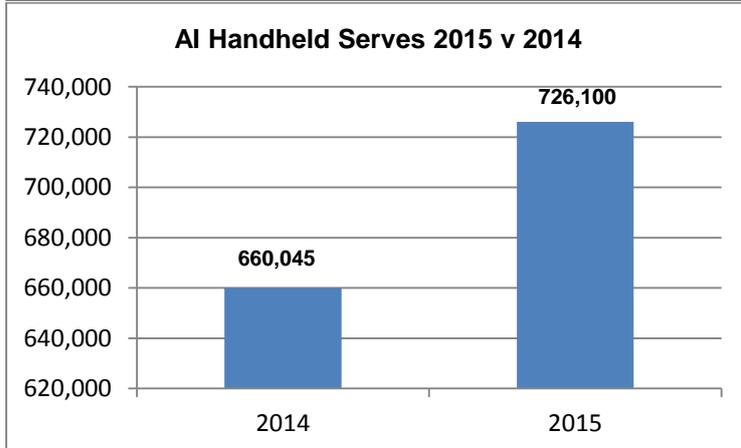
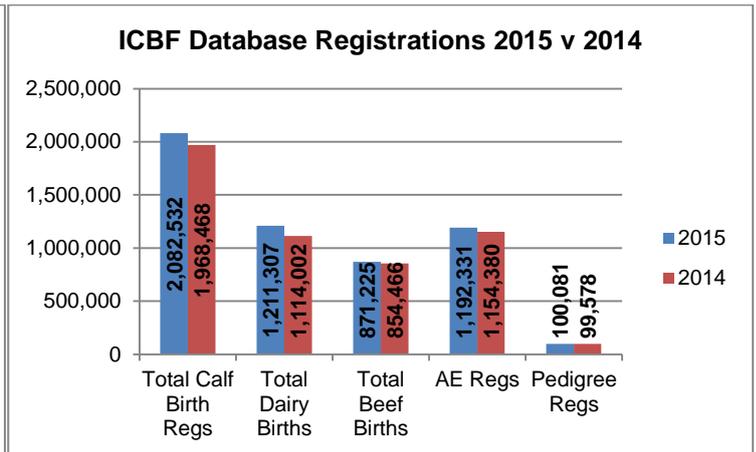
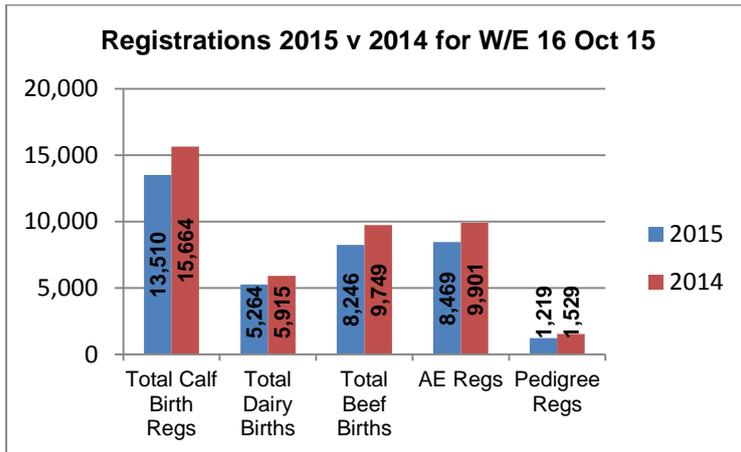


## ICBF Weekly Update 16 October 2015

### 1 Important Dates

- ✚ **Audit & Finance Meeting** – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 10:30, Horse and Jockey Hotel, Thurles.
- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 10:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **Sheep Board Meeting** – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 14:00, 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 2.21 million results received since January 1<sup>st</sup>, of which 21,623 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 7.16 million results have now been received.
- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2014 compared with 2015.

### 3 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Updated sets of breeding values published in the UK for Angus (~4,000 animals) and Belgian Blue (~1,200 animals) have been received. Those values will be included as traits in the next beef run.
- ✚ Calving phenotypes (calving scores and calf mortality) have been sent to Interbeef to participate in the coming pilot across-country genetic evaluation for calving traits.

### 4 Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP)

- ✚ This week's Irish Farmers Journal page is at the end of this update. This week's article explains reliabilities.

#### Information Meetings

- ✚ DAFM are hosting a series of information meetings on the Beef Data and Genomic Programme (BDGP) for scheme participants. Presentations will be made by the Department of Agriculture, Teagasc and ICBF. In addition to the presentations and Q&A sessions at the meetings, officials will be available from 5pm on the

day to address individual queries. Participants should bring along their individual ICBF report to discuss on the day.

