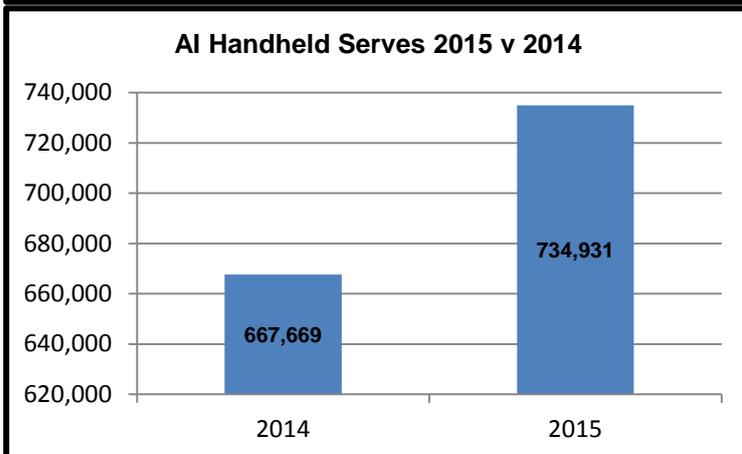
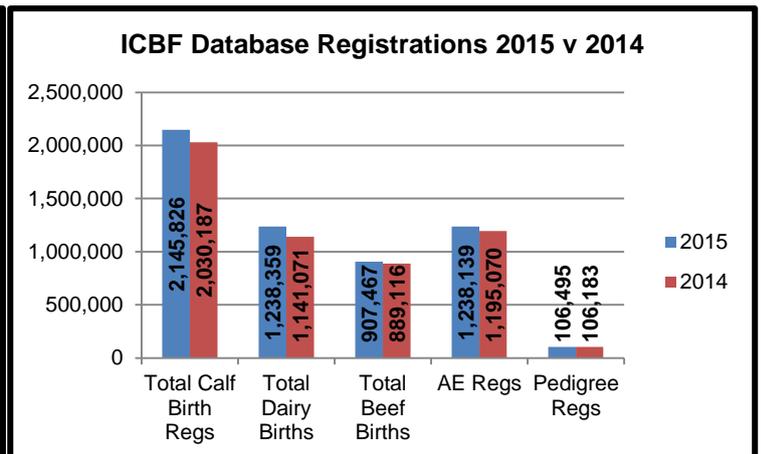
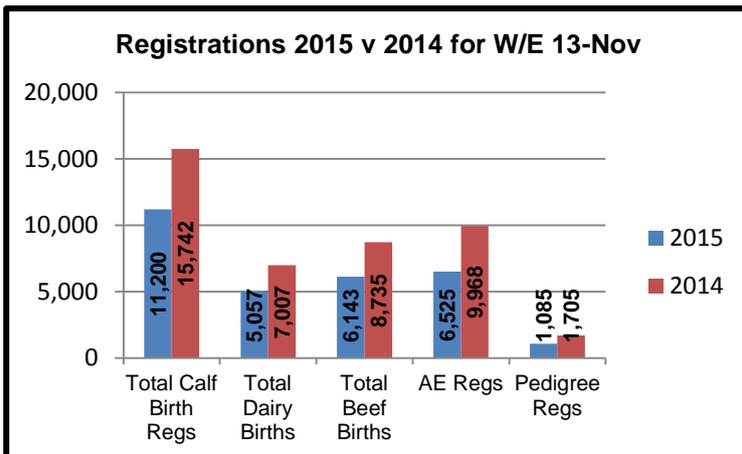


ICBF Weekly Update 13th November 2015

1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Audit & Finance Meeting** – Thursday 19th November 2015 at 10:30, Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise (please note change of venue).
- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 26th November 2015 at 10:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Sheep Board Meeting** – Thursday 26th November 2015 at 14:00, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise

2 Database



- ✚ The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFM AIM systems.
- ✚ BVD test results continue to be received at ICBF and are being processed accordingly. There have been 2.28 million results received since January 1st, of which 17,168 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 7.23 million results have now been received.
- ✚ The chart shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2014 compared with 2015.

3 Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP)

- ✚ This week's Irish Farmers Journal page is at the end of this update. The title of this week's article is "Interpreting bull's Euro-Star Index".

