



Update for period 7th October – 13th October 2006

1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Wednesday 18th October**, 10.30am – 3.30pm, **Beef Genetic Evaluation Consultation** meeting, at the Abbeyleix Manor Hotel, Abbeyleix.
- ✚ **Saturday 20th October**, **Millstreet Dairy Show**. HerdPlus will have a stand and ICBF is sponsoring the EBI awards.
- ✚ **Wednesday 1st November**, 1:30pm to 5:00pm, **Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation** meeting, at Moorpark.
- ✚ **Thursday 2nd November**, **ICBF Board** meeting, Comfort Inn, Portlaoise.

2 Consultation Meeting – Dairy Genetic Evaluations

The Dairy Genetic Evaluation consultation meeting was held on Wednesday and attended by some 60 people representing a wide range of cattle breeding interests. The team developing the dairy evaluations provided a series of reports covering the outcome of recently completed research. All attending had the opportunity to question the research team. Further work will be undertaken over the next few weeks and a further meeting has been scheduled for 1st November prior to the Board of ICBF taking final decisions on changes to be implemented in the November 2006 evaluation run.

Key outcomes

- ✚ ICBF release new EBI proofs on a test basis. These EBI proofs to be derived from an economic model, where land is constrained but with the option of bringing extra feed.
- ✚ Proofs to be published for Montbelliarde breed (bulls, cows & cross-bred animals). Proofs to be published for AI sires that meet Interbull criterion (80 daughters in 20 herds) and pure-bred cows for all other dairy & dual purpose breeds.
- ✚ ICBF to forward new Interbull proofs (for fertility & longevity) to industry on a test basis.

Further work

1. *Updating economic values in the dairy EBI.*

- Laurence Shalloo to examine additional constraints to farm economic model including; (i) number of cows (to ensure a viable income), (ii) milk price, & (iii) reduced stocking rates (i.e., in absence of nitrates derogation).
- Donagh Berry to further review economic values for beef in the EBI model.

2. *Multiple indexes.*

- Andrew Cromie to develop “industry profile” regarding systems of milk production, e.g., liquid milk, seasonal & short-lactation seasonal.
- Andrew Cromie to review options for demonstrating EBI benefits to farmers.

3. *Across-breed genetic evaluations.*

- Francis Kearney to review genetic effects for growth & carcass traits.

General Comments

The genetic evaluation process is fundamentally about the application of science to cattle breeding. These consultation meetings are held by ICBF in order to ensure all cattle breeding interests have an opportunity to meet with the scientists and to have their questions answered and concerns addressed. ICBF is firmly



committed to ensuring full transparency of the genetic evaluation system and to providing the best possible information for farmers to use in their breeding decisions.

Every change made to the genetic evaluation system has an impact on the commercial interests of individual farmers and AI companies. For this reason, it is most important that the process of making changes to the genetic evaluation system is transparent, motivated by the need to provide accurate, unbiased and useful information, and is based on the very best available scientific knowledge.

Our work has established that:

- ✚ There is a lot of genetic variation for most traits of importance to dairy farmers.
- ✚ Genetic evaluations, expressed as PTAs, are the best tool for measuring the genetics of individual animals for individual traits.
- ✚ The use of absolute production, eg kg fat, or kg protein, can give very misleading information about the genetic merit of animals. This is because the affect of environment is totally confounded with the affect of genetics in such records.
- ✚ In deciding which animals to breed from farmers are faced with deciding how much emphasis to place on different traits. The best tool for doing this is an index which combines the economics of the farm with the genetic information contained in the trait PTAs.
- ✚ For most Irish dairy farms the EBI is the best tool for identifying the most profitable animals for breeding replacements
- ✚ In making breeding decisions Irish dairy farmers have available to them, or can obtain it easily, genetic evaluation information that they can use to identify animals that best suit their particular circumstances.

ICBF is committed to further developing the dairy genetic evaluation system to take advantage of new knowledge, changes in economic circumstances and the availability of better data. ICBF and its members have a responsibility to ensure all breeders are kept fully informed of these developments as they occur.

