



1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Tuesday 13th December.** 10:30 to 13:00. **Beef Genetic Evaluation Consultation** meeting.
- ✚ **Tuesday 13th December.** 14:00 to 15:30. **Tully review** meeting.
- ✚ **Thursday 15th December.** 9:00 to 11:00. **Audit & Finance Sub-Committee.**
- ✚ **Thursday 15th December.** 11:00 to 14:00. **ICBF Board** meeting.
- ✚ **Thursday 19th January.** **Tully review** meeting to finalise plans for sale on Saturday 4th March.

2 Looking to the future

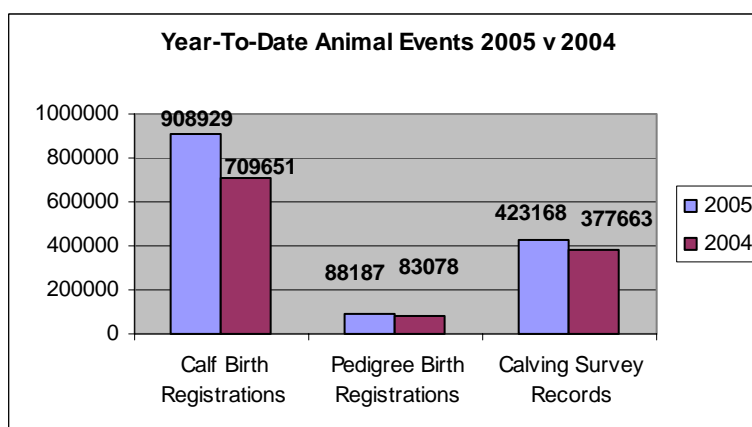
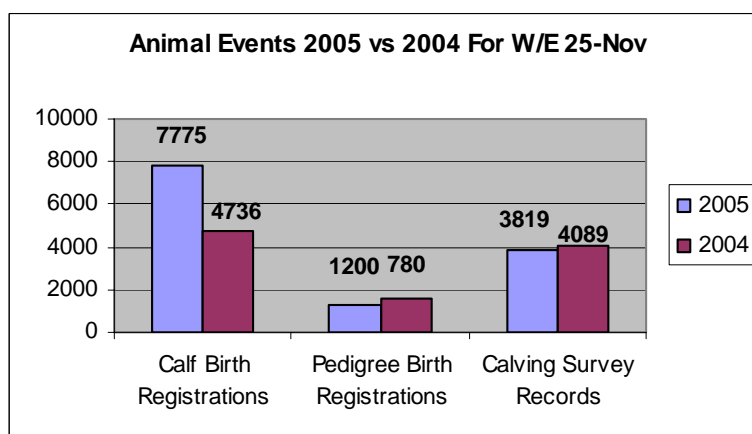
ICBF's cattle breeding database has the potential to provide a range of new information services to Ireland's cattle farmers. Examples include catalogues, sire advice, and management information. These potential services have wide ranging implication for farmers, ICBF and service providers. In order to facilitate the orderly development of these services a discussion paper has been prepared and it will form the basis of consultation with key stakeholders over the next few weeks.

3 January Farmer Meetings

- ✚ **Herds Not Using Animal Events** – a campaign to encourage more herds to use the Animal Events forms for calf registration will be run jointly with TEAGASC and ICBF's members in January 2006. This will involve a series of farmer meetings where the simplicity and benefits of the system will be demonstrated and explained. Dates and venues are currently being finalised.
- ✚ **Herds with high EBI dairy and beef bulls** – a series of five meetings spread throughout the country are being planned for January 2006 to help beef and dairy farmers with high EBI bulls to ensure they can meet the health requirements of AI Centres and Tully. These meetings are being organised jointly with CVERA, Veterinarians, TEAGASC and AI service providers. The key presentations will address the steps a herd owner can take to ensure freedom from diseases such as Johnes, IBR, and BVD.

4 Database Update

- ✚ 109 new herds added to the database last week. This continues to be high due to the recruitment of Dairygold AI herds.
- ✚ 5,209 Teagasc ICBF permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients.
- ✚ Feedback forms relating to the Expected Calving and Fertility Reports continue to be positive.
- ✚ The dry-off sheets are continuing to flow, with most farmers continuing to prefer the paper based option for returning the data.





- ✚ Work is continuing on a revised Annual Milk Recording report. This will be ready for issue during the week of Dec 5th.
- ✚ Solid progress continues to be made with preparations for the roll-out of AI handhelds, though the sign-up of herds is not proceeding quite as quickly as one would like – at this point in time, this is the key risk with this large project.
- ✚ The database upgrade has been continuing this week. This weekend will see the installation by HP of the additional hardware (disks, etc) required on the production server.