4 Herd Plus®

- ✚ Suckler Cow Reports are now available online for all Beef Herdplus herds. Reports should be delivered by post to all farms by early next week.
- ✚ Dairy Herdplus farmers are requested to have all their Insemination and Scanning data recorded ASAP ahead of generation of Personalised Pocket Notebooks and Expected Calving Reports.
- ✚ Milk Recording herds should begin to record the dry-off data, so that accurate lactation yields can be predicted. There are several ways of recording dry-offs on the ICBF database (listed below).

ICBF Website

Dry-offs can be recorded for all herds at www.icbf.com, herdowners need a username & password to login which can be obtained by texting PASS to **089 4577663** or by contacting the HerdPlus office on **1850 600 900**.

Dry-Off Notification Sheets

You should receive these by post from your milk recording organisation. If you have not, you can request them by contacting your milk recording organisation.

Farm Software

If you use a farm software provider (e.g. IFC or Kingswood), record your dry-offs and ensure you send the file to ICBF on completion of recording.

Mobile Phone Text

You can text your dry offs to the ICBF by sending them to the following: **089 4577663**. E.g. Dry 127, 256, 785, 1165, 1952, 2514 25/11/2014

Animal Events Recording Book

Dates can be recorded on the Animal Events Recording Book and sheets subsequently posted to Animal Events Agency, PO Box 72, Clonakilty, Freepost, Co. Cork.

5 GENE IRELAND® Beef

Autumn 2015 Beef Programme

- + Sign Ups are continuing for the Autumn 2015 Beef programme.
- + 197 herds taking a total of 3645 straws have joined so far.
- + The average order is 18 straws per herd.
- + The catalogue is available to view at the link below.
 - + http://issuu.com/herdplus/docs/gi_beef_autumn_2015_catalogue
- + To learn more or to order straws please phone **1850 600 900**.
- + Approximate total straws ordered to date for the bulls are detailed below.

List of Bulls Currently On-Test

Code	Name of Bull	Breed	Straws Ordered
AA2064	Carrigroe Kian	AA	285
AA2163	Liss Brendan	AA	115
AU2155	Slaneymill Jack	AU	245
CH2159	Bondi Jacob	CH	135
PDR	Dereskit Improver	CH	325
CH2154	Polar Joe 2	CH	55
HE2148	Ballyaville Hamlet	HE	175
LM2156	Clonark Jumbo	LM	340
LM2151	Ballygarvan Stud Ike	LM	180
LM2116	Tomschoice Ironstone	LM	170
OEO	Ivoire	LM	80
ZKY	Kyle Herd Ivan	PT	315
PI2157	Kilree Leo	PI	90
SA2153	Highfield Odran	SA	220
SH2181	Coolvin Dominator	SH	10
SI2152	Curaheen Earp	SI	365
SI2158	Seepa Fionn	SI	250
KJG	Knockane Dag	SI	480
ETP	Curaheen Evolution P	SI	255

6 Genetic Evaluations.

- The file of foreign Jersey dairy bulls from New-Zealand and Norwegian Red dairy bulls have been converted into Irish based proofs.
- Those conversions apply to non Interbull traits, such as Somatic Cell Count and some beef traits. The converted proofs are especially useful for young bulls that are not yet proven in Ireland.

7 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 13/11/15						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 13/11/15	No. EDIY Herds YTD 13/11/15	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 13/11/15	No. EDIY Cows YTD 13/11/15	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,993	1,278	32%	367,984	126,595	34%
Progressive	2,509	1,076	43%	260,303	112,423	43%
Tipperary	127	54	43%	11,870	5,282	44%
Total	6,629	2,408	36%	640,157	244,300	38%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2014 Cows Recorded 01/01/14 - 13/11/14	YTD 2015 Cows Recorded 01/01/15 - 13/11/15	2015 vs 2014 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	335,507	367,984	9.7%
Progressive	244,462	260,303	6.5%
Tipperary	10,393	11,870	14.2%
Total	590,362	640,157	8.4%