3 NDP Claims

- ✚ ICBF and the cattle breeding industry benefit from substantial capital funding provided as part of the Irish National Development Plan (NDP). These funds can only be used for development projects.
- ✚ Over the last few weeks we have been preparing claims for NDP contributions. NDP pays 50% or 70% of qualifying expenditure which has already been incurred. Each claim involves a lot of detailed documentation to support both that the work was undertaken and the expenses legitimately incurred.
- ✚ Our NDP claims for 2006 include work and equipment associated with three development projects:
 - EDIY milk recording,
 - Systems for collecting data (AI Handhelds, Linear Scoring Handhelds, ...) and for providing information to farmers (Herd Reports, Website ...), and
 - Genetic evaluation systems development.
- ✚ DAF administers the NDP scheme under which ICBF qualifies and also conducts a regular audit of all claims made.



4 Tully

- ✚ Blood samples for feed conversion efficiency calculations were taken from the May intake bulls on 11-10-06 .
- ✚ Ultrasound scanning of the May intake will take place within the next two weeks.
- ✚ Application forms for the December intake were sent out to breeders on 11-10-06.



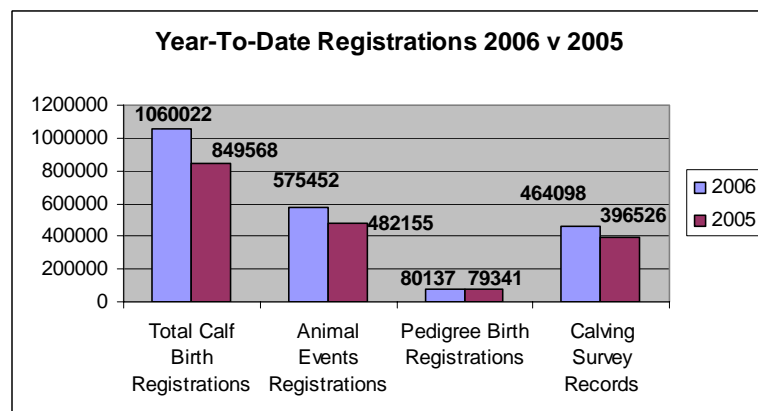
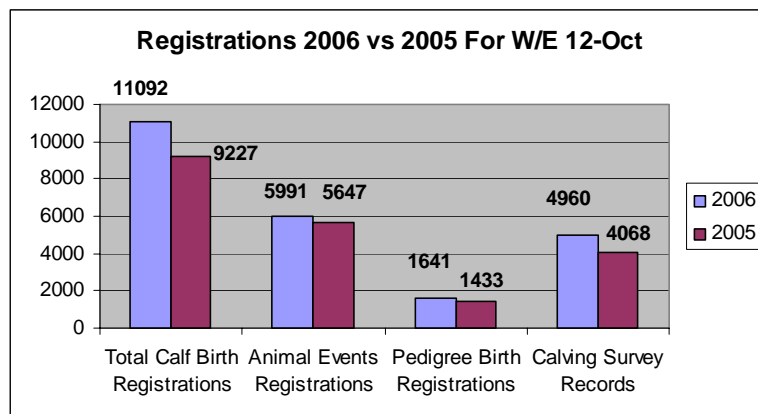
- A group of 12 breeders from Co Laois will be visiting Tully on 6th or 7th November.

5 HerdPlus

- October 2006 EBI Reports were put up on ICBF website today, 13th October, for all HerdPlus farmers. Each of those signed up for the Electronic service will be notified by text on Monday that their reports are updated and available for view/print.
- HerdPlus clients on the Postal service will receive a printed copy of their EBI Reports in the post on Mon/Tue next week.
- New Format Feedback – this is the first issue of the NEW look EBI report (changes were a result of input received over the summer from a farmer focus group). We welcome any feedback or any queries you may have on your report – lo call no. is 1850 600 900.
- Direct Debit Sign up Forms continue to come in at a steady rate.
- ICBF will be promoting HerdPlus at the National Dairy show in Millstreet on Oct 21st 2006. The Show committee have been contacted and preparations are being finalised for the HerdPlus stand.

