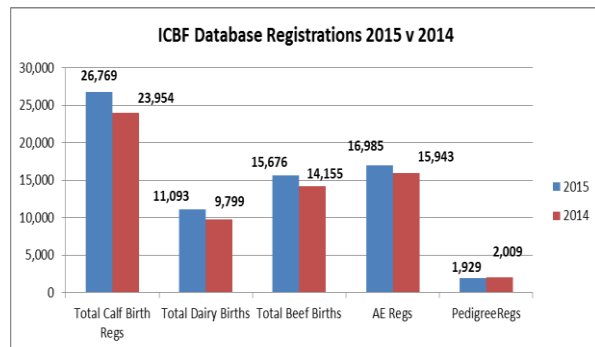
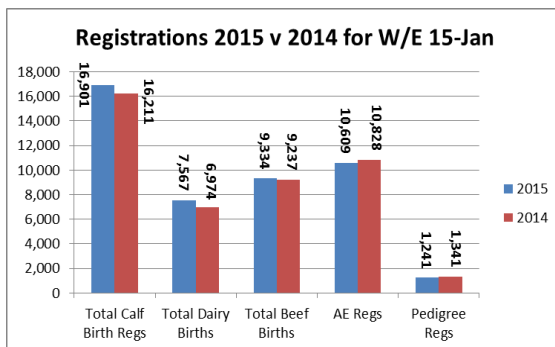


ICBF Weekly Update 16th January 2015

1 Important Dates

- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 29th January 2015, 10:30 to 13:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Sheep Ireland Board Meeting** – Thursday 29th January 2015, 14:00 to 16:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.

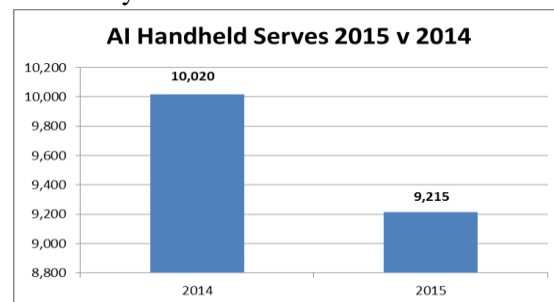
2 Database



- ✚ The stats above are compiled with the assistance of DAFM AIM systems.

- ✚ BVD test results continue to be received at ICBF and are being processed accordingly. There have been 44,000 results received since January 1st, of which 27,000 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 4.98 million results have now been received.

- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2014 compared with 2015.



3 Herd Plus®

- ✚ Final batches of dairy pocket notebooks will be posted early next week. The notebooks are a very useful means of recording information during the calving season before registering calves.
- ✚ EBI reports are now available online. Dairy Cow Reports will be generated in the coming weeks. These reports will also be posted to all dairy HerdPlus customers.
- ✚ Stock data is now fully up to date for beef and dairy farmers looking to complete their 2014 profit monitor. All co-op data will be available in dairy profit monitors next week.
- ✚ Dairy HerdPlus customers that wish to run sire advice for the 2015 breeding season can now do so as all December evaluations are up to date.
- ✚ As spring calving will have commenced or is about to commence on many dairy and beef farms around the country, it is an appropriate time to remind farmers of the importance of data recording. ICBF acknowledges that spring can be a busy and stressful time for farmers with an endless list of tasks to be done. However, ensuring that data (namely sires and calving ease) is recorded comprehensively and accurately is vital, not only to the work that ICBF does, but also to the development of our Agri-food industry going forward.
- ✚ Better data recording leads to more accurate genetic indexes. This will in turn lead to more informed breeding decisions which will leave more profitable stock on farms and increase output at both farm and processor levels. For this reason, people across the industry that find themselves in regular contact with farmers e.g. agri advisors, breed society representatives, AI company reps & technicians etc. need to constantly stress the importance of recording basic breeding information when registering calves. Click [here](#) for a link to an article on best practice in farm data recording.

