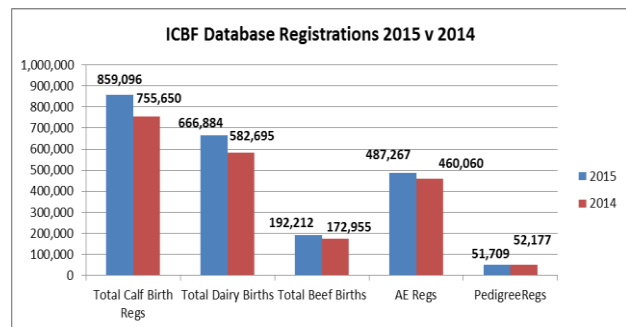
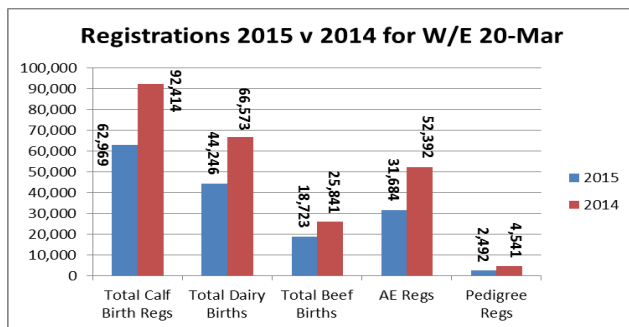


## ICBF Weekly Update 20<sup>th</sup> March 2015

### 1 Important Dates

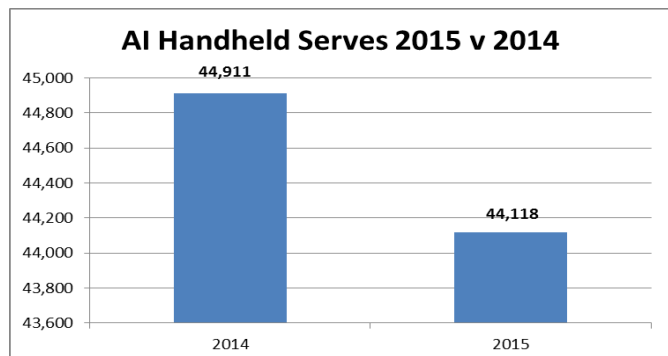
- ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015, 10:30 to 13:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015, 14:00 to 16:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.

### 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 881,000 results received since January 1<sup>st</sup>, of which 85,000 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 5.82 million results have now been received.

As was emphasised again at the most recent BVD Implementation Group meeting, the removal of PI animals is critical to the success of the BVD Eradication Scheme. The Minister for Agriculture recently announced further supports to aid with this for 2015. It is a requirement that all PI animals born in 2012, 2013 and 2014 are disposed of prior to **1 March 2015** in order to avail of any 2015 supports. The removal of PI animals will also be a stipulation of the proposed Beef Data Genomics Programme and successor programmes.



- The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2014 compared with 2015.

### 3 Herd Plus®

- Sire advice for the 2015 breeding season can now be run online by HerdPlus dairy customers. It is important to ensure that the red button is clicked to save the selected bulls to technician handhelds and breeding charts. Postal dairy customers received bull selection forms along with an active bull list with the top 75 bulls currently available and explanation document. See explanation document [here](#). Breeding charts will be generated in early April so it is important that farmers submit their sire advice before then.
- As spring calving has commenced on many dairy and beef farms around the country, it is an appropriate time to remind farmers of the importance of data recording. ICBF acknowledges that spring can be a busy and stressful time for farmers with an endless list of tasks to be done. However, ensuring that data (namely sires and calving ease) is recorded comprehensively and accurately is vital, not only to the work that ICBF does, but also to the development of our Agri-food industry going forward.
- Better data recording leads to more accurate genetic indexes. This will in turn lead to more informed breeding decisions which will leave more profitable stock on farms and increase output at both farm and processor levels. For this reason, people across the industry that find themselves in regular contact with

farmers e.g. agri advisors, breed society representatives, AI company reps & technicians etc. need to constantly stress the importance of recording basic breeding information when registering calves. Click [here](#) for a link to an article on best practice on farm data recording.

