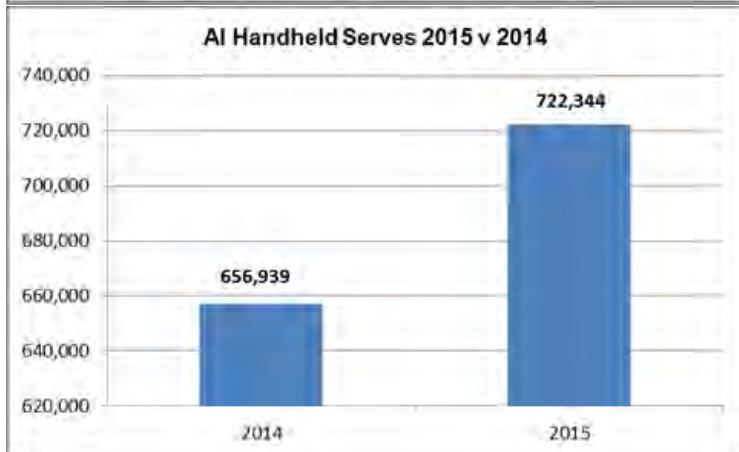
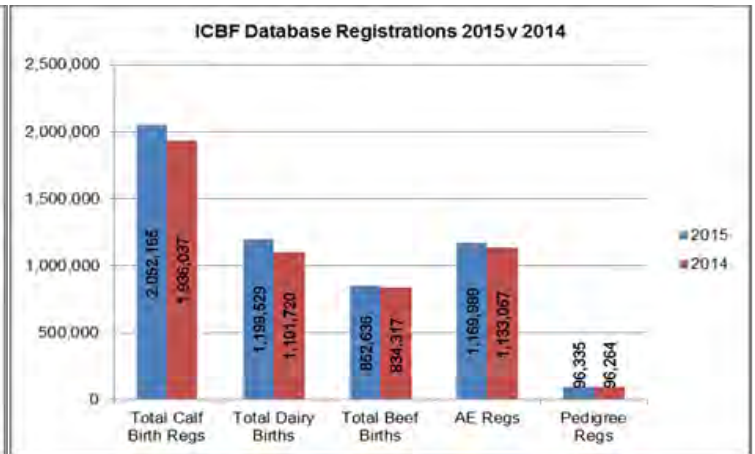
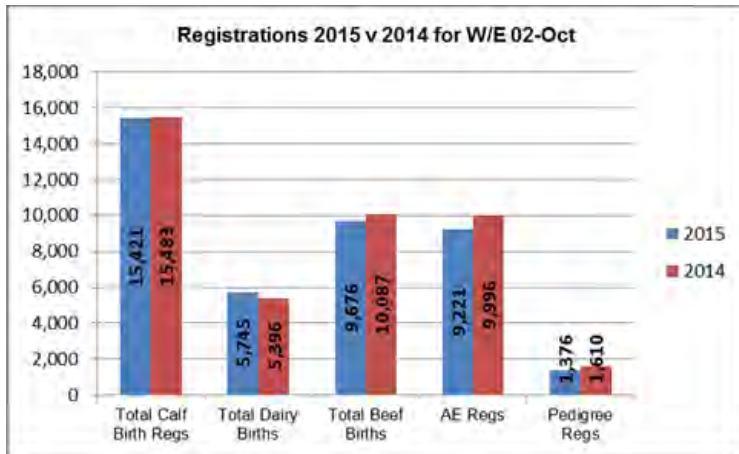


ICBF Weekly Update 2 October 2015

1 Important Dates

- Audit & Finance Meeting** – Thursday 15th October 2015 at 10:00, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 15th October 2015 at 10:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- Sheep Board Meeting** – Thursday 15th October 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 2.18 million results received since January 1st, of which 16750 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 7.12 million results have now been received.
- The graph shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2014 compared with 2015.

3 Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP)

- This week's Irish Farmers Journal page is at the end of this update. This week's article is on genomics.

