



UPDATE – for period 26th February to 4th March 2005

1 ICBF Beef Breeding Priorities

- On Wednesday we conducted a review of ICBF's priorities for beef breeding over the next few months. The key priorities identified included the following:

Beef Linear Scoring

- A review of operations will take place in late March 2005.
- Active consideration is to be given to involving the scorers in helping recruit herds to participate in the beef progeny test matings for 2005 (see below for details).
- The linear scoring handheld units and associated software will be redeveloped over the next six months taking account of all lessons learnt over the last three years and experiences with the AI Handheld Units.
- From 1st August 2005 we will aim to expand linear scoring to include all commercial weanlings in herds with pedigree weanlings.

Beef Genetic Evaluations

- The research team will undertake research into the use of linear scores as predictors in the new evaluation system. This is now high priority and it is planned that this work will be largely completed by 31st July 2005.

Targeted Herd Beef Progeny Test

- There are some 20 beef bulls owned by ICBF's AI members entering progeny test with inseminations in 2005.
- Over the next two weeks ICBF working with its AI members & the National Cattle Breeding Centre will finalize contracts and letters for beef and dairy herds meeting criteria to be invited to participate with inseminations in 2005.
- For herds participating in the targeted herd beef progeny test all weanlings will be weighed and linear scored. All progeny for slaughter will go through factories where meat yield and meat quality (marbling) are measured using appropriate technology. All females used as suckler replacements will be placed into herds participating fully in Animal Events recording. All this data will be used in research into the effectiveness of linear scores as predictors and form the basis of updated beef genetic evaluations in 2008 that will result in improved carcass yield evaluations, and evaluations for marbling.

Beef Research

- Our priority is to ensure we have data collection systems in place for progeny resulting from 2005 inseminations in targeted progeny test herds.

2 Cattle Breeding – Important Dates

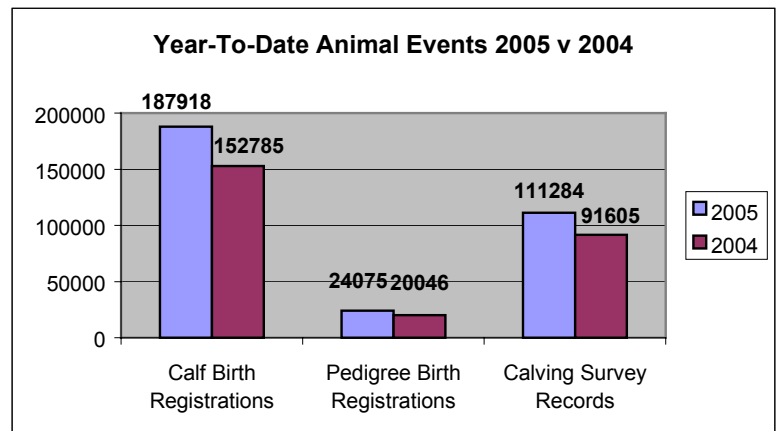
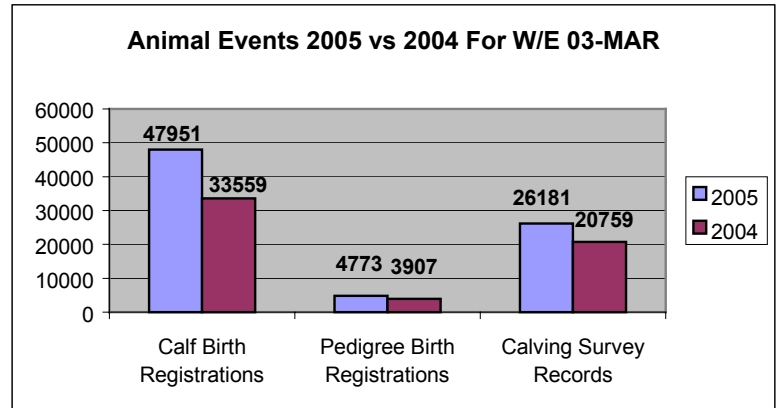
- **10:30 – 17:00 on Saturday 5th March, at Tully, Kildare.** Performance tested bull sale. Sale commences at 12:30. 108 bulls on sale.
- **10:00 – 17:00 Saturday 19th March, at the Punchestown Event Centre, Naas, Co. Kildare.** **National Spring Fair.** ICBF and its member organisations will have a stand at this event featuring: the database, electronic DIY milk recording, recent enhancements to the EBI and progeny testing. This promises to be a day where dairy farmers interested in cattle breeding can obtain the latest information on all aspects of breeding.



