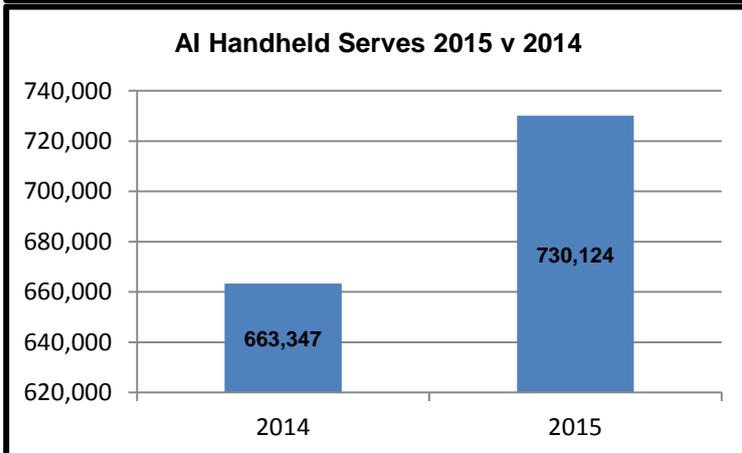
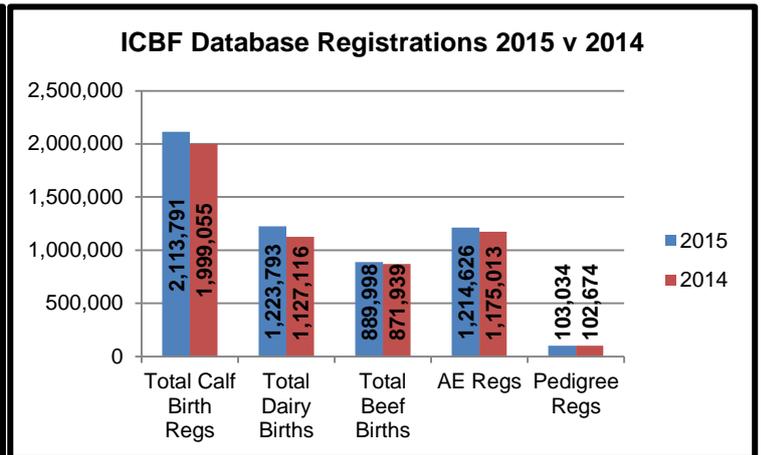
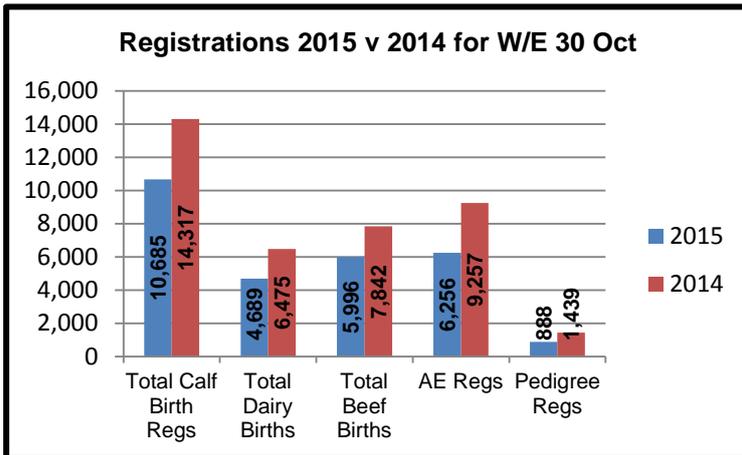


## ICBF Weekly Update 30th October 2015

### 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 2.25 million results received since January 1<sup>st</sup>, of which 13,568 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 7.19 million results have now been received.
-  The chart shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2014 compared with 2015.

### 3 Genetic Evaluations.

-  Research into the incorporation of genomics data into beef evaluations is ongoing. Test runs are currently underway with 105,000 genotyped animals.
-  Updated evaluations for animals linear scored up to 20<sup>th</sup> October were loaded to the database last week.
-  Routine evaluations have commenced ahead of the Interbull routine run submission deadline on 10<sup>th</sup> November.

