

1. Important Dates

- # **Tuesday 9th June.** Irish Grasslands Assn Sheep Meeting. This meeting will feature recent developments by Sheep Ireland. Johnstown, Co. Kilkenny.
- # **Tuesday 30th June.** Irish Grassland Assn Beef Meeting

2. Summary of AHI visit to UK – Brian Wickham

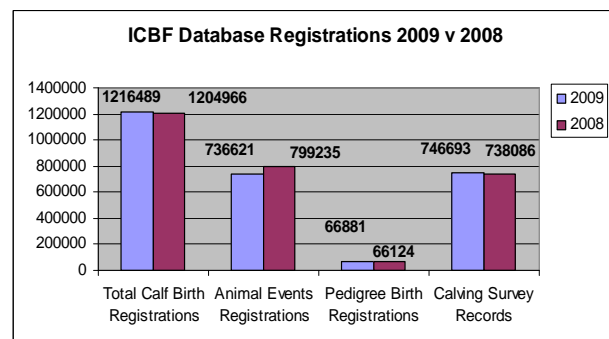
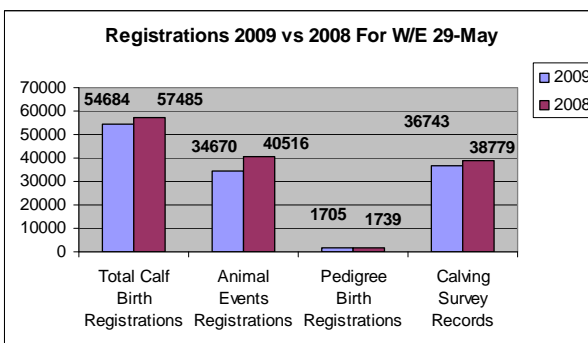
I was fortunate to be part of a group from Animal Health Ireland (AHI) that visited the UK on Wednesday and Thursday this week. We were hosted by a number of organisations with an interest in animal health in the UK including NMR, British Cattle Veterinary Assn, National BVD Control Initiative, GB Animal Health & Welfare Strategy, and the DEFRA Farm Health Planning group.

The purpose of the visit was to gain an insight into recent developments and experiences in the UK.

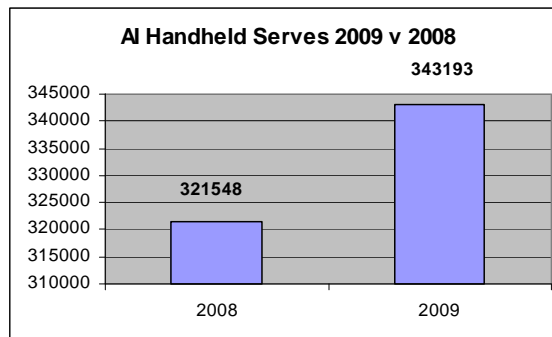
The key messages, for me, coming from these discussions were:

- # Solving farm animal health problems requires a partnership approach involving farmers, veterinarians, and various service providers.
- # The four key elements to solving problems for a wide range of diseases are: biosecurity, surveillance, immunity including vaccination and action plans. Under emphasis on any one of these can result in failure.
- # The best approach varies from disease to disease.
- # The main diseases are infertility, mastitis, Johnes, BVD, calf health and IBR. Individual farms can face serious problems from a wide range of other diseases.
- # Farmers, and their veterinary advisors, need access to high quality data on individual farms and animals to decide priorities, determine surveillance plans and decide action plans.
- # Disease control requires a consistent long-term commitment by the farmer and relevant advisors.
- # UK cattle farmers face similar disease threats to Irish farmers and the two countries can mutually benefit from a free exchange of information and knowledge.
- # AHI has a unique opportunity to develop effective and innovative solutions that can bring about substantial improvements in cattle farming profitability and industry competitiveness.

3. Database



- ✚ The revised 2009 suckler forms (pre and post weaning have begun to go out to farmers). In relation to 2008 born calves, the number of calves with a meal feeding introduction has increased to 790,000, with just over 698,000 of these having been weaned.
- ✚ The revamp of the Milk Recording system continues. Progress has been slower than planned, but we are still expecting to have the system live for some users within the next few weeks.
- ✚ Work on a new mechanism of sending and receiving Suckler scheme data to DAFF is continuing, and will be completed by the end of June.
- ✚ Development on the sheep genetic evaluation extracts is nearing completion.
- ✚ 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, it looks like the overall inseminations for the season will be down.



4. Tully

- ✚ Outlined in the Table 1 below is the breakdown by breed of bulls that are currently in pre-entry isolation at Tully. All bulls were blood sampled this week as part of their pre-entry isolation health testing and results are due back early next week. There will also be two more blood samples taken from each individual animal next week and the week after which will allow us to monitor and maintain a high health status of all bulls before their 90 day performance test starts. This isolation period also allows bulls to adapt to their new environment and be increased to ad-lib concentrates in a safe manner. Bulls were treated this week for stomach worms, fluke and lice.

Table 1. Bulls currently in Tully

Breed	AA	AU	BA	BB	CH	LM	PT	SA	SI	SH	HE
No. of Bulls	14	0	0	3	8	7	1	1	6	1	4

- ✚ Table 2 illustrates the selection process of bulls been targeted for Tully. The table below indicates the strict criteria which allow only the top bulls be selected for Tully in terms of aspects such as visual, health status and indexes. Taking this into account these high genetic merit animals have huge potential in making a major contribution to the beef industry as they are generally the superior bulls from their respective breeds which meet the criteria to be further selected through performance testing.

