



## UPDATE for period 6<sup>th</sup> August to 12<sup>th</sup> August 2005

### 1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2005 Dolmen Hotel, Carlow at 10.00 am.** Review of Linear scoring service. NB – this is the meeting that was previously scheduled for Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> August.
- ✚ **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September** Beef & Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation meetings in Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.
- ✚ **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September** – “EBI 100” farm-walk on farm of Pat & Pauline Ryan, Cappagh, Co. Waterford. EDIY milk recording will be featured on this day. The previously planned farm walks have been replaced by this event.
- ✚ **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September** ICBF Board Meeting.
- ✚ **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> & Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September** Ploughing Championships, Midleton, Co. Cork.

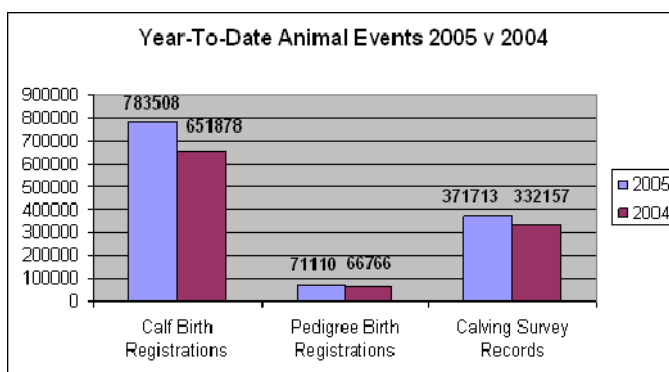
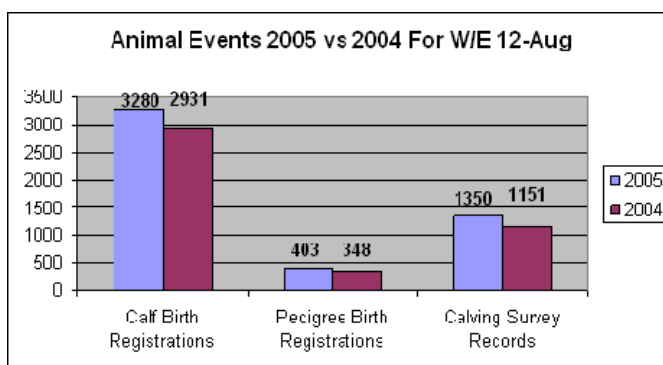
### 2 Database Update

- ✚ 16 new herds added to the database in the last week.
- ✚ 5,004 Teagasc ICBF permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients.
- ✚ The sire correction form sent out to herds with beef cows in milk recording are beginning to return. An entry screen has been provided for the entry of this data.
- ✚ Work is continuing on the report to be sent to beef herds to allow them record missing sires.
- ✚ Work has been completed on the input screens for breeding charts.
- ✚ Final amendments have been made to the Spring 2005 calving reports covering 01-Jan-05 to 30-Jun-2005.

- ✚ Last week we launched a trial text messaging service for farmers wishing to buy high EBI stock. This involved an initial text message being sent to herds,

with an above average EBI, to ascertain if they were interested in receiving details of farmers wishing to buy animals. If interested, they were asked to text the word ‘SALE’ to 51101. Farmers that replied to this text message were then forwarded the farmer’s mobile number along with a short message.

The farmer involved in the trial was delighted with the service and he was able to buy all the animals he required. “I’ve got over 35 calls from farmers looking to sell heifers and they were all from high EBI herds which is what I wanted”.





### 3 Genetic Evaluations

#### Dairy.

- ✚ Milk production proofs have been returned from Interbull and are currently being loaded to the cattle breeding database. These are being loaded along with national and foreign information for fertility, calving and beef traits for all male animals. Extracts for AI sires will take place over the weekend with official publication early next week. The release of sire proofs will be followed by publication of proofs for cows and young-stock.
- ✚ Test runs for SCC are continuing. New genetic parameters have been estimated and forwarded to NRS for the test run. Proofs from the test run will be available from next week and will be released to the dairy industry ahead of the next dairy industry meeting (7th September 2005).

#### Beef.

- ✚ A comprehensive analysis of beef linear type data has been under-taken with a view to rationalising the number of linear traits scored (currently some 40 traits could be scored as part of the beef linear scoring process). The analysis has pin-pointed 14 traits for consideration as part of the on-going linear scoring. These will be discussed at a forthcoming meeting of the beef herdbooks and AI organisations, which will take place on Thursday 25th August, in the Dolmen Hotel, Carlow. A report summarising this research has been distributed to all invited to attend or be represented at this important consultation meeting.
- ✚ Testing of the new beef proofs has continued this week. The complexity of moving from a sire model analysis (where just bulls with progeny get proofs) to an animal model analysis (where all animals, including sires, females and young-stock get proofs) has presented more problems than anticipated. As a result testing is taking longer than expected. Summary information on the new evaluations will be released to the beef industry early next week.

### 4 Tully

- ✚ A total of 968 bull applications have been received for the September intake. This is an increase of 200 for the same intake last year. Inspections will begin on 15th September and will be finished by 29th September.
- ✚ Two groups of pedigree breeders visited Tully this week. On Thursday a group of 20 Simmental breeders from Scotland visited, and on Friday a group of Piedmontese breeders from Italy visited.
- ✚ A total of 29 applications for the vacancy in Tully have been received. Interviews will begin on 19th August.

