



IRISH CHAROLAIS NEWSLETTER

MAY 1976
No. 5

Irish Charolais Cattle Society
Irish Farm Centre · Bluebell · Dublin 12 · Ireland

TEL.
01/501166

WHY CHAROLAIS?

By Mr. J. J. Kelly, President,
Irish Charolais Cattle Society

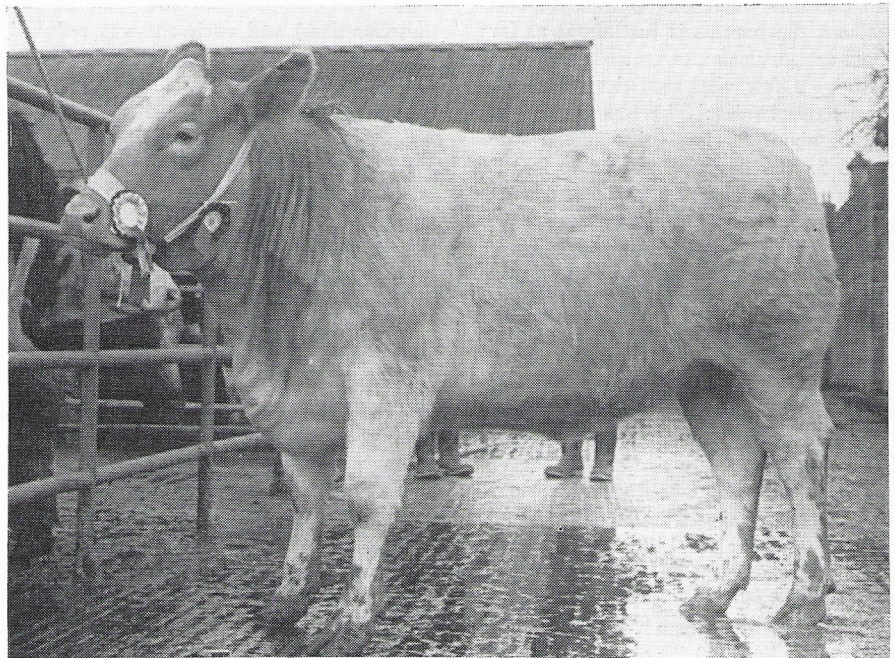
Within a short space of time Ireland will be a full member of the E.E.C. Greater interest is now being shown in the type of animal needed for this market. This is being reflected in the demand for Charolais animals of all weights and ages. As President of the Charolais Society for the coming year I would appeal to all members to take a keen interest in the affairs of your Society as the future seems extremely bright for our breed.

Store producers want Charolais calves, feed-lot operators want Charolais store cattle. Exporters want boat-loads of Charolais cattle at all weights and at a premium price.

Why, therefore, do the owners of our cow population not use more Charolais bulls on their herds and especially the suckler herds? Trials carried out by a specialist advisory committee of the Dept. of Agriculture, over a wide spectrum of suckling herds, show that out of seven different breeds used, the best weight gains within all the herds was obtained from the progeny of a Charolais sire.

Similar trials were carried out in the U.K. on the progeny of ten different breeds of bulls. The Charolais cross animal had a higher daily liveweight gain, produced more lean meat and gave a higher killing out percentage than any other breed.

The ability of the Charolais cross store to outwinter and gain weight, over the winter period, can be borne out by trials carried out in Donegal. Over the past winter I had occasion to observe forty weanling Charolais heifers outwintered and strip-grazed on rape plus barley straw and it was very pleasing to see those animals go to grass in March in wonderful bloom.



This Charolais X Shorthorn heifer has ten first prizes to its credit at various shows throughout the country. She was also placed the overall Champion at three County Shows. The breeder of this fine animal: Mr. Patrick Stephens of Rosanagh, Ashford, Co. Wicklow.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our A.G.M. was held on Friday, March 5th, with the following officers elected:

President: Mr. J. J. Kelly, The Twenties, Drogheda, Co. Lough.
Vice-President: Mrs. E. Gardner, Minis-town, Laytown, Co. Meath.
Treasurer: Mr. S. Fitzgerald, Farmleigh, Castleknock, Co. Dublin.
Council Members:
Mr. P. Doyle, Glencarrig, Oldbawn, Tallaght, Dublin.
Mr. F. Harte, Legnakelly, Clones, Co. Monaghan.
Mr. N. Hayes, Kells Ingram Farm, Townley Hall, Drogheda.
Mr. J. Mulhall, Blackwood, Robertstown, Naas.
Mr. J. J. McGrath, Curragh Grange, Curragh, Kildare.
Mr. O. Vanlandeghem, Skidoo Stud, Ballyboughal, Dublin.

