



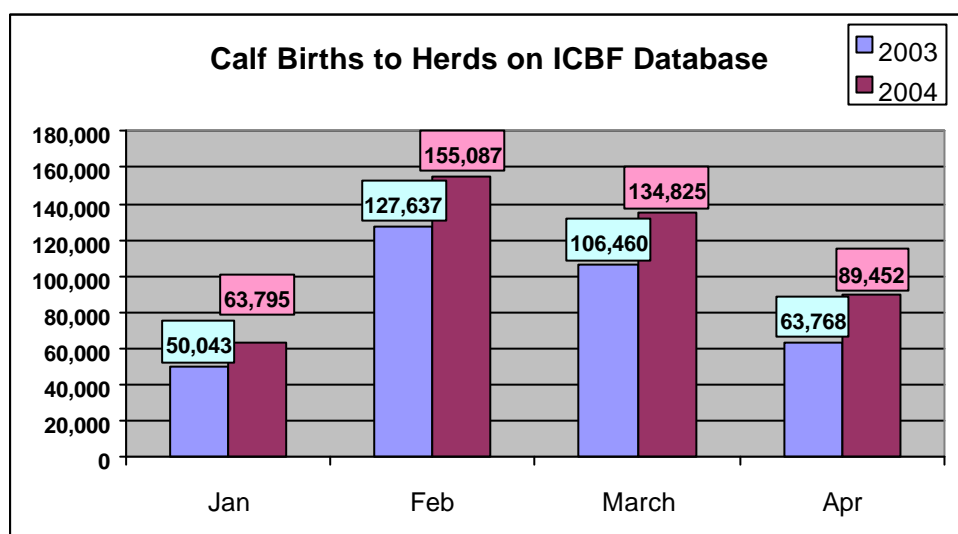
**UPDATE – FOR PERIOD 4<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2004**

**1. Database Project**

**a) Newly Live Herdbooks**

- 793 new attempted pedigree registrations received during the past week.
- 30 new Beef Herds added to the database.
- BLUP reports and Pedigree Certificates were issued to the Charolais, Limousin, and Simmental Societies.
- Work continues on the herd book task lists.

The following graph indicates the impact that having herds from the Beef Herd Books on the database in 2004 has had on the number of calf births in the database over the 2003 figures.



**b) Other database activities**

- The update of Sire Error reports received back from farmers is continuing.
- A good response to the request for feed input data has been received from farmers, and these figures will also be loaded to the database over the coming week.
- Work on the Linear Scoring application and the mechanism by which herds are allocated to scorers will move into testing next week with a view to having it complete by the end of the month.
- A meeting with O2 on the setting up text messaging as a means of reporting to farmers from the database was held this week and it is expected that this work will be completed by the end of June.

**2. Milk Recording**

**a) Database Project - Milk Recording**

- **No. Herdowners Milk Recorded in IRIS 2004 (Jan 01st 2004 to date) = 5,776**

Progressive	1,785
Dairygold	1,566
Kerry	1,086
SWS	959
Tipperary	146
Arrabawn	115
Connacht Gold	119



• **Weekly Update - No. herd tests processed in last 7 days = 918**

Progressive	330
Dairygold	246
Kery	148
SWS	142
Tipperary	27
Connacht Gold	15
Nenagh	10

**b) Conference - DIY TTEMM Conference – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2004 in Moorepark, Fermoy**

- **Objective:** To provide a forum to review the future of Milk Recording in Ireland specifically in relation to the use of Electronic DIY Recording.
- **Attendees:** Representatives from; Livestock Improvement Milk Recording (NZ), Tru-Test (NZ), ICBF, Milk Recording Organisations, Teagasc, DAF, ICOS, Milk Processors, IFA, and Pilot Project Farmers.
- **Minutes and Summary:** These minutes record the main points in the conference, agreements reached and resulting actions.
- **Main Conclusions:**
  - Based on 18 months successful use in Denmark, feedback from NZ and the positive results from the 2004 Irish Pilot study in collaboration with Dairygold, a mandate was given to the project team to commence a larger trial under more commercial conditions. That is, in next few months to establish one full technician Cell of approx 200 Herds using the DIY TTEMM.
  - In tandem with the Commercial trial, ICBF will review with the Milk Recording Organizations the restructuring and centralizing of operations to accommodate electronic DIY in Ireland. This review will include a full cost analysis, strategy for recruiting new herds, and strategy for handling existing milk recording herds.
- **Presentations' Summary:**
  - 1) **TRU- TEST** - Nick Howarth of Tru-Test explained the operating principles of the DIY Tru Test Electronic Milk Meter (TTEMM) – the main points of his presentation were;
    - System overview – explained workings of system down to component level,
    - Meter as a product is now in full production and being sold worldwide.
  - 2) **Livestock Improvement Corporation (LIC) NZ** - Steve Howse of LIC gave an overview of Milk Recording in NZ and their experience/plans for the DIY TTEMM. Main points were;
    - 3.7 million cows, 13,100 herds, average herd size 285
    - 11,800 (90%) herds on Breeding Records Service, 9,000 (70%) herds Milk recording, all DIY, vast majority 4 visits,
    - Herd Test process based on Manual Weigh Stations where sample must go to get weights recorded & entered to dbase, this means farmers need to number and position flasks in correct tray slot for PM & AM – hi hassle factor
    - TTEMM pilots in NZ; Positive feedback from farmers but had following issues;
      - Sample bottle labels had quality issues with barcode,
      - Meters charged at week ends gives 30 hrs batt. time – but would not last 'til Friday. (Lge Herd sizes).
    - LIC not yet researched one sample option so if they were to introduce TTEMM they would have to invest in robots - hi capital expense.