### 4 Herd Plus®

-  The first of the Suckler Cow reports are arriving on farm this week and the remaining should be completed by next Friday.
-  Dairy Farmers are requested to have all their Insemination and Scanning data recorded by Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November so we can generate the Personalised Pocket Notebooks and Expected Calving Reports.  
**Note:** Please only record the animals not In-Calf.

✚ Milk Recording herds should begin to record the dry-off data so that accurate lactation yields can be predicted.

✚ There are several ways of recording Dry offs on the ICBF database (listed below)

### ICBF Website

Dry offs can be recorded for all herds at [www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com), her downers need a username & password to login which can be obtained by texting PASS to **089 4577663** or by contacting the HerdPlus office on **1850 600 900**.

### Dry Off Notification Sheets

You should receive these by post from your milk recording organisation. If you have not, you can request them by contacting your milk recording organisation.

### Farm Software

If you use a farm software provider (e.g. IFC or Kingswood), record your dry offs and ensure you send the file to ICBF on completion of recording.

### Mobile Phone Text

You can text your dry offs to the ICBF by sending them to the following: **089 4577663**. E.g. Dry 127, 256, 785, 1165, 1952, 2514 25/11/2014

### Animal Events Recording Book

Dates can be recorded on the Animal Events Recording Book and sheets subsequently posted to Animal Events Agency, PO Box 72, Clonakilty, Freepost, Co. Cork.

## Recording Dry Offs with ICBF.com

Use our new user friendly screens to record drying off cows



If you don't record Dry Offs you won't receive an accurate Annual Milk Report for your cows!

Jumbo	Animal Number	Lactation	Calving Date	Dry Off Date	Days in Milk	Expected Calving Date	Select
1	IE161210341001	3	18-FEB-14		256	21-FEB-15	Dry Off

**To Record Dry Off Events**

- ① Click into the white box, the calendar will appear, select the date the first batch of cows were dried off.
- ② Select all the cows that were dried off on the selected date by clicking on the blue "Dry Off" button.
- ③ When selected the blue button will change to Green.
- ④ When you have cows selected click "Save Changes". The page will store the saved details and update the listing of cows.

If you make a mistake don't worry, click on the event or cow tag or jumbo in blue font to delete or edit any mistakes.

Remember: Dry offs can also be recorded via farm software, dry off notification sheets sent from milk recording & using the animal events book.



**HerdPlus**  
Profit through Science  
1850 600 900

## 5 Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP)

- This week's Irish Farmers Journal page is at the end of this update. The title of this week's article is "Replacement Strategy – AI".

### 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	Location
Tue 3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Treacys West County Hotel, Clare Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> November	Mullingar Park Hotel, Dublin Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
Thur 5 <sup>th</sup> November	Seven Oaks Hotel, Athy Road, Carlow

## 6 GENE IRELAND® Beef

### Autumn 2015 Beef programme

- Sign Ups are continuing for the Autumn 2015 Beef programme.
- 165 herds taking a total of 3,040 straws have joined so far.
- The average order is 18 straws per herd.
- Please see catalogue here [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.

### List of Bulls Currently On-Test

Code	Name of Bull	Breed	Straws Ordered
AA2064	Carrigroe Kian	AA	195
AA2163	Liss Brendan	AA	85
AU2155	Slaneymill Jack	AU	210
CH2159	Bondi Jacob	CH	130
PDR	Dereskit Improver	CH	315
CH2154	Polar Joe 2	CH	55
HE2148	Ballyaville Hamlet	HE	120
LM2150	Castlevew Immaginable	LM	475
LM2156	Clonark Jumbo	LM	255
LM2151	Ballygarvan Stud Ike	LM	165
LM2116	Tomschoice Ironstone	LM	135
OEO	Ivoire	LM	65
ZKY	Kyle Herd Ivan	PT	300
PI2157	Kilree Leo	PI	90
SA2153	Highfield Odran	SA	180
SH2181	Coolvin Dominator	SH	0
SI2152	Curaheen Earp	SI	315
SI2158	Seepa Fionn	SI	200
KJG	Knockane Dag	SI	465
ETP	Curaheen Evolution P	SI	255