8 Sheep Ireland

LambPlus Regional Meetings

- Two of the five Regional LambPlus meetings have now been held, there have been some good discussions taking place, with feedback on all the various aspects of Sheep Ireland, including the CPT and the genetic evaluations. The remaining three meetings are being held next week.
- One area that did cause a lot of discussion at the Kilkenny meeting was, across breed evaluations. These breeders felt that commercial farmers wanted these evaluations, to better aid them in selecting the best ram for their purpose, regardless of breed. A test across breed evaluation is compiled each year to investigate, if it is ready to be deployed to the public. This will be done again between now and next year's evaluations and depending on the results, some across breed evaluations may be published.
- Another topic that is causing some debate is the DQI, with breeders giving some feedback on what they think should be included in and how it is displayed. Hopefully this level of breeder interaction will continue for the remainder of the meetings.

Regional LambPlus Meeting Dates and Venues

Date	Location	Venue	Time of Meeting
16th November	Ballybofey	Jacksons Hotel	7:30pm
17th November	Navan	Newgrange Hotel	7:30pm
18th November	Tuam	Ard Rí House Hotel	7:30pm



Central Progeny Test Rams

- ✦ All the breeders that submitted rams into the CPT this year have got a letter this week updating them with how many ewes the ram was used to serve, how well the ram jumped, the quality of the rams semen and whether or not the ram successfully had semen frozen and how many doses is available to the breeder.

Sean Coughlan Chief Executive, ICBF & Sheep Ireland , Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon Co. Cork., Phone: +353 238 820 222, Mobile: +353 872903121, Email scoughlan@icbf.com, **Registered Office:** Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Society Ltd trading as "ICBF", Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co Cork. Registered Dublin, Ireland. Registration Number 4914R, Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 1893 to 1978. Web: www.icbf.com.
Registered Office: Sheep Database Ltd trading as "Sheep Ireland". Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co Cork. Registered Dublin, Ireland. Registration Number 465004, Companies Acts 1963 to 2006. Web: www.sheep.ie.

National Milk Recording Results for the 10 day period, 04-NOV-2015 To 13-NOV-2015

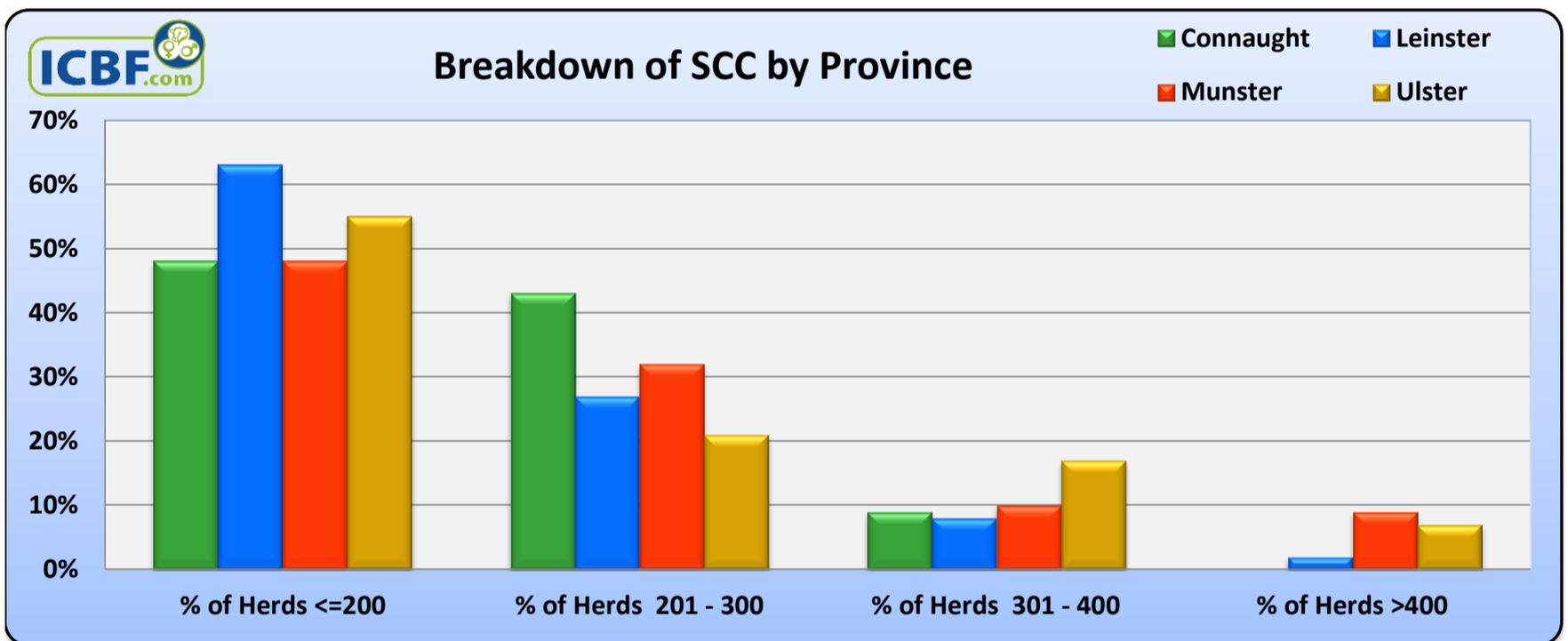
ICBF.com	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Avg Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F+P kg	Average SCC*
Connaught	23	1,235	54	17.4	4.38	3.72	1.39	173
Leinster	131	12,719	97	17.8	4.46	3.76	1.45	168
Munster	514	41,262	80	15.0	4.64	3.90	1.27	206
Ulster	29	1,880	65	17.3	4.18	3.57	1.33	186
National Statistics	697	57,096	82	15.7	4.58	3.85	1.31	196