Table 2. Bull selection process for current intake:

Breed	Targeted	Applied	Passed Visual	Bloods Sent in	Bloods Passed	Entered Tully
AA	56	35	21	19	14	14
AU	3	1	1	0	0	0
BA	6	2	1	1	0	0
BB	14	6	6	4	3	3
CH	284	50	23	15	8	8
HE	130	10	7	5	4	4
LM	423	57	26	23	7	7

PT	3	3	3	2	1	1
SA	6	3	3	1	1	1
SH	4	1	1	1	1	1
SI	71	10	7	7	6	6
Total	1000	178	99	78	45	45

5. Genetic Evaluations

Genomics Update

All proofs have been uploaded to the database and the bull files have been updated. We are currently streamlining programs to help them run faster in future. In future these proofs will be available as part of the main run. Genotypes will have to be provided in advance to ensure this process can occur. We will be in contact with the industry on the protocols over the next couple of months.

Beef Evaluations

Work is progressing on the evaluation of genetic parameters for the farmer scored calf quality and the existing 15 traits in the beef performance evaluation. In addition work has commenced on re-estimating the genetic parameters for a new across breed linear type evaluation.

International

Work on the conversion equations for Charolais and Limousin has been held up due to the work on beef digital images. This piece of work will resume in the coming weeks.

6. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 19/05/09 to 29/05/09

	<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	13	737	57	26.5	3.88	3.45	1.94	326
CAVAN	33	1,838	56	27.1	3.61	3.31	1.88	290
CLARE	23	1,155	50	23.0	3.68	3.22	1.59	307
CORK STH	255	16,826	66	25.5	3.70	3.39	1.81	246
CORK NTH	303	22,273	74	25.2	3.78	3.35	1.80	264
DONEGAL	11	1,109	101	25.3	4.41	3.28	1.95	416
DUBLIN	5	274	55	29.8	3.71	3.45	2.13	279
GALWAY	26	1,894	73	23.6	4.01	3.31	1.73	440
KERRY	86	5,584	65	25.9	3.70	3.21	1.79	342
KILDARE	13	1,034	80	24.1	3.54	3.44	1.68	379
KILKENNY	34	2,681	79	24.3	3.74	3.41	1.74	186
LAOIS	32	2,308	72	24.6	3.85	3.43	1.79	306
LEITRIM	3	104	35	30.8	3.91	3.29	2.22	208
LIMERICK	117	7,588	65	26.7	3.64	3.31	1.86	302
LONGFORD	6	352	59	22.9	4.14	3.52	1.75	369
LOUTH	17	1,573	93	30.2	3.78	3.32	2.14	308
MAYO	25	1,403	56	28.1	3.05	3.35	1.80	383
MEATH	36	3,072	85	24.3	4.07	3.31	1.79	280
MONAGHAN	19	924	49	25.6	3.72	3.22	1.78	331
OFFALY	20	1,479	74	24.7	3.91	3.34	1.79	338
ROSCOMMON	2	109	55	27.9	3.34	3.39	1.88	318

SLIGO	9	308	34	27.5	3.49	3.39	1.89	302
TIPPERARY NTH	48	4,260	89	23.1	4.15	3.40	1.74	306
TIPPERARY STH	47	3,192	68	24.3	3.83	3.36	1.75	237
WATERFORD	60	5,045	84	25.0	3.86	3.38	1.81	297
WESTMEATH	19	1,305	69	23.5	4.13	3.41	1.77	220
WEXFORD	51	3,574	70	24.8	3.70	3.41	1.76	240
WICKLOW E	13	1,041	80	27.7	3.47	3.30	1.88	230
WICKLOW W	7	620	89	24.6	4.36	3.28	1.88	511
	<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	1,333	93,662	68	25.7	3.80	3.35	1.84	309

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 19/05/09 to 29/05/09

Provincial	<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>
Munster	939	65,923	70	24.8	3.88	3.33	1.79	288
Leinster	266	20,050	75	25.5	3.70	3.39	1.81	306
Connacht	65	3,818	59	27.6	3.74	3.35	1.95	330
Ulster	63	3,871	61	26.0	3.91	3.27	1.87	346

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 29/05/09

Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 29/05/09	No. EDIY Herds YTD 29/05/09	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 29/05/09	No. EDIY Cows YTD 29/05/09	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	1,994	786	39%	152,844	58,298	38%
Dairygold	1,460	537	37%	101,965	38,464	38%
Kerry	870	62	7%	54,753	3,346	6%
SWS	848	109	13%	54,744	7,236	13%
Tipperary	124	46	37%	9,339	3,894	42%
Arrabawn	137	113	82%	10,149	8,525	84%
Connacht	121	36	30%	7,092	2,000	28%
Donegal	17	17	100%	1,634	1,634	100%
Total	5,571	1,706	31%	392,520	123,397	31%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 29/05/08	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 29/05/09	2009 vs 2008 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	157,589	152,844	-3.1%

Dairygold	102,490	101,965	-0.5%
Kerry	69,212	54,753	-26.4%
SWS	54,796	54,744	-0.1%
Tipperary	10,976	9,339	-17.5%
Arrabawn	11,274	10,149	-11.1%
Connacht	6,978	7,092	1.6%
Donegal	2,477	1,634	-51.6%
Total	415,792	392,520	-5.9%

7. 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 no longer work.

Old Number (example)	New Number (example)
Phone: 023 20222	023 88 20222
Fax: 023 20229	023 88 20229

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