



UPDATE for period 16th - 22nd July 2005

1 Important Dates

- **Tuesday 26th July, Presentation of “EBI €100” awards** – Moorepark, Fermoy.
- **Thursday 28th July, 8.00pm RTE Radio 1 “Animal Farm”** – Liam O'Brien will interview ICBF Chairman John O'Sullivan. This new six part series will look at the different groupings of farm animals in Ireland through the eyes of their owners / companions. This programme will focus on cattle and the relationship between the farmer and the cattle.
- **Wednesday 7th September.** Beef & Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation meetings in Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.
- **Thursday 15th September.** ICBF Board Meeting.
- **Tuesday 27th, Wednesday 28th & Thursday 29th September.** Ploughing Championships, Midleton, Co. Cork.

2 Review of Beef Linear Scoring & Weight Recording

- A review of plans for the autumn of 2005 is currently taking place. Recent changes by the Charolais Society and the outcome of the recent Beef Genetic Evaluation consultation meeting are the prime reasons for the review.
- The level of linear scoring and weight recording since the start of September 2004 when the ICBF contracted team became fully operational has been higher than ever. With a fully across breed service all beef breeds have been involved. Figures one and two summarise the number of animals scored and weighed and the level of uptake for the beef breeds. The level of uptake has been measured as the percentage of pedigree registrations in 2004. For two of the numerically smaller breeds the percentage is greater than 100 as several age groups have been scored in order to catch-up on the back log of unscored animals as quickly as possible.

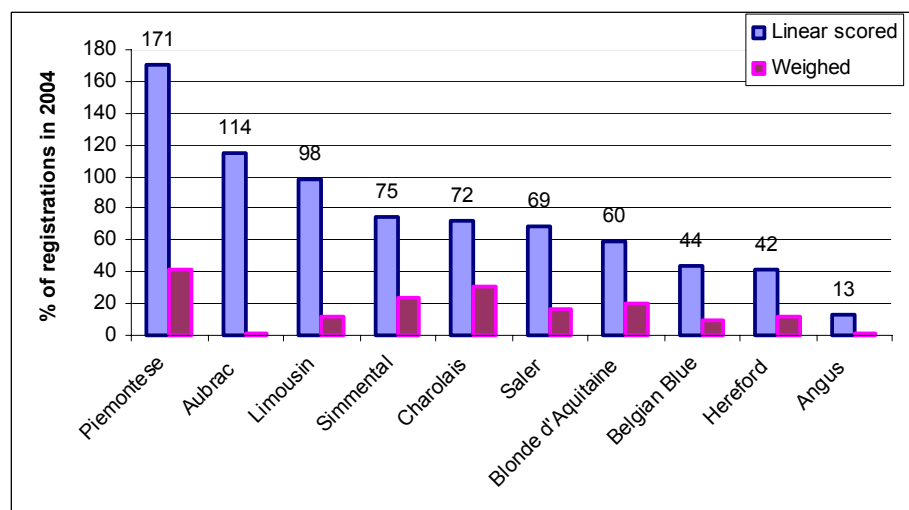
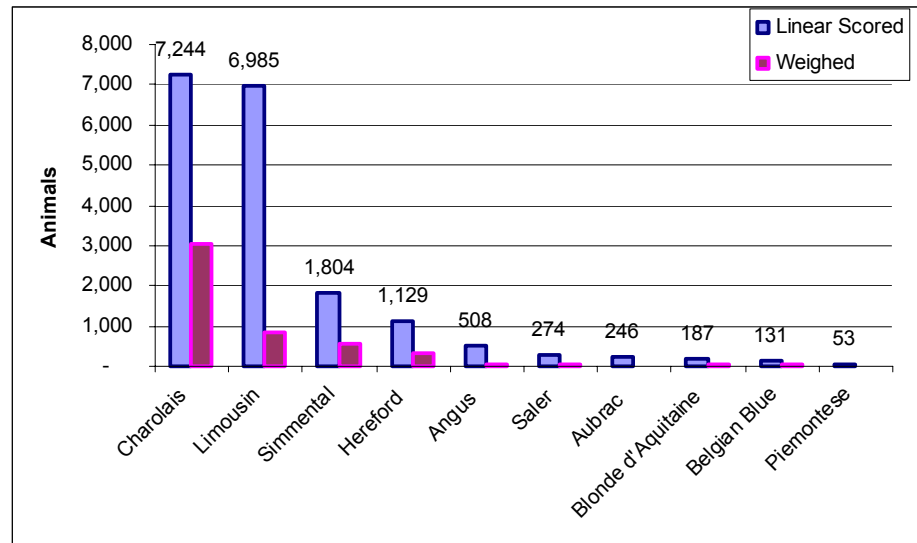


Figure 1. Number of pedigree animals linear scored and weight recorded for each of the main beef breeds since 1st September 2004.



