



UPDATE – for period 17th – 23rd February 2007

1 Important Dates

- Thursday 1st March.** Audit & Finance Sub-Committee (9:00 – 11:00) and ICBF Board (11:00 – 14:00).
- Saturday 3rd March. Tully Bull Sale CANCELLED – SEE BELOW.**

2 Tully Bull Sale – Cancelled

Attached a copy of the letter sent today to the owners of all bulls currently at Tully. The letter explains the situation and the reason the sale has been cancelled. We are currently also making phone contact with all bull owners.

3 International Beef Genetic Evaluations

The beef evaluation system has been updated to blend converted French evaluations for weaning weight and carcass conformation into the Irish evaluations for imported sires and semen. A document describing this work for the Charolais and Limousine breeds has been sent to the relevant breed societies. In the coming weeks, more traits should be validated with priority on calving and maternal traits. A study will start on the Blonde d’Aquitaine breed to establish the feasibility of such a system.

4 Genetic Evaluations

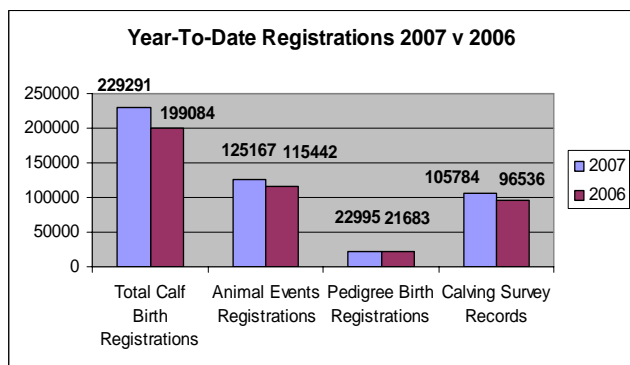
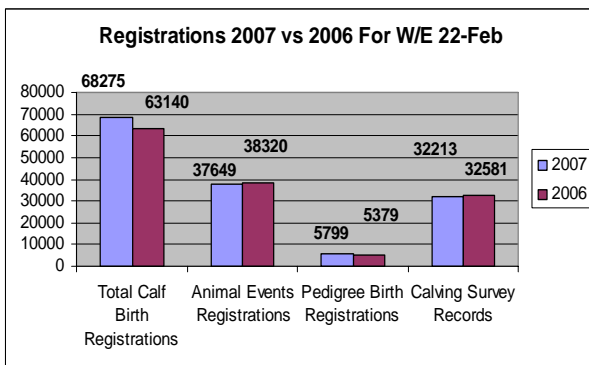
Dairy EBI

- Proofs for the latest run of dairy EBI are now official and available from the website. The active dairy bull list for the Spring is almost complete.

Beef

- Work on the roll out of the new beef indexes continues.

5 Database Update



- 192,212 inseminations have now been recorded on the AI handhelds. This week saw software updated on the handhelds of the majority of technicians. The remainder will be finished next week.
- Production of the personalised Animal Events notebook for farmers is continuing as farmers sign up to HerdPlus. Based on farmer feedback, some changes will be made over the coming week.
- The use of the Sire Advice program is on-going. A training session with IHFA was held this week and the program was well received.
- The new Teagasc Discussion Group application is getting good use and feedback continues to be positive.

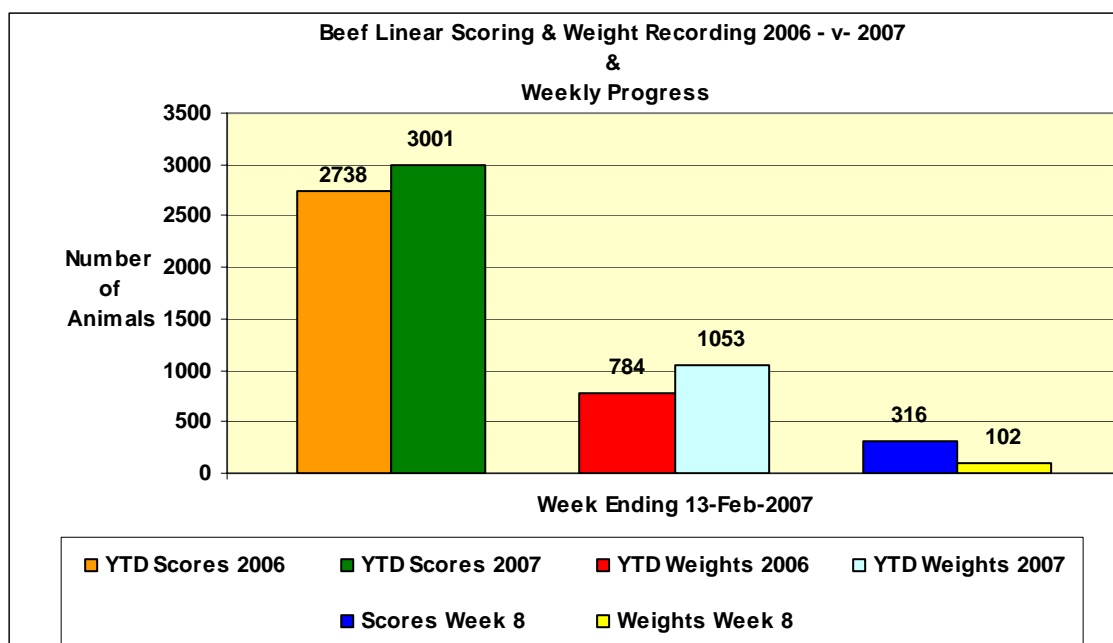


- The Gene Ireland application went live this week.