- **10:30 – 13:00 Thursday 10th March, at Moorepark, Fermoy, Co. Cork.** Milk Recording Managers - Spring Review 2005. Objective: MR Operational Review and plans & goals for Irish milk recording in 2005.
- **10:30 – 12:30 Tuesday 22nd March, Moorepark, Fermoy, Co. Cork.** Beef Herd Book Operations Review.
- **12:30 – 13:00 Tuesday 22nd March, Moorepark, Fermoy, Co. Cork.** Beef Technical Meeting.
- **14:00 – 16:00 Tuesday 22nd March, Moorepark, Fermoy, Co. Cork.** Review for numerically small herd books.

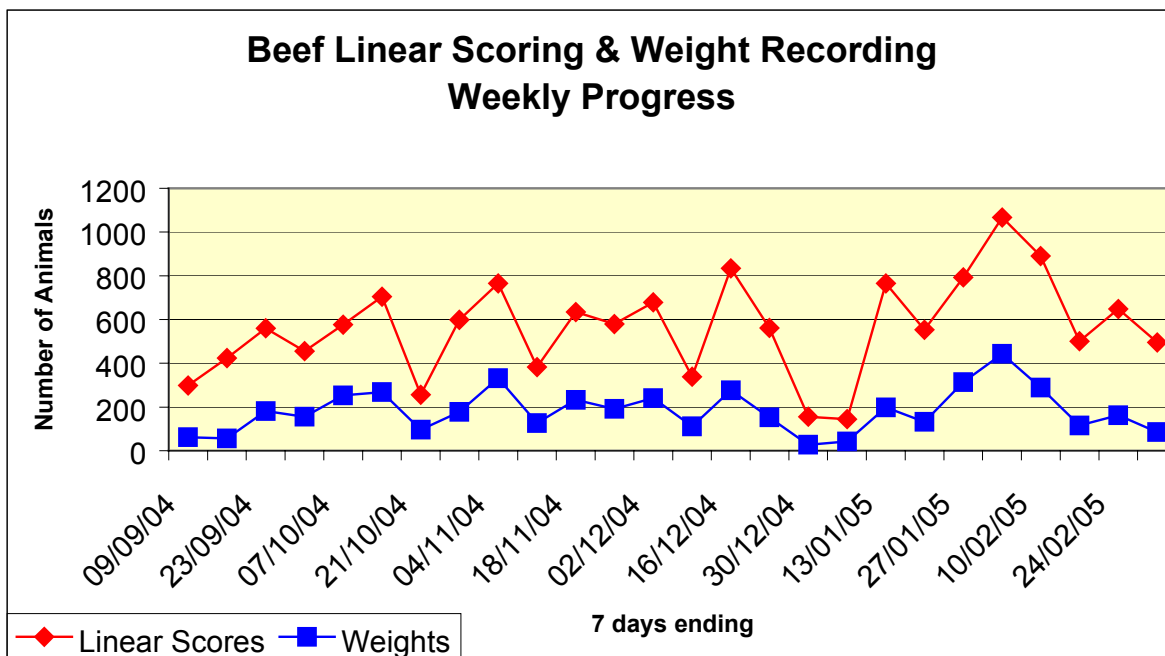
3 Database Update

- 208 New Herds added to the database
- Comment from the staff in the Animal Events office:
"AE Sheet numbers coming in staying very high as is the number of calls in the call center. We have also started receiving calls on the new Jumbo Assignment sheets. Number of new herds increased greatly over the last two days due to the Teagasc/ICBF beef herd initiative. Dry offs and missing sire reports low."
- 3,221 Teagasc ICBF permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients. The Teagasc Beef Client forms are beginning to come back and are coming back at the rate of 50-75 per day.
- Work on the latest EBI reports is continuing, with changes required in order to incorporate the new sub indexes relating to Beef & Calving Performance. Details of how farmers can access their reports through the internet (website address, username, password) will be included with the EBI reports
- Work on the rollout of the AI handhelds is continuing in partnership with SWS AI. This week, 'Jumbo/Freeze Branding' reports were sent to those farmers using AI for whom we don't have a list of freeze brands. This will help the technicians when searching for animals on the handheld.
- Work on the generating complete statistics from the database for 2004 is on-going.
- A beef herdbook female performance report has been completed this week, using the new reporting infrastructure which has just been implemented.
- Work on the full integration of SMS text messaging to the database is continuing. The basic infrastructure is now in place and is being tested. The ability to receive insemination data from farmers using text messaging is being tested.
- The work to get all herdbooks available on-line is on-going and will be finished within two weeks.
- Beef Linear Inspection reports have gone to all breeds this week for animals that had not previously received reports.