Mr. B. Monaghan, Staffordstown House, Navan, Meath.
Mr. E. McCullough, Elmgrove, Gormans-town, Meath.
Rep. the Minister:
Mr. D. O'Driscoll, Dept. of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Spring Show Dinner Dance

This year, in response to numerous requests it has been decided to have our Spring Show Reception in the form of a Dinner Dance. Venue is the Gresham Hotel at 9.00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 4th. Music will be provided by the resident Gresham Orchestra and a good night's entertainment is assured. Tickets £5.50 each are available from the office.

'So you want to get beef out of a Kerry cow...'

By Dr. E. P. Kelly, M.V.B., M.R.C.V.S., Ph.D., Dip. An. Gen., U.C.D., Dublin

As a pedigree Charolais breeder, this title may make you wonder why the *Charolais Newsletter* should choose to look at such a dwindling breed as the Kerry for examples of its beef potential. However, there is an old saying that opposites attract so perhaps it would be interesting to examine some of the economic traits of the progeny of such a marriage to see how the Charolais breed can perform when the 'genetic distance' between the parents is just about as far apart as can be found in these islands.

So — a few vital statistics about the prospective brides: The Kerry at birth weighs about 55 lbs, gains at the rate of 1.5 lbs per day (at best) up to 900 lbs giving a feed efficiency of 6.5 lbs gain per lb of grain and an efficiency of 20 lbs feed intake for 1 lb of lean meat (i.e. muscle). Its carcass at 900 lbs is 30 per cent fat and 57 per cent meat. Not very impressive statistics in this era of high costs and low profit margins. But she will produce milk, 800 to 1,400 gallons at 4.2 per cent B.F. Ah! at last a point in the Kerry favour. And, by the way, her low mature body size of 900 lbs means a low maintenance requirement and the advantage of higher stocking rates on marginal or hilly land.

Would the first Charolais Bull stand up please! Let's have a look at *your* average statistics. Ahem! — birth weight 100 to 105 lbs; 900 lbs at 360 days ($2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs per day) giving an efficiency of feed of 5.3 lbs gain per lb of grain and an efficiency of . . . (he's keeping this secret because we can't find any figures for it) . . . roughly 14 lbs feed intake for 1 lb of lean meat (muscle). Highly impressive statistics for any prospective groom to offer a father-in-law keen to have a bit more muscle in his grandchildren quickly and more efficiently.

The marriage was duly performed using A.I. in the Spring of 1969, 1970 and 1971 at the Veterinary Field Station with all hands attending. It might be best to state now (to prevent embarrassment) that all Kerrys used had produced one pure-bred Kerry calf prior to the Charolais cross.

Let's look at *their* vital statistics. The KC calves weighed 96 lbs at birth, which took place 288 days post insemination; the pure Kerry calves usually took four days less. Did they get out? . . . of course they did and in fact of a total of over 50 calves born, only 1 calf caused some dystocia (unable to be naturally calved). But we did two very important things (we think). We kept our Kerry cows *outdoors* the last month prior to calving and on poor keep.

Since the Kerry mother may be required to produce milk we early weaned the calves at 48 hours but since some may be used as suckler mothers we allowed 10 to stay with their dams. Thus we could compare grain fed calves with a suckler/grazing system. We decided to eat them at 1,000 lbs.

When they were slaughtered, we took half a side of each carcass, dissected it into twelve commercial cuts (just as the butcher does) and each cut was reduced to its fat, muscle and bone components. But a lot of people talk a lot about muscle because that's called meat, so we took the meat and analysed it so that we were left with protein which, after all, is why we raise beef cattle.

At this stage, it becomes difficult to follow words, so we shall summarise the results with a table, giving a short explanation afterwards.

This table should answer most of the questions posed. The Charolais influence is outstanding, on all factors associated with efficiency and growth. It has, in fact, produced a beef cross from our little Kerry equal to that of a typical commercial Friesian. It has not, of course, surpassed the superior genetic ability of the purebred Charolais.

The use of the Charolais on Kerrys is therefore more than an academic exercise. If we look at some of today's most important factors in cross-breeding, it is difficult to find any aspect of this cross which is inferior. Firstly, the heavy calves *were* calved due we would suspect to our pre-calving management system. Secondly, the calves produced excellent weight for age, being 40 per cent faster than pure Kerrys and only 20 per cent

behind the Charolais himself. Thirdly, the efficiency figures speak for themselves. In cash terms on a barley beef diet the difference between Charolais x Kerry and pure Kerry works out at a £40 saving to 1,000 lbs. Fourthly, of course, is the 30 per cent increase in efficiency in beef produced from each lb of concentrates fed. Finally, the tremendous meatiness of the animal (and to think of it we lost the name Kerrygold to butter!).

