

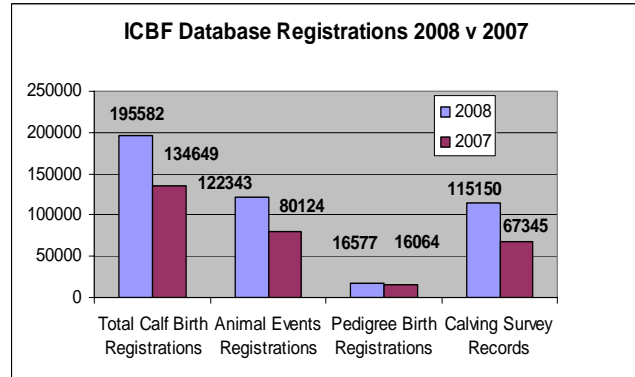
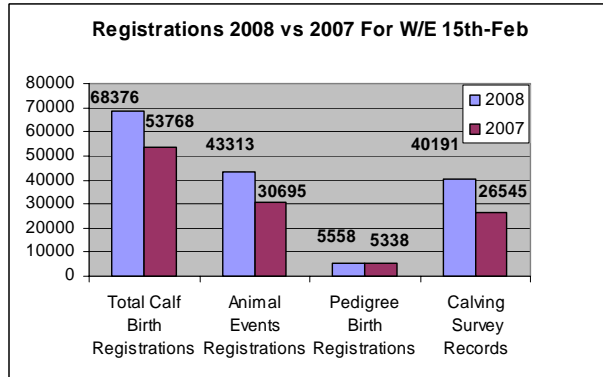


UPDATE – for period 9th – 15th February 2008

1 Important Dates

- ✚ 19th to 21st February. Cork International Airport Hotel. **International Cattle Breeders Round Table.**
- ✚ 6th March. ICBF Board meeting. Portlaoise.

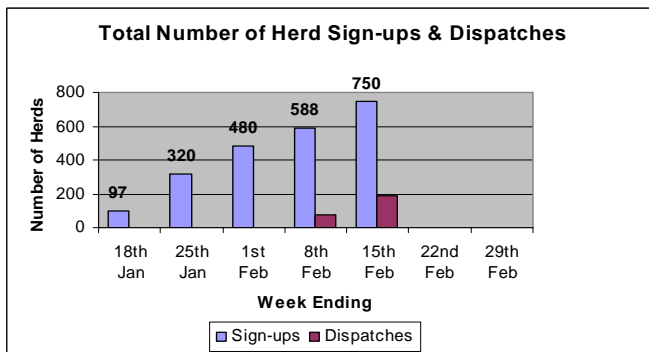
2 Database Update



- ✚ 21,436 inseminations have been received so far in 2008, compared with 16,025 in 2007 for the same period.
- ✚ ICBF have received 38,138 suckler applicant details from DAF, which have been processed. Around 28,000 birth registrations from new Animal Events users have been received.
- ✚ Sire recording and Calving survey recording on Animal Events remains in excess of 90%.
- ✚ Testing of the new loading solution for Animal Events Records continued this week and will continue for a number of weeks. This is a key piece of development work, given the additional volumes of data that will be received as part of the Suckler Scheme.
- ✚ The schedule for the roll-out of the 2008 AI Handheld software is being finalised with the various organisations, with the roll-out expected to be complete by the second week of March.
- ✚ Testing of the 2008 Sire Advice solution will begin next week.

3 GENE Ireland

Dairy Spring 2008



- ✚ Sign ups and dispatch continue at a steady rate (see graph)
- ✚ At this stage 104 herds have requested a Pure Friesian pack; 625 HOFR; 42 Mixed Breed and 92 Jersey/HOFR pack.

