



UPDATE – FOR PERIOD 11TH JUNE – 18TH JUNE 2004

1. Milk Recording

Database Project - Milk Recording week ending 18/06/04;

- **No. Herdowners Milk Recorded in IRIS YTD = 5,826**

Progressive	1,828
Dairygold	1,570
Kerry	1,087
SWS	959
Tipperary	146
Connacht Gold	120
Nenagh	116

- **Weekly Update - No. herd tests processed in last 7 days = 1,098**

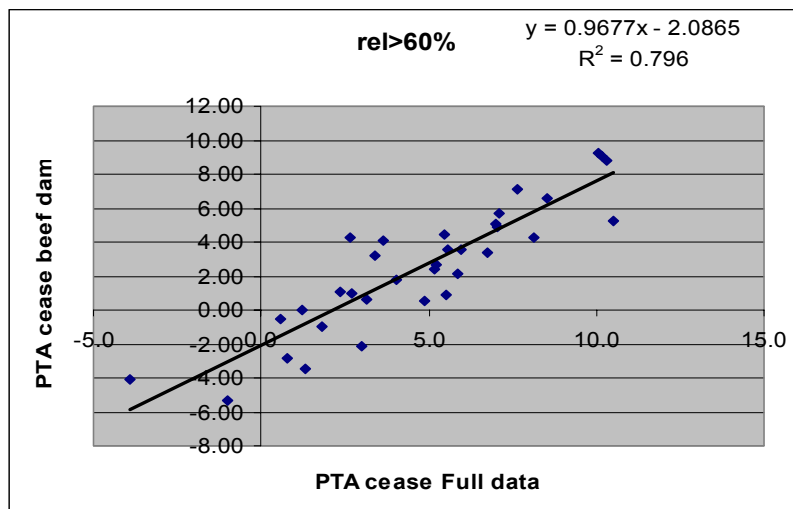
Progressive	406
Dairygold	273
Kerry	193
SWS	175
Tipperary	26
Connacht Gold	19
Nenagh	6

2. Developments in Calving Performance Evaluations

Background:

- At the last meeting of the AI industry and beef herdbooks (18th May, Hotel Kilkenny), concern was expressed that the “test” evaluations for calving difficulty were biased upwards due to the fact that the analysis was based on data collected from predominantly dairy dams (via Animal Events).
- To address this concern, a further analysis was carried out whereby dairy dams were edited out of the dataset (leaving just beef dams) and the analysis repeated.
- A comparison was then carried out between the “previous” analysis (including all data) and the “latest” analysis including just data from beef cows (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Comparison of PTA's for Calving Difficult (cease) between evaluations including all data and including just beef dams*



* Results were based on some 32 AI sires that had a minimum reliability of evaluation of 60% in both evaluations.



Results and conclusions:

- There was very little change in the ranking of AI bulls between evaluations based on all data from Animal Events (including a high proportion of Holstein Friesian dams) and evaluations based on beef dams only (correlation between proofs was 0.89)
- **The results indicate that the current evaluations (using all available data) are not biased by the fact that a large proportion of records are from dairy cows.**
- The range in proofs reduced slightly in the evaluation using just beef cows (from 15% to 12%). However, this is due to the fact that the latest evaluations (including just beef cows) were based on much fewer records. Hence, differences between sires were more difficult to observe.
- The project team is presently investigating further questions, including bias in proofs for “easy calving” bulls. Results of this analysis (see above) and these further analyses will be presented at the beef technical meeting (24th June 2004, Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise).

3. Database Project

Newly Live Herdbooks

- 126 new attempted pedigree registrations received during the past week
- 27 New Beef Herds added to the database
- BLUP reports and Pedigree Certificates were issued to the Charolais, Limousin, and Simmental Societies
- Sire Error reports have been issued to those herds completing the Animal Events Sheets for the first time (i.e. members of the beef breed societies) - 1200 herds have been issued with reports covering sire errors on both commercial and pedigree animals. The main reason for the sire errors is breeders giving the name of the sire rather than the tag, AI code, or herdbook number.

Other database activities

- The update of Sire Error reports received back from dairy farmers is continuing. Around 2000 of 3000 issued have been returned, which is a good response.
- Over 1000 feed input forms have been returned. Reporting on these figures will begin next week.
- Good progress has been made with the AI organisations in getting the process for migration the AI data from current systems to the database. The main stumbling block continues to be around herd identification.
- A prototype Herd Pregnancy Report has been completed and will be issued on a trial basis to a small number of herds over the coming weeks.

4. Beef Breeding Technical Committee meeting

- The meeting will be on next Thursday 24th June in the Heritage hotel Portlaoise from 10.30am-1.00pm.
- The agenda will include database development, update on calving survey evaluations, beef breeding plan, Tully and regulations of stock bulls (with DAF)

5. Beef Linear Scoring Standards Committee meeting

- The meeting will be on next Thursday 24th June in the Heritage hotel Portlaoise from 2.00pm-4.00pm. The agenda will include results of appeals and Scorer
- Contracts.

6. Genetic evaluation update

- Data extraction for the next routine genetic evaluation will commence over the weekend the national evaluation will commence next week.



- The Interbull centre announced an International evaluation service for calving traits this week. The first test run for this evaluation will take place in September 2004. Ireland plans to participate in this test run for the Black and White cattle population. The proposed first official International evaluation for longevity in the BW population in August has been postponed. There will be another test run instead to allow for participation by more countries.

7. Tully Update

- Cleaning and disinfecting of all the sheds and yards has been completed.
- Results for the May '04 intake are back and all the bulls will be in Tully on the 23-6-04
- Applications are been compiled for the September intake, which will be the sale intake for March 05.
- Lanaud station in France was visited from the 14 -17 June, a report of the trip is been compiled.

8. Thinking Beyond Tomorrow International Food Conference Dublin 17 & 18 June 2004

- This two-day conference is organised under the Irish presidency of the EU by Teagasc, Department of Agriculture and the Universities.
- The focus is on a safe nutritious food chain for the consumer.
- Genetics were identified as the key tool in securing food supply for the future.
- Very clear that the breeding industry will be faced by many challenges and that it must have a good understanding of the new genetics technologies if it is to use them wisely.

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