6 Database Update

- 17 new herds added to the database last week.
- The number of inseminations recorded on handhelds this year now stands at 157,155.
- 42 Dairygold technicians have now recorded live inseminations. There are only a few of the technicians currently working remaining to be trained.
- Progressive Genetics are also making good progress in cleaning up the data before going live with the North East technicians. It is expected that the training of these technicians will begin in early November.
- The linear scoring of dairy progeny test heifers has continued this week, 2172 progeny test heifers have now been scored.
- The commercial beef scoring project also continued this week, with 2078 animals now scored.



- A copy of the revised EBI report, which is being released at the moment, is included below.



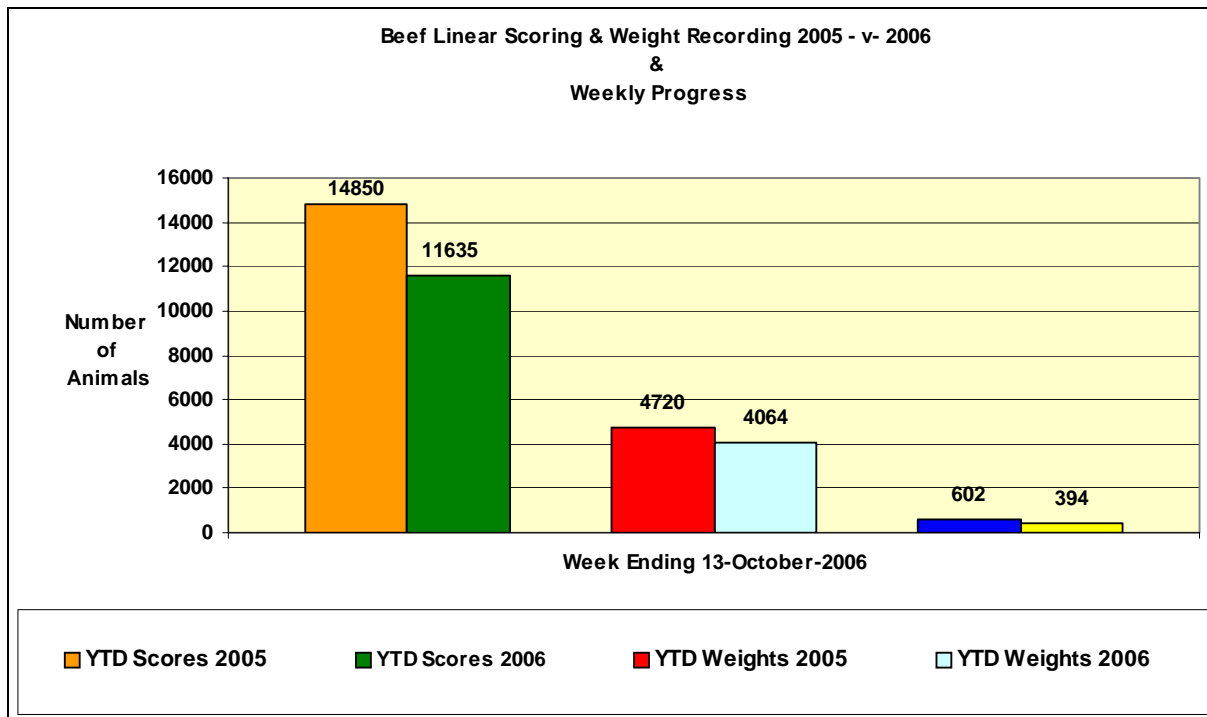
7 Genetic Evaluations - Beef

Routine evaluation continues; new slaughter & mart data have been extracted and a new evaluation will commence shortly.

8 International Beef Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ The corrections of duplicates (about 200) and international tags (about 800) have been realised in the ICBF database. Links between Ireland & the UK are in the process of being updated for the Charolais breed.
- ✚ The results of the first international genetic evaluation are back from France where the INRA (E. Venot & D. Laloe) did the calculations and prepared a report. These results will be forwarded to the Limousine society early next week and a summary will be presented at the beef industry meeting on Wednesday 18th.