### 5 Beef Breeding Initiatives

#### Summary of Contents of Reports being Distributed to Herd Owners (example attached)

- ✚ Missing sire reports for beef females are going out from Monday next.
- ✚ These reports include 287,525 animals in 8,779 herds of which 248,799 have no recorded sire. 165,198 have previous calvings (i.e. are cows) and 83,601 have no recorded calvings (i.e. we're assuming they're young heifers >12 mths).
- ✚ The numbers of herds involved in the database is now 19,578 of which 8,779 are "pure beef", 8,849 are "pure dairy" and 2,163 are a mix of beef and dairy.
- ✚ Total number of calvings in the database for 2005 is 779,055 of which 186,157 are from beef cows. The difference between this figure and the figure above (165,198) is due to pure-bred beef cows which are not appearing on the missing sires reports.



**Key objectives for the remainder of this year are to;**

- ✦ Increase the number of beef herds involved in the database. This does not involve any extra work or cost for the herd owner. Simply phone 1850 625 626 or speak with your Teagasc advisor to get started. Animal Events material will be posted out (bin your white cards) and new reports will follow. These include calving reports and new beef reports.
- ✦ Launch new beef indexes – beef calving, beef production, weaned calf & maternal. Proofs for all animals (AI sires, young males, females & commercial cows). Differences of €100/progeny slaughtered being observed between bulls.
- ✦ Collect missing sires data – we cannot improve the “quality” of our national beef herd without information on ancestry (see above).
- ✦ Collect linear score and weight records from 10,000 commercial weanlings (from beef herds). ICBF will be making contact with some 500 beef herds over the next week or two that are on the database and have commercial AI weanlings. We will be offering a complimentary (free) linear score & weight recording package to these herds. Objective is to collect data on these calves and then follow them through to slaughter to establish which traits measured on weanlings are the best predictors of carcass value.
- ✦ Sign up herds for GENÉIRÉLAND beef program. Key focus will be on maternal testing. Participants will be required to bring a minimum of 6 replacements in from maternal test sires. In return they will receive free semen, complimentary weight recording & linear scoring of weanlings and a cash payment when the heifer calves down in the herd. It is anticipated that the cash payment could be in the region of €100 per heifer calving.

**6 Milk Recording**

**Industry Test Turnaround July 2005.**

Industry national average for July was **5.91** days. The Organisation with the best turnaround was **Kerry** with an average of **4.68 days**. The turnaround average for Ireland seems to be stabilising at around 6 days, but as Kerry are down to 4.68 that sets the bar for others! Each month every MRO gets an ICBF Intranet Report on their respective turnaround performance. This gives the

July 2005 Industry Test Turnaround	
No. Animals Recorded	252,215
No. Herd Tests Processed	4,306
Average Turnaround (No. Days)	5.91

Organisations the details on how much time is taken in the different steps in the milk recording process.

**Milk Recording Processing Statistics**

Milk Recording Organisation	2005 Herds Recorded Week 05/08/05 - 12/08/05	2004 Herds Recorded Week 05/08/04 - 12/08/04
Progressive	364	504
Dairygold	286	231
Kerry	162	213
SWS	157	171
Connacht	15	26
Arrabawn	11	12
Tipp	21	31



Others (Donegal, OAD)	5	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,021</b>	<b>1,188</b>

Milk Recording Organisation	HERD Count		COW Count	
	2005 No. Herds Owners Year to Date Jan 01st - Aug 12th	2004 No. Herd Owners at Year End	2005 No. Cows Year to Date Jan 01st - Aug 12th	2004 No. Cows at Year End
<b>Progressive</b>	2,073	2,231	144,172	156,588
<b>Dairygold</b>	1,518	1,620	95,691	102,778
<b>Kerry</b>	1,063	1,098	66,141	66,886
<b>SWS</b>	934	964	53,640	56,753
<b>Tipperary</b>	141	147	9,155	9,268
<b>Connacht</b>	110	121	6,971	7,597
<b>Arrabawn</b>	107	120	6,946	7,369
<b>Others (Donegal/OAD)</b>	32	N/A	3,314	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,978</b>	<b>6,301</b>	<b>386,030</b>	<b>407,239</b>

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Dear Herdowner,

A major new development in establishing the breeding values of beef animals in Ireland will be launched this autumn. To date, breeding values on beef animals have only been established on pedigree registered animals. This is about to change. The critical piece of information that can establish an animals breeding value is it's sire. Having information on the sire of each commercial cow (and potential beef replacements) will allow us quickly identify the cows that are leaving most profit on your beef farm through a combination of trouble free calving, long herd-life, high weaning weight and good calf quality.

Enclosed you will find a list of the commercial animals which are on the ICBF Cattle Breeding Database as being on your farm. The Sire information that we have (if any) is also given. **Please provide the missing Sire information if you can.** This will allow us to send you breeding values reports for your animals. If any of the animals have been sold or have died, please tick the relevant box. Additional females (not on the report) should be added in the blank lines provided or on an extra page.

The other side of this page allows you to record details of stock bulls you may have used. This is a crucial item of information in the genetic evaluation process and will help us to link your stock bulls with the relevant pedigree herdbook information. Please return that with the completed form.

ICBF now provides a variety of information via SMS text messages. To ensure you can avail of these please provide your mobile number on the completed form.

Please return the sheet in the enclosed FREEPOST envelope. Completed reports should be returned as soon as possible but not later than 1st September 2005.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact the Animal Events Helpline (1850 625 626)

Yours sincerely,



Brian Wickham  
Chief Executive, Irish Cattle Breeding Federation

National



