

ICBF Weekly Update 31st January 2014

1 Important Dates

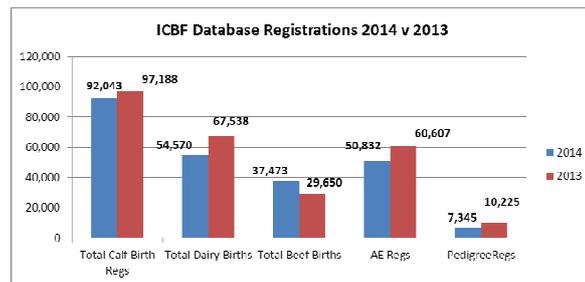
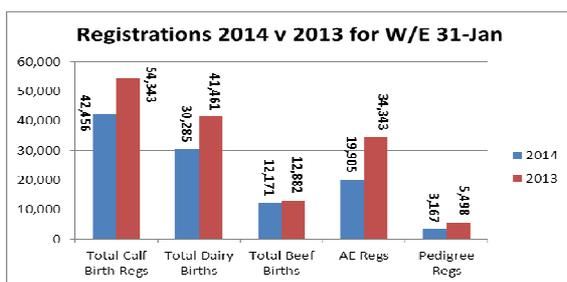
- ✚ **ICBF & Herdbook Technical Meeting** – Friday 7th February, 10:30 to 13:00, Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **ICBF & AI Organisations Meeting** – Friday 7th February, 14:00 to 17:00, Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **ICBF Audit & Finance Sub Committee meeting** – Thursday 13th March, 10:00 to 13:30, Horse & Jockey.
- ✚ **ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 27th March 2014, 10:30 to 13:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ✚ **ICBF Sheep Board Meeting** – Thursday 27th March 2014, 14:00 to 17:00, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.

2 ICBF Board Meeting

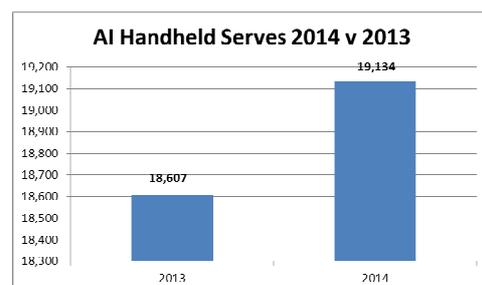
Topics covered at the ICBF board meeting yesterday included:

- ✚ Sexed semen – registration of calves involved in the Sexed Semen trial are happening at the moment and the final trial results will be available at the end of February.
- ✚ Preparations for the DAFM Beef Data and Beef Genomics Programmes are continuing at ICBF.
- ✚ A discussion on an AI industry protocol around dealing with bull fertility. This will be further explored at next Friday's meeting with the AI companies.
- ✚ Gene Ireland Dairy – a full review of the Gene Ireland Dairy Programme will take place after the current breeding season, with a view to ensuring its design continues to deliver for the industry.
- ✚ A Herd Health Recording pilot project will be launched in the next couple of weeks with the aim of getting 100 dairy and 100 beef herds signed up. The plan is to use this to design a recording system that will support on-going genetic evaluations around health and disease, whilst removing duplication of paperwork at the same time.

3 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 120,000 results received since January 1st, of which 44,000 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 2.78 million results have now been received.
- ✚ The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2013 compared with 2014.



4 Herd Plus®

- ✚ EBI and Dairy Cow reports will be packed and posted to all dairy HerdPlus farmers next week.
- ✚ All co-op reports for the last quarter of 2013 have now been posted.
- ✚ Euro-Star reports are now available to be viewed online.
- ✚ Suckler farmers participating in the Beef Data Programme (BDP) are reminded to send in any outstanding data. This data can be recorded online or through postal forms.
- ✚ Suckler farmers participating in the BTAP (discussion groups) scheme are reminded to record any data for the upcoming year. Autumn calving herds will be pregnancy scanning this spring and it is important that this data is recorded ASAP after the event. AI serves and weights should also be recorded as they occur.
- ✚ As the 2014 calving season is now underway, ICBF reminds farmers of the importance of recording vital breeding data when registering calves (sires and calving ease). This data can be recorded when registering through the animal events book (white book) or online through agfood.ie or through a farm software package.
- ✚ Any farmers that are interested in recording extra data on their calves this spring will soon be able to record:
 - Birth Weights.
 - Birth Measurements (chest + height).
 - Calf Size.
 - Calf Vitality/Vigour.
 - Malpresentation e.g. breached birth, leg down etc.
 - Defects.
- ✚ ICBF acknowledges that farmers are extremely busy at calving time, but by contributing this data you will help to improve the reliabilities on genetic indexes which will identify the most profitable animals to breed from. For more information on this, call the HerdPlus office on **1850 600 900**.
- ✚ A beef breeding event will take place on next Thursday 6th February in Tuam mart at 6:30 pm. The event will have various speakers from the industry including Teagasc, Farmers Journal, ICBF, AI Companies and Breed Societies. See farming press for more details.

5 Genetic Evaluations

- ✚ Genomic Evaluations are now running weekly. We are working on streamlining several areas of the process to ensure we keep the time taken to produce a genomic EBI for young Holstein Friesian bulls to a minimum. This includes providing a file of young bull calves to the AI companies twice a week (Tuesday and Friday) rather than once a week (Saturday) previously. Farmers are encouraged to register their calves as quickly as possible and if they get a hair sampling kit to send the hair sample on the same day as receipt to ensure the quickest return of results.
- ✚ Responses to the linear scoring survey have been very positive with good suggestions on how to improve the service. We will be taking these on board to try and improve the service in the future.
- ✚ Results for the monthly beef evaluation will be available next week.

6 Sheep Ireland

- ✚ This week Sheep Ireland continue to set-up our new breeders flocks on the recording database. There are a number of meetings and events planned to take place in the coming days and weeks. One such major event will be the Teagasc National sheep conferences, see details below. There is a very strong genetic element to this conference with some excellent speakers. The full programme for these events can be found on the Teagasc

website. We would strongly encourage all sheep farmers to attend this important conference, especially those interested in sheep breeding.

Conference Date	Location	Venue
Tuesday 4 th February 2014	Athlone	Hodson Bay Hotel
Wednesday 5 th February 2014	Ballyrraine, Letterkenny	Mount Errigal Hotel

Today (Friday) our team of Ultrasound scanners carried out a day of training to refresh their skills and ensure that there is a good level of consistency between each technician. All lambs are scanned at random by each of the three scanning technicians a number of times. All the results have been recorded and will be analysed next week. This process will be repeated again before the scanning season kicks off in May.

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