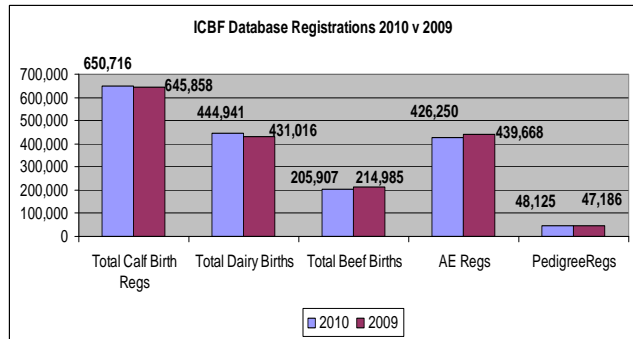
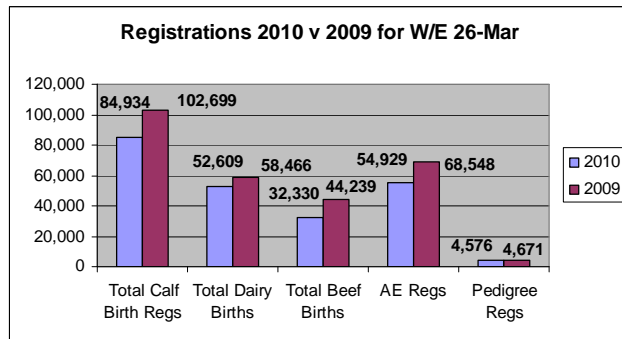


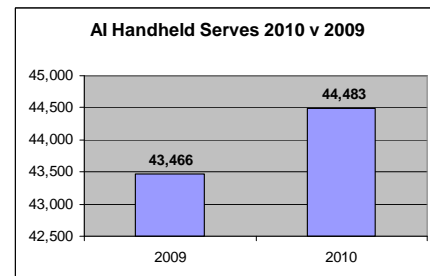
1. Important Dates

- + **Sheep Breeding Consultation Meeting – Genetic Evaluations** – Wednesday 31st March 2010, 10:30 to 14:00 – **Abbeyleix Manor Hotel**, (*Please note change of venue*)
- + **Sheep Board Meeting** – Wednesday 31st March 2010, 14:00 to 16:00 – **Abbeyleix Manor Hotel**.
- + **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 1st April, 10:30 to 14:00 **Maldron Hotel**, Portlaoise.
- + **Tully Bull Sale** – Monday 3rd May 2010 11:00 to 16:00 – Tully Performance Test Centre, Tully.
- + **ICBF AGM** – 14:30 – 16:00, Thursday 27th May at the Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise.
- + **ICAR and Interbull Meetings**, Riga Latvia 31st May to 4th June. Organisations interested in attending can find further information on the conference website - www.icar2010.lv.
- + **Sheep 2010, Lyons Estate, UCD** – Saturday 26th June. This is a major day for the Irish Sheep industry.

2. Database



- + The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFF AIM systems.
- + In the Suckler scheme, the number of 2009 born calves with meal introduced is 613,315 with the number of animals weaned at 534,920.
- + A number of updates to the extracts of Suckler scheme data to DAFF are being worked on.
- + Work is on-going to update the ICBF website to handle the requirements of Animal Health Ireland, beginning with their BVD programme. Testing will begin next week and it is hoped to launch the developments the following week.
- + Work on a number of issues in relation to the IHFA pedigree certificate is underway.
- + The updates to the Suckler Cow report have been completed and are currently being run. This is to reflect the split in milk and fertility in the latest evaluations.
- + The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2010 compared with 2009.



