



UPDATE for period 23rd – 29th July 2005

1 Important Dates

✚ EDIY Milk Recording Donegal Farm Walks:

- Tuesday 2nd August, 7.30pm, on farm of Patrick Carlin, Castlefinn
- Wednesday 3rd August, 7.30pm, on farm of Ivan Ferguson, Inishowen
- Thursday 4th August, 7.30pm, on farm of Maurice Graham, St. Johnston

✚ **Tuesday 2nd August, 2.00 pm - Friesian Breeders Open Day** – on farm of John Kiersey, Ballyhussa, Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford.

✚ **30th, 31st August & 1st September 2005** - EDIY Milk Recording Waterford Farm Walks

✚ **Wednesday 7th September.** Beef & Dairy Genetic Evaluation Consultation meetings in Abbeylax Manor Hotel.

✚ **Tuesday 13th September** – “EBI 100” farm-walk on farm of Pat & Pauline Ryan, Cappagh, Waterford.

✚ **Thursday 15th September.** ICBF Board Meeting.

✚ **Tuesday 27th, Wednesday 28th & Thursday 29th September.** Ploughing Championships, Midleton, Co. Cork.

2 “EBI 100” Awards

These were held on Tuesday this week and were well reported in the Farmers Journal on Thursday.

The achievements of the herd owners are a very important part of the larger cattle breeding picture and they are to be congratulated on their hard work and foresight. Improved farm profitability from better cattle breeding comes about as a consequence of the availability of good information and an excellent breeding scheme. TEAGASC, IHFA (and the other herd books), Milk Recording, AI and ICBF all have very important roles to play in delivering for the future.

The challenge we now face for the Holstein Friesian breed is to ensure that average EBI of the semen being used in Irish dairy herds increases by some €23 year on year, compared with the current €6 per year. The prize, for dairy farmers is enormous, €300 million per year of extra profit in ten years time. We know what needs to be done and it is straight forward.

✚ Select, from the entire world, the best 100 young bulls on EBI for progeny testing in Ireland. Our current knowledge tells us that at least 80 of these, for 2005 births, were born in Ireland.

✚ Progeny test them on some 100 daughters in the Gene Ireland progeny test program.

✚ When the progeny test results are available ensure that the two or three best from each year are used widely through AI to sire the bulk of dairy replacements in the national herd.

Now is the time for us all to commit to ensuring this happens. If we succeed then in ten years time this will be the “EBI €300” competition!

3 Genetic Evaluations – Dairy.

International evaluations & release of domestic proofs.

Routine evaluations for milk production traits, longevity and linear type have been completed and forwarded to the Interbull centre for international evaluations. These evaluations will be completed by Monday 8th August with domestic evaluations released later that week (Friday 12th August).



Kerry Cattle – Conservation project.

As part of ICBF's ongoing responsibility to conserve the Kerry cattle breed (through minimal inbreeding), mating advice reports (for breeders) and lists of potential bulls for AI, were computed. These reports were forwarded to the Kerry cattle herd-book.

Research - SCC evaluations.

- ✚ Test proofs for SCC have been computed for AI sires. Initial analysis indicates consistency between this test evaluation and evaluations completed in other countries, e.g., the Netherlands and the UK. Further test runs will be carried out over the next few weeks incorporating additional SCC data (i.e., data collected prior to the switch to Iris for milk recording) and new genetic parameters (based on the complete Irish dataset).
- ✚ It is anticipated that these SCC proofs will be combined with information on mastitis incidence (recorded through Animal Events) and linear type traits (collected by IHFA) to form the basis of a new "udder health index". This index would then be incorporated into an updated EBI, to be discussed at the forthcoming AI industry meeting (7th September 2005).

4 Genetic Evaluations – Beef.

Research – Beef carcass traits.

A further run of test proofs for beef carcass traits has been completed. This run incorporates;

- ✚ updated pedigree information,
- ✚ inclusion of a new trait (Calf Quality) in the multi-trait analysis
- ✚ additional Linear Type data, and
- ✚ additional data from the Tully performance test center.

Analysis of these test evaluations will be carried out next week with a view to releasing proofs to the beef industry the following week (week commencing 8th August).

Research – Linear type traits.

A comprehensive analysis of all 30 linear type traits (including their relationship with one another) has been completed. On the basis of this analysis, a set of core traits will be established for scoring on all pedigree and commercial cattle. The decision regarding which traits to use will be made collectively by ICBF and its herdbook and AI member organizations. A meeting to discuss this further will be scheduled shortly.

5 Tully

- ✚ Applications for the September intake to Tully are returning and are up on the previous three years.
- ✚ The closing date for applications is the 5th August and inspections will begin on 15th August.
- ✚ A group of 20 beef farmers from Galway visited Tully yesterday and were impressed with the standard of bulls at the Centre.

6 Staffing

John Finnan has announced he will be leaving ICBF Tully effective 15th September 2005. Recruitment of a replacement has commenced. The position will be advertised in the Leinster Leader and the Farmers Journal Recruitment pages next week. A copy of the advertisement is attached. Please bring this to the attention of any person you think might be interested in this very important and interesting position.



7 Database Update

✚ 59 new herds added to the database in the past week.

✚ 4,995 Teagasc ICBF permission forms have now been returned by Teagasc clients.

✚ The linear scoring application to cover the scoring of dairy traits is now complete. The only item now outstanding is some of the on-farm reports being developed.

