



UPDATE – for period 14th – 20th May 2005

1 GENE IRELAND – TOP PRIORITY

We need to give the GENE IRELAND Beef progeny test a big push in the next week.

Over the last few weeks we have done the following:

- a. Sent letters to 650 suckler herds on the database. Minimum 25 cows per herd and these are mainly herds with some pedigree beef cows.
- b. Sent letters to 250 suckler herds using AI but not on the database. All we know about these herds is that they used beef semen and very little dairy semen.
- c. Arranged for a SMS message to be sent to 1,200 Teagasc clients with beef suckler herds.
- d. Phoned 30 farmers who have expressed an interest in participating in the scheme.
- e. Contacted MART managers seeking their help in locating suitable herds.

As a result of this effort, a small number of farmers have so far returned signed contracts.

I would urge all with an interest in upgrading Irish beef breeding to talk with suckler herd owners and encourage them to join GENE IRELAND Beef. If you need any further information please contact Pat Donnellan (086 831 4987) or Nicholas Grubb (086 244 8517).

2 Important Dates

- **Wednesday 25th May, Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.** AM - Tully Review Consultation Meeting. PM - meeting of cattle breeding industry to discuss 2005 plans for Ploughing.
- **1st – 9th June 2005 ICAR, Interbull & EAAP meetings Sweden.** *1st June ICAR General Assembly, 2nd – 4th June Interbull meeting, 5th – 9th June EAAP meeting.* Brian Wickham & Victor Olori will attend these meetings in Sweden. A summary report will be issued mid June.
- **Thursday 23rd June.** ICBF Board Meeting.

3 Tully Review Meeting Wednesday 25th May from 10:30– 13:00 at Abbeyleix Manor Hotel

The draft agenda is:

1. Report - Michael Barron
2. Feedback
 - bull acquisition and entry
 - testing process
 - bull sales and marketing
 - financial
 - public relations
3. AOB

4 Staffing - Geneticists

Interviews were completed this week and offers made. We are pleased to announce that Ross Evans has accepted one of the two positions. Ross has recently completed his PhD on breeding strategy under the supervision of Dr Dorian Garrick of Colorado State University while also working at Moorepark. Ross will commence work with us next week.



5 Tully

- Disease testing results for the next intake to Tully are back and 65 bulls will enter Tully from the 21-5-05 to the 28-5-05.
- Three bulls left Tully this week and entered A.I. An Angus bull went to Dovea AI. An Aubrac bull purchased by a group of Aubrac breeders and the Charolais bull purchased by NCBC in the April sale both went to NCBC, Enfield. Semen from these three bulls should be available in July 2005.
- A group of twelve French Charolais breeders visited Tully on 17-5-05 and were impressed with the facilities.