- Reviewing “Plus” system with own Data Handler but will still require Weigh station & robot to pair samples.
  - TTEMM trial planned for Sept – Dec 2004 with 200 herds – ICBF will stay close to project and monitor the NZ findings.
- 3) **Danish Cattle Federation** – Uffe Lauritsen (sent his apologies but also sent his slides – were presented by M Burke). Main points were;
- 6,500 Dairy herds (585,000 cows) with 6,000 (540,000) of these in MR – 90% DIY
  - MR run by Central Organisation, with 80 technicians serving the 6,000 herds
  - Majority farms use Portable meters (5,500) with 300 farms have fixed meters
  - 965 TTEMM meters in use some 500,000 milkings done with these – hi experience
  - Have purchased a further 2,000 TTEMMs in June 2004 – meters working well
  - 100 Eziscanners used in Denmark for “stanchioned” or “stalled” herds – not needed in Ireland as no stalled cows.
  - Currently taking 2 samples per herd test – will move to 1 sample by Sept 2004
  - Development work on “non Preserved” samples – gives great potential for Veterinary analyses on the sample as well as traditional MR analyses.
- 4) **Irish TTEMM Trials 2004 – Pilot Project Review** - Martin Burke (Overview), Pat O Connor (Technician’s feedback), Diarmuid Lynch (User feedback – farmer from Pilot group).
- Main points;
- Ireland at 27% herds recording is well behind Benchmark countries like NZ & DK
  - 18 Dairygold pilot farmers using DIY TTEMM since Feb 2004, 41 tests successfully done.
  - ½ the meters sent for check up/calibration after 3 months – all OK
  - Lab in Dairygold facilitated new vial barcode for trial
  - Technician feedback - no issues with set up, training – suggested need “protocol agreement “ signed before start up
  - Farmer feedback positive – user and cow friendly – great potential for attracting new herds into MR in Ireland
- 5) **Irish TTEMM - Proposal for Irish Operating model** – Martin Burke presented Irish DIY model proposal - based on “Technician Cells”. Main points were;
- Country is segregated into MR Cells defined by herd density/spatial ratios
  - 1 Technician Cell with 84 meters and 9 DHs could handle 200 herds (100 x 4 visit, 100 x 11 visit)
  - Process flow involves van for meter transport, laptop, depot + courier to lab – potential for drastic reduction in results leadtime
  - Proposal for Central Laboratory for all country’s samples
  - Proposal for One Meter Centre responsible for import, maintenance and calibration
  - National Education/marketing campaign would be required
  - Cell Costings (Direct & Indirect) and scenarios for potential revenues and farmer charges were included.



### 3. Tully

- The December '03 intake have settled in well to their temporary home and have been increased to 9 kg of meal per day.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of sheds and yards will be finished on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June.
- Disease test results for the May '04 intake are back and bulls are due in from 12<sup>th</sup> June.
- A group of 39 students from Wales agricultural college visited Tully on Tuesday the 8-06-04.

### 4. Increasing the Uptake of Milk Recording

Wednesdays workshop devoted to the potential of electronic milk metering highlighted the appeal of this new system to dairy farmers. Not only does it reduce the hassle of milk recording for the farmer but it also reduces the potential for errors and it has the potential to reduce the cost of milk recording. If we are able to realize these benefits then many more farmers will be attracted to milk recording.

The challenge we now face is to ensure we fully understand all aspects of this new system. The larger scale trial is designed to provide the answers. Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly we must now review how the milk recording service is organized in Ireland. One of the lessons from Denmark and New Zealand is that high levels of milk recording can be achieved but only if the service is very efficient, delivers tangible benefits, is well marketed and thus desired by farmers.

As a farmer pointed out during the workshop we now have a unique opportunity to take the best practices and technologies from the rest of the world and to apply them in Ireland. We must put aside all parochial interests and focus on establishing a milk recording service that at least 80% of Irish dairy farmers will find so attractive that they use it every year.

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