- Any farmers that still register calves on the white cards which come with the tags, should be encouraged to switch to an animal events book or, where possible, to register calves online through [www.agfood.ie](http://www.agfood.ie) or through a farm software package. The animal events book and online methods allow for much more comprehensive data recording at calf registration. Animal events books can be ordered by calling **1850 625 626**. Online registration can be set up by going to the Department of Agriculture & Food website or contacting your farm software provider.

#### 4 GENE IRELAND® Beef

- Sign Ups are continuing for the spring 2015 Beef programme.
- 245 herds taking a total of 3900 straws have joined so far.
- The average order is 16 straws per herd.
- The LM bull YOB reached the 500 straw target this week.
- The catalogue is available to view on the ICBF website.
- To learn more or to order straws please phone **1850 600 900**.
- Approximate total straws ordered to date for the remaining bulls are in Table 1.
- The first calves sired by the spring 2014 panel of Gene Ireland bulls are now being born. The following is a picture of a Charolais calf sired by Inverlochyr Gurkha (GKA). If farmers could send in photos of any calves or cows sired by Gene Ireland bulls it would be greatly appreciated. Photos will be posted on the ICBF website and Facebook and twitter accounts Email photos to [pdonnellan@icbf.com](mailto:pdonnellan@icbf.com)



**Table 1. List of Bulls currently on-test**

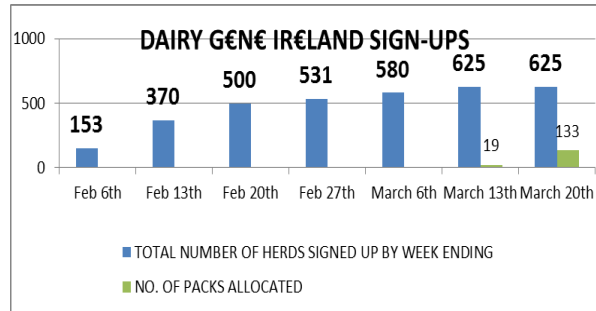
Code	Name of Bull	Breed	Straws Ordered
JJC	Cairnmor John	AA	180
JBS	Steil Jacob	AA	280
VEZ	Balinclea Iveco	AU	435
SGA	Scaughmolin G Mail	BA	370
LJE	Lislea Hermes	BA	100
OZR	Rosemount Gar	BB	130
CH2000	Coom Indurain	CH	215
PDR	Dereskit Improver	CH	100
HHJ	Heracles	CH	200
DBF	Dereskit Invincible	CH	180
YKM	Moyclare Lucky	HE	330
KAC	Keltic Isaac	LM	300
LM2014	Ewdenvale Ivor	LM	130
LM2010	Raffertys Immanuel	LM	240
ZYH	Alamira Harry	PT	400
ZKY	Kyle Herd Ivan	PT	145
ZBZ	Breffni Muzz	SA	155
EMS	Doon Erasmus	SH	245
PPA	Polar Edinson	SI	275
KJG	Knoackane Dag	SI	250
ETP	Curaheen Evolution P	SI	160
AHC	Auroch Deuter PP	SI	200

#### 5 Genetic Evaluations

- Files were sent this week to INTERBULL for the routine INTERBULL MACE evaluations.
- Remaining evaluations for the April routine genetic evaluation update have also kicked off.
- Files were sent to INTERBEEF as part of an international pilot project to develop fertility evaluations for beef breeds.

## 6 GENE IRELAND® Dairy

- Orders are now complete for the Holstein Friesian and Friesian packs.
- Orders can be taken for the Crossbred/Jersey pack.
- Allocations have commenced and bull details and inbreeding reports are currently being sent to these farmers. These allocations are being done according to AI start date, should a farmer wish to know which straws he will be getting in advance of running the Sire Advice please contact **1850 600 900**.



