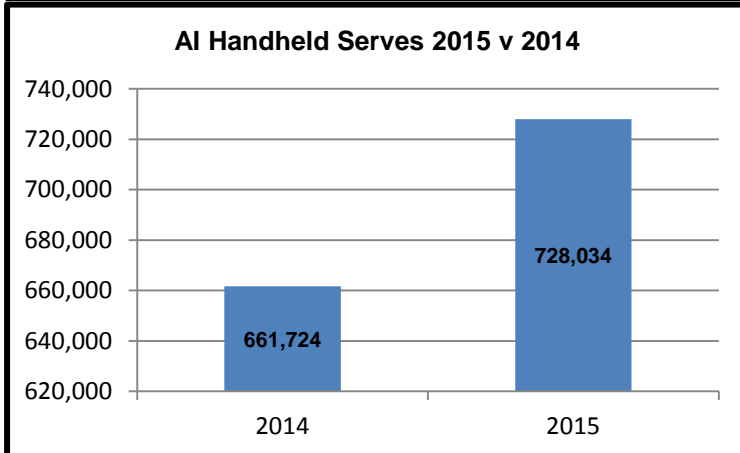
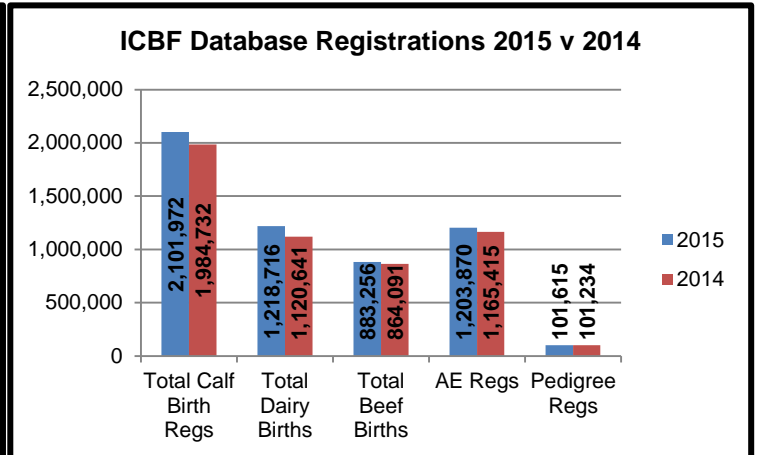
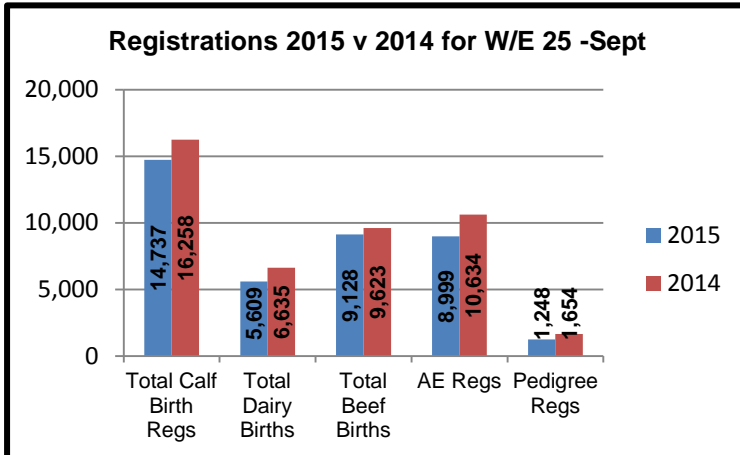


ICBF Weekly Update 23rd October 2015

1 Important Dates

- Audit & Finance Meeting** – Thursday 19th November 2015 at 10:30, Horse and Jockey Hotel, Thurles.
- ICBF Board Meeting** – Thursday 26th November 2015 at 10:30, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.
- Sheep Board Meeting** – Thursday 26th 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 2.23 million results received since January 1st, of which 18,145 have come in the last 7 days. Since the beginning of the voluntary phase in 2012, 7.18 million results have now been received.
- The chart shows Inseminations recorded on AI Handhelds in 2014 compared with 2015.