* Geometric Mean Herd SCC

SCC Distribution for the 10 day period, 04-NOV-2015 To 13-NOV-2015

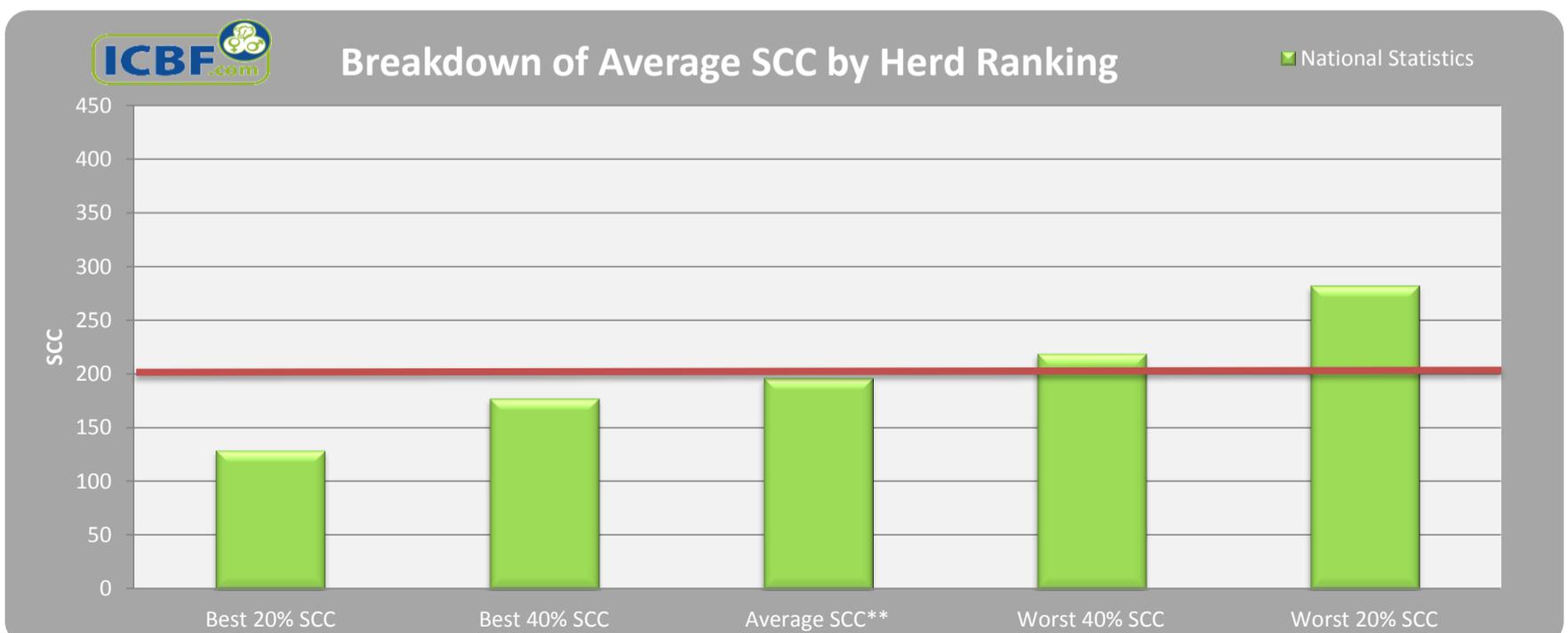
ICBF.com	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	% of Herds <=200	% of Herds 201 - 300	% of Herds 301 - 400	% of Herds >400	Average SCC*
Connaught	23	1,235	54	48%	43%	9%	0%	173
Leinster	131	12,719	97	63%	27%	8%	2%	168
Munster	514	41,262	80	48%	32%	10%	9%	206
Ulster	29	1,880	65	55%	21%	17%	7%	186
National Statistics	697	57,096	82	52%	31%	10%	7%	196