- Any farmers that still register calves on the white cards which come with the tags, should be encouraged to switch to an animal events book or, where possible, to register calves online through www.agfood.ie or through a farm software package. The animal events book and online methods allow for much more comprehensive data recording at calf registration. Animal events books can be ordered by calling **1850 625 626**. Online registration can be set up by going to the agfood website or contacting your farm software provider.
- As part of the Gene Ireland Maternal Bull Breeder Programme, ICBF along with programme partners, are now offering for sale Gene Ireland bulls that have fulfilled their semen requirements in stud. These are high index elite bulls that will no doubt make excellent stock sires. Details of the bulls can be found by clicking [here](#).

4 Genetic Evaluations

- Data has been sent to Interbull for the January test-run this week. Data included test-day milk production traits and modified calving traits as presented in previous industry meetings.
- Work is on-going to install the new Linux machine for processing the genetic evaluation.

5 GROW[®]

- 732 Pedigree animals were scored in December.
- This is down by 215 animals from December 2013
- 1053 Pedigrees were weighed in December.
- This is down by 399 animals from December 2013.
- These totals do not include animals scored as part of the Gene Ireland Maternal Bull Breeding visit.
- The table displays the GROW trend for the last 8 years.

Year	Pedigree cattle		
	Scored	Weighed	% Weighed
2007	10,875	4,531	41%
2008	11,865	9,469	79%
2009	8,892	8,054	90%
2010	9,235	8,873	96%
2011	8,866	8,748	98%
2012	8662	8590	99%
2013	7272	10901	149%
2014	7806	14255	182%

6 Sheep Ireland

LambPlus Update

- It's encouraging to see a large number of Lamb Plus breeders beginning to enter their lambing data onto the new Sheep Ireland screens already. Breeders are certainly recognising the benefit of entering lambs on the system regularly during the lambing season as opposed to one sitting after all ewes have lambed. From a data quality and accuracy point of view the sooner the lambing event is recorded onto the Sheep Ireland database the better. This prompt data recording will also be rewarded in future development of our breeder Data Quality Index (DQI).

Ovigen planning continues

- We continue to progress our plans for Ovigen and its ambitious plan to collect DNA from all performance recorded ewes for genotyping.

Breeds that can benefit from genomics and Ovigen

- To deliver any benefit to a breed, genomics requires a number of critical ingredients. The major requirement is a solid foundation of performance recording within that breed. Benefiting from genomic analysis is not possible without this foundation.

- ✚ The breeds within Ireland that have established a sufficient foundation over the years are as follows: Texel, Suffolk, Charollais, Belclare and Vendeen. We predict that these are currently the only breeds with sufficient performance data to justify genotyping as part of Ovigen.

Inclusion of other breeds

- ✚ We are currently collecting a small number of DNA samples from other breeds that are performance recording with Sheep Ireland in lower numbers. This will allow us to evaluate if genomics will have any potential to add benefit to the genetic evaluations currently being provided to these breeds. Relatedness to the five strongest performance recording breeds will determine if any other breeds will benefit from being genotyped. By collecting a small number of DNA samples from all these breeds, we will be able to assess how closely related these breeds are to our top five recording breeds and a decision to include in Ovigen genotyping will be made on this basis.

DNA collection plans

- ✚ Our intention is to visit all LambPlus recording breeders within the Texel, Suffolk, Charollais, Belclare and Vendeen breeds. During this farm visit we plan to collect a number of valuable measurements:
 - DNA sample from each ewe and ram – Using an ear punch which will collect an ear tissue sample.
 - Ewe mature weights.
 - Ewe condition scores.
 - Ewe visual scores.
 - Lamb weights.
 - Additional measurements are being considered.

Visit from Quality Meat Scotland to CPT

- ✚ On Tuesday Sheep Ireland welcomed a group from Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) who visited two of our CPT flocks (Andrew Moloney in Edenderry, Co. Offaly and John Large in Gortnahoe, Co. Tipperary) to find out more about how Sheep Ireland is steadily developing and if they can learn from our CPT. We were also anxious to get their views and thoughts on what we are doing here. Continued international collaboration is essential to strengthening any breeding program especially here in Ireland as many of our pedigree breeders source rams in the UK each year. This QMS group contained people with huge experience in the UK and other sheep industries and it was extremely interesting to hear their thoughts on genetic improvement. See some images from the visit below.