Figure 2. Number of animals scored and weight recorded expressed as a percentage of pedigree registrations in 2004 for each beef breed.



Our goal for the autumn of 2005 is to:

- Rationalise the traits which will be linear scored to just those that provide useful information. Results from the last twelve months of scoring and the latest beef genetic evaluation research will be used to assemble a revised and reduced list of standard traits. It is our intention that an extended range of traits will continue to be available where required by a breed society, albeit at a cost to cover the extra time required. The objective is to reduce the time taken to score each pedigree and commercial animal while ensuring all relevant information is collected. The new hand-held units will be used to support the scoring of the revised set of traits.
- Ensure all pedigree breeders who want their animals scored and weighed receive an excellent service.
- Ensure a large number of commercial beef weanlings are scored and weighed. Our objective is to; locate several hundred suckler herds with commercial weanlings whose sires are identified, to linear score these animals and then to follow them through to slaughter. Their survival and carcass data will be used to provide a comprehensive validation of linear scoring as a predictor of carcass traits and functional traits.

The reasons why a pedigree breeder should be linear scoring and weight recording in the autumn of 2005 are¹:

- To ensure full information is available for all pedigree cattle that will be offered for sale in the near future.** As the new indexes are introduced over the next few months it will become much clearer how much influence linear scores will have on the indexes that will drive beef cattle breeding in Ireland for many years to come. A breeder would be prudent to ensure maximum information is available for all animals. Buyers will soon be looking for the new genetic indexes and if they are not available or of low accuracy it is likely they will look elsewhere.
- To be acknowledged by customers as being very knowledgeable about beef cattle breeding.** Over the next few months a series of new indexes will be introduced for beef cattle. One of the best ways for a pedigree breeder to learn about these new indexes and how to breed animals that excel in generating profit for bull buyers is to ensure all animals in the herd have full information. This can only be done by linear scoring and weight recording.
- To make excellent breeding decisions.** As the new indexes become available there will be a lot of new information to contend with. The pedigree breeders that will provide the best breeding stock in the future will be those that respond most rapidly and accurately to the information provided. Only by fully participating in these new developments will a breeder have the knowledge required to make the best possible breeding decisions for the future. Participating in linear scoring and weight recording will ensure the breeder understands the value of the new information provided by the indexes.

¹ The role of linear scoring and weight recording was covered in the June 17th 2005 Update.



The reasons why a commercial suckler herd should participate in linear scoring and weight recording in the autumn of 2005 include:

- a) **It will be at a low cost.** The exact incentives are still under consideration.
- b) **To gain knowledge about beef cattle breeding and the merit of their cows.** The new beef genetic indexes will be provided on commercial cattle with sufficient ancestry, own performance - for example linear scores, weights and progeny performance records.
- c) **To gain knowledge about the genetic merit of the stock and AI bulls they have used.** This might be particularly helpful for pedigree breeders who have a herd of commercial suckler cows that have been mated to pedigree stock bull(s) and AI bulls.

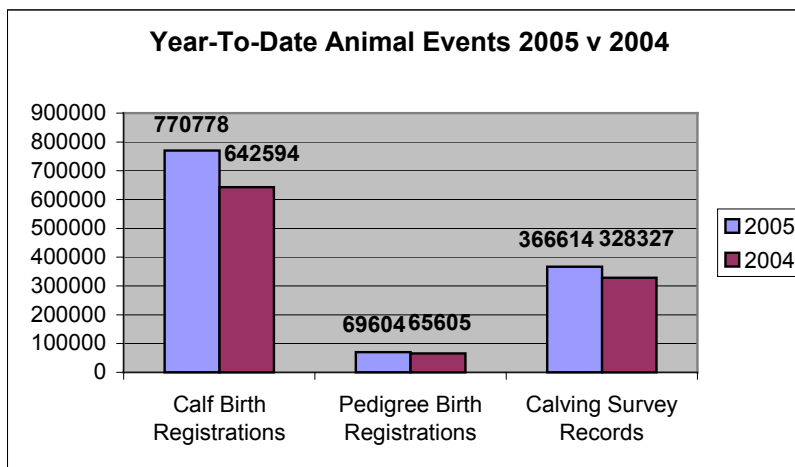
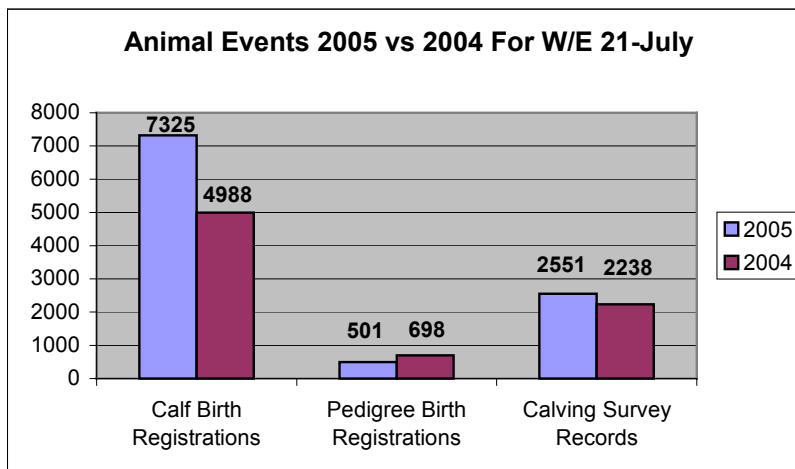
3 Linear Scoring – Dairy Progeny Test Bulls