3. Breeding Scheme Review

(A copy of this discussion paper is available in the publications section of the ICBF website)

- ✚ A round of consultation meetings with individual Stakeholders in dairy and beef breeding has commenced. This is part of a process to improve the short and long term contribution of cattle breeding to the profitability of farming in Ireland. It has been initiated as a consequence of the impact that genomics is having on cattle breeding and the impact that disease outbreaks have had on both dairy and beef breeding.
- ✚ The aim is to find a breeding scheme structure that achieves three key objectives:
 - long term genetic gain,
 - ensures the availability of data to enable genomics to be exploited in the long term and,
 - to minimize risks associated with disease, changing breeding objectives and inbreeding.
- ✚ Genomics is already being used heavily in dairy breeding and our expectation is that it will be a tool available to beef breeding within the next two or three years.
- ✚ The role of progeny testing in identifying bulls for widespread use in AI is diminishing rapidly and it is expected that within a short period most bull selection decisions will be based on genomic information. The selection cycle for bulls used in AI is thus expected to reduce to about three years with little justification for bulls remaining in AI after they reach two years of age.
- ✚ Thus, with genomics, many of the key selection decisions are made on the farms where the elite cows are located. Mating of the elite cows with the right bulls becomes more important and the genomic testing of the resulting calves provides much of the information needed to determine if the bull is of sufficient standard to be used in AI. Disease control also starts on these farms and must continue till the selected bulls are used in AI.
- ✚ Stock bulls make an important contribution to breeding in both dairy and beef herds. Genomic tools have the potential to improve the quality of stock bulls substantially.
- ✚ Genomics will only continue to work effectively if it is being updated and recalibrated every generation. This means there is an ongoing need for the collection of accurate performance data in a number of well recorded herds for progeny all bulls that are used in AI.
- ✚ As a consequence, we expect to see substantial changes in the structure of cattle breeding in Ireland in the next few years. It is important for all stakeholders to engage fully in this consultation and we look forward to meeting with you all in due course. If you would like to be included in these consultations and have not heard from us please let me know (email: bwickham@icbf.com or mobile 086 826 9911).

4. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 16/03/10 to 26/03/10

	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	12	595	50	25.2	4.25	3.35	1.92	482
CAVAN	37	1,382	37	24.5	3.92	3.28	1.76	382

CLARE	11	482	44	30.8	3.68	3.21	2.12	269
CORK STH	209	11,857	57	24.3	4.03	3.24	1.77	318
CORK NTH	193	10,880	56	23.6	4.24	3.27	1.77	332
DONEGAL	6	263	44	27.3	4.02	3.32	2.00	396
DUBLIN	4	198	50	25.8	3.67	3.18	1.77	325
GALWAY	19	1,125	59	25.2	4.16	3.16	1.84	354
KERRY	103	4,464	43	25.4	3.87	3.14	1.78	361
KILDARE	15	1,088	73	23.9	4.15	3.37	1.80	377
KILKENNY	45	3,061	68	23.5	4.14	3.19	1.72	275
LAOIS	20	1,160	58	23.7	4.05	3.34	1.75	292
LEITRIM	2	54	27	22.8	4.20	3.29	1.71	534
LIMERICK	94	4,503	48	25.2	3.96	3.20	1.80	340
LONGFORD	4	120	30	20.7	4.30	3.52	1.62	490
LOUTH	15	1,023	68	24.6	4.04	3.38	1.83	304
MAYO	18	740	41	25.3	4.06	3.33	1.87	526
MEATH	39	3,321	85	23.8	4.05	3.23	1.73	345
MONAGHAN	19	755	40	23.5	3.98	3.22	1.69	312
OFFALY	12	723	60	23.6	4.19	3.28	1.76	344
ROSCOMMON	2	131	66	28.1	4.33	3.39	2.17	234
SLIGO	6	193	32	25.3	3.55	3.34	1.74	412
TIPPERARY NTH	20	1,156	58	22.8	4.05	3.23	1.66	371
TIPPERARY STH	24	1,452	61	21.8	4.16	3.18	1.60	346
WATERFORD	47	3,051	65	24.8	4.05	3.26	1.81	277
WESTMEATH	8	456	57	20.7	3.72	3.25	1.44	356
WEXFORD	54	3,395	63	24.2	4.11	3.36	1.81	279
WICKLOW E	19	1,116	59	22.9	3.82	3.20	1.61	345
WICKLOW W	4	434	109	25.2	3.64	3.34	1.76	332
	<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	1,061	59,178	55	24.4	4.01	3.28	1.78	356

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 16/03/10 to 26/03/10.

