



## UPDATE for period 20<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> August 2005

### 1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September** Beef & Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation meetings in Abbeylax 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 The previously planned EDIY farm walks have been replaced by this event.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 Johnes Conference

- ✚ ICBF was represented at a Johnes disease conference on Monday. Some 250 participants including farmers, Veterinarians and technical experts heard presentations from experts with worldwide experience.
- ✚ Johnes is a disease of cattle that spreads mainly through infection of calves during the first few weeks of their life. The symptoms of the disease are usually only exhibited after five or more years. Severely affected animals suffer from scouring and waste away.
- ✚ The key messages from the conference included:
  - Clinical cases are the tip of the iceberg and provide evidence the herd has been infected for a number of years. The disease reduces farm profitability substantially.
  - The incidence of Johnes is increasing.
  - Doing nothing will lead to further increases.
  - There are very effective strategies that can be adopted to prevent Johnes entering a herd and spreading within the herd. The main ones being to source females from herds that are free of the disease and to ensure calves are not infected early in their lives.
  - Once Johnes is present in a herd it can be eliminated over a number of years by a combination of management, testing and culling.

### 3 Review of Linear scoring service

The outcome of Thursday's meeting included agreement on the following:

- ✚ ICBF to commence linear scoring of commercial AI weanlings as soon as possible. The following traits to be scored as part of the linear inspection process;
  - a) Width behind withers
  - b) Loin development
  - c) Development of hind quarter
  - d) Thigh width
  - e) Height at withers
  - f) Length of back
  - g) Fore legs front view
  - h) Hind legs side view
  - i) Hind legs rear view



- j) Width at hips.
- k) Locomotion
- l) Docility

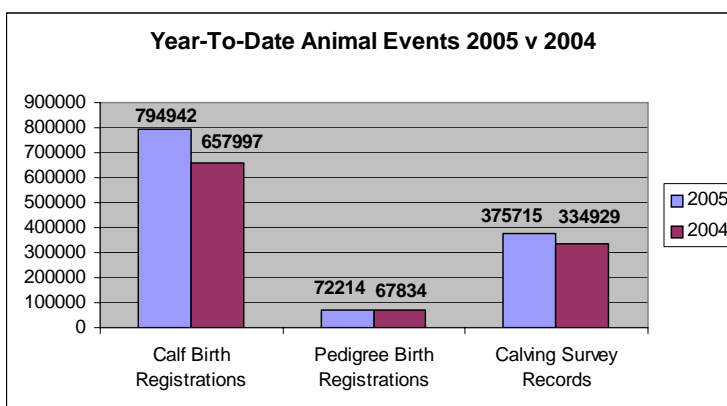
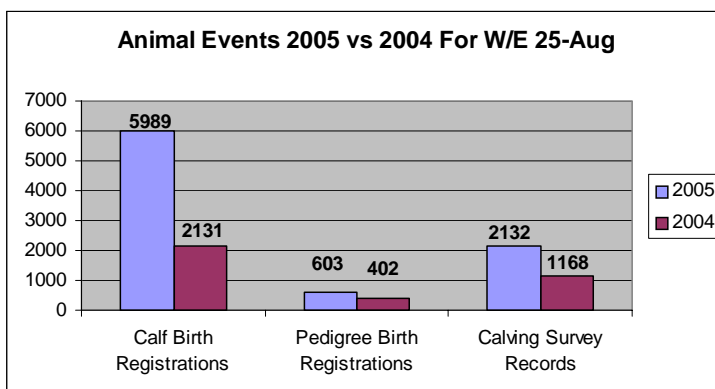
- ✚ As part of the linear scoring of commercial weanlings, ICBF is to investigate ways of “re-scoring” certain traits that might be more easily scored at a later age (than weanling).
- ✚ Linear scoring of pedigree cattle to be retained “as is” until such times as a further review has been carried out.
- ✚ On completion of the work on commercial cattle, ICBF is to undertake a full review of linear scoring with a view to providing an improved and more cost-effective service for the Irish beef breeding industry.

#### 4 Tully

- ✚ A total of 33 applications for the vacancy in Tully were received. Interviews took place on Monday. A total of 6 people were interviewed and Brendan O Shea from Co. Laois has accepted the job and will start on the 5th September. He comes from a farming background with 80 suckler cows and 5 pedigree Limousin cows.
- ✚ Timothy Byrne an Agricultural student from New Zealand will start his 8 month placement at Tully next week.
- ✚ A group of 16 beef farmers from Kerry will visit Tully on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September.

#### 5 Database Update

- ✚ 19 New Herds added to the database in the past week.
- ✚ 5039 Teagasc ICBF permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients.
- ✚ Work is continuing on the loading process for data onto the linear scoring handhelds, including data for both pedigree and commercial animals.
- ✚ The calving reports for both dairy and beef have been re-run and will be available on the ICBF website next week for farmers/advisors to download.
- ✚ Work is continuing on developing the catalogue functionality and putting it into a self-service package for farmers.
- ✚ Both 'Missing Beef Sire' reports and 'Beef Cows in Milk Recording' reports are being returned to ICBF and the loading functions for that data have now been completed.



- ✚ The handover of activities from Anthony Galvin, who leaves us today, has continued this week. Again, thanks to Anthony for his contribution to ICBF over the past three years.



## 6 Open Day at Derek Deane's farm, Rathvilly, Co. Carlow



- ✚ Some 2,000 farmers attended the Open Day on Derek Deane's farm yesterday. Organised by TEAGASC and the Farmers Journal the Open Day featured a farm that is successfully supplying high quality beef to a valuable European market.
- ✚ Derek has recently joined the ICBF database and as a consequence very useful information on calving, breeding and slaughter results featured in the presentations made by TEAGASC advisors during the day.
- ✚ A number of suckler herds took the opportunity to sign-up for animal events on the day.
- ✚ Congratulations to Derek, Mary and their family on both a very informative open day and for running a very successful farm.

