



UPDATE – for period 24th– 30th November 2007

1 GENEIRLAND[®] farmer meeting

The first GENEIRLAND[®] farmer meeting was held this week in Cork. Over 200 farmers and 30 cattle breeding industry representatives attended and participated in an informative and stimulating meeting. The objective of the meeting was to address three key questions:

- How to increase the number of herds participating in GENEIRLAND[®] dairy progeny test to 1,200 in spring 2007?
- How to ensure test bulls are out of the best cows in Ireland?
- How to fund GENEIRLAND[®] in the future?

Presentations from ICBF staff, farmers and AI Companies covered all aspects of GENEIRLAND[®]. Copies of the presentations are available on the ICBF website (<http://www.icbf.com/publications/index.php>). Over the lunch break ideas for addressing the three questions were collected from participants working in groups of 10. A general discussion followed.

The conclusion of the meeting was that GENEIRLAND[®] is an incredibly good investment, it will deliver improved dairy farm profits for many years to come, the issues restricting its success are being addressed and now is the time for Irish dairy farmers to become involved both in progeny testing and bull breeding.



John O'Sullivan, Chairman of ICBF, congratulates Eddie & Eldon Tanner, Rathcormac, Cork on being the first recipients of the FBD Trust award for GENEIRLAND[®] recording.

At the GENEIRLAND[®] meeting held in Cork on Wednesday this week the FBD Trust Awards for farmers participating in GENEIRLAND[®] dairy progeny testing were announced. The first of these awards was made to a herd that kept exceptionally good records for the Spring 2005 progeny test scheme. Some of the key figures for the winners were:

- 50 GENEIRLAND[®] straws in Spring 2005
- 50 inseminations recorded
- 25 calves recorded to sire in Spring 2006
- 12 heifer calves
- 12 insemination records on heifers in 2007



2 ICBF Board Meeting

At the Board meeting on Thursday decision taken included:

- ✚ On the recommendation of the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee to adopt the budget for 2008.
- ✚ On the recommendation of the Tully Advisory Committee to approve the re-opening of Tully.
- ✚ To approve changes to the dairy genetic evaluations as follows:
 1. The economic values in the EBI be updated to reflect changes in milk prices (increased to €0.30/litre) and feed costs (concentrate price increased to €250/ton). The resulting economic values are given in table 1.



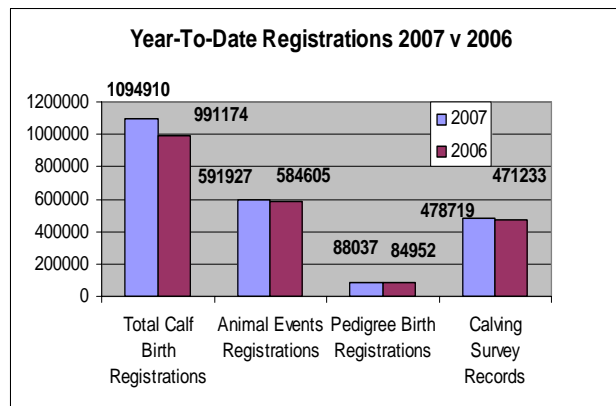
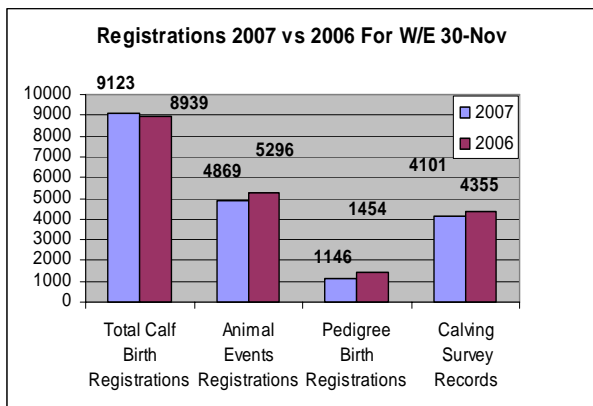
Trait	Old Economic Value (€)	New Economic Value (€)
Milk Yield (kg)	-0.085	-0.09
Fat Yield (kg)	0.96	1.26
Protein Yield (kg)	5.36	6.91
Calving Interval (days)	-10.87	-11.97
Survival (%)	10.51	11.17
Direct Calving Difficulty (%)	-3.26	-3.65
Maternal Calving Difficulty (%)	-1.73	-1.73
Gestation (days)	-6.85	-7.54
Calf Mortality (%)	-2.85	-2.85
Cow weight (kg)	0.04	-0.51
Carcass weight (kg)	1.38	1.38
Carcass conformation (grade)	10.32	10.32
Carcass fat (grade)	-11.71	-11.71
Somatic cell count (ln SCC)	-55.48	-57.21
Locomotion (score)	1.13	1.13

