

1. Important Dates

- ✚ **Thursday 19th February 2009.** Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation Meeting, Moorepark, 10:30 – 14:00.
- ✚ **Thursday 19th February 2009.** ICBF Board Meeting / Conference Call, Moorepark, 2:30pm – 5.00pm. *(This replaces the Board Meeting scheduled for Thursday 5th March in Portlaoise).*
- ✚ **Thursday 5th March 2009.** Sheep Ireland Board Meeting, Portlaoise. 14:00 – 16:30.

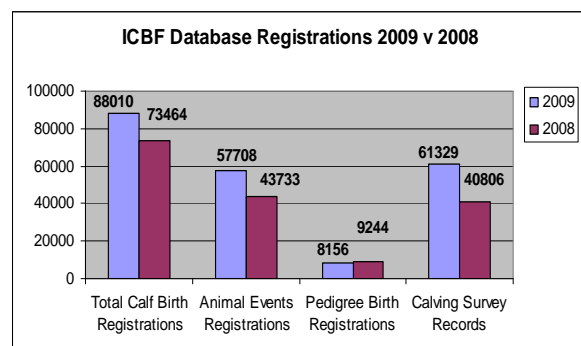
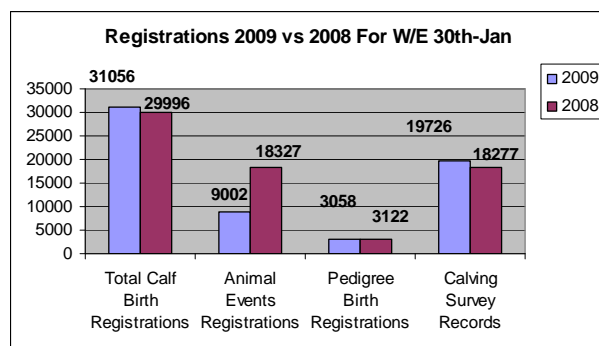
2. Interbull Genomics Workshop

Ireland was represented by Donagh Berry, Andrew Cromie and Brian Wickham at the Interbull Genomics workshop held in Uppsala, Sweden on Tuesday and Wednesday this week. Total attendance was 102 people from 30 countries.

Outcomes of the Workshop included:

- ✚ A survey conducted by Interbull has shown widespread plans to incorporate genomic data into national dairy cattle genetic evaluations. USA is already providing official evaluations incorporating genomic data.
- ✚ Breeding schemes in several countries including USA, Canada, New Zealand, Netherlands, France and Ireland are using genomic information to accelerate the rate of genetic gain.
- ✚ There is a strong consensus that genomic information will play a central role in future dairy (and beef) cattle breeding with developments expected to include reductions in the cost of DNA testing and increasingly accurate evaluations.
- ✚ Interbull has a major role to play in facilitating the use of genomic data in national dairy cattle genetic evaluations. The *ideal* role being to provide a repository of genomic data which is shared between countries to establish large training populations and higher reliability genetic evaluations for breeding decisions within countries.
- ✚ In the immediate future Interbull and national animal evaluation units need to work together to ensure cattle breeders continue to have access to accurate, unbiased and fair genetic evaluations.
- ✚ To remove the risk of bias in future genetic evaluations it is most important that genomic data be retained on all animals that have been genotyped in every country. This should be done regardless of whether the animal is kept or culled.
- ✚ Ireland is one of the leaders in establishing systems for enabling cattle breeders to utilise genomic information in breeding decisions.

3. Database



- ✦ 14,075 inseminations have been received so far in 2009, compared with 15,409 in 2008 for the same period.
- ✦ The AI 2009 software migration continues with PG next week.
- ✦ The 2009 calves for the suckler cow scheme have begun to be registered. The Animal Events notebooks have begun to be issued this week, and will continue for the next number of weeks. There also continues to be a lot of activity in relation to the 2008 born calves. The number of calves with a meal feeding introduction has increased to 732,000, with just over 626,000 of these having been weaned.
- ✦ The revamp of the Milk Recording system continues. Programming has begun this week, and will take several weeks to complete.
- ✦ Work on the in-breeding check function and Sire Advice 2009 is continuing.
- ✦ This week, work has continued on the Sheep application, with a continuous stream of good feedback from users, which is being incorporated wherever possible.