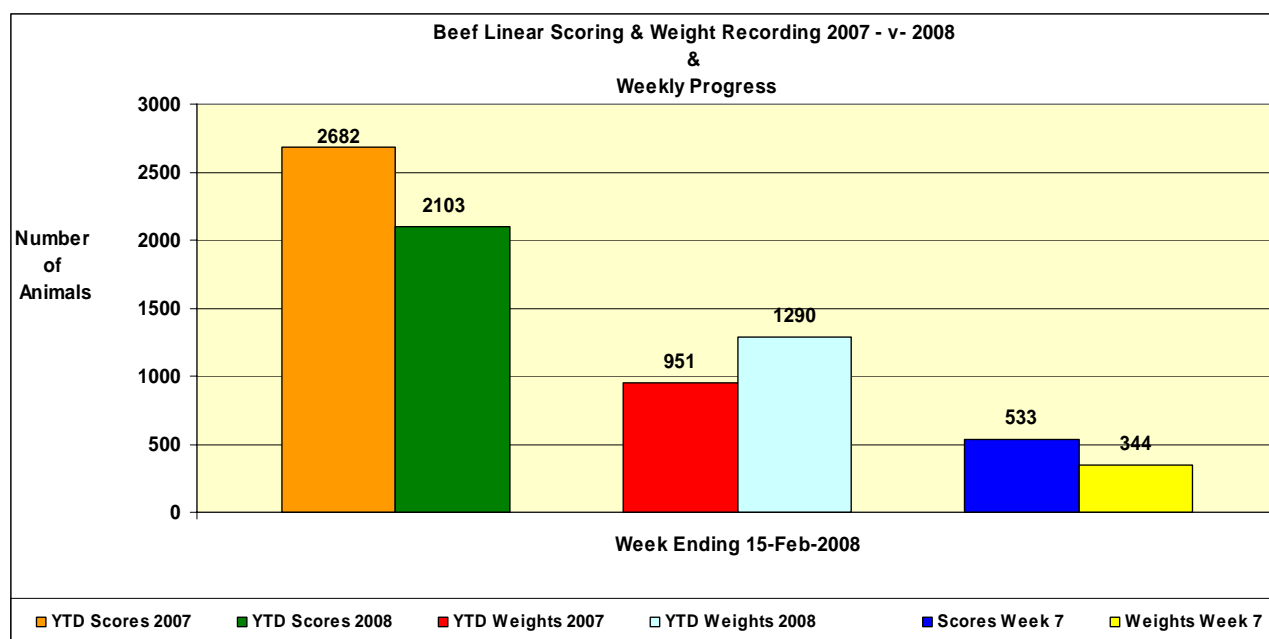


- Dispatch of the third group of test bulls commenced yesterday. Bulls included in this pack are presented below.

3rd Test Group						
AI CODE	NAME	SIRE	MGS	EBI	MILK	FERT
LZD	LAURAGH DANE	UYC	SPW	162.5	91.1	52.3
MZY	MEENASCORTHY STAR	BWZ	UYC	153.8	82.5	51.1
RZE	RINGOWNEY SIETSKE	RIL	RUU	132.4	50.5	59.7
SVY	SLIEVERUE BAWNEY	HZO	GMI	119.2	70.0	46.1
SZU	STAMULLEN D RUUD 1141	RUU	GMI	152.9	47.1	68.1
				144.14	68.25	55.47

- A further batch of invite letters is currently being posted and will continue next week. This is following on from GEN€IR€LAND® articles that were published in both the Irish Independent and the Farmers Journal this week, in relation to.

4 GROW – Linear Scoring & Weight Recording



5 Genetic Evaluations

Dairy

- The bull search with the latest genetic evaluations was turned on at beginning of the week.
- Work is continuing on the development of conversion equations for foreign bulls for the less numerous dairy breeds which do not have enough data for INTERBULL participation. This includes work on the Jersey, Normande and the Norwegian Red breeds.

Beef

- A beef bvextract has been completed for AI bulls. As soon as the percentiles file for the computation of the stars has been completed the file will be circulated to the beef industry.



- ✦ This will be followed by the bull search facility on the website as soon as the parental averages have been completed.

Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation

- ✦ A dairy industry meeting was held yesterday in Moorepark to outline ICBF's plans for genetic evaluation research for the next 7-8 month timeframe.
- ✦ A presentation was made on each of the topics proposed by ICBF and the following these presentations and discussion each person at the meeting voted on the topics they considered the most relevant. ICBF will plan a work schedule for research work around the views from the meeting.
- ✦ A quick summary (table 1) and an extended summary (table 2) of the order of importance of these topics as selected by the people present are included below.
- ✦ Additional key points that came up at the meeting included;
 1. To improve accuracy of genetic evaluations, ICBF should examine possibility of recording & storing batch numbers for semen.
 2. ICBF should examine the potential of “in-line” milk recording systems to help evaluate farmer management traits.
 3. ICBF should continue to work with industry to try and reduce the time between data extraction and publication of genetic evaluation proofs.
 4. ICBF should develop a system to allow AI organisations to record semen stocks. This system would link into both the Active Bull List and Sire-advice program, resulting in much more efficient and effective information systems for farmers and the industry.
 5. ICBF should work with Teagasc to review aspects of the Moorepark Dairy Systems Model, in line recommendations from the AFBI/IHFA report.