9 Beef Linear Scoring





10 Milk Recording Update

Milk Recording Herds and Cows Year To date 2006 versus Year to date 2005

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2005 Herds Recorded 01/01/05 - 13/10/05	YTD 2006 Herds Recorded 01/01/06 - 13/10/06	Year on Year Herds Difference(%)	YTD 2005 Cows Recorded 01/01/05 - 13/10/05	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 13/10/06	Year on Year Cows Difference(%)
Progressive	2,082	2,101	1%	148,811	156,005	5%
Dairygold	1,523	1,550	2%	97,353	103,161	6%
Kerry	1,064	1,074	1%	67,059	69,861	4%
SWS	937	958	2%	54,522	59,196	9%
Tipperary	141	168	19%	9,325	11,776	26%
Arrabawn	109	158	45%	7,105	10,971	54%
Connacht	110	138	25%	7,325	9,007	23%
Donegal	36	58	61%	3,606	5,264	46%
Total	6,002	6,205	3%	395,106	425,241	8%

Milk Recording Stats week ending 6/10/06

Milk Recording Organisation	2006 Herds Recorded Week 06/10/06 - 13/10/06
Progressive	354
Dairygold	229
SWS	160
Kerry	147
Arrabawn	33
Connacht	18
Tipperary	13
Donegal	6
Total	960

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Economic Breeding Index (EBI) Herd Summary Report - Oct 2006

LoCall 1850 600 900

Herd Owner: **SAMPLE HERD**
Herd Number: **IE1234567**
Data Extracted: **17/09/2006**

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1. EBI Herd Summary

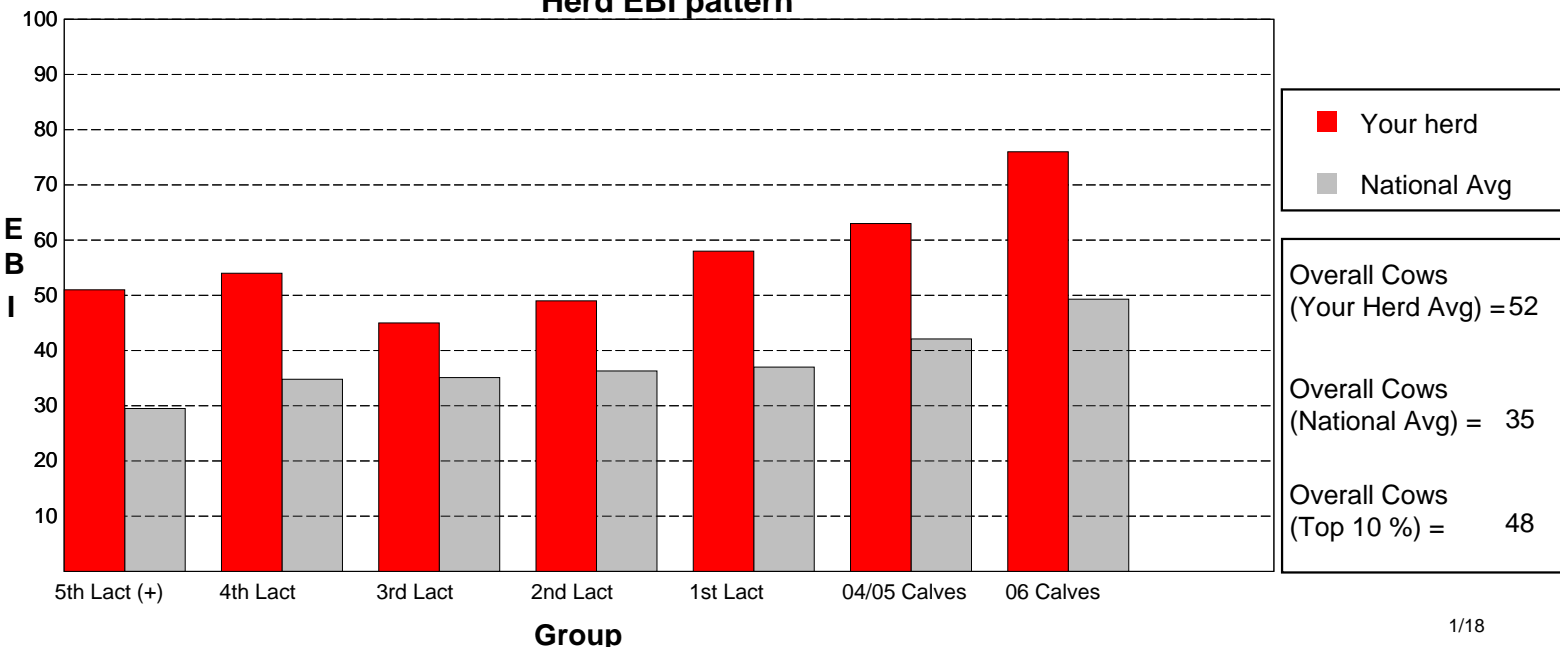
Average EBI for all Holstein Friesian cows with; (i) a known sire (or milk recorded progeny with a known sire), (ii) valid lactation record and (iii) are currently on your farm.

