



1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Tuesday 13th December.** 10:30 to 13:00. **Beef Genetic Evaluation Consultation** meeting.
- ✚ **Tuesday 13th December.** 14:00 to 15:30. **Tully review** meeting.
- ✚ **Thursday 15th December.** 9:00 to 11:00. **Audit & Finance Sub-Committee.**
- ✚ **Thursday 15th December.** 11:00 to 14:00. **ICBF Board** meeting.
- ✚ **Thursday 19th January.** **Tully review** meeting to finalise plans for sale on Saturday 4th March.
- ✚ **Herds Not Using Animal Events** – a campaign to encourage more herds to use the Animal Events forms for calf registration will be run jointly with TEAGASC and ICBF's members in January 2006.
- ✚ **Herds with high EBI dairy and beef bulls** – a series of five meetings spread throughout the country are being planned for January 2006 to help beef and dairy farmers with high EBI bulls to ensure they can meet the health requirements of AI Centres and Tully. These meetings are being organised jointly with CVERA, Veterinarians, TEAGASC and AI service providers. The key presentations will address the steps a herd owner can take to ensure freedom from diseases such as Johnes, IBR, and BVD.

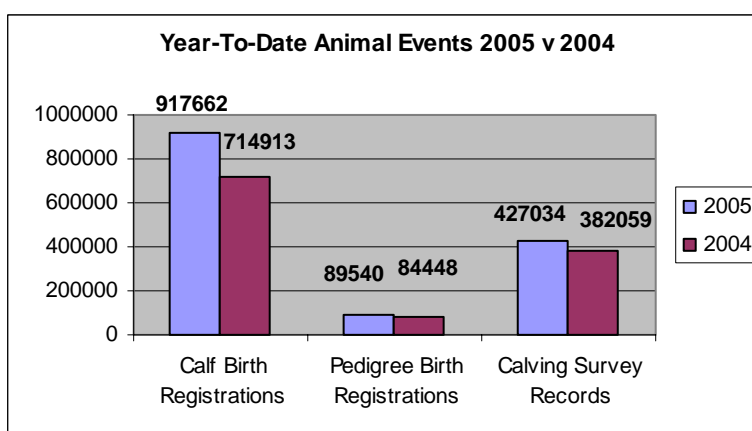
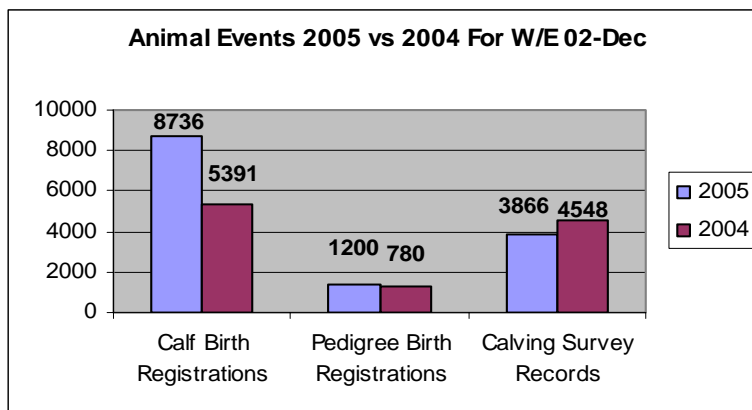
2 International Beef Evaluations

- ✚ Meetings were held this week to progress the development of international genetic evaluations for beef breeds and traits. Involved were specialists from France, UK and ICBF.
- ✚ These meetings are building on:
 - the pilot project involving the Charolais and Limousin breeds which demonstrated the feasibility of international evaluations,
 - the recent decision of ICAR to facilitate the development of an operational system based on Interbull, and
 - recent research in France examining the relationship between genetic evaluations in Ireland and France for the Charolais breed weaning weight.
- ✚ The outcome was agreement on the following priorities:
 - Establishment of an operational identification cross reference system which will then be used for creating complete files for the common animals of the Charolais and Limousin breeds in Ireland, UK and France. This system will also be made available to facilitate the work recently commissioned by the World Hereford Assn.
 - Development of conversion equations for all relevant beef traits (calving, growth and maternal) for the Charolais and Limousin breeds in Ireland, UK and France. These will then be used to provide Irish equivalents for current French and UK genetic evaluations that will then feed into the Irish beef evaluations.
 - Further development of a prototype international evaluation for weaning weight, for both the Charolais and Limousin breed for France, Ireland and UK. This work will then be extended to carcass traits and an across breed evaluation.
 - Development of a prototype international evaluation for calving ease, gestation length and calf mortality.
 - Development of prototype international evaluation for maternal traits.
- ✚ Work plans were agreed and will form the basis of work to be undertaken in Ireland, France and the UK in the near future.