4. Genetic Evaluations

Dairy & Beef

The ICBF bull search is now updated with the new dairy and beef proofs from the January 2009 genetic evaluation run. The usual web files are also updated and can be found under genetic evaluations on our website (www.icbf.com).

International

On Monday 26th January 2009, the InterBeef Working Group (of ICAR) had a meeting at the Interbull center in Uppsala (Sweden). The Working Group meeting was attended by representatives of ICAR, Interbull center, Ireland, France, United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Germany (database set up), & Finland (database management). Observers from Estonia and Germany were also welcomed. The Group is chaired by Brian Wickham. The key points of this meeting were:

- ✦ **Genetic evaluation.** During fall 2008, weaning weight performances and pedigrees for pure bred Limousine and Charolais from Ireland, France, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden were collected and checked by the InterBeef team. A new set of genetic parameters were calculated in January 2009 by INRA for the Limousine breed involving Ireland, France, United Kingdom, Denmark, and Sweden. The same work is currently done for the Charolais breed. The final set of genetic parameters for both breeds is expected for spring 2009. Test proofs will then be calculated for direct and maternal weaning weight.
- ✦ **Genetic database.** Established during summer 2008, the blueprints of the genetic database have supported the building of the first phase of collection of data. This crucial step was tested successfully using live data by ICBF (Ireland) and the Scottish Agricultural College (UK) in December 2008. Finalizing this first step and moving to next step, delivering the data to the genetic evaluation center, is the work plan for the coming months.

The next meetings of the InterBeef working group will be in some two months time to review genetic evaluation results and to coincide with the EAAP meeting in August 2009.

5. Tully

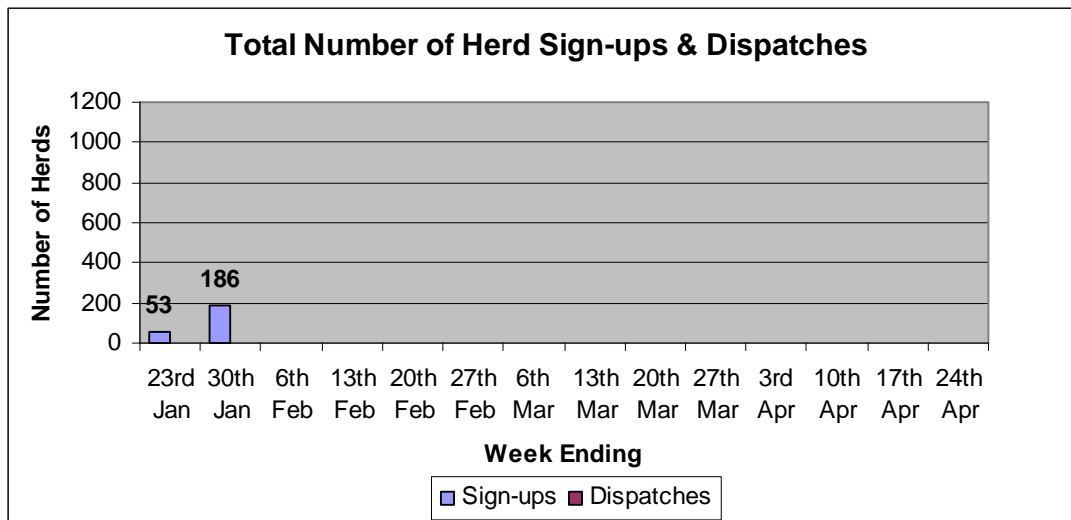
- ✦ A list of potential bulls for the next intake (i.e. May) has been sent out to the secretaries of each breed society.
- ✦ All bulls were washed this week with bulls performing from 1.3 to 3.3 kg per day across breed and the average been 2.1 kg per day.