## 7 Milk Recording

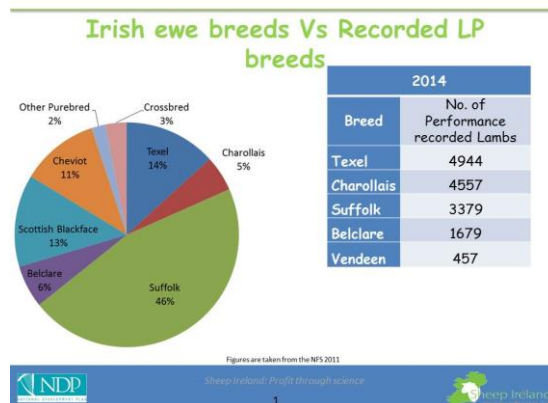
National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 20/03/15						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 20/03/15	No. EDIY Herds YTD 20/03/15	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 20/03/15	No. EDIY Cows YTD 20/03/15	% Cows EDIY
Munster	1,503	182	12%	91,336	14,448	16%
Progressive	1,150	263	23%	78,571	18,175	23%
Tipperary	21	4	19%	1,265	257	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,674</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>171,172</b>	<b>32,880</b>	<b>19%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2014 Cows Recorded 01/01/14 -20/03/14	YTD 2015 Cows Recorded 01/01/15 -20/03/15	2015 vs 2014 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	87,354	91,336	4.4%
Progressive	87,636	78,571	-11.5%
Tipperary	1,135	1,265	10.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176,125</b>	<b>171,172</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>

## 8 Sheep Ireland

### Hill sheep performance recording

- It is estimated by the 2011 Teagasc national farm survey that up to 30% of our breeding ewes are predominantly Blackface Mountain or Cheviot. These breeds have a huge potential contribution to make to the maternal genetics of Ireland's sheep industry. Unfortunately the level of performance recording taking place within these two breeds is very low at present. To date no Cheviot sheep in Ireland have received EuroStar evaluations from the Sheep Ireland genetic evaluations. From a performance recording point of view the Blackface Mountain is in a slightly better situation with a number of breeding groups around the country now organising initiatives to begin capturing data.
- See breakdown of ewe breeds within the Irish Industry combined with a summary of the five strongest performance recording sheep breeds with Sheep Ireland.



## Difficulties facing recording on our hills

- ✚ The main issues facing performance recording hill sheep are practical ones. These practical difficulties begin at mating time, where controlled matings pose a problem. AI is used by an extremely small number of breeders, so single sire mating is the only realistic option available to breeders to assign a definite sire to lambs born the following spring. Parentage identification through DNA analysis is another option which will be researched through the new Ovigen project, at present this is not an economically viable option for hill sheep farmers.
- ✚ Lambing time presents the next hurdle. Generally hill sheep farmers will lamb their ewes outdoors, where supervision at lambing would not be as intensive as your typical indoor lambing environment. Lambing of ewes indoors facilitates very easy data capture and ewes and lambs are easily handled. Compare this to a typical hill outdoor lambing environment, it can prove difficult to physically catch lambs and ewes to insert identity tags and record the identity of the ewe in question.



## First step is parentage recording

- ✚ The first step for all Blackface Mountain and Cheviot groups interested in performance recording is to capture parentage data. Without building the ancestry/family tree for a breed, performance recording will serve no benefit. The true benefit of performance recording can only be realised by combining the performance data of siblings, parents and all other relations to an individual animal. Only by looking at the bigger picture can Sheep Ireland possibly estimate future potential performance.
- ✚ This week lambing notebooks were circulated to 80 Mayo/Connemara and 25 Kerry Blackface Mountain breeders that will be capturing parentage information from purebred lambs on their farms this spring. Many of these breeders will also collect some additional performance data. These breeders form the foundation of Blackface Mountain performance recording in Ireland which will hopefully continue to expand and develop in the coming years.

## Blackface Mountain recording in Donegal

- ✚ Last week Sheep Ireland met again with some of the Donegal Blackface breeders that were interested in starting to record parentage information on their lambs. The breeders acknowledged that the need for a centralised database to record their information is a positive step in the continued advancement of their strain of the breed. The database will enable the breeders to keep track of the bloodlines in their flock in greater detail as well as helping them to promote their flock more through use of the Sheep Ireland online Ram Search and Sales catalogues. However, it has to be acknowledged that this is a big step for these breeders as recording is not traditionally strong within the Blackface breed in Donegal. Teagasc have kindly agreed to provide some help to these breeders to transfer their paper records onto the Sheep Ireland database in the initial years in order to give the breeders the best chance of continuing to record in the future. While these breeders may not be performance recording these animals, the establishment of a family tree is critical, as mentioned above. However, the first steps have been taken to producing Donegal Blackface sheep with stars at some point down the road.

