

## 1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December** – 8:30 - ICBF Audit & Finance Sub Committee meeting, The Comfort Inn, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December** – 10:30 - ICBF Board meeting, The Comfort Inn, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December** – 14:00 - Interim Sheep Board meeting, The Comfort Inn, Portlaoise.

## 2 Change in our phone numbers

The ICBF phone numbers have changed. Our new numbers have “88” added to them after the area code (023). Please amend your files as soon as possible. The old numbers will continue to work for until May of 2009.

Old Number (example)	New Number (example)
Phone: 023 20222	023 <b>88</b> 20222
Fax: 023 20229	023 <b>88</b> 20229

## 3 Animal Health Ireland

It is pleasing to be able to report progress with the establishment of a herd health scheme for Ireland. This is being sought by cattle breeders and the wider industry.

This industry led initiative has progressed with the announcement by DAFF of:

- the formation of *Animal Health Ireland*,
- the formation of an interim **Steering Group** to be chaired by Mike Magan,
- the provision of initial funding,
- the provision of interim staffing, and
- the establishment of a **Stakeholders Group**. The Stakeholders Group is scheduled to meet with the interim Steering Group in the next few days.

The Chairman of ICBF, John O’Sullivan, has also been appointed to the interim **Steering Group** and I will represent ICBF in the **Stakeholders Group**.

The aims of *Animal Health Ireland* are:

- To determine and, on an industry-wide basis, obtain agreement on a range of animal health interventions capable of enhancing on-farm productivity and international competitiveness of the Irish livestock industry.
- To develop and coordinate the national infrastructure that will be needed to enable industry at all levels to take appropriate and effective action.

## 4 GENEIRELAND®

### Dairy

- ✚ The extract for the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of insemination payments for Spring 2008 program was run this week. Payments will be made early next week. A final run will most likely be done in the New Year so data should still be sent in.

- ✚ 135 herds have now signed up to the Autumn program, taking a total of 5,110 straws. 80% of these herds have had their packs dispatched.

## BEEF

- ✚ Autumn 2008 – Sign Ups hit the 200 herd mark today (twice as many as last year).
- ✚ 3,597 Straws sent out which is enough to test just over 5 bulls.
- ✚ First Parthenaise bull (KCP) added to panel. Picture on right.



## 5 GENEIRELAND® - Tully

- ✚ NCBC recently purchased a 5 star Parthenaise bull (Cambridge) from the last intake. Picture on right.
- ✚ The 59 bulls for the next intake are now in. This represents a 20% increase in numbers from the corresponding intake last year.
- ✚ Breakdown by breed is as follows



BREED	AA	AU	BB	CH	LM	PT	SA	SI	SH	HE
NO.OF BULLS	5	7	3	8	27	2	2	2	1	2

## 6 Two New Event Recording Screens

Two new animal event recording screens are now operational.

### Record Farmer Rating

- ✚ This screen allows herd owners to rate their first lactation animals in relation to:
  - Farmer Satisfaction
  - Temperament
  - Milking Speed
  - Leakage
- ✚ The objective is to use this information in genetic evaluations and establish a link to profitable traits such as production, fertility and health.

### Record TG Health (Teagasc Health Project)

- ✚ This screen allows herd owners to record any animal in the milking herd that has had incidences of the following health events during the past season.
  - Mastitis
  - Lameness
  - Retained Placenta

- ✚ The aim of this research is to quantify whether daughters of some sires have poorer health than daughters of other sires. The data collected will also be used to investigate whether selection on EBI is improving the health status of Irish herds and what mechanisms can be put in place to ensure that no negative effects of selection on EBI occur.
- ✚ Letters were sent to HerdPlus<sup>®</sup> clients this week in relation to Animal Health, but we encourage as many herd-owners as possible to record these events over the coming weeks through our website.

## 7 Sheep

All areas of the Sheep Ireland plan are developing well:

- ✚ Protocols for double tagging and performance recording, for both pedigree and MALP breeders, are nearing finalisation.
- ✚ Further meetings are being held with MALP breeders to get all up to speed with the weighing and double tagging that will begin next week in these flocks.
- ✚ A lambing book has been developed with the LambPlus service team and will be ready for lambing recording.
- ✚ Web screens and printed pages for data capture are being developed.
- ✚ LambPlus training course times and locations are to be announced early next week.
- ✚ The Sheep Ireland scheme and the LambPlus service are being presented around the country at Teagasc Sheep meetings so we invite you to come along.
- ✚ We are getting a good response from breeders.