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	701	37,845	54	24.8	4.01	3.22	1.79	327
Leinster	251	16,690	66	23.7	4.01	3.31	1.73	350
Connacht	47	2,243	48	25.3	4.06	3.30	1.87	412
Ulster	62	2,400	39	25.1	3.97	3.27	1.82	363

5. GENRELAND®

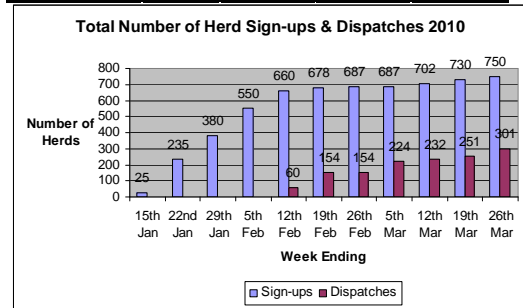
Beef

- Sign ups have reached 171 herds
- Total straws sent out per bull currently on the panel are in the table below

BREED	SI	SA	SH	HE
CODE	HSY	BHU	CZB	AGI
STRAWS	575	446	655	275

Dairy

- The majority of herds that ordered the Mixed Breed and Crossbred packs have had their straws allocated. We await the arrival of the Holstein Friesian and Friesian straws, distribution will commence as soon as possible



6. Genetic Evaluations

Beef

- Beef genetic evaluations for the April 2010 publication are in progress. This run will include a full update of information on all traits.

Dairy

- Production, fertility, longevity, SCC and linear type evaluations have been sent to Interbull for the next International evaluation. Results will be returned to us on April 6th.
- A new calving evaluation is almost complete.
- Once all the evaluations are complete a new genomic run will be done and all proofs will be made official.
- The expected date of release for all proofs, dairy and beef is Monday April 12th at 5pm.

7. Sheep Ireland

- Over 1400 hundred lambs have now been recorded on the LambPlus database so far this year.
- LambPlus breeders continue to add lambing and weighing data daily, any breeders who have not done so are urged to do so as soon as possible.
- Breeders should contact Donegal Farm Relief Service, to organise ultra sound scanning for fat and muscle depth to be carried on their Lambs at 120 to 140 days old. (074-9145386).
- MALP farmers are now lambing. Handheld technology is being used on these farms to record important data, such as lambing difficulty and lamb fostering etc.

- ✚ Early lambing MALP farms will have their lambs weighed at 40 days and EID tagged starting from next week.

Sheep genetic evaluation

- ✚ New software is currently being tested to calculate the accuracy of the sheep breeding values in collaboration with Eildert Groeneveld (Germany).

8. HerdPlus

Beef

- ✚ ICBF attended the recent Kilkenny Agricultural Society Multibreed Bull Sale.
- ✚ Herdplus Reports were on display and there was good interest at the stand.
- ✚ Euro-Stars were also displayed on the day for the Beef Bulls at the Sale.
- ✚ Aberdeen Angus, Charolais, Hereford, Limousin & Simmental Beef Bulls were on offer
- ✚ Although the Bull Trade was challenging, a number of Purchasers commented that they appreciated having the extra information when assessing a Bull for Purchase.
- ✚ The Euro-Stars allowed Purchasers to concentrate on the particular Breeding Goal that interested them.
- ✚ Many Breeders also appreciated the information given that many of them had invested in Linear Scoring – it was important to them that they could see the results of their efforts through the figures of their Bulls.
- ✚ Examples of some of the High Indexed Bulls from each of the Breeds are attached.

Brian Wickham (PhD) Chief Executive, ICBF & Sheep Ireland, Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon Co. Cork., Phone: +353 238 820 222, Mobile: +353 86 826 9911, Email bwickham@icbf.com.

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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.

VENDORS

Lot	Vendor
5	Joseph Lynch - Carhuena Tuamgraney Scariff Co Clare
1	Mr John Mcenroe - Liss Oldcastle Co Meath
6	Thomas O'Riordan - Ballyedmond Midleton Co Cork
2	Matt Ryan - Clonismullen Drom Borrisoleigh Thurles Co Tipperary
3	Francis Scott - Knockfin Rathdowney Co Laois
4	William Smith - Millbrook Oldcastle Co Meath