## 7 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 30/10/15						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 30/10/15	No. EDIY Herds YTD 30/10/15	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 30/10/15	No. EDIY Cows YTD 30/10/15	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,986	1,276	32%	366,132	126,143	34%
Progressive	2,503	1,072	43%	258,057	111,763	43%
Tipperary	126	53	42%	11,864	5,277	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,615</b>	<b>2,401</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>636,053</b>	<b>243,183</b>	<b>38%</b>

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2014 Cows Recorded 01/01/14 - 23/10/14	YTD 2015 Cows Recorded 01/01/15 - 23/10/15	2015 vs 2014 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	333,005	365,375	9.7%
Progressive	242,180	257,395	6.3%
Tipperary	10,294	11,842	15.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>585,479</b>	<b>634,612</b>	<b>8.4%</b>

## 8 Sheep Ireland

### 2016 LambPlus membership

- Today Sheep Ireland are posting 2016 Lambplus sign-up forms. The deadline to return sign-up forms is Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December.
- The number of breeders joining the programme has grown every year since its beginning in 2009. Providing useful genetic evaluations is hugely dependent on volumes of data. Generating large volumes of data is only possible by continually increasing the number of breeders involved in the programme.
- In recent days, we have contacted all breed societies, to get a list of active breeders within each society. All non-performance recording breed society members will receive a letter and sign-up form, to encourage them to join LambPlus for 2016.
- All breeders have also been invited to attend one of the five regional LambPlus meetings taking place around the country in November – please see below the dates and venues for the meetings. All these meetings are open to the public and anyone with an interest in sheep breeding is encouraged to attend.

### Regional LambPlus meeting Dates and Venues

Meeting Date	Location	Hotel	Time of Meeting
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> November	Mallow	Hibernian Hotel	7:30pm
Thur 12 <sup>th</sup> November	Kilkenny	New Park Hotel	7:30pm
Mon 16 <sup>th</sup> November	Ballybofey	Jacksons Hotel	7:30pm
Tues 17 <sup>th</sup> November	Navan	Newgrange Hotel	7:30pm
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> November	Tuam	Ard Rí House Hotel	7:30pm

## OVIGEN

- ✚ We continue to visit flocks to collect DNA and data for OVIGEN. In the coming weeks we will use the mid-pregnancy period as an opportunity to visit flocks.
- ✚ Visits remain completely voluntary, should an individual breeder not feel comfortable with us handling pregnant ewes, that is completely understandable. The process of DNA and data collection is relatively stress free and the reports from flocks that have been visited thus far is very positive.



