacements is increasing. There is a lot of potential to increase the current rate of gain.
- ✦ Genomics is a new technology with the potential to substantially increase the gain in EBI through increased use of selected two to four year old bulls. With the use of genomic testing we expect to see an increasing percentage of the highest EBI bulls being these younger bulls for which complete progeny test data is not yet available. While they will have high EBIs they will have lower reliabilities than traditionally found on the active bull list.
- ✦ The risk to the herd owner associated with the lower reliabilities on these higher EBI bulls can be reduced through the use of several such bulls. The concept of using teams of bulls to reduce risk, while achieving high EBIs, is being strongly supported by ICBF.
- ✦ All the main AI companies operating in Ireland have indicated that they will offer a selection of genomically tested AI sires in spring 2009.
- ✦ To help farmers evaluate the wide choice of bulls we will be publishing EBIs that incorporate genomic data. With the incorporation of the genomic data the reliability of the EBI will increase over that obtained from ancestry information alone.

The key decisions are thus:

- ✦ Ensuring the Active Bull List continues to be highly relevant.
- ✦ The reliability criteria for a bull to be considered for the Active Bull list.
- ✦ The terminology that will be used to describe the information that has been used in computing the EBI for an animal.

### Promotion of Best Practice in Cattle Breeding

ICBF's proposal for an industry funded campaign to promote best practice in cattle breeding will be considered at meetings next week.

### Beef Breeding – Building on the Suckler Cow Welfare Scheme

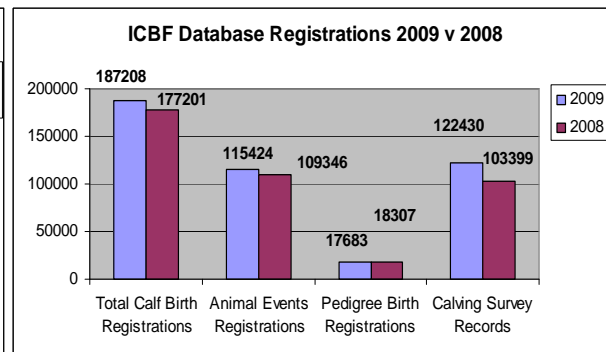
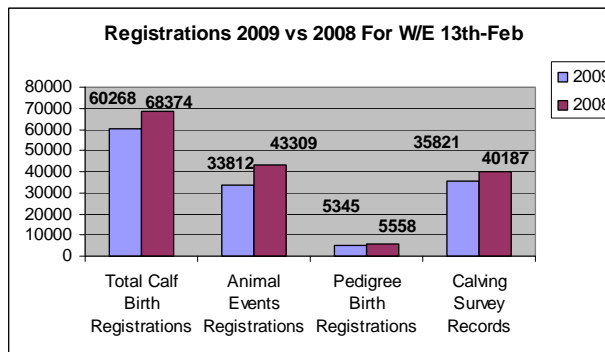
Research to develop a new genetic evaluation system for docility has been completed and will be reported at the Beef Breeding industry consultation meeting on Wednesday next week. This new system makes extensive use of the docility data collected in the Suckler Cow Welfare Scheme.

### 3. Lambplus®

- ✚ NSIS Tag numbers continue to be updated in the Inventory Screen by LambPlus users.
- ✚ MALP Flocks – retrieval of NSIS tag numbers for ewes & rams is ongoing.
- ✚ Work has commenced on setting up links with the various factories. The key issue here is that all lambs will be accurately identified and assigned to their correct carcass information after slaughter.
- ✚ LambPlus Web Screens & Paper Recording Sheets Development Work is ongoing.
- ✚ Design work has commenced on a Lambplus ‘Lambing’ report. Such a report would allow Flockowners to:
  1. Gauge how their flock is performing.
  2. Compare their flock’s performance to other Flock’s in the scheme.