* Geometric Mean Herd SCC



% Herd Breakdown for the 10 day period, 04-NOV-2015 To 13-NOV-2015								
ICBF.com	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Best 20% SCC	Best 40% SCC	Average SCC**	Worst 40% SCC	Worst 20% SCC
Connaught	23	1,235	54	101	176	201	220	256
Leinster	131	12,719	97	118	149	174	195	254
Munster	514	41,262	80	138	181	204	225	294
Ulster	29	1,880	65	112	145	181	208	310
National Statistics	697	57,096	82	129	177	196	219	282

** Percentile Herd SCC Rank (Median SCC)



Interpreting bull's Euro-Star Index

The Euro-star index is one of the first points of reference when deciding on purchasing a stock bull or using a particular AI bull. It allows you to analyse the bull's genetic merit for key profit traits such as carcass weight and milk.

Before looking at any bull's index, you need to ask yourself "What do I want this bull to produce?" Once you know the answer to this question, you can then look for the traits which are of most importance to your farming system.

Replacement and Terminal Indexes

There are two main indexes in beef. The Replacement Index reflects the overall suitability of a bull to breed replacement females and includes traits such as milk, fertility, calving and docility. Farmers looking to breed their own replacement heifers should look at the Replacement Index.

The Terminal Index reflects the overall suitability of a bull to breed cattle for sale as weanlings/stores or for slaughter and includes traits like carcass weight and conformation, feed intake and calving. Farmers should only use the Terminal Index if they are solely concerned with beef traits and do not want to breed replacement heifers from a bull.

The star ratings tell you where a bull ranks within his own breed and when compared to all other breeds. See Table 1.

Within and across breed

The Euro-value's (€151 on replacement index for the above bull) are then expressed on both a within-breed (ie, just compared to all LM animals born in last five years) and across-breed basis (ie, com-

pared to ALL animals born in last five years).

For commercial suckler producers, it is critical that you consider the across-breed stars, as this will give you a better assessment of the genetic merit of an animal relative to all his peers, not just those within the given breed.

Key profit traits

The Replacement and Terminal Indexes give an overview of a bull's breeding potential through the combined effect of a number of traits. However, where a farmer is looking to improve a specific trait, eg fertility, then that trait will have to be looked at in its own right. It is possible for a bull to have, for example, a high overall replacement Index but a poor fertility figure.

Reliabilities

The reliability figure gives an indication as to how much data has been recorded for a particular trait. For example, if a bull has a reliability figure of 99% on calving difficulty, then that bull is fully proven on that trait and the calving difficulty figure is based solely on the data recorded on that bull's progeny.

In contrast, a bull with a reliability figure of only 30% on calving difficulty has few, if any, progeny records and the calving difficulty figure is based almost solely on its ancestry (sire and dam). The higher the reliability figure, the less likely it is that the trait figure will change significantly in the future. Genomics will increase the reliability figures on bulls before they are ever used for breeding and this will lessen the risk of an animal's index changing in the future.



John pictured with his 9 year old stock bull Creggpark Buster. He is sired by Ronick Hawk (RKH) and has a Replacement Index of €138 (5 stars within and across breed). He has been on the farm since Spring 2008 and has sired over 250 calves to date. John has 18 of Buster's daughters calved into his suckler herd and he is very pleased with their performance".

