

1. Important Dates

- ICBF Audit & Finance Sub Committee** – Thursday 26th November 10:30 -14:00 – Horse & Jockey.
- GENEIRELAND[®] Dairy Conference** – Thursday 10th December (please note: changed from 29th Oct), Corrin Mart, Rathcormac, Co. Cork.

2. ICBF Board Meeting

At its meeting on Thursday the Board:

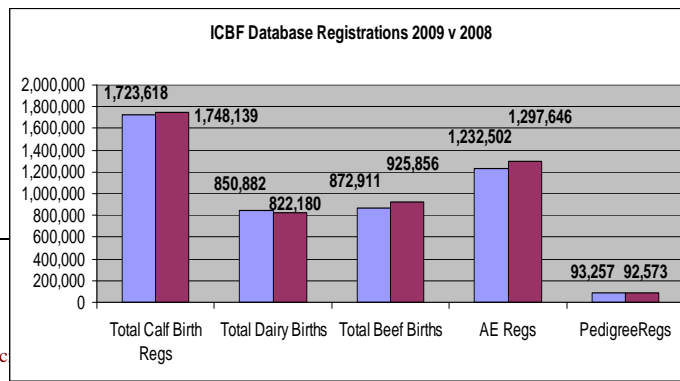
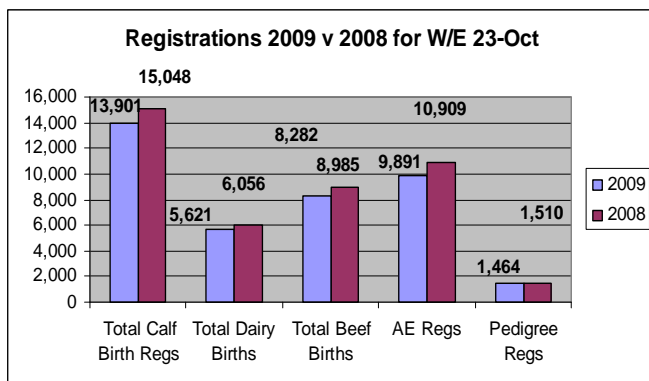
- Endorsed the recommendation from the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee to make an application to DAFF for NDP funding in 2010. The funds, if granted, will be used to extend the cattle breeding infrastructure with particular emphasis on genetic evaluations, genomics, Gene Ireland, animal health and information systems.
- Adopted proposed strategic priorities for 2010 based ICBF's Strategic Plan for the next five years. These priorities will form the basis for the 2010 budget which will be considered at the next Board meeting.
- Endorsed the recent Beef Genetic evaluations decisions. That is, the launch of across breed linear trait evaluations, launch of new docility evaluation and the implementation of a standard template for providing genetic evaluations in pedigree catalogues. These changes are due for implementation at the end of October.
- Accepted to membership a new Herd Book covering the Romagnola, Marchigiana, Chianina and Bazadaise breeds.

3. Sheep Board Meeting

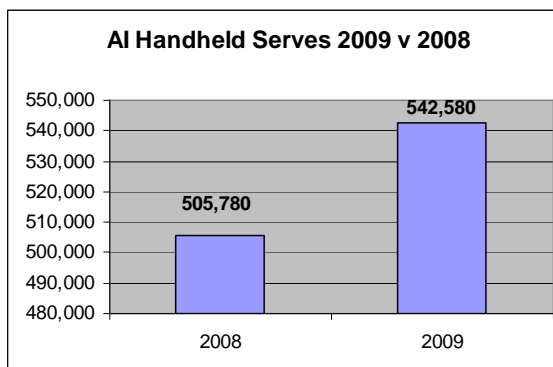
The meeting of the Sheep Ireland Board was chaired by Dermot A. Ryan of DAFF replacing Ignatius Byrne. At its meeting the Board:

- Endorsed the recommendation from the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee to make an application to DAFF for NDP funding in 2010. The funds, if granted, will be used to extend the sheep breeding infrastructure with particular emphasis on genetic evaluations, breeding structures, and recording systems.
- Agreed to give further consideration to a strategy for dealing with scrapie.
- Agreed to advise DAFF that it supports the voluntary use of EID by flock owners.
- Was advised that the Sheep Ireland support team has been increased by the recent appointment of Cathal McNulty. He will start work in Bandon on 23rd November.
- Was briefed by the Sheep Ireland project manager (Pat Donnellan) on recent progress. A major milestone has been achieved with the use of artificial insemination to establish the central progeny test (CPT). This involves three flocks and 2,100 ewes being mated to 31 rams of five breeds. All the rams used are already well linked to the wider breeding industry. Copies of the Project Progress Report and the CPT report are on the publications section of the Sheep Ireland website (www.sheep.ie).