✚ Slight modifications to the calving reports are being made, with a view to re-running the Spring 2005 reports to cover all calvings from 1-Jan-05 to 30-Jun-05. A commentary to supplement those reports is also being generated.

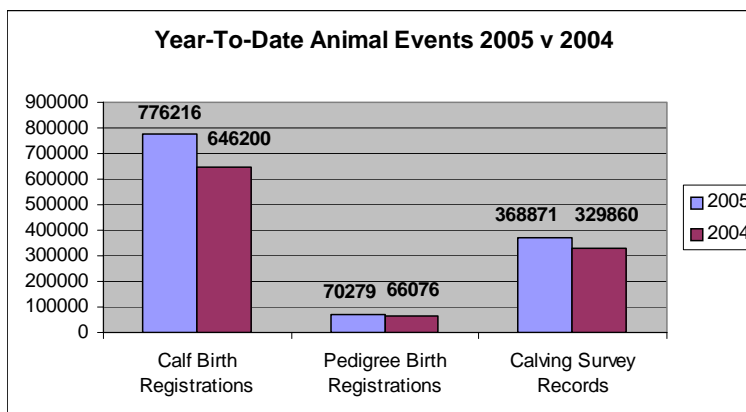
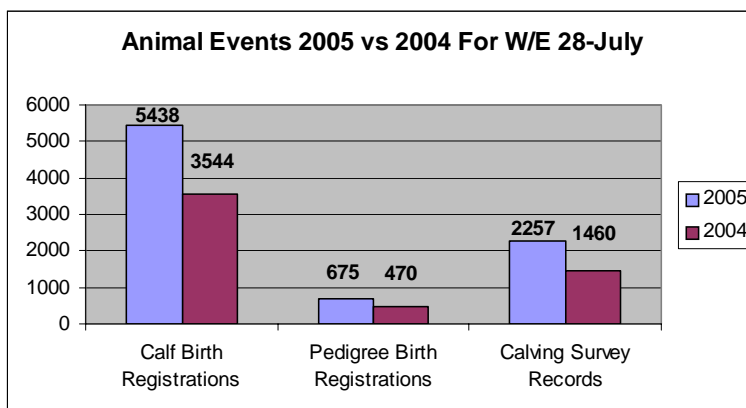
✚ A trial text message will be sent early next week to see if farmers who may have high EBI breeding stock for sale are interested in receiving contact details from those farmers who are looking for such animals.

✚ The calculation of geometric means on SCC records for 'pre-IRIS' lactations is on-going this week. This is needed to support the development work being done on the generation of breeding values for SCC.

✚ Breeding charts are beginning to be returned to ICBF for keying, and the development work to allow this to happen efficiently was largely completed this week. Any farmer returning a completed breeding chart will receive an 'Expected Calving Report', which is currently under development.

✚ Work on two reports concerning sire information is on-going. These reports should go out to farmers next week.

- The first report will ask farmers to verify the sire of cows in milk recording, where those sires are from a 'Beef Breed' (e.g. Belgian Blue, Charolais etc). This is to ensure that these cows receive accurate EBI figures. Some 900 farmers will receive reports, asking for verification on 1,600 animals.
- The second report will ask Beef farmers for sire information on Beef Dam's where it hasn't already been provided. This is to allow these cows to receive Beef Genetic Evaluations this autumn.





8 Milk Recording

Milk Recording Organisation	2005 Herds Recorded Week 22/07/05 - 29/07/05	2004 Herds Recorded Week 22/07/04 - 29/07/04
Progressive	437	360
Dairygold	220	276
Kerry	199	180
SWS	153	160
Connacht	12	19
Arrabawn	26	19
Tipp	15	34
Others (Donegal, OAD)	3	N/A
Total	1,065	1,048

Milk Recording Organisation	HERD Count		COW Count	
	2005 No. Herds Owners Year to Date Jan 01st - Jul 29th	2004 No. Herd Owners at Year End	2005 No. Cows Year to Date Jan 01st - Jul 29th (1 Test or more)	2004 No. Cows at Year end (1 Test or more)
Progressive	2,070	2,231	143,320	156,588
Dairygold	1,517	1,620	95,065	102,778
Kerry	1,063	1,098	65,841	66,886
SWS	934	964	53,433	56,753
Tipperary	141	147	9,103	9,268
Connacht	110	121	6,929	7,597
Arrabawn	107	120	6,925	7,369
Others (Donegal/OAD)	32	N/A	3,297	N/A
Total	5,974	6,301	383,913	407,239

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Tully Team Member
Irish Cattle Breeding Federation
Tully Bull Performance Test Centre
Kildare, Co. Kildare

Do you have a strong interest in cattle breeding and do you enjoy working with cattle?

If so, the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation can offer you a challenging and interesting position as a member of its team who operate the Tully Bull Performance Test Centre located near to Kildare town.

The ideal candidate for this position will have a qualification in agriculture, experience in the operation of beef cattle growing facilities, excellent animal husbandry skills, a good knowledge of farm machinery, a demonstrated ability to work as a member of a team and a good knowledge of the beef breeding industry.

If you wish to be considered for this position please send a written application including your CV to:

Tully Manager, Irish Cattle Breeding Federation, Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co. Cork. Email query@icbf.com, Tel +353 23 20222, Fax +353 23 20229.

Applications for these positions close on Friday 12th August 2005.