Table 1. Old and new economic values in EBI.

2. The calving evaluations be switched to new software (MIX99) and the use of an animal model. The impact is greater accuracy, use of more data, removal of potential biases due to preferential matings, and reduced processing time.
3. That the expression of calving ease evaluations use the same system as has been adopted for beef breeds. That is, the base is set at 6 (%).
4. The *overall type* trait be modified according to the result of a joint review by Ireland and the UK. The main changes being reduced emphasis on angularity and body depth and more weighting on feet and legs. The changes in ranking will be small.
5. The timing of changes in 2008/09 be changed to fit in with the revised Interbull schedule and with decisions being taken in late August 2008.



3 Database Update



- ✚ 364,401 inseminations have been received so far in 2007, compared with 162,937 in 2006 for the same period.
- ✚ Preparations are continuing in order to be ready for the commencement of the Suckler Cow Welfare Scheme. Developments and changes to a number of screens and forms are underway.
- ✚ Production of the personalised farmer notebooks for the 2008 season from the database are underway, with the first batches going to farmers this week.
- ✚ The implementation of the new hardware solution and database upgrade is on-going. The intended date for go-live is scheduled to be Tuesday, December 11th. The database will be unavailable from 12noon on Friday 7th until Tuesday 11th at 9.am.
- ✚ Preparatory work for the go-live of remaining Munster AI technicians is underway, with ICBF working in conjunction with the Munster AI staff.

4 Tully

- ✚ A meeting of the Tully health committee was held on the 26-11-07 to review the test results for the next intake to Tully.
- ✚ A meeting of the Tully advisory committee was held on the 27-11-07.
- ✚ All breeders were contacted on the 28-11-07 to advise them that their bull is eligible for Tully and which isolation unit they are entering.
- ✚ A copy of the Tully and ICBF terms and conditions were sent out to breeders on the 28-11-07.
- ✚ A list of bulls and the Tully and Gene Ireland terms and conditions was sent to Breed Societys on the 29-11-07.

5 Genetic Evaluations

Dairy

Interbull files are currently being processed and will be forwarded to INTERBULL in the coming weeks for the next routine evaluations for milk traits, fertility and longevity.

Improvements to the current fertility evaluation are in progress such as expanding the calving interval and survival records used from the current 1st 3 parities to the first 5 parities and inclusion of calving intervals >600 days where inseminations are available as validation. Work is also well advanced on more detailed correction for heterosis and recombination.

Beef

Weight information from the marts and research centers is currently being collected ahead of the next beef performance evaluations.



INTERNATIONAL

Denmark, Norway and Finland will be present in the next InterBeef evaluation in spring 2008. Files from Ireland (cross reference file and pedigree) have been provided to the InterBeef centre at Interbull in order to test the database.