4 Beef Linear Scoring & Weight Recording



5 Milk Recording Processing

- The statistics for this week include an added column for herds processed in the equivalent week in 2004.
- Industry national average turnaround for February was 5.68 days.
- The Organisation with the best turnaround time in February was SWS which came in at average of 4.42 days.
- Each month each Milk Recording Organisation gets an ICBF Intranet Report on their respective turnaround performance. This gives the Organisations the details on how much time is lost and where it is lost in the different steps in the milk recording process.

Milk Recording Organisation	2005 Herds Recorded Week Ending - 04/03/05	2004 Herds Recorded Week Ending - 05/03/04
Progressive	351	308
Dairygold	166	258
SWS	163	141
Kerry	139	107
Connacht	19	29
Tipperary	12	6
Arrabawn	9	20
Total	859	869

February 2005 Industry Test Turnaround	
No. Animals Recorded	92,720
No. Herd Tests Processed	2,553
Average Turnaround (No. days)	5.68

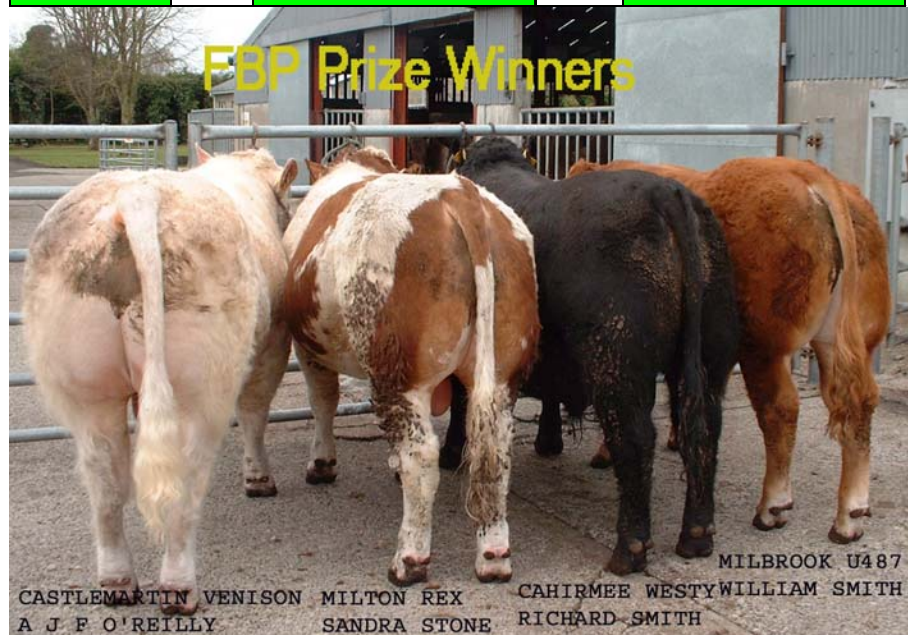


6 Tully

- A very busy week with preparations for the sale. 108 bulls washed, sale facility completed and catalogues printed.
- The third Tully sale since ICBF took over the operation will be tomorrow – Saturday 5th March.
- 108 bulls are catalogued for sale. This is an all time record for Tully.
- The quality of bulls is higher than any time in the past due to the willingness of breeders to enter their best bulls.
- We look forward to meeting many farmers and others interested in beef breeding at Tully tomorrow.
- The winners of the prizes sponsored by FBD are shown here. Congratulations to all the breeders concerned.
- We owe a special thanks to our judges – Derek Deane, Bernard Smith and John Shirley.

Winners of Prizes Sponsored by FBD.