4 GENE IRELAND[®] Beef

- Sign-ups have begun for the autumn 2015 Beef programme.
- 3100 catalogues were posted to suckler farmers this week
- 7 herds taking a total of 165 straws have joined so far.
- The average order is 23 straws per herd.
- The catalogue is available to view at the link below
http://issuu.com/herdplus/docs/gi_beef_autumn_2015_catalogue
- To learn more or to order straws please phone **1850 600 900**.
- Approximate 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	15
AA2163	Liss Brendan	AA	15
AU2155	Slaneymill Jack	AU	10
CH2159	Bondi Jacob	CH	0
PDR	Dereskit Improver	CH	225
CH2154	Polar Joe 2	CH	15
HE2148	Ballyaville Hamlet	HE	10
LM2150	Castleview Immaginable	LM	10
LM2156	Clonark Jumbo	LM	10
LM2151	Ballygarvan Stud Ike	LM	10
LM2116	Tomschoice Ironstone	LM	5
OEO	Ivoire	LM	5
ZKY	Kyle Herd Ivan	PT	215
PI2157	Kilree Leo	PI	30
SA2153	Highfield Odran	SA	10
SH2181	Coolvin Dominator	SH	0
SI2152	Curaheen Earp	SI	0
SI2158	Seepa Fionn	SI	0
KJG	Knockane Dag	SI	355
ETP	Curaheen Evolution P	SI	195

5 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 02/10/15						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 02/10/15	No. EDIY Herds YTD 02/10/15	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 02/10/15	No. EDIY Cows YTD 02/10/15	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,982	1,273	32%	364,119	125,396	34%
Progressive	2,497	1,067	43%	254,998	110,638	43%
Tipperary	125	53	42%	11,791	5,277	45%
Total	6,604	2,393	36%	630,908	241,311	38%

Recorded Cows by Milk Recording Organisation - Year on Year Comparison			
Milk Recording Organisation	YTD 2014 Cows Recorded 01/01/14 - 02/10/14	YTD 2015 Cows Recorded 01/01/15 - 02/10/15	2015 vs 2014 Year on Year Difference (%)
Munster	330,125	364,119	10.3%
Progressive	240,515	254,998	6.0%
Tipperary	9,982	11,791	18.1%
Total	580,622	630,908	8.7%

6 Sheep Ireland

STAP

- Today marks the deadline for STAP task completion which means there is a huge amount of activity in the Sheep Ireland office. For STAP purposes in 2015 the Euro-Star ram task had a double value for farmers involved in the programme.
- All farmers were required to complete two tasks within the STAP year, so the Euro-Star ram task was a very popular choice this year. This task is verified by Sheep Ireland and facilitators and/or farmers are required to provide Sheep Ireland with evidence of task completion. A huge amount of this information has been submitted to the Sheep Ireland office this week and will be processed as quickly as possible.
- All STAP facilitators can check the status of all STAP participants in respect of the Euro-Star ram task on www.sheep.ie using their personal access password.