Group	Num of Cows	M Kg F Kg P Kg	F% P %	Surv% CI Days	Milk Solids % Contrib	Fertility % Contrib	Calving % Contrib	Beef % Contrib	Health % Contrib	EBI €
Overall Cows	97	200			€ 45.9	€ 5.8	€ 0.3	€ 2.1	€ -2.4	€ 52
		7.7	0.00	0.4	84.8%	10.8%	0.6%	3.8%	0%	
		9.6	0.06	-0.2						
1st Lactation	22	210			€ 48.3	€ 8.8	€ -0.1	€ 3.5	€ -2	€ 58
		8.3	0.01	0.5	79.7%	14.5%	0%	5.7%	0%	
		10.1	0.06	-0.5						
2nd Lactation	25	231			€ 51.1	€ 0.4	€ 0.1	€ 0.8	€ -3.2	€ 49
		8.1	-0.01	0.2	97.5%	0.8%	0.2%	1.6%	0%	
		11.0	0.06	0.3						
3rd Lactation	14	124			€ 36.3	€ 10.2	€ 0.1	€ 0.4	€ -2.3	€ 45
		5.7	0.03	0.5	77.2%	21.7%	0.2%	0.9%	0%	
		7.2	0.06	-0.7						
4th Lactation	10	174			€ 49.4	€ 5.4	€ -0.1	€ 1.5	€ -2.1	€ 54
		9.0	0.05	0.3	87.7%	9.6%	0%	2.7%	0%	
		9.5	0.07	-0.3						
5th Lactation (+)	26	213			€ 42.9	€ 6.1	€ 1.1	€ 3.2	€ -2.3	€ 51
		7.4	-0.01	0.5	80.4%	11.5%	2.1%	6%	0%	
		9.3	0.04	-0.1						

2. Dairy Youngstock

06 Spring Calves	25	216			€ 50.5	€ 18.8	€ 3.7	€ 4.1	€ -1.2	€ 76
		10.0	0.04	0.8	65.5%	24.4%	4.8%	5.3%	0%	
		10.1	0.06	-1.4						
All 04/05 Calves	59	242			€ 52.2	€ 6.5	€ 1.2	€ 4.4	€ -1.3	€ 63
		8.8	0.00	0.4	81.2%	10.1%	1.9%	6.9%	0%	
		11.2	0.06	-0.3						

Herd EBI pattern



Comparison of Top and Bottom EBI Cows based on birth year (1999-2003)

Herd Owner: **SAMPLE HERD**

Herd Number: **IE1234567**

LoCall 1850 600 900

Steps taken:

1. The top and bottom 2 EBI cows from each birth year (1999-2003) were selected and the following data extracted:
 - Average daily yields for milk, fat and protein kgs over their lifetime.
2. The average daily milk production was calculated for both groups (denoted A & B).
3. The difference between the 2 groups (denoted C) was established and an overall profit was calculated (denoted D).
4. The cows are ordered by birth year.

Top

Cow FB No.	EBI	Birth Date	Recorded Lact's	Lifetime DIM	Lifetime yield (kg/day)				
					M Kg	F Kg	P Kg	F%	P%
3600	€ 69	15-Sep-99	3	1270	20.4	1.01	0.75	4.95%	3.68%
3730	€ 80	04-Oct-99	4	1402	26.25	1.25	0.95	4.76%	3.62%
467	€ 81	09-Oct-00	3	936	25.1	1.15	0.96	4.58%	3.82%
487	€ 102	19-Nov-00	2	635	22.9	1.15	0.89	5.02%	3.89%
537	€ 88	06-Sep-01	1	629	23.84	1.1	0.88	4.61%	3.69%
566	€ 84	09-Dec-01	2	631	24.13	1.09	0.88	4.52%	3.65%
582	€ 82	19-Feb-02	1	550	22.38	1.01	0.85	4.51%	3.8%
628	€ 61	17-Oct-02	1	319	20.89	0.94	0.79	4.5 %	3.78%
674	€ 76	14-Feb-03	1	321	22.3	1.12	0.81	5.02%	3.63%
690	€ 81	02-Apr-03	1	272	21.03	0.91	0.75	4.33%	3.57%
A AVE	€ 80	09-Aug-01	1.9	697	22.92	1.07	0.85	4.68%	3.71%