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National Milk Recording Results for the 10 day period, 07-JAN-2015 To 16-JAN-2015

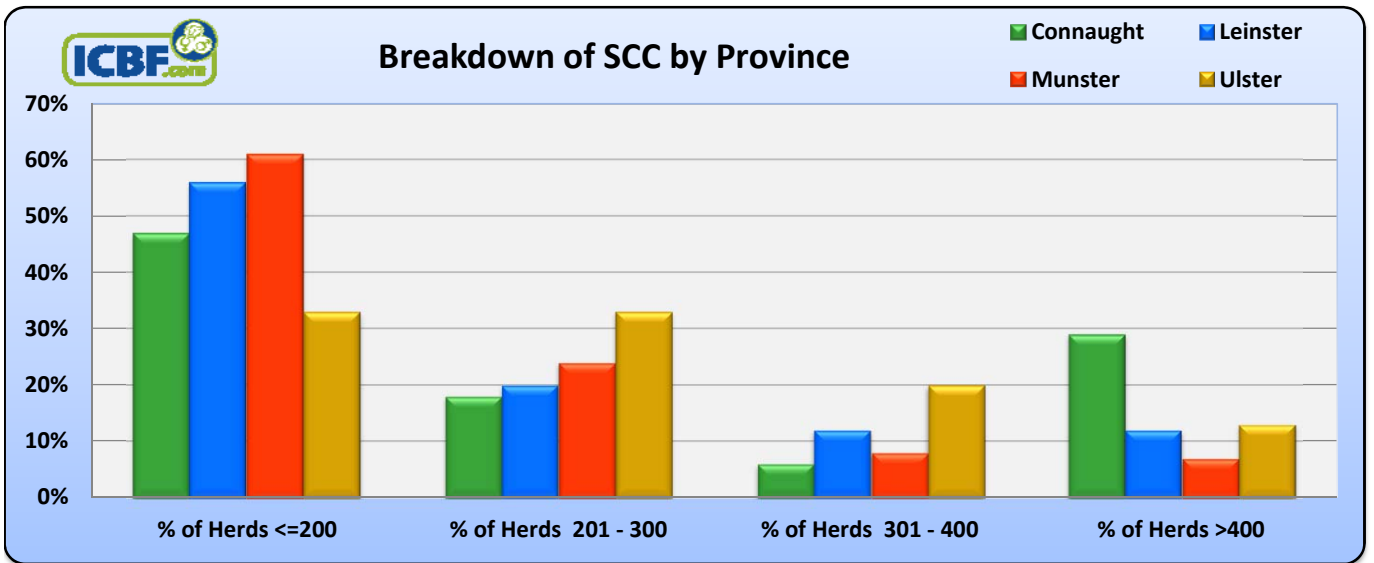
ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Avg Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F+P kg	Average SCC*
Connaught	17	773	45	20.6	4.25	3.28	1.55	212
Leinster	107	6,690	63	22.0	4.14	3.33	1.64	186
Munster	88	4,738	54	22.6	4.22	3.31	1.70	163
Ulster	15	665	44	20.2	3.91	3.26	1.43	233
National Statistics	227	12,866	57	22.0	4.16	3.31	1.64	181

* Geometric Mean Herd SCC

SCC Distribution for the 10 day period, 07-JAN-2015 To 16-JAN-2015

ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	% of Herds <=200	% of Herds 201 - 300	% of Herds 301 - 400	% of Herds >400	Average SCC*
Connaught	17	773	45	47%	18%	6%	29%	212
Leinster	107	6,690	63	56%	20%	12%	12%	186
Munster	88	4,738	54	61%	24%	8%	7%	163
Ulster	15	665	44	33%	33%	20%	13%	233
National Statistics	227	12,866	57	56%	22%	11%	11%	181

* Geometric Mean Herd SCC



% Herd Breakdown for the 10 day period, 07-JAN-2015 To 16-JAN-2015

ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Best 20% SCC	Best 40% SCC	Average SCC**	Worst 40% SCC	Worst 20% SCC
Connaught	17	773	45	106	161	259	297	414
Leinster	107	6,690	63	115	162	185	216	315
Munster	88	4,738	54	100	140	158	188	250
Ulster	15	665	44	174	236	267	285	351
National Statistics	227	12,866	57	107	155	181	212	307

** Percentile Herd SCC Rank (Median SCC)