CPT Progress

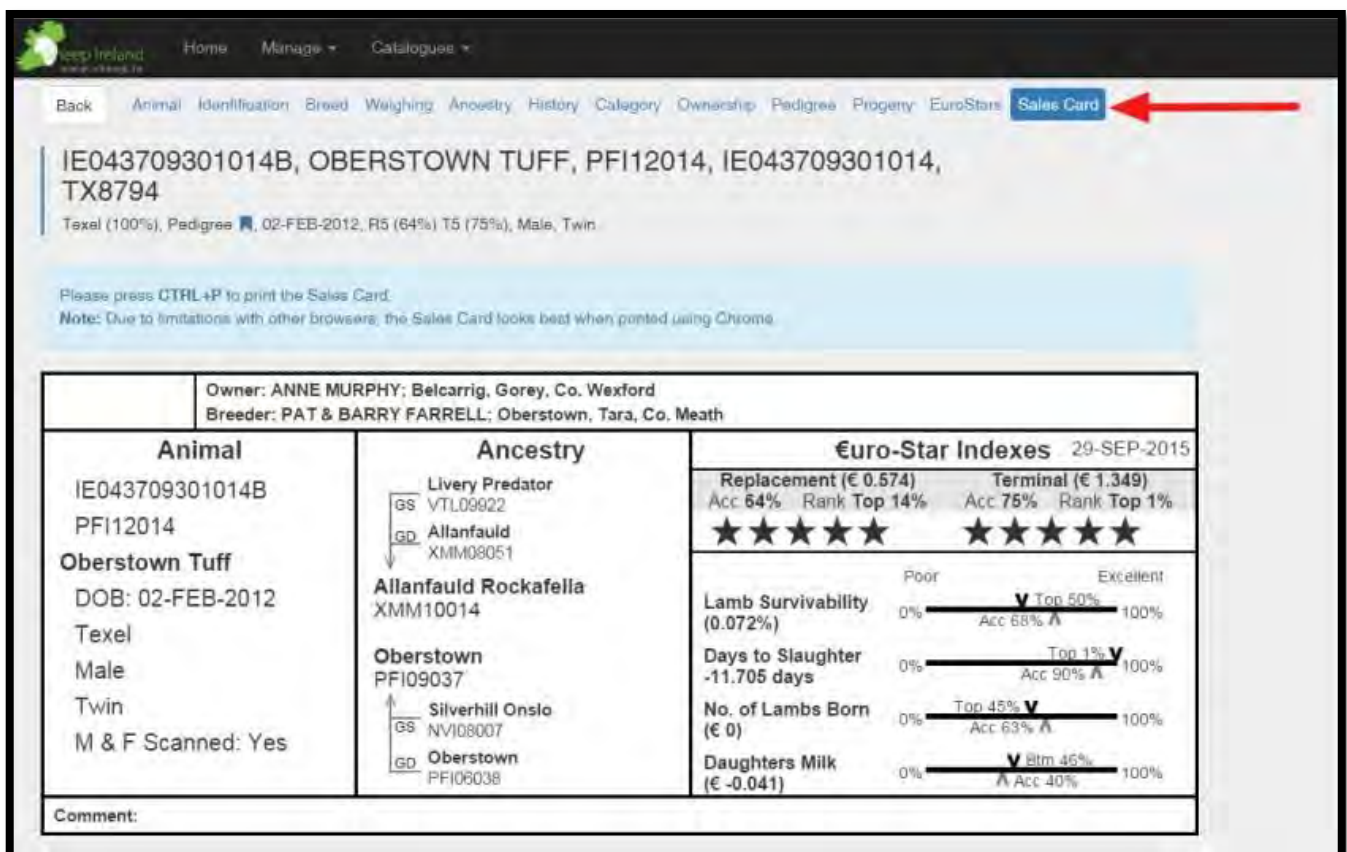
- This week 1,465 were sponged across the flocks of John Large (Tipperary), Andrew Moloney (Offaly) and James Naper (Meath). In association with sponging these ewes were also weighed, condition scored, lameness scored and dag scored. This data will be very valuable for the development of a future health Index for our sheep breeds.
- During all visits to our CPT flocks we place a major emphasis on ewe IDs. All ewes are doubled tagged, with one tag being an EID tag as per legal requirements. Any ewes with missing or damaged tags are retagged with new IDs carefully correlated to the previous ID on the Sheep Ireland database. It is critical that any ewe missing a single tag is retagged as soon as possible to eliminate the risk of total identity loss.
- Sponges must remain in all ewes for 12 days at which point sponges will be removed and ewes will receive 500 IU of Folligan PMSG. On day 14, ewes will be artificially inseminated with fresh semen from the rams that we have collected from around Ireland. The CPT rams are currently being collected and dropped to Lyons Estate, UCD, Co. Dublin and the majority of rams will be assembled by today Friday 2nd October.
- See below some images from this week's CPT work. On Wednesday 30th September just over 300 ewes were sponged on the farm of Andrew Moloney.
- The images below show Andrews ewes post sponging after being weighed, condition scored, lameness and dag scored. Also below are some images of the first rams to arrive in UCD. Rams are held in an isolation shed for a period of three days. Once they are thoroughly checked by a vet, the rams are moved to the main ram shed where they are trained to jump and provide semen over a number of days before they are required for AI.