Date	Participants in	Location
Tue 20 Oct	Galway	Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry, Co. Galway
Wed 21 Oct	Mayo/Sligo	Welcome Inn Hotel, New Antrim Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
Thur 22 Oct	Leitrim/Roscommon/Longford/Sligo	Landmark Hotel, Carrick on Shannon
Tue 27 Oct	Limerick/Tipperary	Ballykisteen Hotel, Limerick Junction, Co Tipperary
Wed 28 Oct	Cavan/Monaghan/Meath/Louth	Kilmore Hotel, Dublin Road, Cavan
Thur 29 Oct	Donegal/Sligo	Radisson Blu, Paddy Harte Road, Letterkenny Co. Donegal
Tue 03 Nov	Clare	Treacys West County Hotel, Clare Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Wed 04 Nov	Westmeath/Meath/Offally	Mullingar Park Hotel, Dublin Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
Thur 05 Nov	Carlow/Kildare/Wicklow/Laois	Seven Oaks Hotel, Athy Road, Carlow

## 5 GENE IRELAND® Beef

### Autumn 2015

- + Sign-ups are continuing for the Autumn 2015 Beef programme.
- + 125 herds taking a total of 2,400 straws have joined so far.
- + The average order is 19 straws per herd.
- + The catalogue is available to view at the link below.
- + [http://issuu.com/herdplus/docs/gi\\_beef\\_autumn\\_2015\\_catalogue](http://issuu.com/herdplus/docs/gi_beef_autumn_2015_catalogue)
- + To learn more or to order straws please phone **1850 600 900**.
- + Total straws ordered to date for the bulls are detailed below.

Code	Name of Bull	Breed	Straws Ordered
AA2064	Carrigroe Kian	AA	120
AA2163	Liss Brendan	AA	75
AU2155	Slanemill Jack	AU	150
CH2159	Bondi Jacob	CH	110
PDR	Dereskit Improver	CH	285
CH2154	Polar Joe 2	CH	40
HE2148	Ballyville Hamlet	HE	105
LM2150	Castleview Immaginable	LM	350
LM2156	Clonark Jumbo	LM	195
LM2151	Ballygarvan Stud Ike	LM	110
LM2116	Tomschoice Ironstone	LM	130
OEO	Ivoire	LM	65
ZKY	Kyle Herd Ivan	PT	275
PI2157	Kilree Leo	PI	75
SA2153	Highfield Odran	SA	170
SH2181	Coolvin Dominator	SH	0
SI2152	Curaheen Earp	SI	260
SI2158	Seepa Fionn	SI	180
KJG	Knockane Dag	SI	460
ETP	Curaheen Evolution P	SI	255

## 6 GROW<sup>®</sup>

- 1,011 Pedigree animals were scored in September, this is up by 38 animals from September 2014.
- 1,288 Pedigrees were weighed in September, this is up by 138 animals from September 2014.
- These totals do not include animals scored as part of the Gene Ireland Maternal Bull Breeding visit.

## 7 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 16/10/15						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 16/10/15	No. EDIY Herds YTD 16/10/15	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 16/10/15	No. EDIY Cows YTD 16/10/15	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,982	1,273	32%	364,834	125,598	34%
Progressive	2,500	1,070	43%	256,504	111,153	43%
Tipperary	125	53	42%	11,793	5,277	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,607</b>	<b>2,396</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>633,131</b>	<b>242,028</b>	<b>38%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2014 Cows Recorded 01/01/14 - 16/10/14	YTD 2015 Cows Recorded 01/01/15 - 16/10/15	2015 vs 2014 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	332,136	364,834	9.8%
Progressive	241,623	256,504	6.2%
Tipperary	10,100	11,793	16.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>583,859</b>	<b>633,131</b>	<b>8.4%</b>

## 8 Sheep Ireland

### CPT Update

- There has been almost 1,500 commercial CPT ewes AI'd over the past 5 days, with 3 more days of AI left to do. The big challenge in the CPT is to ensure that each flock gets at least two rams from each breed, so they can be compared to a contemporary group of animals and that there is an even balance of breeds used across the flocks. Some of the rams that were entered into the CPT will be ready to go home from today, as they have fulfilled their quota regards number of ewes they have been put across. They have successfully supplied semen to be frozen for breeders (where possible).
- We had a group of Vet students visit the CPT Ram shed this week to see how the rams are teased, how the semen is collected and analysed. You can see a ram being trained to jump in the background in the picture below.



