



## UPDATE – for period 25<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2007

### 1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>**. EBI €100 Open Day. On farm of Pat & Noreen Cronin, Macroom, Co. Cork.
- ✚ **Thursday September 13<sup>th</sup>**. ICBF Board Meeting, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **September 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>**. Ploughing Championships, Tullamore.

### 1. Interbull & EAAP meetings Dublin 24<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> August

The Interbull and EAAP meetings were held in Ireland over the past week. The meetings are annual events in the animal breeding and production calendars and attract people from all over the world in the areas of animal breeding, physiology and nutrition.

This year's meetings were held in UCD, with some 1,000 delegates from over 40 different countries converging on the Belfield campus. Delegates were treated to a combination of excellent science, hospitality and weather, making it a memorable occasion for all involved.

The meetings highlighted the key role that science can play in delivering increased profit for livestock farmers. The challenge for the future will be to ensure that this science is delivered to farmers and the industry in a user-friendly manner that allows them make well informed breeding and management decisions.

#### **Interbull Meeting.**

Interbull (or International Bull Evaluation Service), is the body responsible for international evaluations of dairy and beef cattle. This week's annual meeting attracted delegates from 35 different countries (some 150 delegates in total). Delegates were from a wide range of backgrounds, including research scientists, technical staff, breed association staff and AI representatives. Key areas covered during the 2-day meeting included;

- International beef evaluations.
- National and international evaluation of fertility traits.
- Developments in national and international dairy evaluation methods.

There were 46 presentations in total, with 6 coming from Irish scientists, including papers from Donagh Berry (Teagasc), Thierry Pabiou (ICBF), Ross Evans (ICBF), John Hickey (ID Lelystad), Paddy Cunningham (DAF) & Eileen Wall (SAC). Key messages from the conference for Irish cattle breeders were;

- **International beef evaluations** are now moving at a fast rate, with scientists from Ireland, Australia and USA presenting the latest developments in international evaluations for a range of beef breeds and beef traits. A further 6 countries will soon join the Interbeef evaluation for Limosuin and Charolais. Other countries expressed a strong willingness to initiate international evaluations for other breeds, most notably for Simmentals.
- **Female fertility** is now a trait of major international significance with all of the main dairying countries now evaluating this trait on a routine basis. In addition many of the countries now include female fertility directly in their economic index. For example, the UK now includes female fertility in its Productive Life Index with a weighting of 18%, which is quite comparable to the weighting that the trait is given in the EBI formula.
- **Genomic selection** is a tool of increasing interest to animal breeders. Papers at the conference suggested that it had the potential to increase rates of genetic gain considerably, with one scientist comparing it to the level of increase that was achieved when AI was first introduced.

The Interbull meeting was kindly co-sponsored by the Irish Farmers Journal, who also hosted the conference dinner.



## EAAP Meeting

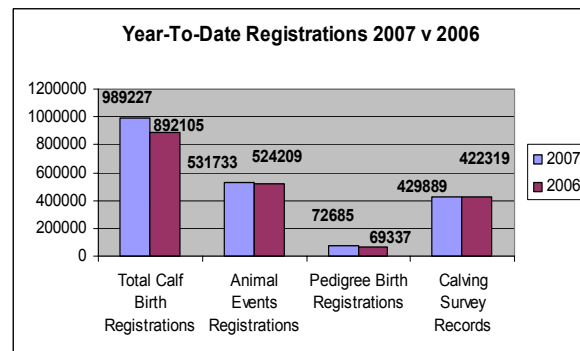
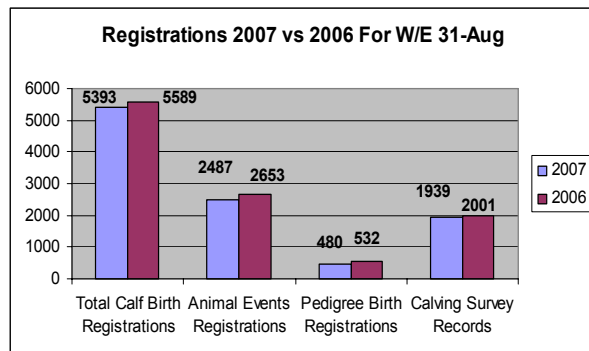
The Interbull meeting was then followed by the EAAP (European Association of Animal Production) meeting, attracting some 900 delegates in total. The meeting covered 9 different areas (commissions) related to animal production, with each of these running concurrently during the course of the 3 day conference;

- Animal Genetics
- Animal Physiology
- Animal Nutrition
- Animal Management & Health
- Cattle Production
- Sheep & goat production
- Pig production
- Horse production
- Livestock farming systems.

Again Irish scientists were heavily involved with researchers/students from Teagasc, UCD and Trinity all presenting results on a range of areas, including TB resistance (Mairead Bermingham), Energy balance (Donagh Berry), Inbreeding (Sinead McParland), Calving Difficulty (John Hickey) and Across Breed Comparisons of dairy cattle (Noreen Begley). Each of these studies were based on data from the ICBF cattle breeding database.

One additional component to the EAAP meeting was the cattle breeding tour, organised by ICBF. The tour visited two commercial farms, one dairy and one beef. The farms involved were David Johnson, Redcross, Co. Wicklow and Paul Kinch, Arklow, Co. Wicklow. A full update on these 2 farm visits will be included with next weeks update.

