



**UPDATE – for period 24<sup>th</sup> – 30th March 2007**

**1 Important Dates**

✚ **High EBI Heifer Sales** - Enniscorthy 2<sup>nd</sup> April, Fermoy 4<sup>th</sup> April, Kilkenny 16<sup>th</sup> April.

**2 Board Meeting**

At its Thursday meeting the Board focused on the recommendations of its Audit & Finance Sub Committee and efforts to resolve Herd Book issues.

**Audit & Finance Sub-Committee Recommendations**

Decisions taken on the basis of recommendations included:

- In relation to the IBR outbreak at Tully:
  - (a) To complete implementation of the agreed settlement as quickly as possible.
  - (b) Short term financial arrangements to cover the funding requirement have been put in place.
  - (c) To give full consideration to all future options for Tully in close consultation with the breeding industry before taking further decisions.
- To adopt and authorise the signing of the Audited Accounts for 2006.
- That the Board is to be consulted prior to any significant changes in staffing.
- To implement a policy of charging interest on overdue accounts at a rate appropriate bearing in mind the need for ICBF to arrange overdraft funding and the cost of administering overdue accounts.
- Recommend to the AGM that Ernst & Young be appointed as auditors for 2007.

**Herd Book Issues**

A delegation of eight representatives of Dairy and Beef herdbooks met with the Board and identified the issues they wished addressed. Dr Doreen Corridan reported back on her role as Special Liaison with the Herd Books.

The Board welcomed the very positive approach taken by the beef herd books, endorsed Dr Corridan's recommendations, agreed that priority should now be given to resolving the outstanding issues, and that resource issues be addressed.

The following table contains a summary of the issues identified by Dr Corridan.

Issue	Key Elements	Relevance
Principles in relation to roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pedigree certificates/ancestry details,</li> <li>• sales and marketing of pedigree cattle, semen and embryos, and</li> <li>• contact with members.</li> </ul>	Dairy and Beef
Administration of Herd Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more user friendly and efficient front-end to database for use in herd book offices,</li> <li>• reduction and elimination of errors, and</li> <li>• building of win-win relationship between organisations.</li> </ul>	Dairy and Beef



<b>Issue</b>	<b>Key Elements</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
Imported cattle, semen and embryos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop similar conversion methods for beef as exist for dairy,</li> <li>progress collaboration with UK/France and Interbull, and</li> <li>implement short term solutions.</li> </ul>	Beef
Linear Scoring & Weight Recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bring beef to same level as exists for dairy,</li> <li>professional service to international standards, and</li> <li>standard operating procedure agreed by Scorers, Herd Books, Producers and ICBF.</li> </ul>	Beef
Tully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operated in partnership between ICBF and Herd Books,</li> <li>refocus strategy after IBR outbreak, and</li> <li>explore cross border funding opportunity.</li> </ul>	Beef
Breed Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>urgent need for partnership approach involving Herd Books, AI industry and ICBF.</li> </ul>	Beef and Dairy
Herd Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>elite genetics and elite health status is way forward,</li> <li>herd books have demand for certified scheme for breeders, and</li> <li>ICBF database is cornerstone for scheme.</li> </ul>	Dairy and Beef

### **3 International Beef Evaluations**

A new set of conversion equations are being processed for Charolais & Limousin: the conversion formulae will be based on the Irish February 2007 genetic evaluation (update from November 2006) and the French spring 2007 Iboval genetic evaluation (update from spring 2006). Also, the regression will be based not only on the AI sires connecting the 2 countries but also on the stock bulls with proofs in both France & Ireland: about 30 extra Charolais bulls & 40 extra Limousin bulls.

### **4 Genetic Evaluations**

#### **Dairy**

Work on developing and enhancing various aspects of both the dairy and beef genetic evaluations is on-going.

#### **Beef**

Staff from the Genetic Evaluations unit were present at the EBI sale in Dungarvan and the Blonde d'Aquitaine sale in Kilkenny during the week.