**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, 21-OCT-2015 To 30-OCT-2015

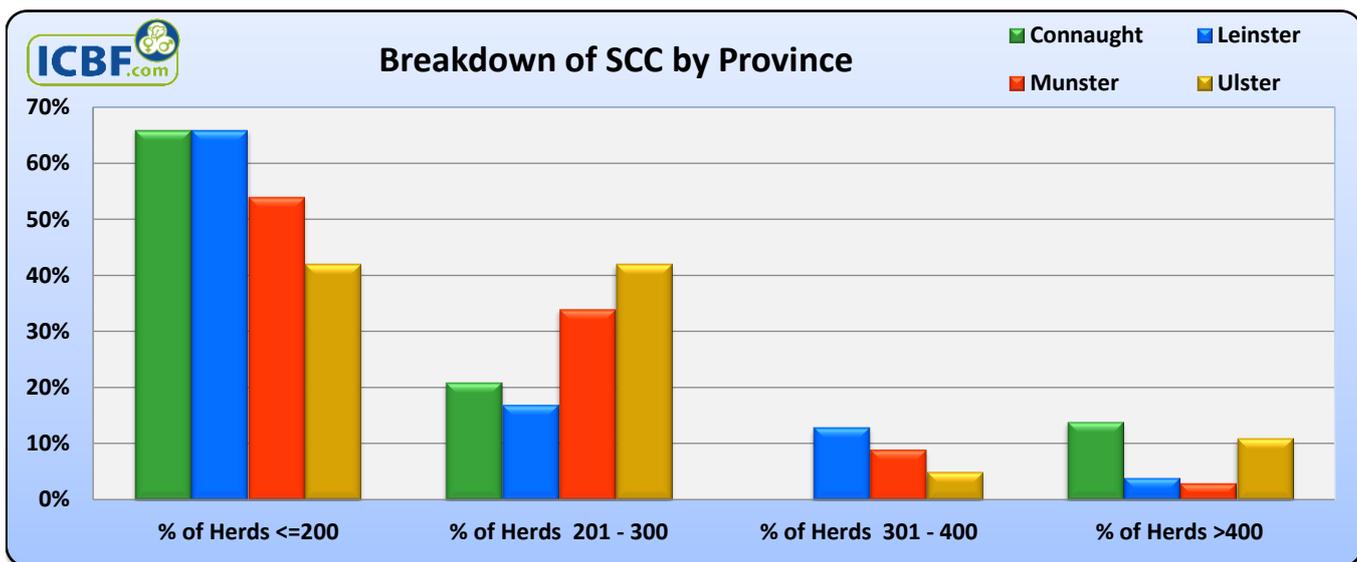
ICBF.com	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Avg Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F+P kg	Average SCC*
Connaught	29	1,716	59	18.1	4.41	3.88	1.48	180
Leinster	112	10,532	94	17.4	4.38	3.94	1.43	172
Munster	462	39,741	86	16.5	4.50	4.02	1.40	194
Ulster	19	1,719	90	16.4	4.51	3.91	1.37	196
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>53,708</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>3.99</b>	<b>1.41</b>	<b>189</b>

\* Geometric Mean Herd SCC

## SCC Distribution for the 10 day period, 21-OCT-2015 To 30-OCT-2015

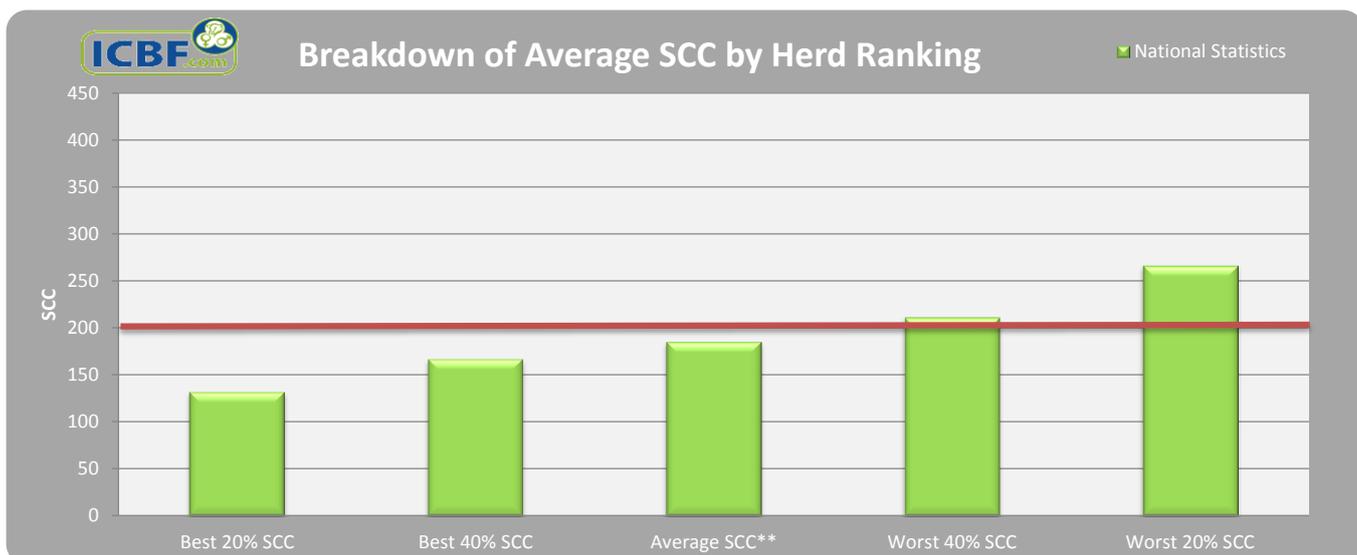
ICBF.com	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	% of Herds <=200	% of Herds 201 - 300	% of Herds 301 - 400	% of Herds >400	Average SCC*
Connaught	29	1,716	59	66%	21%	0%	14%	180
Leinster	112	10,532	94	66%	17%	13%	4%	172
Munster	462	39,741	86	54%	34%	9%	3%	194
Ulster	19	1,719	90	42%	42%	5%	11%	196
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>53,708</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>189</b>