4. Database



- ✚ All suckler scheme herds with a calving in 2009 have now received their first pre-weaning form. The number of 2009 born calves with meal introduced is 393,000, with the number of animals weaned at 120,000.
- ✚ All four milk recording organisations are now live on the new Milk Recording system. Munster went live this week. Once the start-up issues have been dealt with, we will be retiring the IRIS application completely.
- ✚ Work is continuing on updating the Sales Catalogue template for beef animals based on feedback received during the recent industry meeting.
- ✚ Final updates to the Taurus application around pedigree cert generation will be completed next week.
- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recoded on AI Handhelds in 2009 compared with 2008. There are more technicians using the handhelds in 2009 than there were in 2008, so even though the number of inseminations recorded is up, overall inseminations for the season will be down.



5. GENEIRELAND®

Dairy

- ✚ Currently there are 90 herds signed up to the Autumn 2009 programme.

Beef

- ✚ Sign ups are going well with 121 herds taking part so far.
- ✚ Total straws sent out per bull currently on the panel are in the table below.
- ✚ Straws of Belgian Blue bull should be available next week.

BREED	CH	CH	LM	LM	SI	AA	AA	BA	PT	SA	SH	HE
CODE	VHC	CWB	RHF	FL29	RWV	RWB	FPG	WOA	KCP	BHU	CZB	AGI
STRAWS	120	313	660	141	456	342	211	560	443	83	315	50

6. Tully

- ✚ On farm inspection of bulls commenced this week, with a total of 278 bulls to be visually inspected over the next 12 days. Inspections are being carried out by linear scorers, with bulls being accessed for muscle, skeletal and functionality traits.
- ✚ Once inspections have being completed, health testing requirements will be posted out to the bull owners whose animals have passed inspection. Also, their Veterinary surgeon will be notified at the same time.
- ✚ Health testing and visual inspection then allow the best bulls to be identified and these superior animals will enter pre-entry isolation on 21st of November.
- ✚ At present, all facilities at Tully are being power washed, in preparation for the next intake.

7. Sheep Evaluations

- ✚ This week saw the continuation of work to develop an across breed sheep evaluation, using Mix99 software (this is in contract to the current system, which within breed and using ASReml software). Specific areas of work have included:

Breed effects

- ✚ Different approaches to modelling breeds have now been considered. These include; no breed effect, main breed in the model (as a fixed effect), breed groups (in the pedigree), breed fraction (as a covariate). Initial results indicate that, given the poor linkage between flocks & breeds in the dataset, a fixed main breed effects is a more accurate way of correcting for breed than fitting breed groups in the pedigree. Work will continue next week on potential inclusion of information on % breed fraction in the model.

New evaluation software (Mix99)

- ✚ The current full model for production (direct & maternal effects) using Mix99 has now been tested and results with ASReml compared. Unfortunately correlations in proofs were not as high as expected. Work is continuing in this area, with a further update expected next week.

8. Lambplus Update

CPT

- ✚ Since the beginning of August the focus of Sheep Ireland has been on the establishment of the Sheep Ireland 'Central Progeny Test (CPT)' Program.
- ✚ The overall objective of the program is to: *'Assess a large number of Rams for economically important traits, through their progeny, & link this information to an even wider number of animals throughout that Breed's Pedigree System.*
- ✚ It is an extremely important part of the overall Sheep Ireland Project as it ultimately provides a large volume of high quality sheep breeding data that will then benefit each of the breeds involved.
- ✚ The CPT is set up not as a breed comparison, but rather as a **ram** and **trait** comparison. It will be focused on identifying the best genetics regardless of breed. Genetic links between breeds and breeding groups established through the CPT will in time be used in large scale evaluations performed across flocks and across breeds by Sheep Ireland. The intension is to evaluate as many new sires as possible each year, while having as wide a presence as possible throughout Ireland.