5 Milk Recording

Weekly Stats: Fri 18/11/05

Milk Recording Organisation	2005 Herds Recorded Week 18/11/05 - 25/11/05	2004 Herds Recorded Week 18/11/04 - 25/11/04
Progressive	348	438
Dairygold	169	158
Kerry	179	105
SWS	142	152
Connacht	20	18
Arrabawn	16	10
Tipp	23	20
Others (Donegal, OAD)	8	N/A
Total	905	901

Year to Date Stats: up to 18/11/05

Milk Recording Organisation	HERD Count		COW Count	
	2005 No. Herds Owners Year to Date Jan 01st - Nov 25th	2004 No. Herd Owners at Year End	2005 No. Cows Year to Date Jan 01st - Nov 25th	2004 No. Cows at Year End
Progressive	2,084	2,233	152,238	156,588
Dairygold	1,529	1,620	98,624	102,778
Kerry	1,065	1,099	67,685	66,952
SWS	937	964	55,609	56,753
Tipperary	142	147	9,383	9,268
Connacht	110	121	7,269	7,597
Arrabawn	109	120	7,146	7,369
Others (Donegal/OAD etc)	47	N/A	4,286	N/A
Total	6,023	6,304	402,240	407,305

Electronic DIY Milk Recording

- ✚ As a result of a meeting between ICBF, Arrabawn Co-op and Tipperary Co-op on Nov 18th, the two co-ops have agreed to share an EDIY cell in Tipperary for 2006. The technician will be located in between Nenagh and Tipperary and will serve both sets of clients, initially targeting non milk recording milk suppliers in the county.
- ✚ So, the list of co-ops / service providers offering EDIY in 2006 is;



- Dairygold,
- Progressive Genetics,
- SWS,
- Kerry,
- Tipperary,
- Arrabawn,
- Connacht Gold,
- Donegal Creameries.

6 Tully

- ✚ A total of 26 bulls from the May intake have been sold to date. Prices range from €2,300 to €3,800. Six Limousin bulls from Tully are entered for the Limousin sale at Tullow on the 1-12-05.
- ✚ Results for the May intake of bulls will be available from the 28-11-05 and will be posted out to breeders by 1-12-05.
- ✚ A group of pedigree beef farmers from Wales will visit Tully on the 26-11-05.

7 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Thierry Pabiou will be joining the ICBF Animal Evaluation unit next week (Wednesday 30th November). Thierry previously worked for the Institut de l'élevage (in France) where he had responsibility for the publication of genetic evaluation information to the French beef industry. Thierry will be an excellent addition to the ICBF team as we continue to develop new indexes for Irish beef farmers. His specific area of work will be combining national and international evaluations for beef cattle.
- ✚ Loading of dairy proofs has continued this week, with proofs now loaded for almost all files, with the exception of calving interval and survival. This work will be completed over the weekend with proofs for AI sires released early next week and proofs for cows and young-stock later next week. A number of changes have been made to the publication of proofs. These have included;
 - new animal model beef proofs (some 4 million records),
 - new SCC proofs (some 1.25 million records),
 - new health sub index for all animals (incorporating SCC & locomotion score) and
 - new EBI weighting factors.

As a result of these very extensive changes to our publication system, there has been a slight delay in our intended publication date of 25th November. We apologise for this inconvenience.

- ✚ Increasing the accuracy of genetic evaluations is a major objective of ICBF. To that end we have been actively involved in;
 - collecting sire information from cows with “missing” sires (especially for commercial beef cows) and
 - maximising the use of breed fraction data from the national calf registration database.

This work has now been completed (albeit for the current period) with “ancestry/breed fraction updates” on some 500,000 animals of the total of 9 million animals in the pedigree file.

- ✚ Lameness is a new trait included in the forthcoming EBI proof run. In an attempt to improve the quantity and quality of lameness data, ICBF and Teagasc have initiated a pilot project with Farm Relief Services (FRS) to collect lameness data on farms. This project will involve 15 FRS hoof care operators in the Cork and Waterford region and will continue up to Christmas. It is expected that records will be collected on 3,000 animals over this period, from which a greater understanding of the extent and type of lameness on-farms will be established. This work will help establish the basis for a nation-wide recording system for lameness data.



8 GEN€IR€LAND®

- ✚ 125 herds are now signed up to the GEN€IR€LAND® winter AI program. Semen is currently being dispatched to participating herd-owners, with the objective of testing 10 high EBI young bulls (500 straws per bull) in these herds over the coming weeks. Average EBI of the young bull group is €82.
- ✚ With the winter dairy program now largely finished, attention is moving to 3 areas;
 - signing up herds for the spring program with a target of 400 herds,
 - targeting more bulls for the Spring 2006 program in conjunction with NCBC & Dovea AI, and
 - targeting bull calves expected to be born in the next few month for the Spring 2007 program. These are being identified from recorded inseminations of high EBI cows in the ICBF database.

Brian Wickham Ph.D. Chief Executive Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Soc. Ltd, Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co. Cork, Ireland, [Phone office +353 \(0\)23 20222](tel:+3532320222), [mobile +353 \(0\)86 826 9911](tel:+3532320222) [Fax office +353 \(0\)23 20229](tel:+3532320222) E-Mail bwickham@icbf.com ICBF Web site www.icbf.com Assistant: Mary Madden. © Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Society Limited 2005.