### **5 HerdPlus**

- ✚ Sire Advice activity: March to date there were some 703 distinct herdowners who ran the program.
- ✚ HerdPlus staff have been also taken bull selection from 144 farmers ("postal" clients who do not have internet access) - bulls were entered on sire advice on their behalf.
- ✚ Breeding charts are being generated this weekend for posting next week. If a farmer "saves" his Sire Advice run before Sun Apr 01st, then his bull selections will get loaded to the AI technicians hand-held and will also be reflected on his Breeding Chart.



## 6 Tully

- ✚ Final within breed BLUP figures for the December intake of bulls will be up on the ICBF web site from 30-3-07.
- ✚ 3 bulls from the March intake and 3 from the May intake were exported to Northern Ireland on the 30-3-07.
- ✚ 3 bulls from March will be exported to Scotland on the 5-4-07.
- ✚ The following table is a summary of acceptances to date for the settlement following the outbreak of IBR. The percentages relate to the total number of bulls in each group (March 124, May 91). Statements are scheduled for posting on Thursday next week by which we expect to know the option chosen by all bull owners.

Acknowledgements received from Bull Owners		%
<b>March</b> Option A (take home) bulls	39	31%
<b>March</b> Option B (slaughter) bulls	73	59%
<b>Total March Acknowledgements</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>May</b> Option A (take home) bulls	12	13%
<b>May</b> Option B (slaughter) bulls	65	71%
<b>Total May Acknowledgements</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Total Acknowledgements (bulls)</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>88%</b>

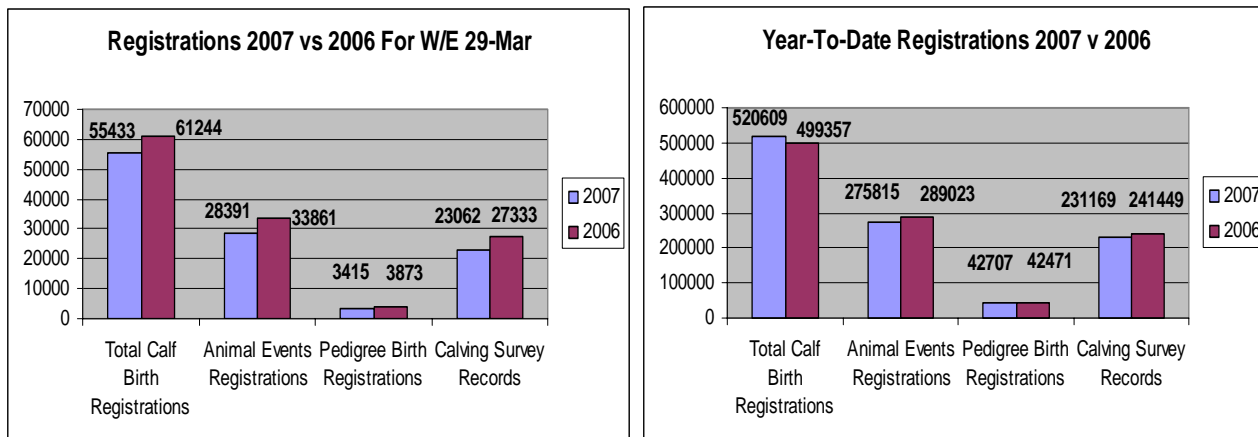
## 7 GENEIRELAND®

- ✚ DAF have confirmed their support for the 2007 Dairy and Beef programs. The total amount provided is up to €0.8 million and is limited to 70% of qualifying costs. This support is greatly appreciated during this initial period while the programs are being established. There is no doubt that a good progeny test program for beef and dairy will provide excellent returns for Irish farmers and the wider community.
- ✚ The spring dairy program is now in full swing. Herd sign-up continues and semen dispatch is underway.
- ✚ To date we have just under 500 herds signed up, enough to progeny test 30 young dairy sires.
- ✚ Dispatch of the target number of straws from the first 2 groups of test bulls (5 bulls per group) will be complete early next week, at which point we'll start working on the 3rd and 4th groups.
- ✚ To date straws have been packed for 150 herds and this semen is now being dispatched.
- ✚ Once bulls have been allocated to herds, inbreeding reports are being generated and sent to herd-owners. The first batches of these were sent early this week.
- ✚ Semen continues to be collected from young bulls by NCBC in Enfield.
- ✚ Some 1,000 herd-owners have been contacted in relation to Gene Ireland. Now is the time for all involved to really promote the program and to get as many herds on board as possible.
- ✚ This is a great example of the partnership that is Irish cattle breeding. AI Companies have been collecting young bull semen working to very tight timetables. At the same time Rachel Wood and the team at Highfield, with help and support from AI field sales people have been signing herds up. Pat Donnellan and John Maloney, both working for ICBF are in Mallow making up the packs of semen for each herd. These packs are then sent out through AI field service