Animal Sales Card

- As part of continued development of www.sheep.ie LambPlus breeders can now download and print off an animal sales card in same format as our Euro-Star sale catalogue. Breeders and farmers have always been able to print animal Euro-Stars from the Sheep Ireland online ram search, but the format of this print out has been different to the sales catalogue format which commercial sheep farmers have become very familiar with in recent years.
- We continue to encourage all LambPlus breeders to provide each ram customer with an up to date print out of the Euro-Star evaluations for the animal in question. We continually come across cases where farmers are not provided with any Euro-Star information when they purchase a ram. We also come across cases where the Euro-Star information provided is out of date (an old evaluation). While all ram buyers can check their ram evaluations on www.sheep.ie, not all farmers will have ready access to this facility so it is important that an up to date physical copy of the genetic evaluation accompanies the ram. The new sales card facility will help breeders to supply this information very easily. To access the sales card, simply click on the required animal ID in the 'Inventory' section of your Sheep Ireland profile, the 'Sales Card' option will be visible from here – See image below.



Back Animal Identification Breed Weighing Ancestry History Category Ownership Pedigree Progeny EuroStars **Sales Card**

IE043709301014B, OBERSTOWN TUFF, PFI12014, IE043709301014, TX8794
Texel (100%), Pedigree, 02-FEB-2012, R5 (64%) T5 (75%), Male, Twin

Please press CTRL+P to print the Sales Card.
Note: Due to limitations with other browsers, the Sales Card looks best when printed using Chrome.

Owner: ANNE MURPHY; Belcarrig, Gorey, Co. Wexford Breeder: PAT & BARRY FARRELL; Oberstown, Tara, Co. Meath										
Animal	Ancestry	€uro-Star Indexes 29-SEP-2015								
IE043709301014B PFI12014 Oberstown Tuff DOB: 02-FEB-2012 Texel Male Twin M & F Scanned: Yes	Livery Predator GS VTL09922 GD Allanfauld XMM08051 Allanfauld Rockafella XMM10014 Oberstown PFI09037 Silverhill Onslie GS NVI08007 GD Oberstown PFI06038	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Replacement (€ 0.574) Acc 64% Rank Top 14%</td> <td>Terminal (€ 1.349) Acc 75% Rank Top 1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>★★★★★</td> <td>★★★★★</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lamb Survivability (0.072%) 0% ————— V Top 50% ————— 100% Acc 68% A</td> <td>Days to Slaughter -11.705 days 0% ————— Top 1% V ————— 100% Acc 90% A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No. of Lambs Born (€ 0) 0% ————— Top 45% V ————— 100% Acc 63% A</td> <td>Daughters Milk (€ -0.041) 0% ————— V Blm 45% ————— 100% A Acc 40%</td> </tr> </table>	Replacement (€ 0.574) Acc 64% Rank Top 14%	Terminal (€ 1.349) Acc 75% Rank Top 1%	★★★★★	★★★★★	Lamb Survivability (0.072%) 0% ————— V Top 50% ————— 100% Acc 68% A	Days to Slaughter -11.705 days 0% ————— Top 1% V ————— 100% Acc 90% A	No. of Lambs Born (€ 0) 0% ————— Top 45% V ————— 100% Acc 63% A	Daughters Milk (€ -0.041) 0% ————— V Blm 45% ————— 100% A Acc 40%
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Comment:										

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, **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. **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.