Bottom

Cow FB No.	EBI	Birth Date	Recorded Lact's	Lifetime DIM	Lifetime yield (kg/day)				
					M Kg	F Kg	P Kg	F%	P%
3380	€ 34	11-Feb-99	5	1723	24.24	1.07	0.88	4.41%	3.63%
3590	€ 30	15-Sep-99	4	1409	25.01	1.08	0.83	4.32%	3.32%
424	€ 22	16-Feb-00	2	1084	27.77	1.12	0.93	4.03%	3.35%
480	€ 25	01-Nov-00	1	1018	21.09	1.07	0.85	5.07%	4.03%
508	€ 25	14-Feb-01	2	768	20.22	1.12	0.76	5.54%	3.76%
530	€ 8	27-Mar-01	2	952	23.2	1.05	0.82	4.53%	3.53%
593	€ 12	09-Mar-02	1	327	15.69	0.64	0.52	4.08%	3.31%
604	€ 17	17-Apr-02	1	313	27.62	1.09	0.89	3.95%	3.22%
664	€ 48	01-Feb-03	1	324	19.62	0.83	0.68	4.23%	3.47%
683	€ 45	13-Mar-03	1	291	21.78	0.82	0.71	3.76%	3.26%
B AVE	€ 27	16-Apr-01	2	821	22.62	0.99	0.79	4.39%	3.49%

Difference

		M Kg	F Kg	P Kg	Profit
C	Difference	€ 54	0.3	0.08	0.06
	Economic Values	€ -0.08	€ 1.55	€ 5.27	
D	Profit/Day	€ -0.03	€ 0.12	€ 0.32	€ 0.41
	Profit/Lactation (305 day)	€ -9.15	€ 36.6	€ 97.6	€ 125

Based on information from the average daily yields:

1. Top EBI cows produced 0.3 kg more milk carrier per day in their lifetime, generating a relative loss of -9.15 €/lactation (cost of transporting and processing milk is 0.08 €/kg).
2. Top EBI cows produced 0.08 kg more fat per day in their lifetime, generating a relative profit of +36.6 €/lactation (value of 1kg fat is €1.55 after accounting for feed and quota costs).
3. Top EBI cows produced 0.06 kg more protein per day, generating a relative profit of +97.6 €/lactation (value of 1kg protein is €5.27 after accounting for feed costs).
- 4. On average each of the Top EBI cows had an increased profit per lactation of €125. (ie.€125 * 10 Top EBI cows = €1250 /lactation)**

Economic Breeding Index (EBI) Animal Report (Cows) Oct 2006

LoCall 1850 600 900

Herd Owner: **SAMPLE HERD**
 Herd No: **IE1234567**
 Data Extracted: **17/09/2006**
 Page: **1(8)**