Table 1: Replacement & Terminal Indexes of a bull.

Star rating (with Limousin breed)	Economic Indexes	Euro value	Index reliability	Star rating (across all beef breeds)
★★★★★	Replacement (per daughter lactation)	€151	85% (V High)	★★★★★
	Maternal cow traits	€52	82%	
	Maternal progeny traits	€99	92%	
★★★★★	Terminal (per progeny)	€150	91% (V High)	★★★★★

Q&A

Q. Where can I access the Euro-Star Index of a bull?

Indexes can be accessed in a number of places. The online bull search at www.icbf.com allows you to type in the tag number or name of a bull and bring up his index. If using AI, indexes are available in AI company catalogues. Most pedigree bull sales now have Euro-Star catalogues available to potential buyers. Euro-Star indexes are updated three times per year (Apr, Aug & Dec) so it is important to ensure that you are looking at the most up-to-date indexes. The ICBF bull search will always be fully up-to-date.

Q. How can I tell from a bull's Euro-Star index how well proven he is?

A. You do this by looking at the reliability figures. A bull's reliabilities will not go above 50% until his own progeny start to hit the ground and data is recorded on them. The lower the reliability figures, the less information is known about the ancestry of the bull. Once a bull hits 90% reliability on a trait, it can be considered proven on that trait. Genomics will increase the reliability figures on a bull's index before it is ever used for breeding, hence, giving more certainty as to how he will breed in the future.

FARMER FOCUS: JOHN KELLY

I plan to genotype all of my heifers

Name: John Kelly, Moydow, Co Longford
Farming System: Suckler to weaning.
BDGP Cow Reference No: 72
4 and 5 Star Females: Cows: 47; Heifers: 65.
Stock Bull or AI: Stock Bull
Replacement Strategy: Breed own.

Why did you join the BDGP?

The breeding in my herd is already quite good so meeting the requirements seems to be pretty straightforward for me. I am always looking to improve my breeding as well and I think genomics can add an extra dimension to this. Having more information at hand when selecting future replacements has to be a good thing.

Do you feel it will deliver for the national suckler herd?

It can absolutely. From my experience better breeding can make a big impact on herd performance. You can have the best management practises in the world but if your genetics aren't good enough, you simply won't get the performance.

What is your replacement strategy?

I have always bred my own replacements. The majority of my heifers are coming in with high Replacement Indexes which is great to see. Next year I plan to genotype all of my heifers and sell the surplus heifers as genotyped 4 & 5 star females. I can see a big market opening in the next few years for top quality high Replacement Index heifers.

Do you place much emphasis on the Euro-Star Indexes of bulls prior to purchase?

I use a combination of visual appearance and index. I would get a sale catalogue a few weeks



John Kelly

before the sale and pick out potential bulls based on their indexes. As I am interested in breeding, I would also take the bull's pedigree into account. On the day of the sale I then visually assess each of the bulls and further narrow my selection. This strategy has worked well for me in the past. The only problem that I can run into is that some of the bulls can go out of my price range.

Tell me a bit about your own stock bulls.

I have 2 stock bulls. My main bull is a 9 year old Ronick Hawk (RKH) bull. He has a Replacement Index of €138 (5 stars within and across breed). A lot of my cows are out of this bull and I am very pleased with them. They have milk, are fertile and they are so quiet. They are consistently producing top quality calves. My younger bull is a 2.5 year old Ampertaine Commander (APM) bull. He has a Replacement Index of €109 (5 stars within and across breed). I only have his first crop of calves on the ground this autumn, but so far so good.

DATA RECORDING

- ➔ All calves born from January to May are now old enough (five months) to record calf quality and docility.
- ➔ Cows can be scored for milk and docility as soon as they calve.
- ➔ This information can be recorded online through www.icbf.com, a farm software package or by postal forms.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

- Weds 18th Nov:** Munster AI/Teagasc Suckler Event, Tuam Mart at 7:30pm
- Thurs 19th Nov:** Dingle Mart Suckler/BDGP Information Event, Benner's Hotel, Dingle at 8pm