**Sean Coughlan** Chief Executive, ICBF & Sheep Ireland , Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon Co. Cork., Phone: +353 238 820 222, Mobile: +353 872903121, Email [scoughlan@icbf.com](mailto:scoughlan@icbf.com), **Registered Office:** Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Society Ltd trading as "ICBF", Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co Cork. Registered Dublin, Ireland. Registration Number 4914R, Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 1893 to 1978. Web: [www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com).  
**Registered Office:** Sheep Database Ltd trading as "Sheep Ireland". Highfield House, Shinagh, Bandon, Co Cork. Registered Dublin, Ireland. Registration Number 465004, Companies Acts 1963 to 2006. Web: [www.sheep.ie](http://www.sheep.ie).

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

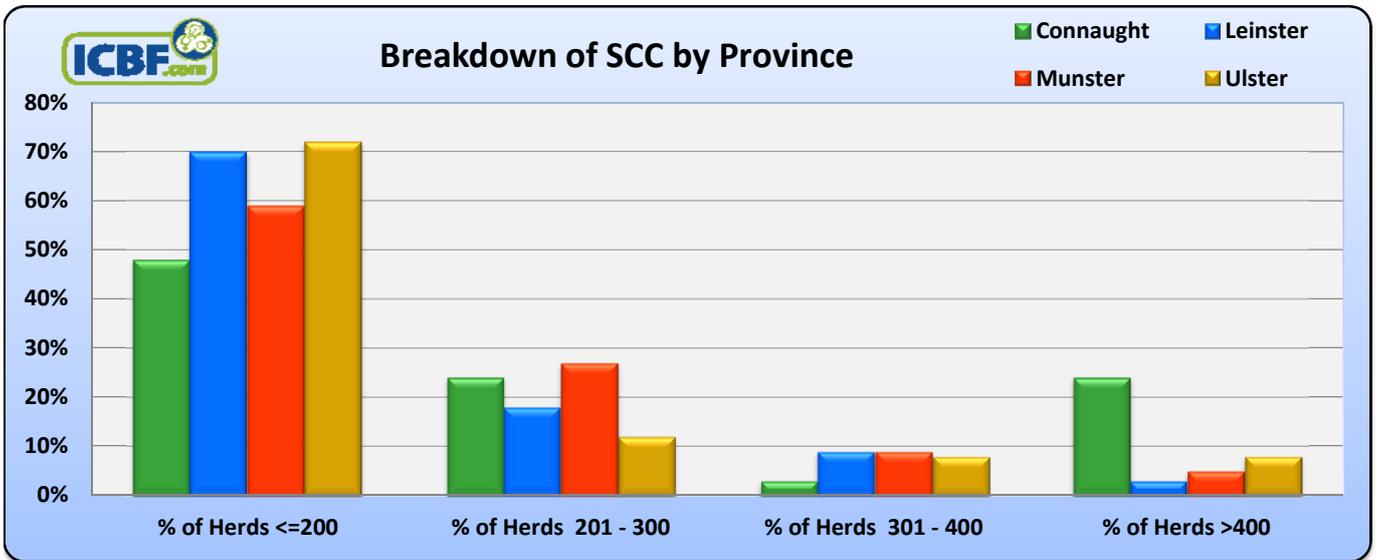
ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Avg Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F+P kg	Average SCC*
Connaught	29	1,722	59	18.9	4.45	3.90	1.57	210
Leinster	171	15,817	92	18.4	4.37	3.90	1.51	157
Munster	615	50,525	82	17.5	4.41	3.91	1.45	194
Ulster	25	1,803	72	18.9	4.27	3.87	1.53	168
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>69,867</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>4.40</b>	<b>3.91</b>	<b>1.47</b>	<b>185</b>

\* Geometric Mean Herd SCC

## SCC Distribution for the 10 day period, 07-OCT-2015 To 16-OCT-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	29	1,722	59	48%	24%	3%	24%	210
Leinster	171	15,817	92	70%	18%	9%	3%	157
Munster	615	50,525	82	59%	27%	9%	5%	194
Ulster	25	1,803	72	72%	12%	8%	8%	168
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>69,867</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>185</b>