National Milk Recording Results for the 10 day period, 23-SEP-2015 To 02-OCT-2015

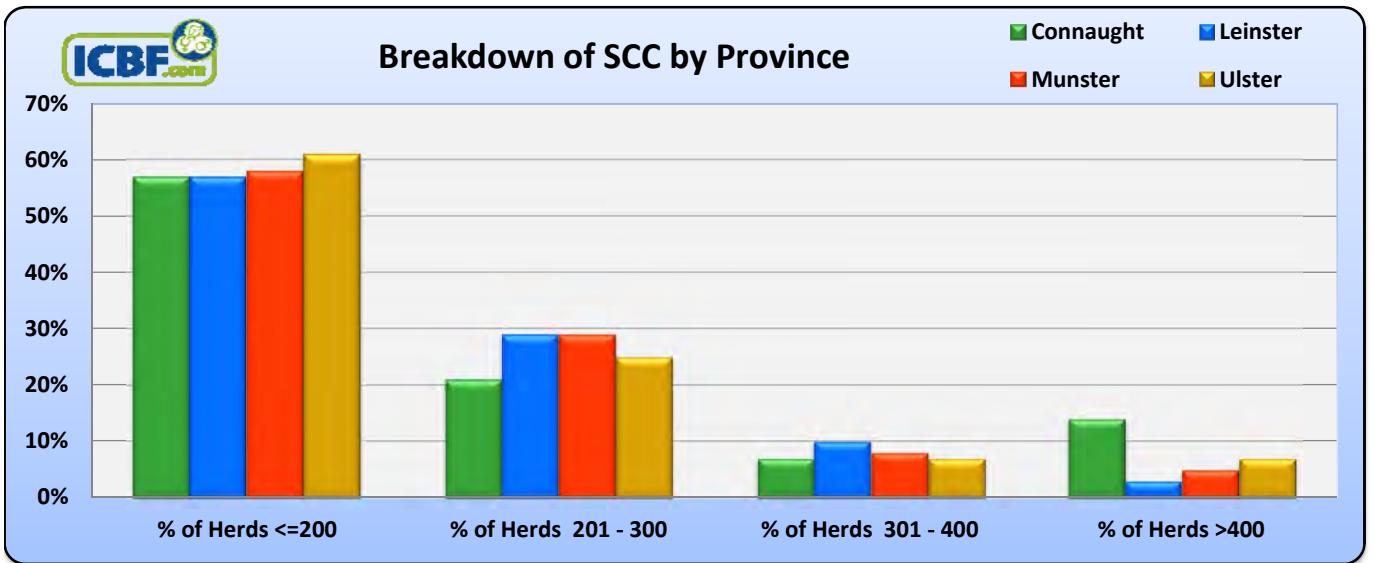
ICBF	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Avg Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F+P kg	Average SCC*
Connaught	14	915	65	18.9	4.26	3.70	1.49	172
Leinster	87	8,109	93	19.2	4.31	3.87	1.56	174
Munster	482	38,825	81	18.4	4.39	3.88	1.52	189
Ulster	28	1,927	69	22.0	4.11	3.69	1.71	159
National Statistics	611	49,776	81	18.7	4.36	3.86	1.53	185

* Geometric Mean Herd SCC

SCC Distribution for the 10 day period, 23-SEP-2015 To 02-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	14	915	65	57%	21%	7%	14%	172
Leinster	87	8,109	93	57%	29%	10%	3%	174
Munster	482	38,825	81	58%	29%	8%	5%	189
Ulster	28	1,927	69	61%	25%	7%	7%	159
National Statistics	611	49,776	81	58%	29%	8%	5%	185