FB Name Breed	Cow ID	Sire ID Dam FB MG Sire ID	Sire EBI Dam EBI MGS EBI	C. Date Age Lact.	M Kg F Kg P Kg	F % F % P %	Surv% CI (Days)	Milk Solids Calving	Fertility Beef Health	EBI € Herd Rank
8	IEXXXX0008G	ASE	42	07/02/2006	108		1.3	€ 63	€ 25	€ 86
H JULIE 5		318	45	10y 8m	16.0	0.22	-1.5	€ -6	€ 5	4
HO 84.4% FR 15.6%		DSK	-26	9	9.0	0.10			€ 0	
67	IEXXXX0067P	ELC	65	04/12/2005	7		1.5	€ 19	€ 34	€ 60
H RUTH 5		271	6	10y 0m	6.0	0.11	-2.5	€ 5	€ 0	32
HO 62.5% FR 37.5%		WYT	-13	8	2.0	0.04			€ 2	
136	IEXXXX0136W	ELC	65	19/04/2006	248		1.6	€ 52	€ 26	€ 86
H LUCY 7		247	73	9y 8m	9.5	0.00	-1.2	€ 8	€ 5	5
HO 46.9% FR 40.6%		BEY	58	8	11.0	0.05			€ -4	
148	IEXXXX0148P	ELC	65	20/03/2005	230		1.6	€ 61	€ 19	€ 91
H LILY 5		342	83	9y 7m	9.0	0.01	-0.4	€ 6	€ 8	2
HO 71.9% FR 21.9%		EZB	70	6	12.5	0.09			€ -2	
167	IEXXXX0167K	ELC	65	05/04/2006	127		0.8	€ 23	€ 9	€ 44
H LAURA 9		261	-6	9y 6m	3.0	-0.04	0.1	€ 5	€ 11	59
HO 53.1% FR 46.9%		TBN	-20	8	5.5	0.03			€ -3	
200	IEXXXX0200Q	ASI	45	05/03/2005	91		0.4	€ 31	€ 14	€ 51
H MAY 36		288	56	8y 11m	4.5	0.02	-1.4	€ 1	€ 2	50
HO 65.6% FR 34.4%		CHW	38	5	6.0	0.06			€ 3	
205	IEXXXX0205E	ASI	45	26/02/2004	301		-0.9	€ 73	€ -10	€ 58
H MAY 10		319	16	8y 11m	19.0	0.13	0.0	€ -3	€ -2	39
HO 87.5% FR 0%		COA	-37	4	13.0	0.06			€ 0	
208	IEXXXX0208X	RRG	12	15/11/2005	258		0.1	€ 41	€ -9	€ 25
H MAY		353	70	8y 11m	11.5	0.03	1.3	€ -6	€ 0	87
HO 75% FR 25%		EZF	55	5	8.5	0.00			€ 0	
226	IEXXXX0226V	CAU	42	09/02/2005	360		0.2	€ 75	€ -12	€ 63
H LILY 6		10	76	8y 8m	11.5	-0.04	2.1	€ 7	€ -2	29
HO 93.8% FR 6.3%		EZF	55	5	16.5	0.08			€ -4	
231	IEXXXX0231D	ASI	45	13/11/2004	241		0.0	€ 6	€ 6	€ 8
H LAURA 10		300	4	8y 8m	-2.0	-0.20	-0.9	€ -1	€ 2	96
HO 78.1% FR 21.9%		BUZ	22	5	5.5	-0.05			€ -5	
244	IEXXXX0244T	JOS	33	19/11/2005	222		-0.1	€ 70	€ -5	€ 67
H LILY 7		342	83	8y 7m	11.0	0.05	0.4	€ 3	€ 0	25
HO 75% FR 18.8%		EZB	70	6	13.5	0.11			€ -2	
262	IEXXXX0262R	MAU	94	14/02/2006	-90		1.4	€ 6	€ 52	€ 60
H JUNE 5		284	65	8y 6m	0.5	0.08	-5.1	€ 5	€ 5	33
HO 87.5% FR 12.5%		ARN	78	7	-0.5	0.05			€ -6	
263	IEXXXX0263P	ESQ	-2	19/10/2005	418		-0.2	€ 38	€ -5	€ 24
H ANGELA 5			29	8y 6m	3.0	-0.22	0.5	€ 0	€ -4	88
HO 75% FR 12.5%		WYT	-13	6	13.0	-0.02			€ -5	
273	IEXXXX0273L	ASI	45	05/10/2005	136		0.0	€ 38	€ 7	€ 44
H EVE 7		363	49	8y 0m	6.5	0.03	-1.0	€ 2	€ -3	60
HO 87.5% FR 0%		CAU	42	5	7.5	0.06			€ -1	

Helping you to understand your EBI Report

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Herd Owner: **SAMPLE HERD**
Herd Number: **IE1234567**
Data Extracted: **17/09/2006**