- Also, just a reminder that the Tully committee meeting will take place in Tully next Tuesday the 3rd of February at 11 0' clock.

6. GENÉIRLAND[®]

Dairy

- To date there are only a small number of milk recorded heifers from the test bulls of the Autumn 2005 programme. It was expected that there would be a certain percentage carried over until the Spring, so more information will be available as the season progresses.
- Constant flow of sign-up forms are been received for the Spring 2009 programme, although this time last year we were at 320.



Beef

- Sign Ups continuing well. 105 herds taking 1982 straws are now signed up.
- Interesting results for GENÉIRLAND[®] bulls from the release of the latest proofs.
 - AA – The Red Angus LZE is the second highest Angus on SBV and the MGS of RWB is the highest within breed
 - BA – The MGS of WOA is the highest index Blonde bull
 - BB – ANX is 13th within breed
 - CH – Tully tested bull KLU is the top Charolais in the country and 3rd highest bull across all breeds
 - LM – Tully tested RBU is 8th within breed
 - PT – Tully tested KCP is 3rd within breed
 - SI – DRU is the 5th highest bull across all breeds and RKZ, IS4 and SEV are all in the top 25 of the breed.

7. HerdPlus

Herd Ahead Health Project

- ICBF and TEAGASC are collaborating in a research project with the goal of improving dairy farm profitability through better control of a range of diseases.

- ✚ The 'HERD AHEAD' project, has been initiated to pilot and evaluate farm-specific health statements relating to infectious diseases.
- ✚ We have a target of getting 200 farmers participating in this baseline health survey and as of Friday 30th January some **175 farmers** have returned sign-up forms.
- ✚ The aim is to make these health statements available through ICBF's HerdPlus[®] service. At the end of the project we envisage a system which allows farmers to continuously monitor infectious disease on their farms and also allow farmers to trade safely with farmers of similar health status.

Glanbia Dairy Seminars - New HerdPlus/Glanbia Dairy Herd Performance Report

- ✚ ICBF staff have been out and about this week at Glanbia meetings in Abbeyleix, Clonmel, Navan and Dungarvan. Presentations focused on Genomics, GEN[®] IRELAND[®] 2009 and the launch of a new "**HerdPlus Dairy Herd Performance Report**" for Glanbia suppliers.
- ✚ This new report is the result of a synergistic and collaborative effort between Glanbia and ICBF. It combines the farmers bulk data from the co-op and the number of cows from ICBF, to calculate the average solids output per cow and average SCC. By combining the data from two existing databases, this new report adds real value by putting farmer's own data in a format which measures his cows' performance. It also benchmarks that farmers performance against the top 10% in Glanbia. It will be first dispatched to Glanbia suppliers in late February 09.

See sample report below

Dairy Herd Performance Report Spring Calving 2008									
Herd Owner:		Sample of actual herd							
Designator:		IE1234567							
Table 1: Your Herds Milk Deliveries to Glanbia for 2008									
Your Herd's Milk Performance (based on 2008 Glanbia Milk Deliveries)									
Month	Milk (Litres)	Fat Kg	Ptn Kg	Fat%	Ptn%	Total Solids (kg)	SCC	Total Dairy Cows	Milk solids/cow /day (all cows)
January	4,111	157	132	3.71	3.12	289	691	51	0.18
February	9,105	339	293	3.61	3.12	631	362	55	0.41
March	24,282	935	800	3.74	3.20	1736	272	57	0.98
April	24,348	880	838	3.51	3.34	1718	219	58	0.99
May	34,805	1265	1205	3.53	3.36	2470	203	58	1.37
June	43,360	1626	1492	3.64	3.34	3117	233	58	1.79
July	31,837	1230	1089	3.75	3.32	2318	239	58	1.29
August	38,282	1490	1341	3.78	3.40	2831	447	58	1.57
September	24,188	1004	909	4.03	3.65	1913	849	54	1.18
October	12,433	543	506	4.24	3.95	1049	934	54	0.63
November	7,970	349	314	4.25	3.82	662	1,183	54	0.41
December	897	37	36	4.05	3.89	73	1,381	54	0.04
Total	255,618	9,856	8,953			18809			
Average/mth	21,302	821	746	3.82	3.46	2,894	406	56	0.90
Average/cow	4585	177	161			337			