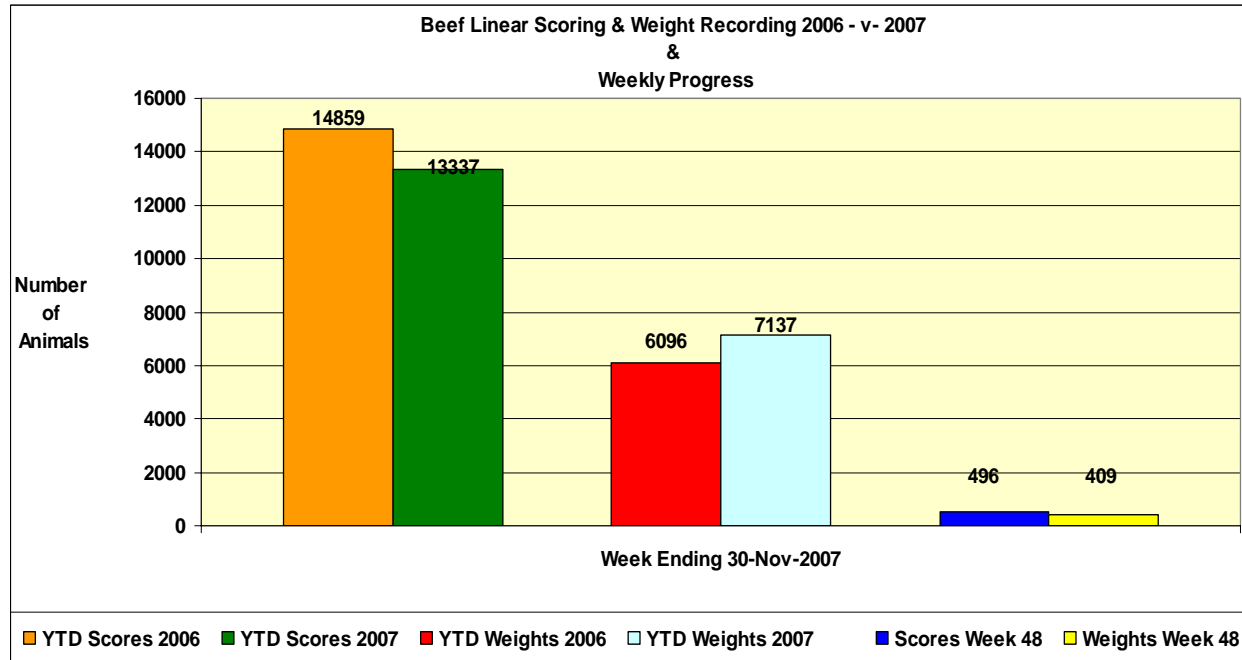
6 Milk Recording Processing – this week and year to date

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 30/11/07						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 30/11/07	No. EDIY Herds YTD 30/11/07	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 30/11/07	No. EDIY Cows YTD 30/11/07	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,142	686	32%	170,462	53,451	31%
Dairygold	1,593	555	35%	112,459	40,622	36%
Kerry	1,034	70	7%	72,283	5,688	8%
SWS	932	111	12%	61,464	7,525	12%
Tipperary	170	71	42%	12,330	5,245	43%
Arrabawn	169	128	76%	12,079	9,249	77%
Connacht	154	68	44%	10,288	4,474	43%
Donegal	43	43	100%	3,920	3,920	100%
Total	6,237	1,732	28%	455,285	130,174	29%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison				
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2005 Cows Recorded 01/01/05 - 30/11/05	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 30/11/06	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 30/11/07	2007 vs 2006 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	153,616	161,309	170,462	5.4%
Dairygold	98,792	104,363	112,459	7.2%
Kerry	67,848	70,697	72,283	2.2%
SWS	55,808	60,310	61,464	1.9%
Tipperary	9,464	11,886	12,330	3.6%
Arrabawn	7,199	11,107	12,079	8.0%
Connacht	7,452	9,320	10,288	9.4%
Donegal	4,638	5,274	3,920	-34.5%
Total	404,817	434,266	455,285	4.6%



7 Linear Scoring & Weight Recording



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