3 Genetic Evaluations

- Production files were generated for the upcoming December 2015 dairy evaluation.
- Results of the beef mini-run were loaded for animals recently linear scored.
- On-going support provided for the recent BDGP meeting and queries.

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 is entitled "Replacement Strategy – Stock Bulls".

Information Meetings

- The 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 27 Oct	Ballykisteen Hotel, Limerick Junction, Co Tipperary
Wed 28 Oct	Kilmore Hotel, Dublin Road, Cavan
Thur 29 Oct	Radisson Blu, Paddy Harte Road, Letterkenny Co. Donegal
Tue 03 Nov	Treacys West County Hotel, Clare Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Wed 04 Nov	Mullingar Park Hotel, Dublin Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
Thur 05 Nov	Seven Oaks Hotel, Athy Road, Carlow

5 GENE IRELAND® Beef

Autumn 2015 Beef programme

- + Sign Ups are continuing for the Autumn 2015 Beef programme.
- + 151 herds taking a total of 2900 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
- + 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	180
AA2163	Liss Brendan	AA	85
AU2155	Slaneymill Jack	AU	195
CH2159	Bondi Jacob	CH	130
PDR	Dereskit Improver	CH	310
CH2154	Polar Joe 2	CH	55
HE2148	Ballyville Hamlet	HE	120
LM2150	Castleview Immaginable	LM	435
LM2156	Clonark Jumbo	LM	250
LM2151	Ballygarvan Stud Ike	LM	155
LM2116	Tomschoice Ironstone	LM	135
OEO	Ivoire	LM	65
ZKY	Kyle Herd Ivan	PT	295
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

6 Milk Recording

National Milk Recording Statistics - Herds, Cows & EDIY 23/10/15						
Milk Recording Organisation	Total Herds Recorded YTD 23/10/15	No. EDIY Herds YTD 23/10/15	% Herds EDIY	Total No. Cows Recorded YTD 23/10/15	No. EDIY Cows YTD 23/10/15	% Cows EDIY
Munster	3,983	1,273	32%	365,375	125,666	34%
Progressive	2,502	1,071	43%	257,395	111,551	43%
Tipperary	126	53	42%	11,842	5,277	45%
Total	6,611	2,397	36%	634,612	242,494	38%

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%
Total	585,479	634,612	8.4%

7 Sheep Ireland

LambPlus Regional Meetings

- The annual LambPlus regional meetings have been set for 2015 (Dates and venues below). A strong attendance is critical at these meetings. The current sheep breed improvement is by no means the 'finished article', but we can only make progress through active engagement with the countries pedigree ram breeders and commercial farmers.
- A number of changes will be implemented to the LambPlus service in 2016 as a result of both farmer and breeder feedback and these will be presented at each meeting.
- Sheep Ireland will also be demonstrating the new website screens at each meeting. The new screens are designed to be more user friendly and therefore will help to increase the quantity and quality of the data recorded.

Meeting Date	Location	Hotel	Time of Meeting
11 th November	Mallow	Hibernian Hotel	7:30pm
12 th November	Kilkenny	New Park Hotel	7:30pm
16 th November	Ballybofey	Jacksons Hotel	7:30pm
17 th November	Navan	Newgrange Hotel	7:30pm
18 th November	Tuam	Ard Rí House Hotel	7:30pm

CPT AI Programme

- ✚ The CPT AI programme concluded on Tuesday, October 20th on the farm of Brian Nicholson, Co Kilkenny. Brian is also a regular contributor to the Irish Farmers Journal. This week there is a large article detailing activities on his farm over the past two weeks, regarding the CPT programme.
- ✚ You can watch a video that was created by the Irish Farmers Journal [here](#). In this video, a step by step explanation is given by Veterinarian Ronan Gallagher, detailing the procedure needed when AI'ing sheep on the CPT flocks.



