

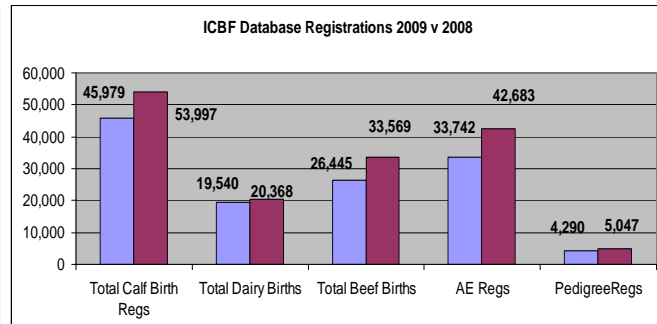
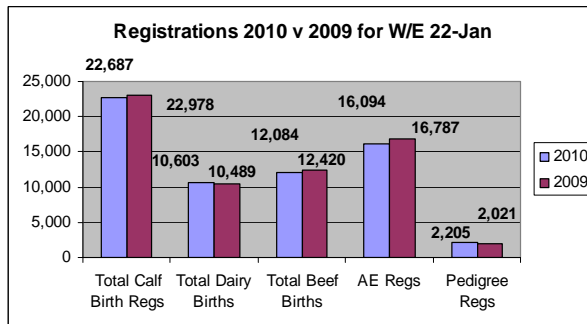
1. Important Dates

- ✚ **Beef Breeding Consultation** – Wednesday 28th January 2010, **14:30 to 17:00** – Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.
- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 25th February 2010, **10:00 to 14:00** – Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 25th February 2010, **14:00 to 16:30** – Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Interbeef Working Group Meeting** – Monday 25th January, Telford UK in conjunction with British Cattle Breeders Club.
- ✚ **Interbull Breeding Industry Workshop** – Friday 5th March, Paris. This meeting is open to the cattle breeding industry. See below for details.

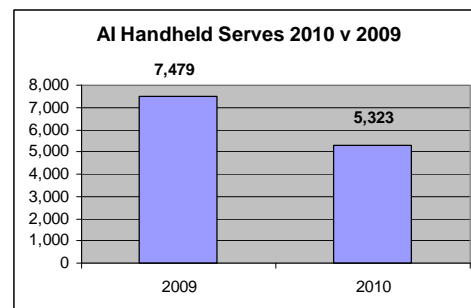
2. Interbull Industry Meeting

- ✚ In March 2010, Interbull will organize two workshops, in connection with the International Agricultural Show of Paris and with the support of France Genetique Elevage. The main purpose of this workshop is to share experiences on genomic evaluations and on the international evaluations, both with scientists responsible for the genetic and genomic evaluations and with the Dairy Breeding industry.
- ✚ The Industry Meeting which is open to AI and Breed Association personal will take place on Friday 5th March from 13:00 to 18:00. This meeting will be a good place to learn more about the way the breeding industry in Europe and North America is dealing with genomic evaluations. If you are interested in participating please contact me (bwickham@icbf.com).

3. Database



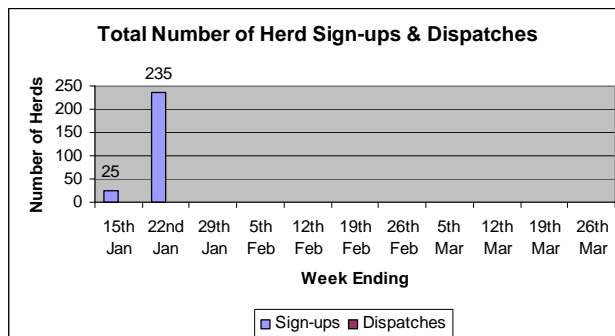
- ✚ In the Suckler scheme, the number of 2009 born calves with meal introduced is 575,313 with the number of animals weaned at 468,903.
- ✚ All four milk recording organisations continue to work well on the new Milk Recording system. A significant release of the final changes will happen during the first week of February, bringing the major developments in the milk recording application to an end. Obviously, as any issues arise, these will be dealt with.
- ✚ A number of changes to facilitate the migration to the new Beef Linear evaluations are being tested. These include the new linear score report, the herd-book catalogues, Taurus, and the on-line bull search.
- ✚ The final change requests to the AI Code application have been made and final testing will take place next week.
- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recoded on AI Handhelds in 2009 compared with 2008.