The CPT is set up to:

- Examine how much industry rams vary in carcass merit.
- Examine how much industry rams vary in maternal merit.
- Foster links between Breed Societies, Ram Breeding Groups, and the wider Breeding Industry.
- Identify leading sires and benchmark sires.
- Demonstrate to the industry the extent to which rams varied in the value they could add to farm returns.
- With the collection of valuable data, improve our understanding of the genetic control of carcass merit and maternal merit and their relationship with other production traits.

CPT – UCD Lyons Research Farm – CPT Ram Management

- ✚ Lyons UCD provided the facilities for the Rams while they were being trained to give semen. Lyons also provided the facilities for semen to be collected & frozen.

- ✚ Extremely tight Bio Security precautions were put in place for the Rams at Lyons. 35 Rams were used in the CPT scheme this year. Straws of Semen were frozen from each Ram so as to build up a bank of superior genetics for the future.

CPT – UCD Lyons Research Farm – CPT Research

- ✚ The establishment of a CPT Research flock was an extremely important development in the establishment of the CPT Program.
- ✚ The Lyons UCD flock provides research possibilities that will be hugely beneficial to the CPT Program.
- ✚ The flock at Lyons was also inseminated using the CPT Rams. Indeed the availability of the Lyons UCD Flock allowed those Rams that were average semen producers to be used. Without the UCD flock these Rams would have been excluded from the CPT as they would not have given semen having being transported out to the CPT Flocks.
- ✚ Following is a link to a full report that is up on the Sheep Ireland ® website on the CPT project 2009:
http://www.sheep.ie/publications/files/cpt_presentation_20091022.pdf
- ✚ An article on the CPT Program was also published in this week's Farmers Journal.

2009 CPT Summary:

- ✚ Target of 2000 Ewes inseminated in first year achieved.
- ✚ CPT Centre set up.
- ✚ CPT Research Flock established.
- ✚ 3 CPT Commercial Flocks secured.
- ✚ **Ireland's first Sheep Central Progeny Test program established.**

MALP

- ✚ Considerable progress has been made with the building of the dataset for the genetic evaluation of the Rams in the MALP Flocks.

Lambplus

- ✚ Development work on the Lambplus Web Screens is now well advanced and will be ready for testing shortly.
- ✚ Before any more Flockowners are signed up to Lambplus it is essential that this work is completed.



CPT Centre Launch Photo:

Back row (L to R): Stephen Potterton (Sheep Ireland), Alan Fahey (UCD). Front row (L to R): Rodney Bryan (Sheep Ireland), James Brennan (Sheep Ireland), Andreina Doyle (UCD Sheep Masters Student), Pat Donnellan (ICBF)



Laparoscopic AI being performed by Innovis AI Technician



Gerraint Thomas from Innovis preparing straws of semen from CPT Rams for freezing.



Teaser Ewes in CPT Centre



Drafting Facilities at UCD Lyons.



Ewes in UCD Lyons CPT Research Flock



Individual Ram Pen showing details of Ram.



Individual Ram Pens in CPT Centre.



CPT Centre (Lyons UCD)

9. Genetic Dairy & Beef Evaluations

- ✚ Work continues on developments of the genetic evaluations of dairy and beef cattle.
- ✚ Work over the next number of weeks will be focused on implementing and testing a new model for calving interval and survival and calving performance with a few to publishing new proofs for the spring AI season. The work on calving interval and survival is using new insemination data and extending the number of parities used in the evaluation.
- ✚ An evaluation using both heifer calving and calving in later parities is being looked at for calving performance. In addition new genetic parameters have been estimated for the calving performance traits.

10. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 13/10/09 to 23/10/09.