National Milk Recording Results for the 10 day period, 14-OCT-2015 To 23-OCT-2015

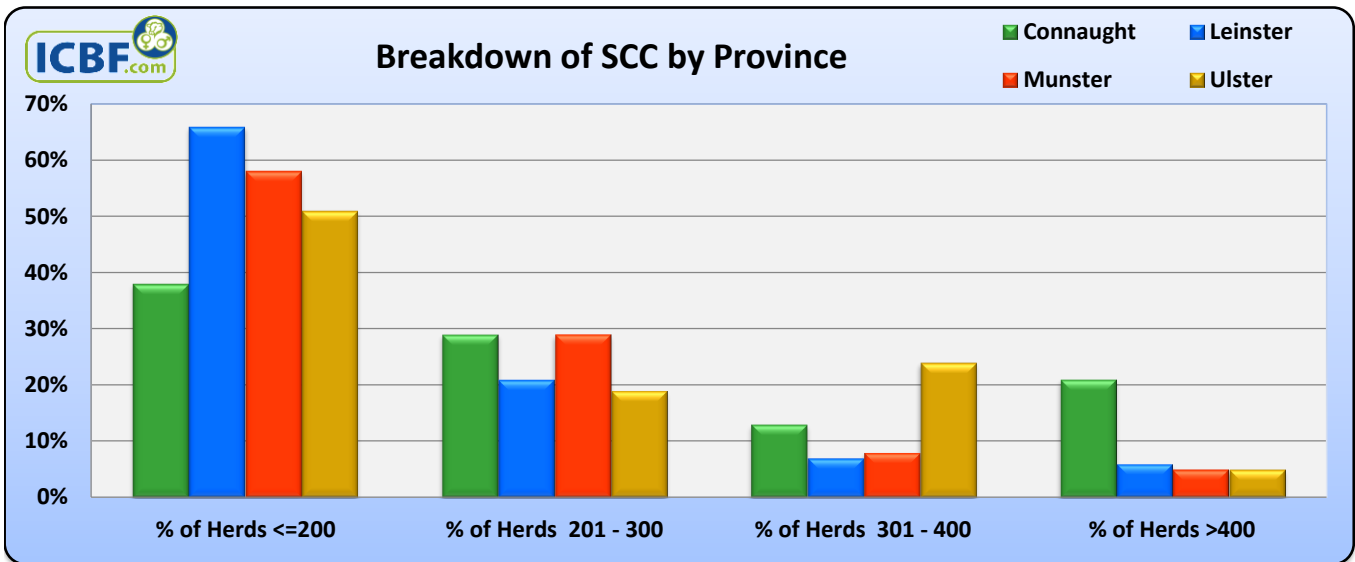
ICBF.com	No. Herds Recorded	No. Cows Recorded	Avg Herd Size	Avg Milk kg/Cow	Average Fat %	Average Protein %	Average F+P kg	Average SCC*
Connaught	24	2,138	89	18.4	4.41	3.88	1.51	243
Leinster	163	14,221	87	17.7	4.40	3.91	1.46	168
Munster	600	50,474	84	17.0	4.45	3.97	1.42	187
Ulster	37	2,320	63	20.3	4.13	3.73	1.58	202
National Statistics	824	69,153	84	17.3	4.42	3.94	1.44	185

* Geometric Mean Herd SCC

SCC Distribution for the 10 day period, 14-OCT-2015 To 23-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	24	2,138	89	38%	29%	13%	21%	243
Leinster	163	14,221	87	66%	21%	7%	6%	168
Munster	600	50,474	84	58%	29%	8%	5%	187
Ulster	37	2,320	63	51%	19%	24%	5%	202
National Statistics	824	69,153	84	59%	27%	9%	5%	185