4. GENEIRELAND®

Dairy

- ✚ Calls to participants of last years programme commenced this week. Sign-up forms are coming in at a steady rate.
- ✚ Total number of doses requested to date is 11,434. Breed breakdown: HOFR 8,393; Pure Fr 899; XBred 1,679; and Mixed 463.



Beef

- ✚ Sign ups are growing with 23 herds taking part so far.
- ✚ Catalogues were sent this week to all previous Gene Ireland participants.
- ✚ The follow up telephone campaign will start up next week.
- ✚ Total straws sent out per bull currently on the panel are in the table below.

BREED	CH	LM	LM	SI	BB	BB	PT	SA	AA	SH	HE
CODE	VHC	FL29	MBP	HSY	EVG	SEU	KCP	BHU	RWB	CZB	AGI
STRAWS	465	440	425	205	335	615	640	345	545	445	195

5. Dairy Consultation Meeting at Horse and Jockey

1. **Fertility evaluations:** An update on progress with the new fertility evaluation was presented. Since the December meeting 12 test runs were performed to assess the reasons for re-ranking of proofs between the old and the new evaluations. Good progress has been made with the correlations improving considerably due to the extra testing. Work in the coming weeks will focus on possible differences in the software between the old model (PEST) and the new model (MIX99). As a result of the need for further testing a decision has been made to run with the old model for the Spring 2010 official evaluation.
2. **Genomic Evaluations:** Donagh Berry presented results on the inclusion of bulls with foreign proofs but no Irish daughters into the reference population. This meant an increase in the number of bulls in the training population from about 1,200 to 5,740. This resulted in an increase in the correlation of about 10% compared to just using a domestic reference population. It also results in a slightly lower bias. Inclusion of these bulls is recommended and will result in an increase in reliabilities of genomic bulls. New genomic proofs will be compared to the previous proofs and a new genomic run will commence next week. In addition, the efficiency with which the process runs has been improved dramatically with the editing steps being reduced from 3 days to 30 hours. Donagh also provided an excel file which can be used to determine the impact of genomic information on a bulls proof. This will be made available on the ICBF website.
3. **Calving Performance:** Testing on the use of first versus later parity calving performance evaluations is on going. It is anticipated that this research will be finalized in the next number of weeks with new information being submitted to the Interbull test run in April. This should enable Ireland to partake in the official international evaluations for calving performance in August.
4. **Bull Breeding:** Sinead McParland from Teagasc presented the background to a new contract mating program which is expected to be rolled out for Spring 2010. The objective of the program is to maximize genetic gain in the dairy herd while minimizing the levels of inbreeding through recommending a list of selected sires to be used on elite dams. A meeting between ICBF, Teagasc, bull breeders & AI companies will be held to discuss thresholds for the GENEIRELAND® contract mating program this Spring.

5. **Optimal Breeding Scheme Design with Genomics:** Noirin McHugh, a PhD student in Moorepark presented her simulation work on the options available to the dairy industry in terms of numbers of animals, genotyped for genomic selection, bulls selected for progeny testing and age at which bulls are returned to widespread AI and the resulting implications on genetic gain and inbreeding levels. The next phase of her work is to look at traits of differing heritabilities and also an economic assessment of the options analysed. This will then form the basis of ICBF recommendations to the dairy industry.
6. **Active Bull List:** A review of the design of the active bull list is under way. Traits to be considered are the maintenance sub-index and type traits. The impact of pedigree status also needs to be addressed. The Active bull list will be drafted in early February. In the next few weeks a web facility will be provided to enable AI companies to maintain the “active” bulls for their organization. This will result in the active bull list on the ICBF website being constantly updated as new bulls are introduced and others run out of semen or are withdrawn. Responsibility for keeping the list up-to-date will rest with the AI companies.
7. **Semen Limits for Genomically Selected Bulls:** ICBF proposed that the semen limits used last year should remain in place for this year i.e., <35% EBI reliability on GS proof = 3,000 doses, 35-50% reliability on GS proof = 5,000 doses, & >50% reliability on GS proof = 10,000 doses. Semen limits for GS bulls of other dairy breeds than HF, would remain at 3,000 doses. In addition these bulls will be required to participate in the GENÉIRÉLAND[®] program.

6. Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Calving, Beef performance, linear and docility evaluations have all been completed and will be loaded to the database over the weekend. Initial AI bull files for Beef bulls will be distributed to industry partners early next week ahead of the beef consultation meeting on Thursday.
- ✚ Dairy Proofs are being uploaded to the database and parent averaging of completed traits has commenced. A new genomic run will be done next week. We are also doing some conversions for Norwegian Red bulls, Jersey bulls and calving proofs for Holstein/Friesian bulls.
- ✚ Expected official release date is February 1st for dairy and beef proofs.
- ✚ Digital images collected from Aug 2008 to Sept 2009 are currently being processed into meat yield. The next phase will be the variance components estimation for the meat yield traits.

7. Sheep Ireland

LambPlus

- ✚ LambPlus[®] Users are starting to record lambing data for 2010, all other LambPlus[®] Users from 2009 are being contacted as a reminder to start recording their Lambing data, as Lambing starts on the farm.
- ✚ All Galway Sheep Breeder's have been contacted this week informing them that LambPlus[®] is the process through which they will be doing their flock performance recording for 2010.
- ✚ All Belclare Breeders have received logons and passwords, and are starting to record their Lambing Data successfully.

MALP/CPT

- ✚ A total of 6,100 ewes have been EID tagged in 16 MALP flocks so far. DNA samples have also been taken from these ewes.
- ✚ Initial Breeding Value and Weight figures for the Rams used in the MALP flocks were also distributed.
- ✚ Excellent feedback was received from which improvements can now be made to the data extracted for future genetic evaluation runs.
- ✚ DNA samples are being sent for analysis every week.

✚ The remainder of the MALP flocks are being EID tagged and DNA sampled over the coming weeks.

8. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 12/01/10 to 22/01/10								
	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
CARLOW	1	39	39	25.9	3.89	3.84	2.00	308
CAVAN	7	272	39	19.3	4.19	3.40	1.46	489
CLARE	1	27	27	20.1	3.94	3.43	1.48	324
CORK STH	72	3,529	49	22.3	4.26	3.47	1.72	361
CORK NTH	34	1,857	55	20.5	4.28	3.41	1.58	367
DONEGAL	4	131	33	19.7	4.71	3.39	1.60	356
DUBLIN	8	348	44	23.5	3.75	3.21	1.64	429
GALWAY	4	210	53	25.0	4.14	3.31	1.86	369
KERRY	11	498	45	19.7	4.13	3.42	1.49	571
KILDARE	5	204	41	20.9	4.48	3.47	1.66	447
KILKENNY	7	368	53	24.7	4.28	3.32	1.88	469
LAOIS	14	637	46	17.0	4.34	3.59	1.35	627
LEITRIM	3	85	28	18.7	4.12	3.35	1.40	749
LIMERICK	12	510	43	22.2	4.06	3.36	1.65	402
LONGFORD	2	69	35	28.1	4.47	3.43	2.22	421
LOUTH	14	814	58	20.7	3.79	3.36	1.48	421
MAYO	21	928	44	21.0	3.83	3.39	1.52	353
MEATH	29	2,214	76	21.4	3.97	3.38	1.57	635
MONAGHAN	9	283	31	17.4	4.19	3.50	1.34	571
OFFALY	7	269	38	17.8	4.28	3.38	1.36	467
ROSCOMMON	1	17	17	20.5	4.64	3.33	1.63	445
SLIGO	7	221	32	20.5	3.49	3.96	1.53	395
TIPPERARY NTH	4	286	72	17.0	4.36	3.55	1.34	515
TIPPERARY STH	3	126	42	17.3	4.68	3.44	1.40	446
WATERFORD	5	316	63	20.2	4.34	3.33	1.55	321
WESTMEATH	6	346	58	22.3	4.24	3.39	1.70	409
WEXFORD	32	1,860	58	21.6	4.26	3.39	1.65	427
WICKLOW E	22	1,215	55	21.9	3.92	3.36	1.59	423
WICKLOW W	2	110	55	26.9	3.51	3.40	1.86	498
	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Average Herd Size	Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F + P kg	Average SCC
National	347	17,789	46	21.2	4.16	3.43	1.61	449

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 12/01/10 to 22/01/10

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
Munster	142	7,149	50	19.9	4.26	3.43	1.53	413
Leinster	149	8,493	57	22.5	4.09	3.42	1.69	460
Connacht	36	1,461	41	21.1	4.04	3.47	1.59	462
Ulster	20	686	34	18.8	4.36	3.43	1.47	472

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