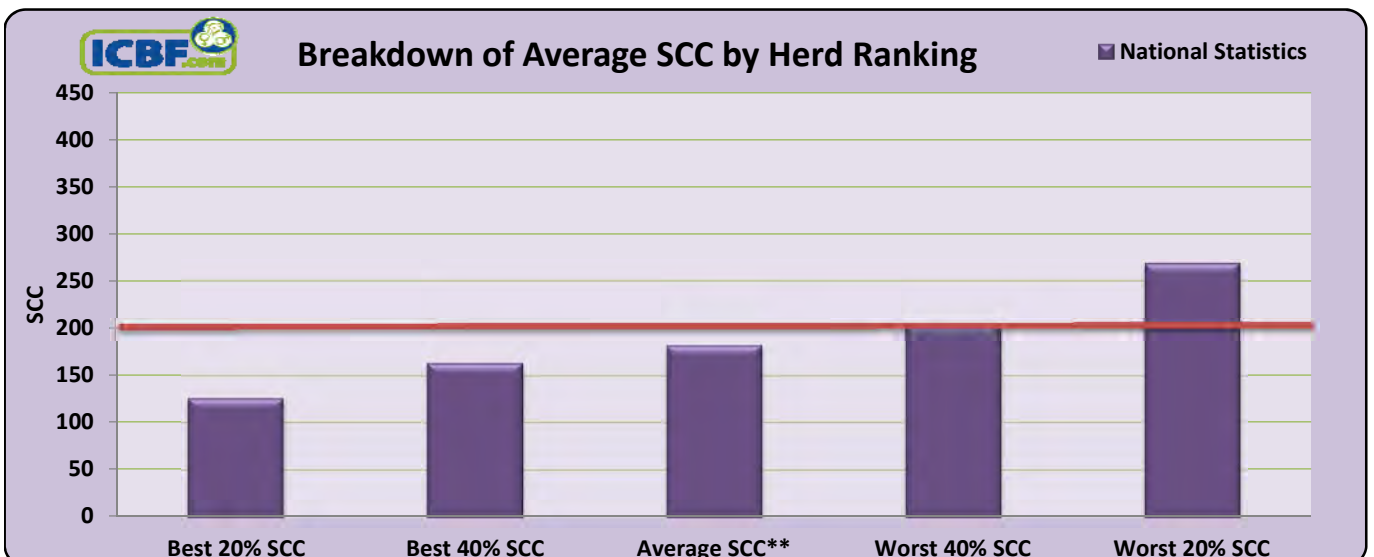
* Geometric Mean Herd SCC



% Herd Breakdown for the 10 day period, 23-SEP-2015 To 02-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	14	915	65	101	117	161	203	271
Leinster	87	8,109	93	110	149	181	206	281
Munster	482	38,825	81	133	167	184	203	268
Ulster	28	1,927	69	112	143	146	188	231
National Statistics	611	49,776	81	126	163	182	203	269

** Percentile Herd SCC Rank (Median SCC)



What is genomics?

Over the next two to three weeks, the last of the remaining animal genotyping tags, will be sent to herds involved in the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP). So what is genomics, and how will it benefit participating herds in the future?

In the past, farmers used visual assessment and breed as the primary means to estimate the value of an animal at, for instance, weanling sales, replacement heifer sales or pedigree bull sales. In certain circumstances, such as buying a bull or using AI, this would be supplemented by information on the pedigree of the animal and its Euro-Star evaluation, as the farmer attempted to get a better "handle" on how the animal (and its potential progeny) would perform in the future.

The use of genomic data is simply another tool to help inform this important breeding/purchasing decision.

By taking a tissue sample from an animal (via an ear tag) we can assess the animal's DNA, and in doing so predict expected performance based on knowledge of how similar DNA (from other animals) has performed on Irish farms in the past.

This additional DNA/genomic data is then combined with traditional information on pedigree and the animal's own performance (or that of its relatives) to provide a more accurate assessment of each animal's genetic merit at a much younger age. This is in essence how genomics works.

So how will genomics benefit my beef herd in the future? If we take a trait such as weanling weight or weanling calf quality, then arguably genomics will have little impact as most of the expected performance (of that animal and/or its progeny) can be assessed visually by the farmer. However, if we take a maternal trait such as milk or fertility, then the im-

BDGP MEETINGS

The Department of Agriculture, Teagasc and the ICBF are organising a series of nine regional meetings, starting from mid-October to address key questions on the BDGP. Topics covered will include a better understanding of the Euro-Stars (including genomics), herd replacement strategy and questions in relation to BDGP payments, reference cows etc. See first confirmed dates and venues in the dates for the diary section below.

pact is potentially huge, as it is almost impossible for farmers to assess these traits visually, especially on younger animals.