In conjunction with this years linear scoring of the dairy progeny test sires farmers are being asked to express their overall opinion of each heifer. Attached is an example of the form being used to request this information from herd owners.

Experience in other countries has been that the farmers overall opinion of a heifer is a good early indicator of survival rate. The data collected in these herds will be used to determine if this method provides a useful early assessment of survival under Irish conditions.

4 Database Update

- 62 New Herds added to the database in the past week. 19,139 herds signed up to ICBF have now registered calves this year.
- 4991 Teagasc ICBF permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients.
- The finalisation of the linear scoring application to cover the scoring of dairy traits is on-going. The beef application has been completed.
- A number of extracts of Herd Health related data from the database to support Simon More and his team with the National Herd Health initiative have been completed and the data has been sent to the CVERA team.
- Vet access to on-line reports has been gathering some momentum over the past couple of weeks, and all development required to accommodate VET access is in place.





- The female 'Lifetime Performance Sheet' which was generated for the Limousin society from the database has been posted to Limousin members - A sample is attached.
- A number of developments are continuing on the Genetic Evaluations extracts and imports, which are supporting the on-going work by the genetics team.
- Development work on the ICBF website is on-going.

5 Genetic Evaluations

- Estimation of genetic parameters for somatic cell counts and linear traits has been continuing this week. Ross Evans from ICBF and Donagh Berry from TEAGASC are undertaking this work using Irish data.
- NRS is conducting test evaluations for somatic cell counts. Results are expected next week. Arnold Harbers of NRS is conducting this work and will be meeting with the ICBF team on Monday next week. He will also be the invited speaker at the "EBI 100" awards on Tuesday
- Preparation of data files for the next Interbull routine evaluations is nearly complete. The files for production and longevity will be submitted next Tuesday.

6 Tully

- Applications for the next intake to Tully are being sent out to breeders. A total of 2,344 bulls have been targeted in 1378 herds.

Herdbook	BULLS	HERDS
Irish Angus	291	186
Aubrac	18	11
Blonde d'Aquitaine	26	15
Belgian Blue	37	22
Charolais	790	474
Hereford	297	153
Limousin	609	363
Piedmontese	2	1
Salers	53	30
Shorthorn	7	6
Simmental	214	117
Total	2344	1378

- A list of bulls will be sent out to each breed society by 28-7-05.
- A group of 20 beef farmers from Galway visited Tully on the 14-7-05.

7 GENE IRELAND

Over the last few weeks a telephone survey of dairy farmers participating in the first year of the GENE IRELAND progeny test service has been conducted. The results of the survey included a number of important findings that are being taken into account in planning for 2006. Points to emerge from the survey include:

- There has been a high level of usage of test bull semen.
- The herd owners attached great importance to the average EBI of the test bulls.
- 60% of the herds will be returning insemination data through their farm computer systems.