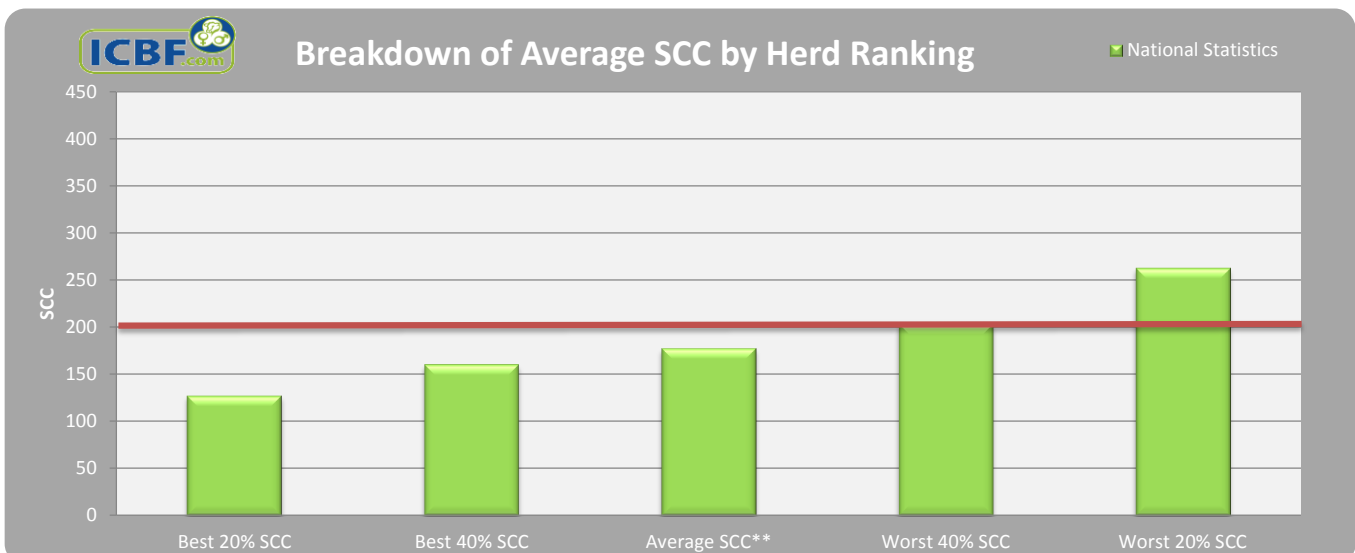
* Geometric Mean Herd SCC



% Herd Breakdown for the 10 day period, 14-OCT-2015 To 23-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	24	2,138	89	156	218	244	272	432
Leinster	163	14,221	87	112	151	168	188	246
Munster	600	50,474	84	132	160	179	204	257
Ulster	37	2,320	63	124	181	196	241	309
National Statistics	824	69,153	84	127	160	177	203	262

** Percentile Herd SCC Rank (Median SCC)



Replacement strategy – stock bulls

Of the 27,600 herds involved in the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP), some 20,000 herds have a stock bull. So what are the scheme requirements regarding having an eligible stock bull and what should participants consider when replacing their stock bull?

The scheme requires participants using a stock bull to have an eligible stock bull on the farm on the key date of 30 June 2019. An eligible stock bull is defined as a breeding bull (>12 months of age) that is: (i) genotyped and is (ii) 4 or 5 stars for either the replacement or terminal index, on a within- or across-breed basis.

Looking at the bulls on the recent BDGP reports, some 75% of these are already meeting the 4/5 star requirement, with a proportion of these already genotyped. ICBF expects to finish out the genotyping of all stock bulls on scheme herds in the next two to three months as part of the current tissue sampling process. At that stage we will be sending out updated BDGP reports (spring 2016), where in addition to identifying the 4- and 5-star bulls, we will also be identifying those that are genotyped and on that basis defined as eligible for the scheme (provided that the bull is still on the farm on 30 June 2019). It's at that stage that herd-owners will be able to make a definitive decision regarding what they plan to do with their stock bull (or bulls).

Whilst most of the bulls on farms are eligible (some 75%), a high proportion of these will have to be replaced in any case due to age considerations (the average length of time that a bull stays on farm is about 3.5 breeding seasons). So invariably

most scheme participants will find themselves buying a bull at some stage over the next five years, either because their current eligible bull is getting too old, or their current bull is ineligible.

Will there be enough eligible bulls for purchase?

The ICBF is confident there will be more than enough available. Based on the figures above, scheme herds will need about 6,000 stock bulls per year. Currently there are 14,000 pedigree bulls registered per year, with 10,500 of these deemed eligible for the scheme.

What should I focus on when buying a bull?