### 4. Database

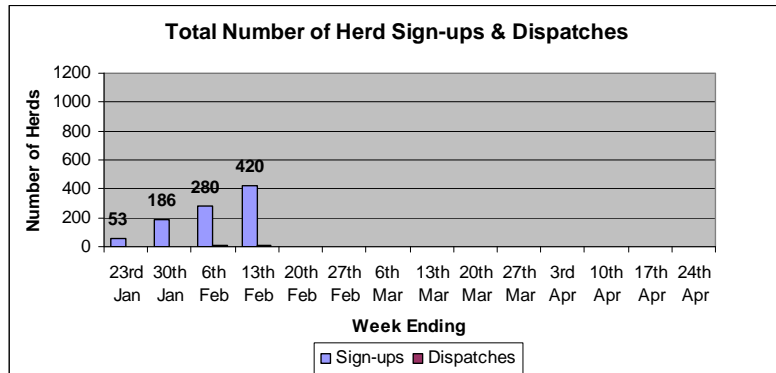


- ✚ 21, 697 inseminations have been received so far in 2009, compared with 22,020 in 2008 for the same period.
- ✚ The 2009 AI software migration with PG has taken place this week and will be completed today.
- ✚ The Animal Events notebooks continue to go out and should be completed by the end of next week. There also continues to be a lot of activity in relation to the 2008 born calves. The number of calves with a meal feeding introduction has increased to 740,000, with just over 639,000 of these having been weaned.
- ✚ The revamp of the Milk Recording system continues. Programming has continued this week, and will take several weeks to complete.
- ✚ Work on the in-breeding check function and Sire Advice 2009 are continuing, with the in-breeding check in the testing phase.
- ✚ Another release of functionality for Sheep will take place today, with more to follow next week.

## 5. GENRELAND<sup>®</sup>

### Dairy

- ✚ A further 600 letters were posted this week targeting herds.
- ✚ Sign-ups continue at a steady rate.
- ✚ Semen from a number of test bulls arrived at Munster AI this week. Dispatches to commence early next week.
- ✚ The introduction of Genomics has delayed proceedings by approximately 2 weeks compared with last year.



### Beef

- ✚ Sign ups have now reached 151 herds taking an average of 19 straws each (50 herds ahead of the same week last year)
- ✚ The popular Tully tested LM bull RBU has reached 700 straws and is no longer available'
- ✚ A new Shorthorn bull CZB has been added to the panel. See picture on right.
- ✚ Work continuing on identifying new Charolais and Limousin bulls for the panel.



## 6. GROW – Linear Scoring & Weight Recording

- ✚ The new GROW report is awaiting final development work to be completed.
- ✚ It will then be sent out to all breeders following a visit from a Scorer.
- ✚ Crucially, it will show a Breeder how many of the animals that they put forward for scoring & weighing will have their own data included in their evaluations.
- ✚ This will depend on:
  1. Age – 150-300 days is desired age window
  2. Group size – Group of 5 is minimum required group size.
- ✚ A constant issue following a Scoring session is that a Breeder assumes that all data recorded is subsequently used in genetic evaluations. This is not always the case, however up to now this has not been clearly communicated to Breeders. The new GROW report will address this issue.
- ✚ This report will also be available on the web.



## 7. Tully

- Breakdown by breed of their average daily gain (A.D.G) of bulls for the last weighting (16-1-09 to 6-2-09);

Breed	AA (n = 4)	AU (n = 7)	BB (n = 1)	CH (n = 5)	LM (n = 26)	PT (n = 2)	SA (n = 2)	SI (n = 2)	SH (n = 1)	HE (n = 2)
Highest A.D.G	2.57	2.57	2.57	2.57	3.14	2.48	2	2.19	2.24	2.33
Lowest A.D.G	1.52	1.81	2.57	2	1.29	1.52	1.71	1.9	2.24	2.29
Average	1.86	2.2	2.57	2.28	2.09	2	1.86	2.05	2.24	2.31

- Also a reminder that the Tully Advisory Committee Meeting will take place on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> of February at the Abbeyleix Manor Hotel after the Beef Genetic Evaluation Consultation meeting which starts at 11:00am and finishes at 2:00pm.

## 8. HerdPlus

### UCD Agricultural Science Careers Day Class of 2009

- On Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> of February the Agricultural Science Students in UCD held their annual 'Careers Day'.
- This is a day where Companies involved in Agriculture are invited participate.
- It provides Final Year students with an opportunity to find out what opportunities exist within the industry.
- It also provides a great opportunity for students to find out more about a particular area that interests them.
- For ICBF it was our first time and we found it a very good way to get to know the names and faces of our Ag graduates, the future of our industry.



- The day was a great success & the Agricultural Science students as well as the Faculty Co-Ordinators deserve great credit for how the event was run.
- Pictured here are some of the students pictured at the ICBF stand with Pat Donnellan.

## 9. Genetic Evaluations

### Dairy & Beef

- A file of docility test proofs will be sent out to the beef industry today ahead of the consultation meeting on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February. The new proofs are the culmination of a large piece of work on a new evaluation combining the linear score docility and the farmer scored docility coming from Animal Welfare Scheme.
- ICBF staff presented a talk on dairy breeding developments for Spring 2009 at the Glanbia meetings in Corrin Mart, Fermoy on Monday night last.
- A presentation on HerdPlus<sup>®</sup> was also given to farmers in the Westmeath area in the Teagasc office in Mullingar on Wednesday evening.

### International

- Conversion formulae have been updated for the Norwegian Red breed. Most of the traits have been successfully converted except for 'direct mortality'. A list of converted production traits have also been passed on to the Normande society for validation following conversion work done early this year.