Summary - Your Herd	Star Rating * * * * *	Target - 10 Years (2016)
1. Your Herd EBI is €52	* * *	€100
2. Your Herd Milk sub-index is €45.9	* * * * *	€50
3. Your Herd Fertility sub-index is €5.8	*	€50
4. Your first lactation animals' EBI is €58 €6 above herd EBI	* *	€125 (i.e. €25 above herd average)
5. Your 04/05 born replacements' EBI is €63 €11 above herd EBI	* *	€130 (i.e. €30 above herd average)
6. Your potential replacement rate for 2007 is 61%	* * * * *	20% potential replacement rate (in non-expanding herd)
7. Your 2006 born replacements' EBI is €76 €24 above herd EBI	* * *	€135 (i.e. €35 above herd average)
8. Your potential replacement rate for 2008 is 26%	* * * * *	20% potential replacement rate (in non-expanding herd)

Teagasc Commentary

Each €5 increase in EBI will result in increased profit from milk production of 0.7 cent/litre - worth €1,600 in a 230,000 litres (50,000 gallons) herd. Remember that if you wish to increase EBI by €5 per year you should use a team of bulls with an average EBI of €70 above your current herd EBI - in your case the team of bulls chosen must have an average EBI of €122. EBI improvement can be accelerated by breeding your replacements from the highest EBI cows in your herd

The keys to lifting herd EBI by €5 per year are:

1. Having high EBI replacement stock (target €30 above herd average - in your case €82).
2. Having adequate numbers of replacement stock (the target in a stable herd is 18% replacement rate, in your case 17 replacements). You should always use 1.5 dairy AI straws for every cow in your herd, in your case 146 dairy AI straws, to breed adequate numbers of high EBI replacements.

There is scope to lift profit through the genetic improvement of your dairy herd.

- The long term target EBI for your herd is €100.
- Your target should be to breed for both milk production and fertility using a team of high EBI sires from the 'ICBF Active Bull List' -this team of AI bulls should have an average EBI of at least €70 greater than your current herd EBI - in your case €122
- You must aim to breed a sufficient number of high EBI replacement heifers.
- You must never use a stock bull to breed replacements for your herd - they are €70 per cow per year less profitable than AI bred replacements.

You should use your EBI report to help you to choose the parents of the next generation of cows which you will milk. Your Teagasc advisor is available to discuss your EBI report with you in greater detail - you should contact your advisor with any queries you may have.

**This interpretation has been issued on behalf of your local Teagasc dairy advisor.
All comments and observations are based on figures included on your October 2006 EBI Report.**

Helping you to understand your EBI Report

Herd Owner: SAMPLE HERD
Herd Number: IE1234567
Data Extracted: 17/09/2006

Description of Star Ratings

	*	* *	* * *	* * * *	* * * * *
1. Herd EBI	<€20	€20 - 40	€40 - 60	€60 - 80	>€80
2. Milk sub-index	<€10	€10 - 20	€20 - 30	€30 - 40	>€40
3. Fertility sub-index	<€10	€10 - 20	€20 - 30	€30 - 40	>€40
4. 1st Lactation EBI compared to herd EBI	<€5	€5 - 10	€10 - 20	€20 - 25	>€25
5. EBI of Heifers born in 2004/2005 compared to herd EBI	<€5	€5 - 15	€15 - 25	€25 - 30	>€30
6. 2007 Replacement rate as % of current herd size	10% or less	10 - 15%	15 - 20%	20 - 25%	> 25%
7. EBI of Heifers born in 2006 compared to herd EBI	<€10	€10 - 20	€20 - 30	€30 - 35	>€35
8. 2008 Replacement rate as % of current herd size	10% or less	10 - 15%	15 - 20%	20 - 25%	> 25%

Ranking of herds and cows on EBI value

Table 1. Ranking of Herds on EBI value

Top 1%	Top 5%	Top 10%	Top 25%	Ave.	Btm 25%	Btm 10%	Btm 5%	Btm 1%
€ 57	€ 51	€ 48	€ 43	€ 35	€ 26	€ 15	€ 9	€ 0

Table 2. Ranking of Cows on EBI value

Top 1%	Top 5%	Top 10%	Top 25%	Ave.	Btm 25%	Btm 10%	Btm 5%	Btm 1%
€ 90	€ 74	€ 66	€ 51	€ 34	€ 15	€ -4	€ -15	€ -37