## 7 Genetic Evaluations

### Dairy.

- ✚ Official EBI proofs for all AI sires and top cows were posted on the ICBF website on Monday. Cow proofs are currently being loaded to the ICBF cattle breeding database with switch-over to the new August 2005 proofs due on Monday next.
- ✚ Test evaluations for SCC have been completed and proofs for AI bulls generated. The proofs indicate considerable differences between bulls in their ability to breed cows with reduced SCC and improved udder health.
- ✚ Work on international evaluations for a number of traits is continuing. These include; SCC, calving performance & longevity. Interbull test evaluations for these traits will commence on 1st September. This will be the first time that ICBF will have participated in the Interbull test runs for SCC & calving performance.

### Beef.

- ✚ New Animal Model test proofs for beef and carcass traits were received this week. Earlier problems regarding scale differences between the sire and animal model proofs have now been resolved. Further issues (e.g., trait definition, breed differences) are being investigated with new test proofs expected next week.



## 8 Milk Recording

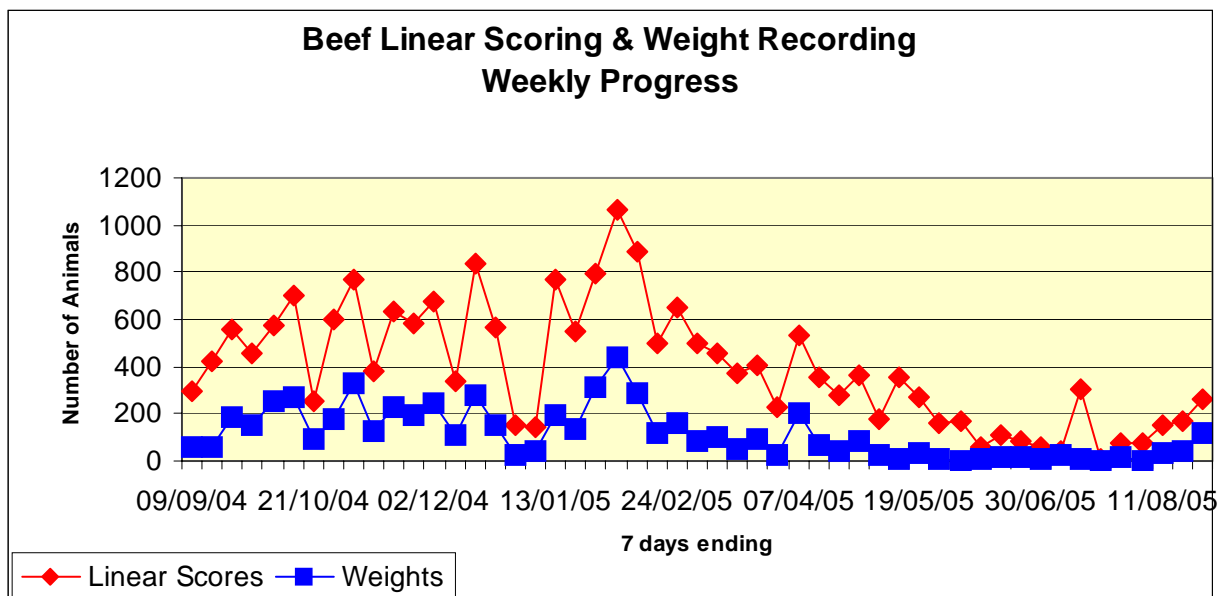
### Milk Recording Processing Statistics

| Milk Recording Organisation | 2005<br>Herds Recorded<br>Week 19/08/05 -<br>26/08/05 | 2004<br>Herds Recorded<br>Week 19/08/04 -<br>26/08/04 |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Progressive                 | 388   | 545   |
| Dairygold                   | 223   | 301   |
| Kerry                       | 158   | 206   |
| SWS                         | 144   | 157   |
| Connacht                    | 15  | 23  |
| Arrabawn                    | 5   | 22  |
| Tipperary                   | 5   | 4   |
| Others (Donegal, OAD)       | 3   | 0   |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>941</b>  | <b>1,258</b>  |

| Milk Recording Organisation | HERD Count  |  | COW Count   |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|--|
|                             | 2005<br>No. Herds Owners<br>Year to Date Jan<br>01st - Aug 26 <sup>th</sup> | 2004<br>No. Herd Owners at<br>Year End | 2005<br>No. Cows Year to<br>Date Jan 01st - Aug<br>26th (All) | 2004<br>No. Cows at<br>Year End (Min<br>2 tests) |
| Progressive                 | 2,075   | 2,233                                  | 144,908   | 156,588  |
| Dairygold                   | 1,518   | 1,620                                  | 95,996  | 102,778  |
| Kerry                       | 1,063   | 1,098                                  | 66,315  | 66,886   |
| SWS                         | 934   | 964                                    | 53,769  | 56,753   |
| Tipperary                   | 141   | 147                                    | 9,180   | 9,268  |
| Connacht                    | 110   | 121                                    | 7,017   | 7,597  |
| Arrabawn                    | 108   | 120                                    | 7,036   | 7,369  |
| Others (Donegal, OAD)       | 32  | 0                                      | 3,364   | 0  |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>5,981</b>  | <b>6,303</b>                           | <b>387,585</b>  | <b>407,239</b>                                   |



## 9 Beef Linear Scoring & Weight Recording



## 10 Anthony Galvin's Farewell



Anthony Galvin (on left) is wished all the best for his future by Michael Lynch.

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