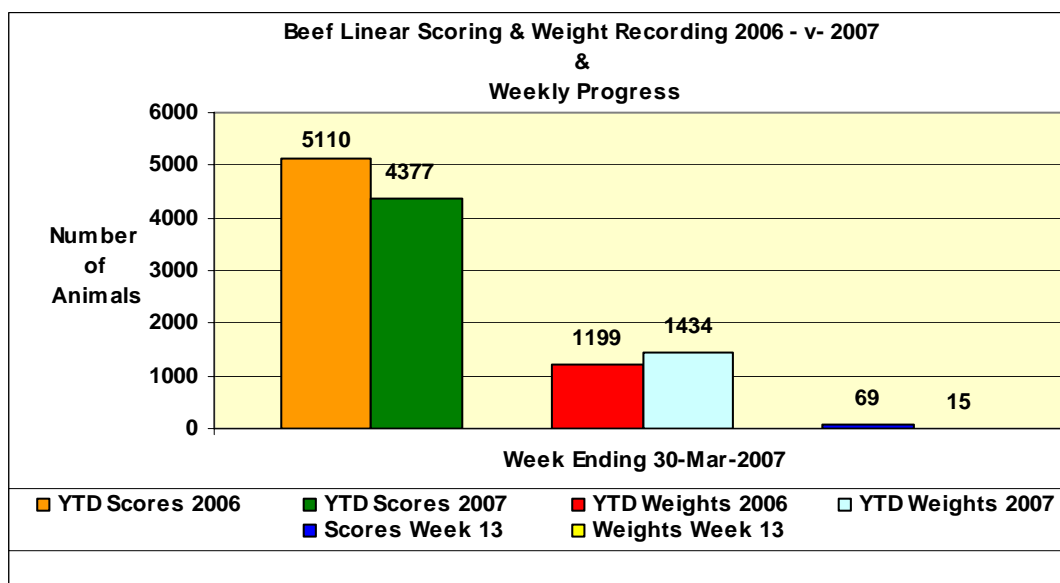
providers for delivery to herds on DIY and technician service. The database provides herd owners with matings to be avoided. This partnership is efficiently identifying the bulls that have the greatest potential to increase profitability on Irish cattle farms.

## 8 Database Update



- The year-to-date Animal Events registrations are slightly down on last year. Next weeks update will include an analysis as to why this is the case.
- Over 200,000 inseminations have now been recorded on the AI handhelds. From next week on, the update will include a comparison with last years figures. Also next week, the PG North East area will go live with its first group, with the remainder to follow the week after Easter.
- Breeding charts will be issued next week. These are printed and posted to all HerdPlus clients.
- The Sire Advice program has been further enhanced this week based on feedback from users.
- The new Teagasc Discussion Group application is getting good use and feedback continues to be positive.
- The Herdbook front end has been issued to a number of breed societies this week to work in tandem with the existing front end. It will be issued to more societies next week.

## 9 Beef Linear Scoring





## 10 Milk Recording

Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 30/03/06	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 30/03/07
Progressive	89,803	89,521
Dairygold	41,098	38,058
Kerry	29,627	29,703
SWS	32,867	32,961
Tipperary	3,412	2,831
Arrabawn	2,385	2,778
Connacht	4,274	4,529
Donegal	372	259
<b>Total</b>	<b>203,838</b>	<b>200,640</b>

Milk Recording Organisation	2007 Herds Recorded Week 23/03/07 - 30/03/07
Progressive	317
Dairygold	215
Kerry	136
SWS	149
Arrabawn	12
Tipperary	18
Connacht	12
Donegal	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>861</b>

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