## 8 Genetic Evaluations

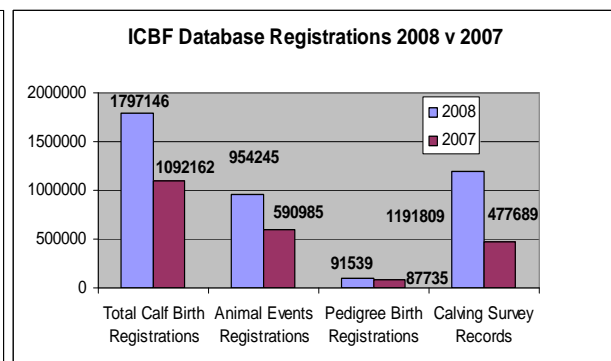
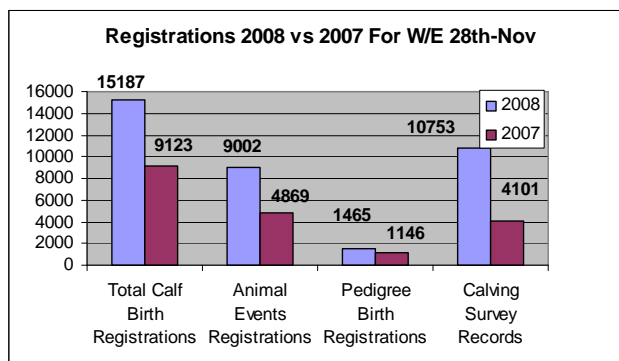
### Dairy

Work is ongoing on genomic selection research in tandem with Donagh Berry from Moorepark. Data extractions for use in training populations are currently being undertaken.

### Beef

A new round of mart data collection has commenced. It is anticipated that the utilisation of suitable mart records for genetic evaluation purposes will increase significantly as a result of the suckler cow welfare scheme. There are now potentially enough docility recordings available from the suckler welfare scheme (400,000) to allow commencement of research on this trait which will commence in the coming week.

## 9 Database



- ✚ 515,050 inseminations have been received so far in 2008, compared with 363,954 in 2007 for the same period.
- ✚ The work on revamping the AI software for next season is continuing. Testing of the finalised solution began this week and has been provided to some of the organisations this week. Further users will receive the application next week.
- ✚ There continues to be a lot of activity in the Suckler Scheme. The number of calves with a meal feeding introduction has increased to 650,000, with just over 460,000 of these having been weaned.
- ✚ The revamp of the Milk Recording system continues. Work on the data inputting screens will begin next week.
- ✚ This week, work has continued on migrating the Sheep Performance system to the ICBF/Sheep Ireland database, and on building the systems to handle the flock reconciliation activities which will be undertaken in the coming weeks.
- ✚ Work is continuing on the Genomic Selection applications, working in conjunction with Donagh Berry at Moorepark.
- ✚ This week saw the installation of new servers and storage. This extra capacity is necessary to handle the increased data in respect of the suckler scheme, genomic selection and the Sheep Ireland database.
- ✚ The hardware that is being installed is:
  - HP Storage Works EVA 6100 SAN (storage area network) with 12 terabytes (a lot of disk space!) and capacity for as much again.
  - HP rx3600 Itanium Servers running HP-UX 11i V2.
  - Proliant DL380 Storage Server.



Niall Naughton (on left) and Paul O'Brien of Morse in front of new computer hardware installed this week in ICBF's computer room at Highfield House. Paul has been responsible for installing all the database servers at ICBF since 1999.

## 10 HerdPlus®

- ✚ Kevin Downing & Martin Burke attended the Teagasc Dairy Conference in the Rochestown Hotel. It was encouraging to see that Herdplus® reports had been used in a number of the presentations on the day.
- ✚ The new procedure for running Herdplus® Fertility reports as often as they are required and not just at set times in the year is being tested at the moment.
- ✚ The Irish Pure Friesian club held their AGM this week. Pat Donnellan spoke to them about Dairy Herdplus® and Francis Kearney spoke about Genomic selection.
- ✚ Pat Donnellan also spoke at a Teagasc Winter Beef seminar in conjunction with Teagasc Macroom & Teagasc Bandon.