Class	Breed	Bull Name	Date of Birth	Owner
1st other breeds	AA	CAHIRMEE WESTY	15-Dec-03	RICHARD SMITH, CAHIRMEE DONERAILE, CO CORK.
2nd other breeds	BA	BEECHMOUNT ULICK	06-Dec-03	JOHN TIERNEY, CLAREEN BALLYCAHILL, CO TIPPERARY.
3rd other breeds	BB	ROSS VALIANT	14-Nov-03	JARLATH J DUGGAN, ROSS RATHDOWNEY PORTLAOISE, CO LAOIS.
1st Charolais	CH	CASTLEMARTIN VENISON	02-Jan-04	A J F O'REILLY, CASTLEMARTIN KILCULLEN, CO KILDARE.
2nd Charolais	CH	DOLLAND URBAIN	24-Nov-03	KEVIN MOLLOY, DOLLAND HOUSE LUTTRELLST CLONSILLA, DUBLIN 15.
3rd Charolais	CH	ROUGHAN VAL	06-Jan-04	PATRICK G MCCLEAN, ROUGHAN NEWTOWNCUNNINGHA LIFFORD, CO DONEGAL.
1st Limousin	LM	MILBROOK U487	16-Dec-03	WILLIAM SMITH, MILLBROOK OLDCASTLE, CO MEATH.
2nd limousin	LM	ARDLEA UBOY	10-Nov-03	DANIEL TYNAN, BEECHHILL FARM DOON MOUNTRATH, CO LAOIS.
3rd Limousin	LM	MILBROOK VIC	04-Jan-04	WILLIAM SMITH, MILLBROOK OLDCASTLE, CO MEATH.
1st Simmental	ST	MILTON REX	06-Jan-04	SANDRA STONE, MILTON COTTAGE BANDON, CO CORK.
2nd Simmental	ST	KNOCKANE RIGHTROGUE	11-Jan-04	JOHN MURPHY, KNOCKAUN ANNESTOWN, CO WATERFORD.
3rd Simmental	ST	TOWERHILL ROMEO	09-Jan-04	SEAMUS AHERNE, TOWERHILL CAPPAMORE, CO LIMERICK.





7 “The Black & White Road to Profit”

A special meeting was organised on Wednesday night by the Cork Holstein Friesian Club to discuss recent developments in dairy cattle breeding. Some 135 breeders attended the meeting. Speakers included John O’Sullivan, the Chairman of ICBF, Andrew Cromie, Doreen Corridan and Robert Helen.

Topics covered in the course of the meeting included:

- The EBI – its introduction as a replacement of the RBI in 2001 and the enhancements that were made in 2004 and 2005. Further enhancements planned for introduction in February 2006 include “udder health” and “feet & legs”.
- Theory and practise of the EBI - two of the slides Andrew used in his presentation were specially prepared for this meeting. Both slides are attached. One shows the theory of how the EBI and its underlying PDs can be used to predict the performance of the daughters of AI bulls. The other shows how the performance of the daughters of two well-known Holstein Friesian bulls is accurately predicted.
- Electronic DIY milk recording will be available in 2005. This system has great potential to enable many more dairy herds to benefit from milk recording.
- The selection of bulls for progeny testing by Munster and Progressive Genetics was described. Current plans are to source 80% of these bulls from Irish herds. Provided were details of minimum EBI criteria, the types of dams being favoured and the sires from which sons are being sought in 2005 and 2006.
- The targeted herd progeny test scheme being introduced for spring matings in 2005 was described. Herds willing to mate some 80% of their cows to test bulls are being sought. An attractive incentive package was described.

A very positive and constructive discussion followed the presentations.

The meeting was a major step forward in ensuring Holstein Friesian breeders are well informed about the developments in cattle breeding that are being lead by ICBF in partnership with its members.

8 Active Bull List for AI Sires – Spring 2005

ICBF’s Active Bull List for Holstein-Friesian AI Sires – Spring 2005 was published in the Irish Farmers Journal on Thursday. This list included the EBI enhancements and the sub-indexes which show the economic contribution sets of traits make to the EBI. A copy of the list is attached.

Brian Wickham Chief Executive Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Soc. Ltd, Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co. Cork, Ireland, Phone office +353 (0)23 20222, mobile +353 (0)86 826 9911 Fax office +353 (0)23 20229 E-Mail bwickham@icbf.com ICBF Web site www.icbf.com Assistant: Mary Madden. © Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Society Limited 2005.