6 Milk Recording

Milk Recording Organisation	2007 Herds Recorded Week 16/02/07 - 23/02/07
Progressive	248
SWS	95
Dairygold	106
Kerry	56
Connacht	27
Tipperary	5
Total	537

7 Beef Linear Scoring



8 Gene Ireland

- Herd sign-up for the Spring 2007 programme commenced this week.
- Approximately 2000 letters have been sent to herd-owners during the week. More will be sent out next week.
- Currently 58 herds have signed up to date.

9 HerdPlus

- This week saw first issue of the revised Pocket Notebook with blank section at front of book to record the calvings as they happen.
- We are fast approaching the end of our **FBD sponsored €40 Euro special discount** for direct debit members. The €40 credit was open to the first 2,000 direct debit clients - we are past this number now so we will be announcing end of offer very shortly. We will keep you posted through this update.
- Spring '07 EBI Reports** are being prepared and tested for planned release week commencing March 05th.

Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Society Limited (ICBF).
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23rd February 2007

Dear Bull owner,

Re: Health Status of Tully Test Centre Bulls

An investigation earlier this week into ill-health amongst some of the bulls at Tully confirmed the presence of IBR and lead to the conclusion that all bulls currently at Tully have been exposed to IBR. IBR is a highly infectious respiratory disease that is common in Ireland and found in Suckler & Dairy Herds. It is most likely that the problem arose from a bull that tested clear of IBR and then subsequently showed up with it at Tully (False Negative Result).

Over is a fact sheet giving more information about IBR.

The affected bulls at Tully have been treated in accordance with veterinary advice and under veterinary supervision. Virtually all bulls have fully recovered. As an added precaution all bulls at Tully are being vaccinated against IBR.

The presence of IBR in the Tully bulls means they cannot be marketed to AI Centres through Tully sales. Accordingly, the sale scheduled for Saturday 3rd March has been cancelled. We are currently reviewing options for further sales.

On the basis of advice from UCD and our veterinary advisers the bulls currently at Tully can be safely used in suckler herds providing appropriate precautions are taken. That is, the herd is adequately covered (currently and into the future) with an appropriate IBR vaccination programme or the herd has evidence (based on a blood screen) of ongoing active IBR infection. Herd owners should contact their veterinarian for further expert advice.

This is a most unfortunate and unexpected turn of events in view of the precautions we have in place for selecting and testing animals for entry to the centre and the standard of care taken while bulls are in Tully.

In the next few weeks we will review all of our procedures with a view to ensuring this type of event does not occur again.

If you wish to discuss the situation further please phone Tully on 045 521573. In any case one of our staff will make phone contact with you to discuss your options for marketing your bull(s).

Yours sincerely,

Brian Wickham
Chief Executive

IBR Fact Sheet

(updated 5th March 2007)

WHAT IS IBR?

It is an infectious and contagious disease of cattle causing eye, and nasal discharge, temperatures, coughing, loss of appetite, and depression.

It may lead to secondary bacterial infections causing forced noisy breathing and damaged lungs. It is seen most commonly in housed cattle following the stress of mixing moving or purchase from multiple sources.

The typical age group is from 6 to 9 months of age, but animals of any age may become affected.

The mortality rate varies according to the speed of recognition, treatment, and vaccination, and the extent of relief of environmental factors such as overcrowding, poor ventilation, and mixed age groups.

WHAT CAUSES IT?

A herpes virus infection, that is similar to the common cold sore virus Herpes simplex in humans and Aujeski's disease in pigs.

It spreads mainly by aerosol between cattle in the same air space. Occasionally venereal infection may occur.

THERE IS A CARRIER STATE

The virus can remain latent in an animal all its life, without it showing any signs.

If the carrier animal is stressed then the virus can be shed.

BLOOD TESTS.

If an animal is blood tested and is found to be positive, it means it has either been exposed to the virus or has been vaccinated. The ability to differentiate between the wild virus and vaccine virus is possible, and available in Ireland.

Unfortunately the blood test of an individual animal is of limited significance. If a test is negative it usually means that the animal is unlikely to have been exposed to the infection but it does not rule out the possibility of it being a latent carrier of the IBR virus.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Usually from animals derived from an infected herd and it takes 3-7 days to incubate.

The disease is often slow to spread within a farm and may take between 2 -5 weeks to spread between all groups. This is why immediate vaccinations with live vaccine will often prevent or interrupt the spread of the disease. The advice of your vet should always be sought before any treatment or vaccination.

CONTROL.

A closed herd, and/or a complete vaccination programme with annual boosters.

IBR infection is widespread is controllable and preventable.

Seek veterinary advice.