8 Milk Recording

Milk Recording Organisation	2005 Herds Recorded Week 15/07/05 - 22/07/05	2004 Herds Recorded Week 15/07/04 - 22/07/04
Dairygold	300	188
Progressive	284	344
Kerry	154	328
SWS	151	157
Tipperary	26	37
Others (Donegal, OAD)	8	0
Connacht	5	25
Arrabawn	1	23
Total	923	1,054

Milk Recording Organisation	HERD Count		COW Count	
	2005 No. Herds Owners Year to Date Jan 01st - Jul 22nd	2004 No. Herd Owners at Year End	2005 No. Cows Year to Date Jan 01st - Jul 22nd (All)	2004 No. Cows at Year End (Min 2 tests)
Progressive	2,068	2,233	142,736	156,588
Dairygold	1,516	1,620	94,684	102,778
Kerry	1,063	1,098	65,606	66,886
SWS	934	964	53,258	56,753
Tipperary	141	147	9,086	9,268
Connacht	110	121	6,920	7,597
Arrabawn	107	120	6,887	7,369
Others (Donegal, OAD)	32	0	3,273	0
Total	5,971	6,303	382,450	407,239

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Are You happy with your heifers this year?

Please tick the relevant box for each animal

<u>Freeze Brand</u>	<u>Animal Number</u>	<u>Animal Name</u>	<u>Strongly Disliked</u>	<u>Disliked</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Liked</u>	<u>Liked Very Much</u>
396	IE111126810396	Jane 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
263	IE211338570263		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
233	IE211398130233		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
418	IE111126860418	Begonia 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
413	IE111126810413		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
412	IE111126890412		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
310	IE381157910310		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
331	IE381157960331		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
392	IE111126860392		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Once Complete please place in the free-post envelope and return to ICBF



BREEDER
 Sample
 Sample
 KILKENNY
 CO KILKENNY

IRISH LIMOUSIN CATTLE SOCIETY

Female Performance Record

OWNER
 Sample
 Sample
 NENAGH
 CO TIPPERARY

For: **HIGHFIELD MONA (IEDVKN024)**

Date Printed: 08/07/05

PEDIGREE INFORMATION	
Tarvis (TVS)	
Highfield Ivory (KGEI003)	
Highfield Ann (NETA002)	
Highfield Mona (IEDVKN0243Q)	
DOB: 28-OCT-1997	
Volcan (VCN)	
Highfield Irene (JOA713933)	
Highfield Geraldine (IEA688848)	

BLUP INDEX (07-JUL-2005)					
MUS	SKE	FUNC	BREED	DOC	RELIABILITY
113	105	N/A	N/A	111	51

MUSCLE TRAITS		SKELETAL TRAITS		FUNCTION TRAITS	
WBW	7	LOB	8	FLFV	7
WBHW	6	LOP	8	HLSV	6
TOL	7	WAH	7	HLRV	
WHQ	7	WHT	6	DOC	7
DHQ	8				

CALVING DETAILS & PROGENY PERFORMANCE

CALVING DETAILS								BLUP INDEX (07-JUL-2005)					LINEAR ASSESSMENT													
Name/ National ID	DOB	SEX	CE	CI	SIRE	Age @ Scoring	Weight (kg)	MUS	SKE	FUNC	BREED	DOC	REL%	WBW	WBHW	TOL	WHQ	DHQ	LOB	LOP	WAH	WHT	FLFV	HLSV	HLRV	DOC
Shinagh Rowena IE111062140018	04/08/00	F			Fidele FDL	348		115	102	N/A	N/A	118	49	6	6	7	7	8	8	7	7	6	7	6		9
Shinagh Simon IE111062110031	27/09/01	M		419	Gigusse GGU	380		108	103	N/A	N/A	114	42	7	6	7	8	8	7	8	7	6	7	6		8
Shinagh Travis IE111062190055	25/09/02	M		363	Highlander HGR	304		118	111	N/A	N/A	110	49	9	8	10	10	11	6	4	6	5	4	6	4	7
Shinagh Urson IE111062160085	08/11/03	M		409	Highlander HGR	215		112	113	N/A	N/A	112	49	7	6	7	8	9	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	9
Shinagh Vicram IE111062160119	20/10/04	M	1	347	Meridien MEZ			109	113	N/A	N/A	125	33													

DOB - Date of Birth
 CE - Calving ease (as per animal events)
 CI - Calving Interval

MUS - Muscle Development
 SKE - Skeletal Development
 FUNC - Functionality
 BREED - Breed Characteristics
 DOC - Docility
 REL% - Reliability of Index

WBW - Width between Withers
 WBHW - Width behind Withers
 TOL - Thickness of Loin
 WHQ - Width of Hindquarter
 DHQ - Development of Hind Quarter

LOB - Length of Back
 LOP - Length of Pelvis
 WAH - Width at Hips
 WHT - Height at Withers

FLFV - Front Legs Front View
 HLSV - Hind Legs Side View
 HLRV - Hind Legs Rear View
 DOC - Docility