Indeed initial research undertaken by Teagasc and ICBF has indicated that DNA collected on beef animals provides the same level of milk and fertility information as about 30 actual calvings on beef cows. These findings are supported by recent results from the national dairy herd, which have clearly confirmed the accuracy of the genomics in being able to forward predict performance for key traits such as milk and fertility in dairy cows.

This is where genomics has significant potential for the Irish beef industry as it is these traits (eg calves/cow/year) that are currently affecting the profitability and sustainability of our national suckler beef herd. By collecting DNA on important breeding animals (starting with 4 and 5 star cows and calves this year) ICBF is confident that we can help farmers shape the makeup of their suckler herds in the future, to put more emphasis on these important maternal traits.

Recording online: Farmers interested in recording their BDGP data online, can contact 1850-625-626 for their password.



Michael pictured with one of his best cows. This BBx cow has a Replacement Index of €125 (5 stars). She is 10 years old, first calved at 23 months and has had nine calves with an average calving interval of 370 days.

Q&A

Q. Do some beef animals already have genomic indices? No, genomic indices have not been published for any beef animals yet. The animals sampled as part of the 2014 Beef Genomics Scheme (BGS) were used to establish a reference population. These animals will have been parentage verified, but do not yet have genomic indices. Genomic indices are due to be published in spring 2016.

Q. Some animals in my herd are missing sires. Will genomics identify the sires? If the sires have already been genotyped, they will be identified. You may have older cows in your herd that are missing sires. Many of these were sired by old stock bulls that were never genotyped. These sires will not be identified. If you manage to identify sires, these can be recorded on the ICBF website www.icbf.com. Only record missing sires where you are 100% sure that they are correct.

FARMER FOCUS: MICHAEL BIGGINS

'It has been proven to work in dairy'

Name: Michael Biggins, Ower, Co Galway.
Farming system: Suckler to weanling.
BDGP cow reference no: 61
4 and 5 Star females: 25 cows; nine heifers.
Stock Bull or AI: 80% AI and bull mops up.
Replacement Strategy: Breed most and buy in some.

Why did you join the BDGP? We're always trying to improve our breeding and any tools which can help us, particularly in the area of picking replacements, have to be seen as a positive. I'm looking forward to seeing what genomics will bring to the beef herd as well.

Do you feel it will deliver for the national suckler herd? We have to start somewhere to improve from where we currently stand in terms of beef breeding. We became a little preoccupied with the high value, export-type weanling, to the detriment of maternal traits. I think the scheme will help to put a renewed focus on breeding top-quality replacement females.

What replacement strategy do you plan to implement in light of the scheme? We plan to target our highest-index cows with the best maternal AI bulls to breed replacements. We have bought in some beef cross heifers from the dairy herd in the past and this is a quick fix where milk is a problem. I think more weighing should be done on beef farms to identify the best-performing cows and bulls for milk.

Do you know much about genomics? Not a huge amount I suppose. It's a science that's proven to work in the dairy herd and should be



Michael Biggins.

embraced by beef farmers. Being able to predict the potential performance of an animal, before it's ever used for breeding, will be a huge development.

How do you record your data? We do everything online. All information for the old suckler scheme was recorded through the ICBF website www.icbf.com and we will continue to do this for the BDGP. It's so much easier and gives great peace of mind.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

1 October: Teagasc and Munster AI BDGP information event, Kanturk Mart, 8pm.

9 October: Teagasc BDGP farm event, Edward and Richard Butler's Farm, Danesfort, Co Kilkenny, 11am.

Department of Agriculture, ICBF, Teagasc BDGP information meetings: Mon 12th Oct - Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney at 8pm; Weds 14th Oct - Silversprings Hotel, Cork at 8pm; Thurs 15th Oct - Brandon House Hotel, New Ross at 8pm.