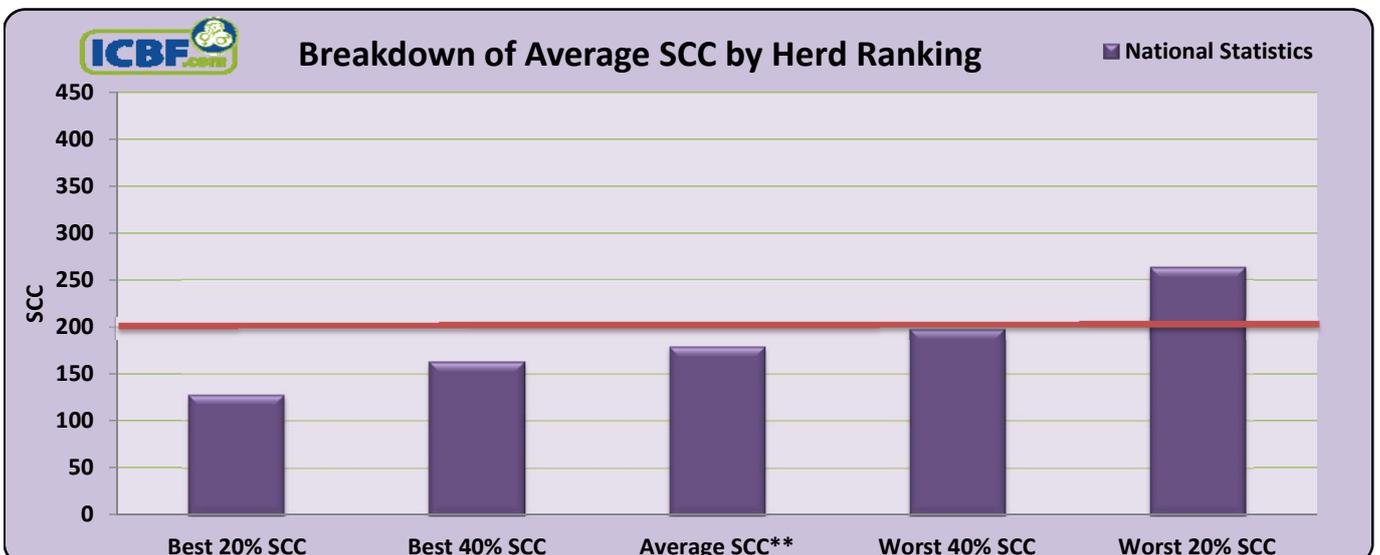
\* Geometric Mean Herd SCC



## % Herd Breakdown for the 10 day period, 07-OCT-2015 To 16-OCT-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	29	1,722	59	115	182	204	246	441
Leinster	171	15,817	92	105	138	156	167	233
Munster	615	50,525	82	139	172	186	202	267
Ulster	25	1,803	72	111	136	153	171	239
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>69,867</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>263</b>

\*\* Percentile Herd SCC Rank (Median SCC)



## What is data reliability?

**A**longside each Euro-Star figure for an animal is a data reliability figure. **What is this and how can farmers use this reliability figure to make better breeding decisions in the future?**

Data reliability is an indicator of the level of confidence that the ICBF has that the proof will change in the future as more data accumulates on the animal. For example, a young calf will have a data reliability figure of about 20% (see Table 1). Expressing this in confidence interval term indicates that the Euro-Star index value for that animal could increase by €102 over its lifetime, but could also decline by €102 (assuming a 90% confidence interval). So taking a calf with an initial Euro-Star value of €100 (5 stars), the proof of this animal could increase to €202, but could equally fall to -€2 as more data accumulates on the animal over many years. Naturally, the extent of this proof change declines as the data reliability figure increases. So the expected change in a well-proven AI bull is reduced to only +/- €36.

If we consider the impact of genomics, then this is expected to increase the data reliability figure from the current 20% (eg, a young calf) to about 40% (eg, a five-year-old cow) for the same animal, simply through the use of additional DNA data.

Some people may be concerned by the extent of the possible changes outlined in Table 1. However, a simple and highly effective way of ad-

ressing the potential change in proof for an individual animal is through using teams of bulls. While the proof for an individual calf could increase or decrease by €102, the expected change when applied to 10 calves (eg, 10 new female replacements entering the suckler herd over a number of years) reduces to only €30. This is because, while one animal in 10 may change by the extreme, the average of the 10 animals will come much closer to the initial estimate based on the average of the group. The same applies to a team of AI bulls, except where the expected change would drop for +/- €51 to less than €20. This is exactly what the new Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP) is trying to capture – to give farmers confidence in using the new Euro-Star indices on a regular basis as they make more informed breeding decisions on their farms in the future.