FIG 1: Milk Solids per Cow per Day

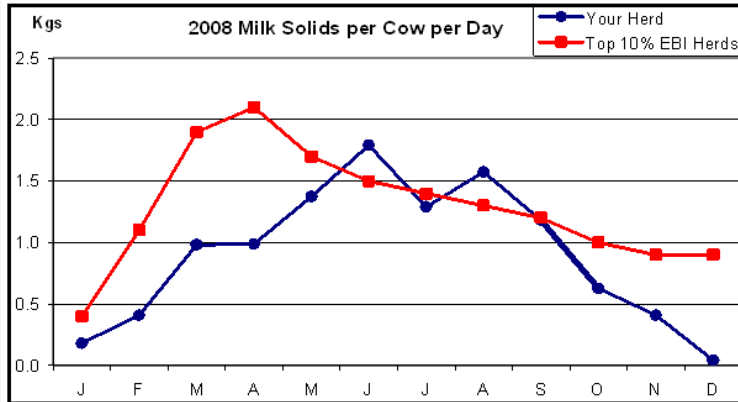
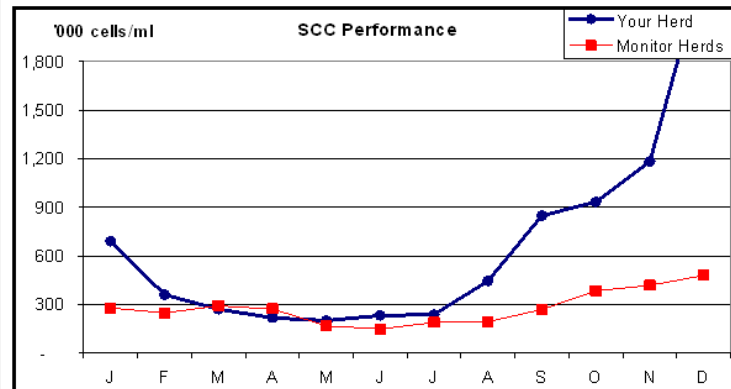


Fig 2: Monthly SCC



Useful Management Tips March - May

- Prevent grass tetany - feed 2oz (60g) calcined magnesite per cow per day at grass.
- Cows fed 13 kg grass DM + 3 kg meal per head per day can produce 28 kg milk.
- Attend a monitor fam grassland walk to see how this is done
- Tail Paint cows one month before the start of the breeding season.
- Use the Active Bull list to select the bulls for your herd this year.
- Run the heifers with the cows for the first three weeks of the breeding season.
- Shorten the first round - inject unbred heifers with PG after 6 days of breeding.

Dairy Herd Performance Report Spring Calving 2008

Herd Owner: Sample of actual herd
Designator: IE1234567

Table 2: Your Glanbia/ICBF Performance Score Card

	Your Herd	Glanbia Average	Glanbia Top 10%	Your Rank out of 100	Your Star Rating
Your Milk performance for 2008 (Table 1) based on Glanbia data					
Fat + Protein (Kgl/cow)	337	402	506	18%	☆☆
<i>Average Fat and Protein yield per cow for your herd (Table 1)</i>					
Average Milk Value (cpl)	26.2	29.4	32.4	23%	☆☆☆☆
<i>Value of your milk based on your herd performance and the average glanbia manufacturing milk price for 2008.</i>					
SCC (,000 cells/ml)	406	260	180	4%	☆☆
<i>The weighted average Somatic Cell Count for 2008.</i>					

8. Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 30/01/09						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 30/01/09	No. EDIY Herds YTD 30/01/09	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 30/01/09	No. EDIY Cows YTD 30/01/09	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	700	115	16%	40,755	6,764	17%
Dairygold	142	8	6%	7,115	423	6%
Kerry	143	1	1%	6,459	132	2%
SWS	206	3	1%	9,161	362	4%
Tipperary	13	1	8%	615	23	4%
Arrabawn	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Connacht	50	0	0%	2,177	0	0%
Donegal	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Total	1,254	128	10%	66,282	7,704	12%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2008 Cows Recorded 01/01/08 - 30/01/08	YTD 2009 Cows Recorded 01/01/09 - 30/01/09	2009 vs 2008 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	50,661	40,755	-24.3%
Dairygold	6,026	7,115	15.3%
Kerry	7,804	6,459	-20.8%
SWS	10,083	9,161	-10.1%
Tipperary	282	615	54.1%
Arrabawn	467	0	0.0%
Connacht	2,591	2,177	-19.0%
Donegal	0	0	0.0%
Total	77,914	66,282	-17.5%

National Milk Recording Results by County - 10 day Period 20/01/09 to 30/01/09.

	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	11	526	48	22.6	3.79	3.41	1.63	340
CAVAN	22	717	33	19.7	4.02	3.50	1.48	330
CLARE	6	228	38	30.0	3.80	3.30	2.13	215
CORK STH	117	5,528	47	23.5	4.19	3.48	1.80	335
CORK NTH	59	2,920	49	23.3	4.02	3.41	1.73	367
DONEGAL	12	448	37	21.8	4.31	3.44	1.69	227
DUBLIN	8	497	62	21.7	4.28	3.52	1.69	357
GALWAY	16	704	44	24.1	4.00	3.20	1.74	361
KERRY	37	1,598	43	21.4	4.01	3.37	1.58	339
KILDARE	15	1,101	73	25.1	4.26	3.52	1.95	493
KILKENNY	16	775	48	23.3	4.15	3.50	1.78	297

LAOIS	22	1,099	50	19.9	4.32	3.68	1.59	352
LEITRIM	7	287	41	18.8	3.92	3.36	1.37	306
LIMERICK	27	1,384	51	25.6	3.92	3.31	1.85	312
LONGFORD	4	181	45	17.9	4.83	3.48	1.49	458
LOUTH	37	2,404	65	29.3	4.00	3.55	2.21	330
MAYO	18	629	35	23.3	3.79	3.46	1.69	358
MEATH	72	5,043	70	22.4	3.91	3.49	1.66	347
MONAGHAN	41	1,418	35	21.8	4.19	3.41	1.66	401
OFFALY	10	472	47	26.9	3.94	3.45	1.99	334
ROSCOMMON	1	22	22	9.8	4.59	3.71	0.81	362
SLIGO	4	126	32	19.9	4.02	3.51	1.50	346
TIPPERARY NTH	4	150	38	15.0	4.15	3.41	1.13	448
TIPPERARY STH	10	576	58	19.6	3.95	3.52	1.46	406
WATERFORD	17	1,318	78	20.6	4.06	3.39	1.53	225
WESTMEATH	18	944	52	22.5	4.21	3.50	1.73	461
WEXFORD	49	2,598	53	22.3	4.08	3.52	1.69	378
WICKLOW E	29	1,644	57	21.2	3.60	3.40	1.48	341
WICKLOW W	7	628	90	24.1	4.03	3.46	1.81	436
	<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	696	35,965	50	22.0	4.08	3.46	1.66	354

National Milk Recording Averages by Province - 10 day Period 20/01/09 to 30/01/09

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	277	13,702	49	22.4	4.01	3.40	1.66	331
Leinster	305	18,199	60	23.0	4.09	3.49	1.75	374
Connacht	46	1,768	38	21.5	4.06	3.45	1.62	347
Ulster	75	2,583	34	21.1	4.17	3.45	1.61	319

9. 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 until May of 2009.

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

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