\* Geometric Mean Herd SCC



% Herd Breakdown for the 10 day period, 21-OCT-2015 To 30-OCT-2015								
ICBF.com	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	1,716	59	112	148	162	179	276
Leinster	112	10,532	94	117	147	163	187	267
Munster	462	39,741	86	136	174	190	215	265
Ulster	19	1,719	90	125	185	212	246	279
<b>National Statistics</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>53,708</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>266</b>

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



# Replacement strategy – AI

Over half of the 27,400 herds involved in the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP), currently use some level of AI. Feedback from the current round of BDGP information meetings, suggests this is likely to increase with the new scheme, as participants look to increase the number of 4-star and 5-star females in their herds. So what are the main advantages of using AI and how can herd-owners ensure that when using AI, they are meeting the scheme requirements regarding male and female replacement strategy.

**Advantages of AI:** The main advantages of using AI to breed replacement females are: (i) choice of sire, and (ii) data reliability. The ICBF Active Beef Bull List (see this week's *Irish Farmers Journal* AI supplement) indicates that there are almost 70 bulls available in AI catalogues that have 4 or 5 stars on the replacement index on an across-breed basis. This is across all of the main beef breeds (some 10 breeds in total), with an average replacement index of €108, and reliability of 73%.

**Bull Teams:** When using AI, herd-owners can decide to use a smaller number of well-proven sires (over half of the bulls on the active bull list are well-proven for milk and fertility) or alternatively use a higher number of younger AI bulls. The latter is a common approach in dairy breeding, where herd-owners prefer to capitalise on the higher index of younger AI bulls (albeit at lower individual reliability) by using a team of four to five AI bulls.

It is also a concept the ICBF and the partner AI companies (Munster Cattle Breeding, Progressive Genetics and Dovea AI) are promoting as part of the GEN€ IRELAND programme. The average replacement index of young bulls available through that programme is €125. More details on the GEN€ IRELAND Programme are also included in this week's *Irish Farmers Journal* AI supplement or alternatively contact ICBF directly on 1850 600 900 or 045 521 573.

Using AI to meet the scheme requirements? The primary scheme requirement in relation to AI is that 80% of the AI used on participating farms from 30 June 2016 is from a 4-star or 5-star AI bull on either the replacement or terminal index (on a within-breed or across-breed basis). While this should not present a problem at the AI bull level, there is a real risk that unless herd-owners understand how to effectively use AI, then they will not meet the scheme requirements regarding 4- and 5-star replacement females.

Work undertaken by Teagasc has indicated that herd-owners looking to breed a 1-star cow to get a 4- or 5-star replacement female, need to use a bull with a replacement index of €195 or more (see Table 1).

Similar cut-offs are given for other categories of females based on their replacement index. The key message from that piece of work is that AI gives farmers options regarding all potential breeding females on their farm.

Scheme participants should be mindful of this fact when deciding on which replacement strategy to apply on their farm in Spring 2016 and going forward in the new programme.



One of David's best cows. This nine-year-old SI X cow has a Replacement Index of €169 (5 star, top 1%). She calved for the first time at 24 months, has had eight calves with an average calving interval of 364 days and she weaned the heaviest calf of David's 2015 calf crop. She is sired by the old Simmental AI bull Hurtig (HRG).

## Q&A

**Q. Are all AI bulls 5 star bulls?** Absolutely not. Every bull has its own index and this should be looked at before deciding to use any bull. It is also important to remember that star ratings are used for both the Terminal and Replacement Index as well as other traits such as carcase or milk. A bull that is 5 stars on the Terminal Index, for example, might only be a 1 star bull on the Replacement Index. It is important to look for a high star rating on the index or trait you are looking to improve.

