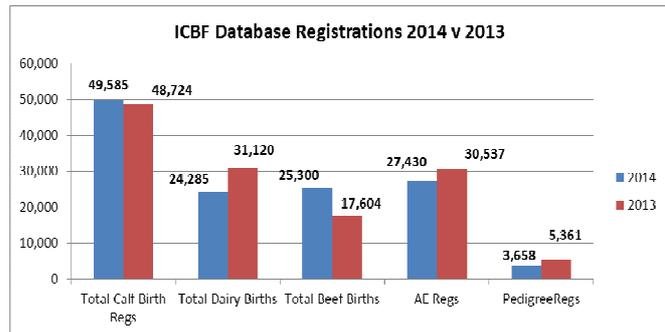
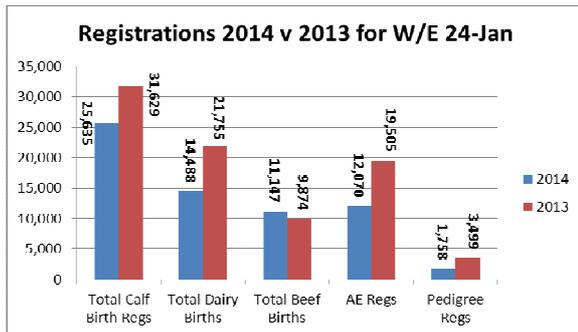


## ICBF Weekly Update 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014

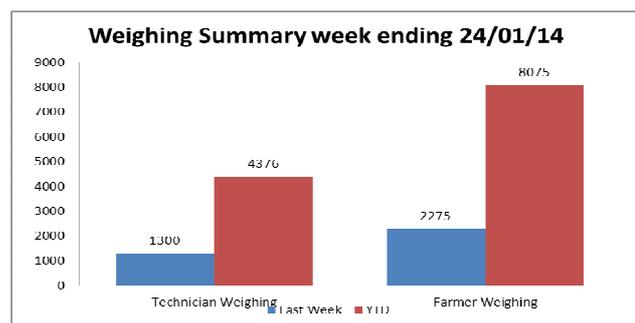
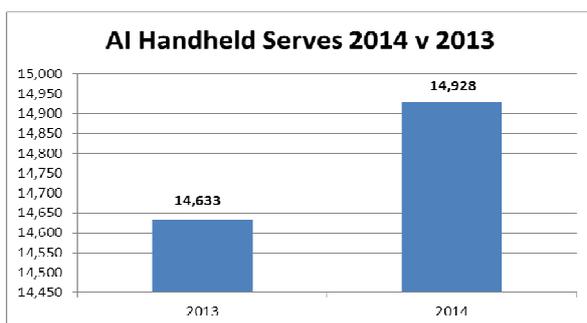
### 1 Important Dates

- ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014, 10:30 to 13:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ICBF Audit & Finance Sub Committee meeting** – Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 10:00 to 13:30, Horse & Jockey.

### 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 77,000 results received since January 1<sup>st</sup>, of which 29,000 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 2.74 million results have now been received.
- The graph below shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2013 compared with 2014.
- This week there were 1300 weights received through the technician service and 2275 weights recorded by farmers.
- The graph below shows the week and year to date totals.



### 3 Genetic Evaluations

- The monthly beef evaluation has commenced. Results will be available the first week of February.
- A survey on GROW- beef linear scoring has been sent to breeders who have scored animals in the last 2 years. The aim of the survey is to gauge breeders opinions on a range of aspects in order to improve the current service.

- Work is on-going on calving performance research. This research is looking at the impact of splitting the current single calving ebv into 4 separate calving traits namely Dairy heifer calving performance, Dairy cow calving performance, Beef heifer calving performance and Beef cow calving performance. Initial work on the individual traits has been completed and focus now turns to the relationship between the traits.

## 4 Sheep Ireland

- We are continuing to get our new LambPlus flocks up and going on our system. Breeders have now started to enter their lambing data onto the database already. We encourage breeders to do this as close to the actual lambing event as possible. This greatly reduces the risk of data being lost or mislaid.

- On Wednesday night Teagasc held their national Hill Sheep Conference in Bantry, Co. Cork. This was a great event that saw a huge crowd in attendance from all corners of Ireland. The event speakers tackled all the difficult issues that currently face the Hill sheep sector and did not shy away from any questions posed by farmers on the night. It's clear that there are many difficulties facing this section of our sheep Industry but identifying these issues and highlighting the areas which significant improvements can be made will be the first step in improving the outlook for sheep on our hills. Hopefully genetic improvement will play a big part in this outlook.



The large attendance at this week's Teagasc National Hill sheep conference.

- Thursday marked the first Sheep Ireland board meeting of 2014. Among the many topics that came up in discussion was Ultrasound scanning for the 2014 season, Minimum Accuracy levels for evaluations and the 2014 LambPlus ram sale.
  - Ultrasound scanning - In the absence of a regular feed of factory slaughter data into our database, the Ultrasound scanning of pedigree lambs each year will continue to be a critical part of what we do. The number of flocks in need of Ultrasound scanning this year is set to grow to its highest level ever. This will pose practical difficulties. In an effort to plan our scanning campaign in a more efficient way for all, we will be insisting that breeders notify us of their intention to scan before April 30th. At this point we will be in a position to pre-plan our scanning programme. We acknowledge that many breeders have off-farm employment etc. and we will make an effort as always to accommodate the various individual circumstances of breeders.
  - There will be a minimum accuracy% for all evaluations in 2014. Any evaluation with accuracy lower than 10% will not be displayed. Once the first run of genetic evaluations are produced by Thierry our geneticist, we will be working with breeders that find themselves in this low accuracy bracket to identify how their evaluations can be improved. There are numerous ways to increase accuracy and we will be continuously reminding both ram breeders and ram buyers of the role that accuracy plays in the Euro-Stars.
  - The 2014 LambPlus sale will take place again in Tullamore on Saturday 23rd of August. This date and Venue will be communicated with all breed societies in the coming days. We will finalise the entry criteria for this sale in the coming weeks and communicate these with all breeders.

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