	<i>No. Herds Recorded</i>	<i>No. Cows Recorded</i>	<i>Average Herd Size</i>	<i>Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow</i>	<i>Average Fat %</i>	<i>Average Protein %</i>	<i>Average F + P kg</i>	<i>Average SCC</i>
CARLOW	16	947	59	15.9	4.32	3.74	1.28	362
CAVAN	24	1,147	48	15.6	4.10	3.80	1.23	382
CLARE	33	1,695	51	13.7	4.33	3.82	1.12	375
CORK STH	243	15,749	65	16.4	4.19	3.81	1.31	309
CORK NTH	219	14,100	64	16.3	4.32	3.88	1.34	297
DONEGAL	5	43	9	19.4	4.21	3.93	1.58	192
DUBLIN	5	248	50	22.2	3.87	3.66	1.67	364
GALWAY	13	889	68	19.2	4.12	3.75	1.51	361
KERRY	98	6,137	63	15.7	4.15	3.73	1.24	350
KILDARE	18	1,011	56	20.1	4.16	3.69	1.58	384
KILKENNY	61	3,853	63	14.5	4.38	3.82	1.19	411
LAOIS	28	2,078	74	15.8	4.35	3.84	1.29	298
LEITRIM	5	269	54	17.7	3.95	3.43	1.31	285
LIMERICK	112	7,347	66	15.6	4.15	3.83	1.24	338
LONGFORD	10	494	49	16.3	4.25	3.73	1.30	475
LOUTH	14	865	62	18.5	4.04	3.66	1.42	431
MAYO	15	589	39	19.3	3.73	3.70	1.43	313
MEATH	46	3,591	78	18.6	3.90	3.51	1.38	365
MONAGHAN	18	751	42	19.3	4.13	3.60	1.49	330
OFFALY	36	2,092	58	17.0	4.16	3.77	1.35	274
ROSCOMMON	1	66	66	9.1	5.68	4.32	0.91	2100
SLIGO	6	241	40	19.8	3.95	3.79	1.53	229
TIPPERARY NTH	47	3,459	74	14.4	4.42	3.87	1.19	418
TIPPERARY STH	55	3,991	73	15.1	4.42	3.89	1.25	338
WATERFORD	52	3,679	71	16.6	4.33	3.86	1.36	276
WESTMEATH	15	973	65	18.3	4.21	3.66	1.44	298
WEXFORD	54	3,032	56	16.1	4.12	3.77	1.27	339
WICKLOW E	18	667	37	20.0	3.74	3.61	1.47	275
WICKLOW W	5	453	91	24.5	3.70	2.83	1.60	396
	<i>No. Herds Recorded</i>	<i>No. Cows Recorded</i>	<i>Average Herd Size</i>	<i>Average 24hr Milk kg/Cow</i>	<i>Average Fat %</i>	<i>Average Protein %</i>	<i>Average F + P kg</i>	<i>Average SCC</i>
National	1,272	80,456	58	17.3	4.19	3.73	1.37	399

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 13/10/09 to 23/10/09.

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	859	56,157	65	15.5	4.29	3.84	1.26	338
Leinster	326	20,304	62	18.3	4.09	3.64	1.41	359
Connacht	40	2,054	51	17.0	4.29	3.80	1.38	658
Ulster	47	1,941	41	18.1	4.15	3.78	1.43	301

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 23/10/09

Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 23/10/09	No. EDIY Herds YTD 23/10/09	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 23/10/09	No. EDIY Cows YTD 23/10/09	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,080	848	41%	177,851	72,136	41%
Dairygold	1,508	567	38%	117,069	46,186	39%
Kerry	891	66	7%	62,466	4,245	7%
SWS	857	114	13%	61,910	8,940	14%
Tipperary	136	56	41%	11,136	5,009	45%
Arrabawn	141	116	82%	11,879	10,123	85%
Connacht	143	52	36%	9,697	3,533	36%
Donegal	33	33	100%	3,917	3,917	100%
Total	5,789	1,852	32%	455,925	154,089	34%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 23/10/08	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 23/10/09	2009 vs 2008 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	182,189	177,851	-2.4%
Dairygold	125,830	117,069	-7.5%
Kerry	79,149	62,466	-26.7%
SWS	62,009	61,910	-0.2%
Tipperary	13,092	11,136	-17.6%
Arrabawn	12,830	11,879	-8.0%
Connacht	10,554	9,697	-8.8%
Donegal	4,787	3,917	-22.2%
Total	490,440	455,925	-7.6%

Brian Wickham Ph.D. Chief Executive Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Soc. Ltd, Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co. Cork, Ireland, Phone office +353 (0)23 882 0222, mobile +353 (0)86 826 9911 Fax office +353 (0)23 882 0229 E-Mail bwickham@icbf.com ICBF Web site www.icbf.com