### Genomics

- Due to problems with DNA extraction only 96 of the 192 samples sent to the lab were good enough for genotyping. We will be in contact with the AI companies regarding the samples that were rejected with a view to getting new DNA samples. We expect to get the genotypes back from the lab on Tuesday 17th February with a new run commencing as soon as possible. The latest position with regards to publishing the proofs will be given at the dairy industry meeting on Thursday.

## 10. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 13/02/09						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 13/02/09	No. EDIY Herds YTD 13/02/09	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 13/02/09	No. EDIY Cows YTD 13/02/09	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	895	162	18%	52,565	10,063	19%
Dairygold	187	13	7%	10,195	785	8%
Kerry	179	2	1%	8,106	173	2%
SWS	289	7	2%	12,631	641	5%
Tipperary	16	2	13%	670	53	8%
Arrabawn	9	6	67%	386	291	75%
Connacht	53	0	0%	2,372	0	0%
Donegal	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,628</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>86,925</b>	<b>12,006</b>	<b>14%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 13/02/08	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 13/02/09	2009 vs 2008 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	53,885	52,565	-2.5%
Dairygold	8,638	10,195	15.3%
Kerry	9,244	8,106	-14.0%
SWS	13,100	12,631	-3.7%
Tipperary	484	670	27.8%
Arrabawn	431	386	-11.7%
Connacht	3,018	2,372	-27.2%
Donegal	214	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>89,014</b>	<b>86,925</b>	<b>-2.4%</b>



National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 03/02/09 to 13/02/09

	<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>
CARLOW	9	659	73	25.5	3.84	3.43	1.85	380
CAVAN	14	395	28	23.5	3.89	3.30	1.69	338
CLARE	2	118	59	24.6	4.16	3.23	1.82	394
CORK STH	106	4,580	43	21.9	4.15	3.41	1.66	306
CORK NTH	45	3,104	69	23.1	4.09	3.50	1.75	271
DONEGAL	2	67	34	25.7	4.07	3.34	1.90	106
DUBLIN	2	88	44	24.1	4.38	3.55	1.91	272
GALWAY	11	430	39	23.5	4.04	3.31	1.73	330
KERRY	29	1,264	44	24.1	4.04	3.36	1.78	333
KILDARE	10	537	54	24.1	4.12	3.46	1.83	399
KILKENNY	19	967	51	23.8	3.96	3.54	1.79	391
LAOIS	17	746	44	19.9	4.39	3.66	1.60	452
LEITRIM	2	60	30	18.9	4.15	3.26	1.40	408
LIMERICK	16	817	51	23.2	3.89	3.41	1.69	407
LONGFORD	1	18	18	24.1	3.82	3.33	1.72	220
LOUTH	13	980	75	24.4	3.57	3.47	1.72	347
MAYO	11	415	38	24.0	3.60	3.43	1.69	404
MEATH	40	3,071	77	23.3	4.33	3.50	1.82	379
MONAGHAN	29	1,087	37	24.2	3.93	3.42	1.78	347
OFFALY	7	376	54	24.4	3.97	3.48	1.82	464
ROSCOMMON	1	36	36	18.4	3.85	3.31	1.32	622
SLIGO	1	51	51	22.0	3.76	3.49	1.60	640
TIPPERARY NTH	6	203	34	15.8	4.09	3.55	1.21	200
TIPPERARY STH	3	128	43	29.1	3.85	3.35	2.10	322
WATERFORD	11	762	69	25.1	4.12	3.45	1.90	407
WESTMEATH	11	531	48	22.1	4.27	3.37	1.69	412
WEXFORD	23	1,297	56	22.3	4.23	3.40	1.70	259
WICKLOW E	8	516	65	23.1	3.85	3.31	1.65	289
WICKLOW W	7	535	76	26.8	4.65	3.33	2.14	535
	<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	456	23,838	50	23.3	4.04	3.41	1.73	367

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 03/02/09 to 13/02/09								
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
<b>Munster</b>	218	10,976	50	23.4	4.05	3.41	1.74	330
<b>Leinster</b>	169	10,381	61	23.7	4.11	3.44	1.79	372
<b>Connacht</b>	26	992	38	21.4	3.88	3.36	1.55	481
<b>Ulster</b>	45	1,549	34	24.5	3.96	3.35	1.79	264

## 11. Change in our phone numbers

The ICBF phone numbers have changed. Our new numbers have “88” added to them after the area code (023). Please amend your files as soon as possible. The old numbers will continue to work until May of 2009.

Old Number (example)	New Number (example)
Phone: 023 20222	023 <b>88</b> 20222
Fax: 023 20229	023 <b>88</b> 20229

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