**11 Milk Recording**

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 28/11/08						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 28/11/08	No. EDIY Herds YTD 28/11/08	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 28/11/08	No. EDIY Cows YTD 28/11/08	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,245	937	42%	185,862	74,639	40%
Dairygold	1,698	644	38%	125,880	49,531	39%
Kerry	1,159	248	21%	79,471	16,317	21%
SWS	915	135	15%	62,985	9,985	16%
Tipperary	171	138	81%	13,076	5,781	44%
Arrabawn	166	72	43%	12,976	10,967	85%
Connacht	159	69	43%	10,471	4,423	42%
Donegal	49	49	100%	4,817	4,817	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,562</b>	<b>2,292</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>495,538</b>	<b>176,460</b>	<b>36%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 28/11/07	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 28/11/08	2008 vs 2007 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	170,538	185,862	8.2%
Dairygold	112,709	125,880	10.5%
Kerry	72,223	79,471	9.1%
SWS	61,374	62,985	2.6%
Tipperary	12,329	13,076	5.7%
Arrabawn	12,079	12,976	6.9%
Connacht	10,160	10,471	3.0%
Donegal	3,920	4,817	18.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455,332</b>	<b>495,538</b>	<b>8.1%</b>

**National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 18/11/08 to 28/11/08.**

	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	8	691	86	21.6	4.18	3.52	1.66	422
CAVAN	39	1,789	46	16.7	4.12	3.55	1.28	288
CLARE	2	139	70	26.4	3.85	3.40	1.91	344
CORK STH	158	8,900	56	17.9	4.16	3.58	1.39	323
CORK NTH	173	10,581	61	15.4	4.40	3.68	1.24	398
DONEGAL	10	535	54	14.1	4.51	3.77	1.17	348
DUBLIN	4	202	51	17.6	3.95	3.54	1.32	463
GALWAY	15	905	60	16.4	4.40	3.60	1.31	289



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	<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>
<b>KERRY</b>	67	3,652	55	16.1	4.17	3.58	1.25	408
<b>KILDARE</b>	20	1,404	70	20.5	4.39	3.55	1.63	304
<b>KILKENNY</b>	24	1,566	65	17.0	4.44	3.68	1.38	276
<b>LAOIS</b>	29	1,783	61	16.1	4.50	3.77	1.33	395
<b>LEITRIM</b>	4	165	41	13.9	3.90	3.41	1.02	307
<b>LIMERICK</b>	41	2,309	56	16.6	4.15	3.57	1.28	445
<b>LONGFORD</b>	7	375	54	11.8	4.49	3.76	0.97	321
<b>LOUTH</b>	24	1,670	70	19.4	4.08	3.58	1.49	331
<b>MAYO</b>	9	435	48	14.6	3.92	3.56	1.09	367
<b>MEATH</b>	54	4,449	82	19.5	4.36	3.62	1.56	374
<b>MONAGHAN</b>	32	1,251	39	18.8	4.05	3.37	1.39	364
<b>OFFALY</b>	13	748	58	17.4	4.18	3.51	1.34	381
<b>SLIGO</b>	2	76	38	14.4	3.73	3.78	1.08	200
<b>TIPPERARY NTH</b>	19	1,085	57	14.2	4.40	3.75	1.16	349
<b>TIPPERARY STH</b>	20	1,171	59	16.9	4.13	3.57	1.30	279
<b>WATERFORD</b>	25	1,761	70	14.9	4.77	3.91	1.29	374
<b>WESTMEATH</b>	13	817	63	16.9	4.52	3.73	1.39	300
<b>WEXFORD</b>	52	3,152	61	16.8	4.38	3.63	1.35	341
<b>WICKLOW E</b>	17	1,159	68	17.5	3.95	3.54	1.31	358
<b>WICKLOW W</b>	10	966	97	23.9	4.19	3.49	1.84	355
	<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>
<b>National</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>54,088</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>4.23</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>1.34</b>	<b>344</b>

**National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 18/11/08 to 28/11/08**

<b>Provincial</b>	<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>
<b>Munster</b>	505	29,598	59	17.3	4.30	3.63	1.37	365
<b>Leinster</b>	275	18,982	69	18.2	4.10	3.61	1.40	355
<b>Connacht</b>	35	1,933	55	14.7	4.19	3.60	1.14	290
<b>Ulster</b>	81	3,575	44	16.5	4.56	3.56	1.34	333