Table 1.

Topic	Score
1 Improve fertility evaluations	4.35
7 New Culling Index	4.08
3 Update EBI	4.04
5 Dairy Linear Type	3.92
4 Update calving performance	3.76
6 Across Breed Proofs	3.56
9 Farmer management traits	3.33
2 New Health indexes	3.23
8 Beef traits	3.00

Table 2.

Title	Description	Priority
1. Improve female fertility evaluations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review predictors of Calving Interval & Survival; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Insemination data, age at first calving & milk yield. ○ Additional lactations. ○ Use of data from maiden heifers. • Consider new “compactness of calving” traits, e.g., % cows bred to AI in first 6 weeks. • Develop new operational CIS system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New software (Mix99). 	4.35



Title	Description	Priority
2. Develop new indexes for health traits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review options for genetic evaluation of mastitis and lameness data. 	3.23
3. Update the EBI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review economic values in the EBI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Costs of inputs & outputs ○ Consider splitting beef index; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cull cow & calf value. ▪ Live-weight & efficiency 	3.92
4. Update calving performance evaluations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review calving performance evaluations; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data from heifer versus later lactations. ○ Review use of “historical” calving performance data • Submit data to Interbull test run. 	3.76
5. Dairy Linear Type Traits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new genetic base for Irish bulls & cows. • Review inclusion of data from other breeds & breed combinations into genetic evaluations for dairy linear traits. • Review presentation of dairy linear type data. 	3.92
6. Improve accuracy of across breed proofs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce standard approach for handling heterosis & recombination across all traits, i.e., milk, fertility, calving & beef. • Develop standard approach for defining breed groups in genetic evaluations, e.g., animal equivalents. • Develop short & longer term approach for handling other breeds, i.e., conversion equations and/or Interbull evaluations. 	3.56
7. Develop new “culling” index for farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combines data on (EBI, + hybrid vigour + cows own performance record) to identify potential animals for culling. 	4.08
8. Beef traits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new genetic evaluation for dairy calf quality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Based on price & price/kg data from marts. 	3.00
9. Develop new indexes for farmer management traits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review options for new farmer management traits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Farmer satisfaction (based on farmer surveys). ○ Milking speed and temperament (based on information from EDIY meters). • Submit data to Interbull test run for these traits. 	3.33



6 Tully

- ✦ A meeting will be held with the department of agriculture on the 20-2-08 to discuss health testing improvements for the May intake to Tully.
- ✦ Weights of the December intake will be sent out to breeders and breed societies on the 20-2-08.
- ✦ Construction of the bull viewing area is completed.

7 HerdPlus®

BEEF

- ✦ Testing of the Dis-budding screen for the suckler cow scheme has been completed.

DAIRY

- ✦ The Spring Active bull list is being compiled.
- ✦ The specification document for a new Teagasc Discussion Group Report – “Milk Recording Summary” was completed.
- ✦ The specification document for the 2008 version of Sire Advice was also completed. (Work on the Sire advice is expected to be completed within two weeks to coincide with the generation of the EBI reports).
- ✦ Specification work was done on modifying the "Dry off" screen to allow users easily add or edit their dry off dates.

8 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 15/02/08						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 15/02/08	No. EDIY Herds YTD 15/02/08	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 15/02/08	No. EDIY Cows YTD 15/02/08	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	1,012	162	16%	56,020	9,757	17%
Dairygold	198	16	8%	9,183	754	8%
Kerry	213	5	2%	9,526	341	4%
SWS	365	10	3%	13,931	668	5%
Tipperary	14	0	0%	484	0	0%
Arrabawn	11	3	27%	431	167	39%
Connacht	73	13	18%	3,103	604	19%
Donegal	4	4	100%	214	214	100%
Total	1,890	213	11%	92,892	12,505	13%
Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison						
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2005 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 15/02/06	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 15/02/07	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 15/02/08	2008 vs 2007 Year on Year Difference (%)		
Progressive	62,564	59,605	56,020	-6.4%		
Dairygold	11,576	8,937	9,183	2.7%		
Kerry	10,130	11,017	9,526	-15.7%		
SWS	15,249	15,246	13,931	-9.4%		
Tipperary	850	395	484	18.4%		
Arrabawn	581	566	431	-31.3%		
Connacht	3,151	3,115	3,103	-0.4%		
Donegal	262	0	214	0.0%		
Total	104,363	98,881	92,892	-6.4%		



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