**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](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.sheep.ie).

## National Milk Recording Results for the 10 day period, 11-MAR-2015 To 20-MAR-2015

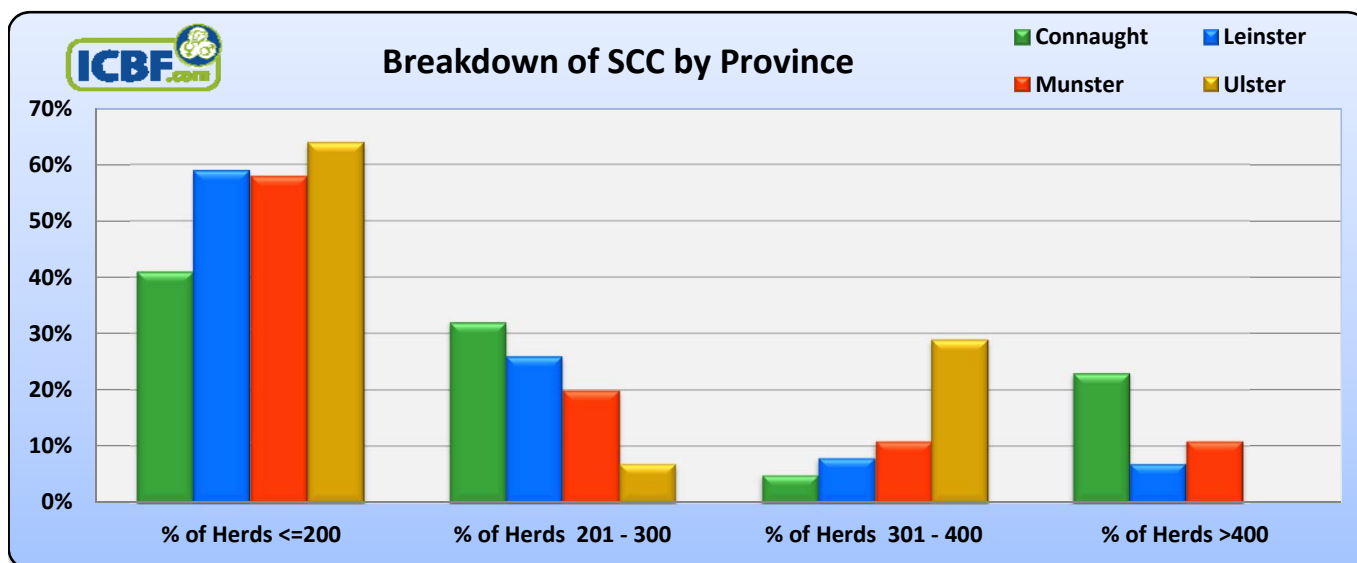
ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Avg Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F+P kg	Average SCC*
Connaught	22	1,067	49	24.8	4.00	3.13	1.76	238
Leinster	102	8,434	83	23.7	4.16	3.23	1.75	164
Munster	320	22,058	69	24.7	4.14	3.21	1.81	186
Ulster	14	617	44	23.1	3.79	3.11	1.59	187
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>32,176</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>183</b>

\* Geometric Mean Herd SCC

## SCC Distribution for the 10 day period, 11-MAR-2015 To 20-MAR-2015

ICBF	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	22	1,067	49	41%	32%	5%	23%	238
Leinster	102	8,434	83	59%	26%	8%	7%	164
Munster	320	22,058	69	58%	20%	11%	11%	186
Ulster	14	617	44	64%	7%	29%	0%	187
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>32,176</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>183</b>

\* Geometric Mean Herd SCC



## % Herd Breakdown for the 10 day period, 11-MAR-2015 To 20-MAR-2015

ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Best 20% SCC	Best 40% SCC	Average SCC**	Worst 40% SCC	Worst 20% SCC
Connaught	22	1,067	49	145	197	217	234	407
Leinster	102	8,434	83	99	141	162	203	259
Munster	320	22,058	69	117	161	183	208	308
Ulster	14	617	44	135	155	185	187	317
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>32,176</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>305</b>

\*\* Percentile Herd SCC Rank (Median SCC)