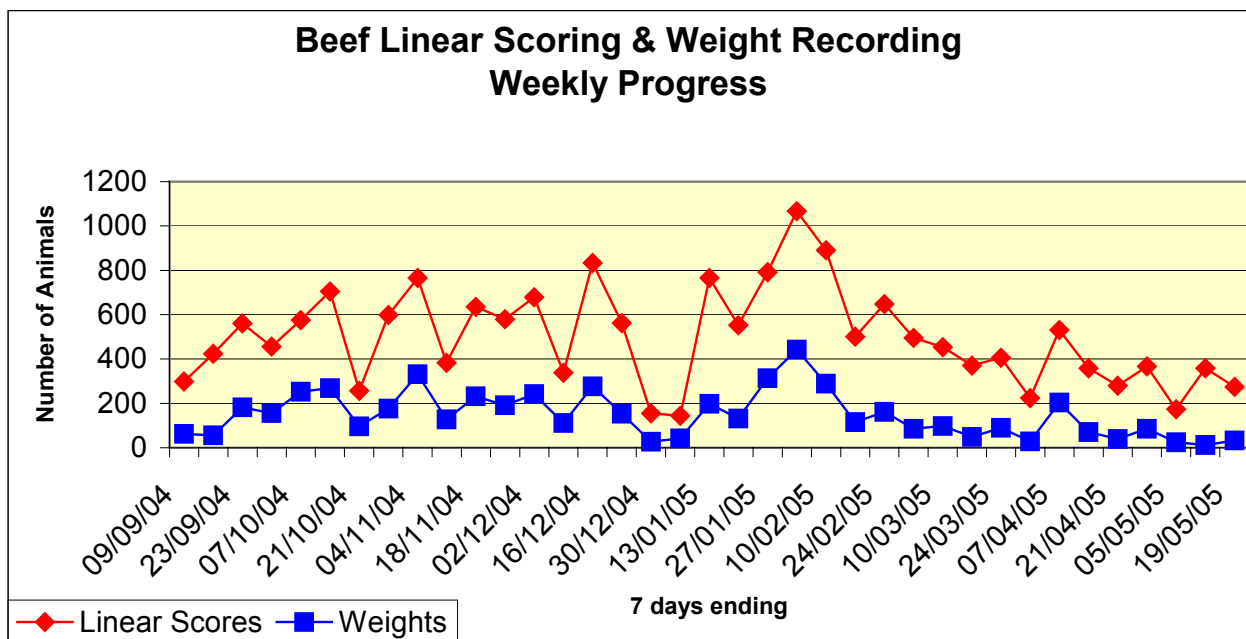
6 Genetic Evaluations - Dairy

The official proofs for AI bulls were published this week. A file with all AI bulls born since 1988 and with EBI reliability of 50% or more has been distributed. This file along with the top 100 and top 500 bulls file are now available on the website. Proofs for other bulls not on this list will be available by request until the web search facility is updated.

The files for the web search as well as the files for the various farm software downloads are currently being generated. These will be used to update the website as soon as possible – next Tuesday at the latest.

Please note that there was no new evaluation for calving difficulty and carcass traits since the last evaluation in March. So there is no change in these proofs and the corresponding sub indexes in this run.

7 Beef Linear Scoring & Weight Recording





8 Milk Recording

Milk Recording Organisation	2005 Herds Recorded Week 12/05/05 - 19/05/05	2004 Herds Recorded Week Ending - 20/05/04
Progressive	451	375
Dairygold	292	222
SWS	202	165
Kerry	208	162
Tipperary	32	47
Connacht	25	23
Arrabawn	18	18
Total	1,228	1,012
	* Note : Stats for week are from Thu – Thu	

Milk Recording Organisation	HERD Count		COW Count	
	2005 No. Herds Owners Year to Date Jan 01st - May 19th	2004 No. Herd Owners at Year End	2005 No. Cows Year to Date Jan 01st - May 19th	2004 No. Cows at Year End
Progressive	2,022	2,231	130,016	145,976
Dairygold	1,415	1,620	77,073	95,817
Kerry	1,041	1,098	56,734	63,995
SWS	926	964	46,168	53,970
Tipperary	138	147	7,858	8,851
Connacht	105	121	6,046	7,120
Arrabawn	105	120	5,620	7,005
Total	5,752	6,301	329,515	382,734



9 Database Update

- 35 New Herds added to the database in the past week. This Spring we have passed the 1,000,000 mark for registrations on Animal Events Sheets (since 01/01/2002).
- Comment from the staff in the Animal Events (AE) office: "**Number of AE sheets coming is continuing to fall. The number of new permission forms is steady at a low level. Large numbers of sire error reports are being returned.**"
- 4,852 Teagasc ICBF permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients. It is expected that the usage of the breeding reports through the website will begin to rise again, now that the single farm payment applications have been dealt with.
- The redesign of the linear scoring application is moving forward with the first design documents being developed this week. A new handheld device is being looked at which will be used by the Scorers to deliver the service.
- The proofs for the May Dairy Genetic Evaluation run have been received and final loading will take place over the weekend. The proofs will be turned on in the database early next week.
- Work on the development to support the entry of Tully performance test data directly to the ICBF database has been completed. Some final testing will take place with staff at Tully once the new intake of bulls has arrived.
- The testing of the new milk recording batch has been completed, and will be live next week for SWS and Kerry, with the other organisations going live the following week.
- The development work on enhancing the catalogue generation functionality from the database will begin next week.
- Work on the 2005 Calving reports is on-going - the first drafts will be available for testing next week.
- A further 200,000 slaughter records have been received from the Dept of Agriculture. 100,000 of the animals for which we received records had sires in the database.