## 2. Database Update



- ✚ 341,230 inseminations have been received so far in 2007, compared with 148,121 in 2006 for the same period.
- ✚ The majority of herd-books are continuing to use the new Web Front end as the main means of completing Herdbook administration activities. Focus is now switching towards ensure that the catalogue process is in order for the coming sales season.
- ✚ Further work on HerdPlus modules is on-going, focusing around the data recording aspects, and the new 'look and feel' to the farmer interface.
- ✚ Progress continues on the redesign of the Animal Events file processing which will be completed over the coming months.
- ✚ Work on Gene Ireland reports and user interfaces is also on-going, in advance of the Autumn Gene Ireland programme kicking off for both dairy and beef.



- ✚ Development on a number of reports for Suckler Beef Herds is ongoing in advance of the Ploughing championships.
- ✚ Work is continuing on the Sire Advice module for the new season.

### 3. Milk Recording Processing – this week and year to date

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 31/08/07						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 31/08/07	No. EDIY Herds YTD 31/08/07	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 31/08/07	No. EDIY Cows YTD 31/08/07	% Cows EDIY
Progressive	2,123	644	30%	162,986	48,870	30%
Dairygold	1,587	552	35%	110,016	39,906	36%
Kerry	1,032	70	7%	71,074	5,604	8%
SWS	932	109	12%	59,948	7,017	12%
Tipperary	170	71	42%	12,207	5,209	43%
Arrabawn	167	126	75%	11,793	9,001	76%
Connacht	153	67	44%	9,879	4,165	42%
Donegal	43	43	100%	3,861	3,861	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,207</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>441,764</b>	<b>123,633</b>	<b>28%</b>

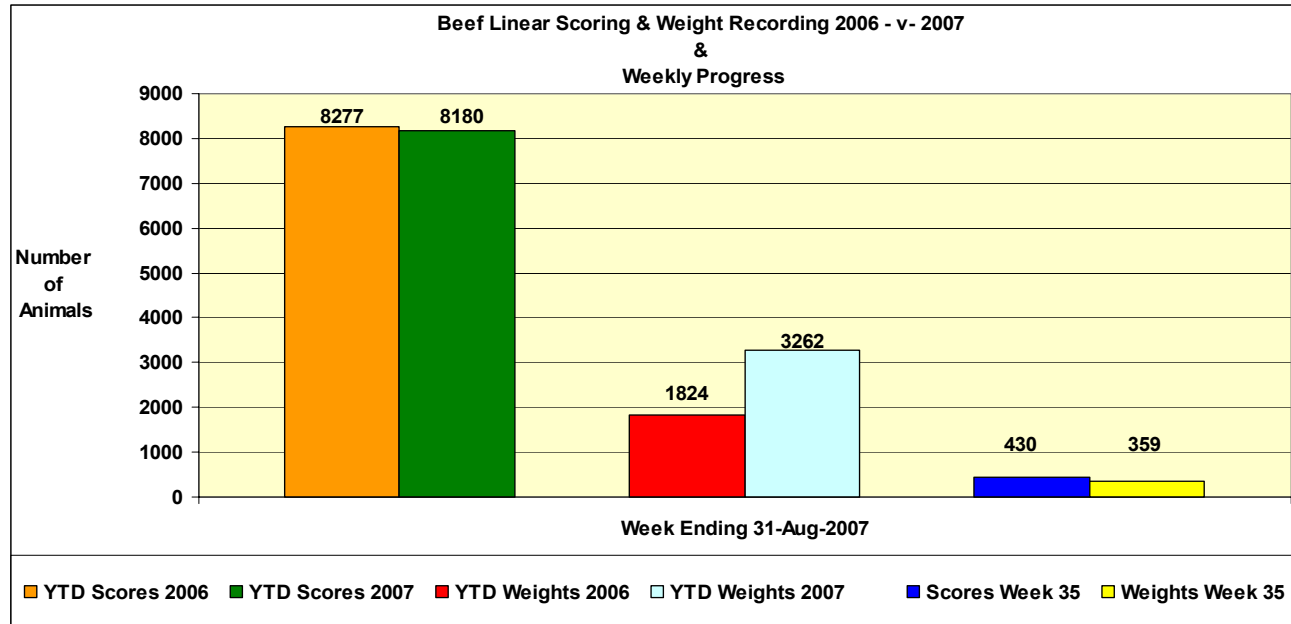
Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison				
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2005 Cows Recorded 01/01/05 - 31/08/05	YTD 2006 Cows Recorded 01/01/06 - 31/08/06	YTD 2007 Cows Recorded 01/01/07 - 31/08/07	2007 vs 2006 Year on Year Difference (%)
Progressive	146,263	153,148	162,986	6.0%
Dairygold	96,147	102,424	110,016	6.9%
Kerry	66,561	69,510	71,074	2.2%
SWS	53,864	58,484	59,948	2.4%
Tipperary	9,264	11,740	12,207	3.8%
Arrabawn	7,081	10,944	11,793	7.2%
Connacht	7,220	8,917	9,879	9.7%
Donegal	3,364	5,142	3,861	-33.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>389,764</b>	<b>420,309</b>	<b>441,764</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

### 4. Tully

- ✚ Security fencing to divide the office area from the bull housing area will be finished before the 6-9-07
- ✚ The risk assessment of Tully and pre entry isolation units will take place on the 24-9-07.
- ✚ Applications for the next intake to Tully will be sent out to breeders on the 17-9-07.



## 5. Beef Linear Scoring & Weight Recording



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