The major decision herd-owners have to make is whether they want the bull to breed potential female replacements (ie, the bull is 4 or 5 stars on the replacement index) or whether they only want the bull to breed animals for sale/slaughter (ie 4 or 5 stars on the terminal index). To make this decision, they will have to consider the current position of their herd, with regard to number of 4- or 5-star females. Again, based on data from BDGP reports, 80% of herds are on target to meet their 2018 and 2020 replacement female requirements based on existing females. However, closer analysis of BDGP reports shows a high proportion of these eligible females are older cows, which may not be on the farm come 2018 or 2020. On that basis, the ICBF expects an increasing number of herd-owners will be looking to buy a bull that is eligible on the replacement index requirement (ie 4 or 5 stars), as these bulls have greater potential to return more 4- or 5-star female offspring into the herd.



Niall's current stock bull, Icare, is the perfect example of a high Replacement Index bull. He has an index of €171 (5 stars within and across breed). He has a milk figure of +8 kgs (4 stars) and a calving interval figure of -3 days (5 stars). Niall also bred Highfield Odran SA2153 (inset) which is the highest index bull on the Gene Ireland young AI bull panel this Autumn. Straws are available through ICBF at 1850 600 900.

Q&A

Q. How do I check the Euro-Star Index of a bull before I purchase him?

The indexes for all pedigree registered bulls are available through the online bull search at www.icbf.com. You can search for a bull by name or tag number. Most pedigree bull sales provide catalogues with the Euro-Star Indices included. These are usually available online prior to the sale date and on the day of the sale.

Q. Should I look at within or across breed stars? If you are a pedigree breeder or a commercial farmer who only works with one breed, the within breed stars are the most applicable. If you have no allegiance to a particular breed then you should focus on the across breed stars. If you are looking to breed commercial 4 and 5 star Replacement Index heifers then you must look at the bulls across breed star rating on the Replacement Index. Bulls in certain breeds may be 5 stars within breed, but when compared with bulls across all of the beef breeds, they may only be a 1 star across breed.

FARMER FOCUS: NIALL O'CONNELL

'It suits the type of cattle that I am breeding'

Name: Niall O'Connell, Macroom, Co Cork.

Farming system: Pedigree Salers breeder.

BDGP Cow Reference No: 15

4 and 5 Star females: Cows 14; heifers 20

Stock bull or AI: Stock bull and AI.

Replacement strategy: Breed all of my own.

Why did you join the BDGP? The Salers breed is very strong on the Replacement Index and it made total sense for me to join as it suits the type of cattle that I am breeding. The scheme should also increase demand for high Replacement Index bulls. The financial supports are significant and even though money was not my motivation for joining, it is a nice bonus.

Do you feel it will deliver for the national suckler herd? It definitely will improve the national herd by increasing maternal genetics and leaving more cows with milk, fertility and calving ability. I feel this will make things much easier for farmers by increasing profits through higher performance and decreasing labour through fewer calving problems and better fertility.

What replacement strategy do you plan to implement in light of the scheme? I'll continue to breed my own using a combination of the top AI bulls and my own stock bull. I have found that the replacements I am keeping are generally the higher indexed heifers anyway.

Do you use the Euro-Star indices when selecting AI or stock bulls? My current stock bull, Icare, is a French-bred bull. I was able to check his index on the ICBF bull search prior to purchasing him. He is a very balanced bull and this is reflected in his index. He has a high Replacement and Terminal Index. On AI bulls, I would always check their indices before using



Niall O'Connell.

semen. It's good to have this independent information available.

Do you know much about genomics? I don't, to be totally honest. I know that it's based around collecting more information on an animal's genetics through their DNA. This should provide a bit of reassurance to a breeder like me prior to selling stock bulls or selecting AI or stock bulls for my own herd.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

22 Oct: Teagasc/Munster AI Suckler Event, Skibbereen Mart at 7.30pm.

28 Oct: Suckler Information Event, Ennis Mart at 7.30pm.

29 Oct: Teagasc/Munster AI Suckler Event, Castleisland Mart at 7.30pm.

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

▶ 22 Oct – Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon

▶ 27 Oct – Ballykisteen Hotel, Limerick Junction

▶ 28 Oct – Kilmore Hotel, Cavan

▶ 29 Oct – Radisson Blue Hotel, Letterkenny

▶ 3 Nov – Treacy's West County Hotel, Ennis

▶ 4 Nov – Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar

▶ 5 Nov – Seven Oaks Hotel, Carlow

All meetings commence at 8pm