3 Database Update

- ✚ 34 new herds added to the database last week. This surge in new herds from AI has died down.
- ✚ 5,209 Teagasc ICBF permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients.
- ✚ All feedback has now been received on the Expected Calving and Fertility Reports, and the comments from farmers were very encouraging indeed.
- ✚ The dry-off sheets are continuing to be returned at a high rate.
- ✚ Work is almost completed revised Annual Milk Recording report. Testing internally and with the milk recording organisations will take place next week.
- ✚ Solid progress continues to be made with preparations for the roll-out of AI handhelds. The sign-up of herds continues to be a cause for concern, though very good progress is being made in certain pockets.
- ✚ The database upgrade has been continuing this week. The testing of the upgraded development system will begin in earnest next week, with involvement from milk recording and herdbooks.
- ✚ Significant database team effort has gone into the loading and publication of the latest run of bull proofs (November run). This is now nearing completion.



4 Milk Recording

Weekly Stats: Fri 2/12/05

Milk Recording Organisation	2005 Herds Recorded Week 25/11/05 - 02/12/05	2004 Herds Recorded Week 25/11/04 - 02/12/04
Progressive	237	298
Dairygold	189	124
Kerry	75	80
SWS	158	138
Connacht	10	35
Arrabawn	9	11
Tipp	7	12
Others (Donegal, OAD)	7	N/A
Total	692	698



Year to Date Stats: up to 2/12/05

Milk Recording Organisation	HERD Count		COW Count	
	2005 No. Herd Owners Year to Date Jan 1st-Dec 2nd	2004 No. Herd Owners at Year End	2005 No. Cows Year to Date Jan 1st - Dec 2nd	2004 No. Cows at Year End
Progressive	2,084	2,233	152,825	156,588
Dairygold	1,529	1,620	98,757	102,778
Kerry	1,065	1,099	67,758	66,952
SWS	937	964	55,791	56,753
Tipperary	142	147	9,392	9,268
Connacht	110	121	7,283	7,597
Arrabawn	109	120	7,155	7,369
Others (Donegal/OAD etc)	54	N/A	4,686	N/A
Total	6,030	6,304	403,647	407,305

Industry Test Turnaround November 2005

November 2005 Industry Test Turnaround	
No. Animals Recorded	187,730
No. Herd Tests Processed	3,651
Average Turnaround (No. Days)	6.93

Industry national average for November was 6.9 days. The Organisation with the best turnaround was **SWS**, with an average of **5.3 days**. Each month every MRO gets an ICBF Intranet Report on their respective turnaround performance. This gives the Organisations the details on how much time is taken in the different steps in the milk recording process.

Electronic DIY Milk Recording

- ✚ Operational review held with Dairygold EDIY Technicians on Mon 29th Nov. where 2005 was discussed and preparations made for 2006.
- ✚ ICBF & Teagasc held review of 2005 with Donegal EDIY clients on Tue 29th Nov. Feedback was positive and plans were made to expand service to further non milk recording clients in 2006. How farmers should interpret, and get the most out of, the MR and EBI reports was also part of the session.
- ✚ Tipperary and Arrabawn notified suppliers by letter they will be providing the EDIY service in 2006.
- ✚ In readiness for gearing up new MRO cells for 2006, the meters and vans are on order – first meters are on their way this weekend, due in Cork 04/12/05. First vans are being delivered next week to customisation house for kitting out.