**Q. I have an AI catalogue from 2013. Can I go by the index figures in this?** The Euro-Star indices are updated three times per year (April, August and December). AI companies generally print one main catalogue per year and sometimes print updates with new bulls throughout the year. It is important to check bulls on the online bull search to check their most up to date figures on [www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com). Local AI technicians or area reps should be able to provide you with an up to date catalogue.

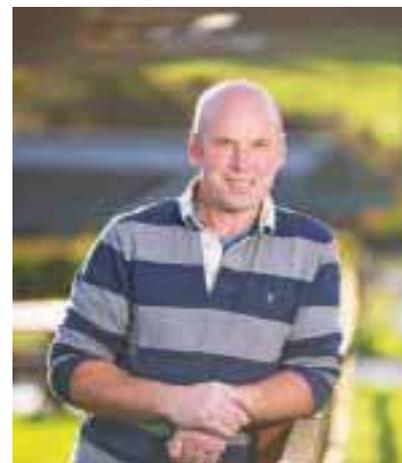
## FARMER FOCUS: DAVID KINSELLA

### AI gives me great flexibility

**Name:** David Kinsella, New Ross, Co Wexford.  
**Farming system:** Suckler to beef.  
**BDGP Cow Reference No:** 66.  
**4 and 5 star females:** Cows 31; heifers 28.  
**Stock Bull or AI:** 100% AI.  
**Replacement strategy:** Breed all of my own.  
**Why did you join the BDGP?** I'm always looking to improve and genomics will hopefully enable me to make better decisions, particularly around which females to retain for breeding. Going by the indices on my stock, the herd is already in a pretty good place in relation to the 2018 and 2020 targets, so it made total sense to join.  
**Do you feel it will deliver for the national suckler herd?** I think it will help to improve things and going by the fertility performance statistics of the national herd, there is massive scope for improvement. Indices aren't everything, but by the same token appearance isn't everything either. A more balanced approach to breeding is needed.

**Do you use the Euro-Star indices when selecting AI bulls?** I have been for a good while. Up to now I've been using a mix of maternal and terminal bulls. I plan to place more emphasis on the Replacement Index in future while also maintaining good carcase performance. I like to see a bull with a carcase figure of 30kg or more. Docility is something which I also plan to watch very closely. Wild cattle are just a nightmare to have to deal with.

**What is your management routine around AI during the breeding season?** I start breeding heifers in mid-April and cows maybe two weeks after that. I get two of my own bull weanlings vasectomised every year and these are fitted with



David Kinsella.

chin balls. I check the animals two or three times per day. Cows observed in heat in the morning are served that evening and those at night are served the next morning. I use iron stakes and reels to make temporary roadways to the crush. My conception to first serve varies between 60% and 70% with everything calved in about eight weeks in spring. I had seven empty cows at scanning this year which is about 10%. I've been using AI a long time now and it gives me great flexibility through the choice of bulls and allows me to make a high level of genetic gain at a relatively low cost.

Table 1: Generating 4 and 5 star replacements.

Target Replacement Index	€74	€74	€74	€74	€74
Sample Cow stars	*	**	***	****	*****
Sample Cow Index	€10	€40	€60	€80	€100
Recommended bull index	€195	€165	€145	€125	€105

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

**29 October:** Teagasc/Munster AI Suckler Event, Castleisland Mart at 7:30pm.

**4 November:** Munster AI Suckler Event, Cashel Mart, at 7:30pm

**12 October to 5 November:** DAFM, ICBF, Teagasc BDGP Nationwide Information meetings. (One to one sessions: 5–8pm)

► **Thur 29th Oct:** Radisson Blue Hotel, Letterkenny

► **Tue 3rd Nov:** Treacy's West County Hotel, Ennis

► **Wed 4th Nov:** Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar

► **Thur 5th Nov:** Seven Oaks Hotel, Carlow

All meetings commence at 8pm