### More than 10,000 herds have sent back calf registrations, survey forms and tissue samples for 2015

There has been a remarkable response to tissue tags and survey forms sent out over the last number of weeks – more than 10,000 herds have now sent back calf registrations, survey forms and tissue samples for 2015. This is a fantastic response and we would urge all other herd owners to please complete these two tasks as soon as possible so as to facilitate BDGP payments starting in December.

**Table 1**  
The impact of data reliability on Replacement Index.

Reliability	Example animal	Possible change in proof*
20%	Calf	+/- €102
40%	5 year old cow	+/- €89
60%	5 year old stock bull	+/- €72
80%	AI Bull	+/- €51
90%	Well proven AI Bull	+/- €36

\* Based on a 90% confidence interval

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

**21 October:** Teagasc/Munster AI BDGP Livestock Event, Kilmallock Mart at 7:30pm.

**12-29 October:** DAFM, ICBF, Teagasc BDGP Nationwide Information meetings.

- ▶ 15 October: Brandon House Hotel, New Ross
- ▶ 20 October: Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry
- ▶ 21 October: Welcome Inn Hotel, Castlebar
- ▶ 22 October: Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon
- ▶ 27 October: Ballykisteen Hotel, Limerick Junction
- ▶ 28 October: Kilmore Hotel, Cavan
- ▶ 29 October: Radisson Blue Hotel, Letterkenny



One of Edward's stock bulls. This Simmental bull, Clonagh Dynamo Star, is sired by Banwy T-Rex (S699). He has a Replacement Index of €198 (5 stars within and across breed). He has a milk figure of +15 kg (5 stars) and a fertility figure of -1.6 days (4 stars). His first daughters are due to calve next spring with an average Replacement Index of €127 (5 stars).

## Q&A

**Q. Can I sell on cows and/or calves at any time and still be paid on these animals?** Calves must be retained on the farm for a minimum of five months as calf quality and docility cannot be recorded before the calf reaches five months of age. If the calf is sold after it has hit five months, but before the data is recorded, you must still record the data retrospectively. Cows can be culled at any time after calving.

**Q. How can I tell from a bull's Euro-Star index how well proven he is?** You do this by looking at the reliability figures. A bull's reliabilities will not go above 50% until his own progeny start to hit the ground and data is recorded on them. The lower the reliability figures, the less information is known about bull ancestry. Once a bull hits 90% reliability on a trait, it can be considered proven on that trait. Genomics will increase the reliability figures on a bull's index before it is used for breeding, hence, giving more certainty as to how he will breed in the future.

## FARMER FOCUS: EDWARD BUTLER

### 'Genomics is something I look forward to'

**Name:** Edward Butler, Danesfort, Co Kilkenny.

**Farming System:** Suckler to beef

**BDGP Cow Reference No:** 69

**4 and 5 Star Females:** Cows 14; heifers 35.

**Stock Bull or AI:** Three stock bulls, two Simmental and one Limousin.

**Replacement Strategy:** Breed all of our own.

**Why did you join the BDGP?** I consider it a very innovative, positive scheme and I didn't hesitate in signing up for one minute. There are huge potential benefits both for me on my own farm and for the national suckler herd.

**Do you feel it will deliver for the national suckler herd?** Absolutely. The scheme has secured vital data flows for the next six years which were started in 2008 with the old suckler scheme. The continuous collection and accumulation of data coupled with the power of genomics will make the Euro-Star indices a powerful breeding tool.

**What replacement strategy do you plan to implement in light of the scheme?** We have always bred our own replacements here. I have a Simmental bull with a Replacement Index of €198 (pictured above). The first of his daughters will be calving down next spring at 24 months and I am very impressed with his stock.

**Do you use the Euro-Star indices when purchasing stock bulls?** Yes, I do. I would never buy a bull without having first checked his index. Of course, the bull still has to be visually assessed for functionality, docility and overall quality; but the Euro-Star index has to be taken into account as well. A big problem is that too much emphasis is being put on the appearance of beef animals and little or no emphasis on their



Edward and Olive Butler pictured with their children Miriam (two) and Ellen (four) on their farm in Danesfort Co Kilkenny.

genetic merit. I think if the pedigree show scene started to put some emphasis on the genetics of animals it would help to change this.

**Do you know much about genomics?** I have read up quite a bit on it. To think that you can take a DNA sample from a young heifer calf and get a more accurate prediction of how that heifer will potentially perform as a cow in your herd in the future, is something to really look forward to.