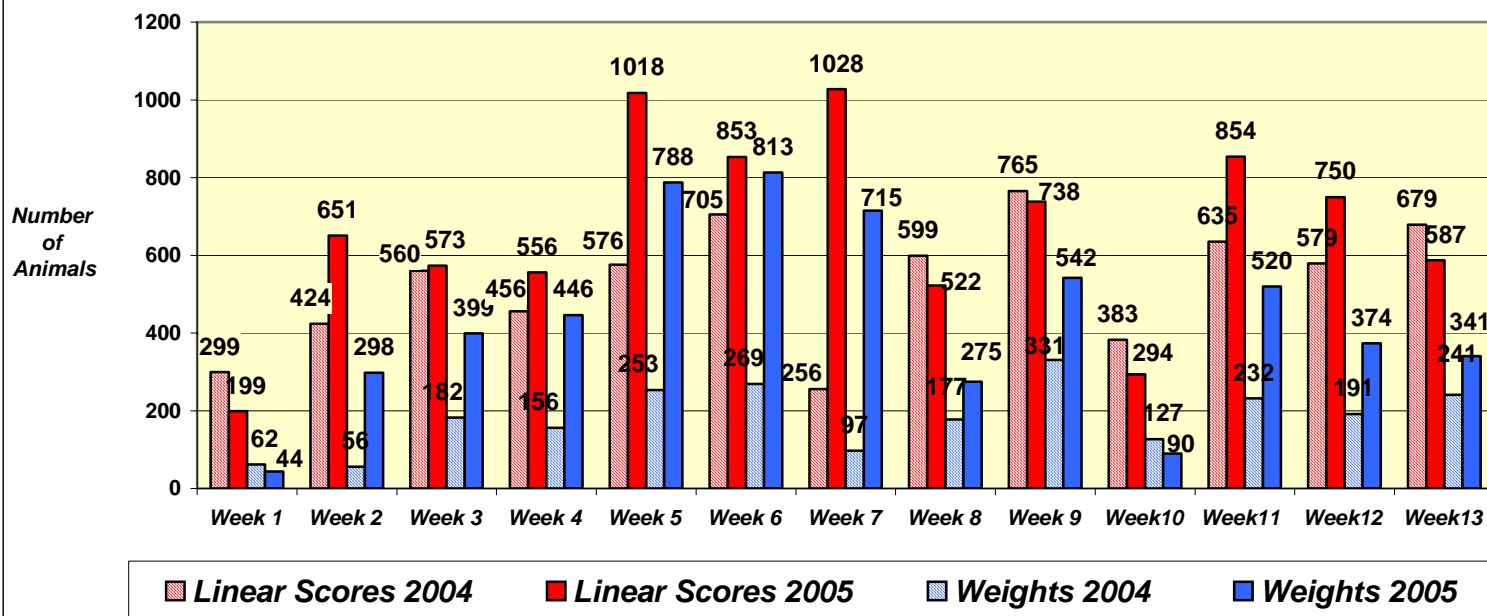
5 Tully

- ✚ Health test results of the November intake are returning. A total of some 90 bulls will enter this intake and will be sold from Tully on the 6-5-06.
- ✚ The catalogue for the October intake of bulls which will be for sale on the 4-3-06 will be up on the ICBF web site from the 8-12-05.
- ✚ A group of suckler farmers from Donegal will visit Tully on the 3-12-05.



6 Beef Linear Scoring & Weight Recording

Beef Linear Scoring & Weight Recording Weekly Progress 2004 -v- 2005



7 GENÉIRÉLAND®

145 herds have now signed up to the GENÉIRÉLAND winter AI program. Semen is currently being dispatched to participating herd-owners, with the objective of testing 10 high EBI young bulls (500 straws per bull) in these herds over the coming weeks. Individual herd “inbreeding charts” are also being posted to all participating herd-owners.

8 Genetic Evaluations

- Domestic proofs for AI sires were released on Monday of this week. The release included information on each of the traits linked to profitable dairy production, i.e., EBI, milk, fertility, beef, calving and health. Feed-back on the new proofs has been positive, especially with regard to the new health sub-index including information on lameness and udder health.
- Proofs for imported sires, cows and young-stock have not yet been released, pending the completion of additional work on data loading. The extent of this additional work was greater than initially anticipated, resulting in a delay in the release of proofs for these groups of animals. This work will be completed over the weekend with all relevant files published on the ICBF web-site early next week. Again, we apologise for any inconvenience caused in the release of these data.
- A new evaluation run for beef performance traits was completed this week incorporating; (i) further slaughter data, (ii) the most up to date records from Tully, and (iii) improvements to the pedigree file. Proofs for the latest group of Tully bulls will be made available to the relevant bull-owners on Monday.

9 Genetic Conservation.

An interim report on the “genetic conservation of the Irish draught horse breed” was completed this week ahead of next Monday's meeting of the Irish Draught Horse industry. This interim report will form an integral part of the overall conservation strategy for the Irish Draught horse breed.



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