One word before we end. What does it look like? The animal is light dun coloured with a kind head and one helluva backside. A famous breeder looking at them on our farm summed it up after a good ten minute gaze . . . "Dammit," he said, "its a real stockman's beast." We all agreed!

Good looks — efficiency in feed — excellent growth rate as a suckler calf and store, growth rate on a par with the Friesian and good kill out percentage all spells profit for the farmer. Good carcass, lean meat and tender too — and isn't that what all the Senioritas and Frauleins are shouting for?

So, by the way, if you're thinking of crossing your Charolais bull it's about time you contacted the Secretary of the Kerry Cattle Society before it's too late! And to think that *he* coined Kerrygold before us.

P.S. The author wishes to thank his colleagues Fred Smith, MRCVS, and Ian Bath, B.Agr.Sc., at the Veterinary Field Station for permission to quote with a degree of licence, the data collected by all three of us over the last seven years of Charolais crossing with Kerry cattle.

Table 1

	Friesian	Charolais X Kerry	Pure-bred Kerry
Daily liveweight gain in lbs to 9 cwt.	2.2	2.2	1.65
Efficiency of feed to gain 1lb for lb.	5.2	4.8	6.50
Efficiency of feed intake to meat produced lb for lb.	13.1	12.0	20.00
Per cent fat in carcass.	20.0	20.0	30.00
Per cent muscle in carcass.	64.0	67.0	57.00
Killing out per cent	66.0	68.0	58.00

SHOW & SALE OF PEDIGREE CHAROLAIS

R.D.S. Showgrounds, Ballsbridge

Wednesday, 5th May at 11 a.m.

Catalogues and particulars from the Secretary Tel. (01) 501166

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Son of SIMMONSTOWN FIGARO



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OVER 30 FULL FRENCH FEMALES

TOP IRISH AND ENGLISH BULLS USED

Visitors welcome by appointment



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NEWS ITEMS

Good Trade at Balmoral

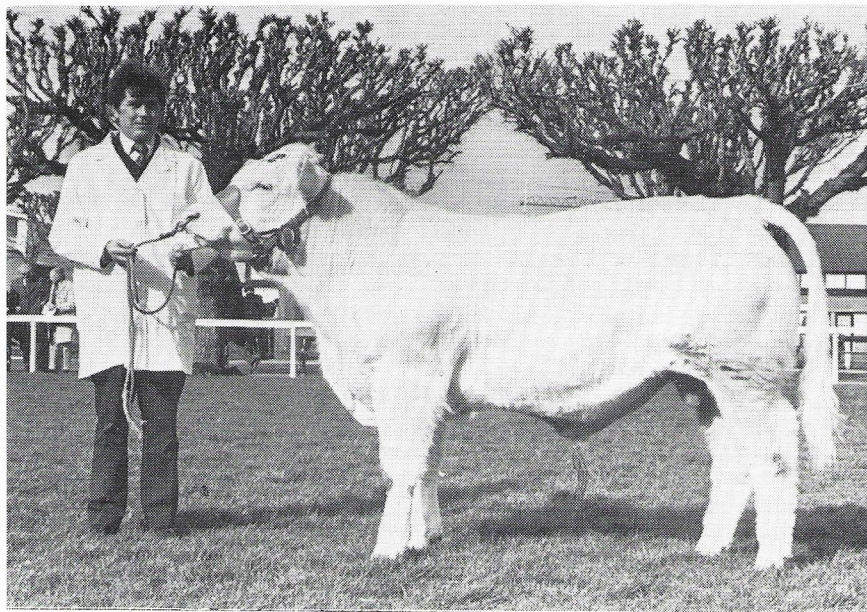
At the March Show and Sale of the Northern Ireland Charolais Club the Champion of the Show 'Ardrhan Isabelle' was bred in Galway by Mr. Paul J. Whiriskey, and exhibited at the Show by Mr. Walter Shortt.

Thirty-six heifers sold for an average of £1,837 and fourteen bulls made an average of £850.

Keen bidding from Scottish and English buyers was a feature of the sale.

The heifers sold from £960 to £4,053 and the champion of the Show was withdrawn at £4,935. Bull prices ranged from £1,365 at the top back to £580.

Some graded bulls and heifers were also sold at prices ranging from £370 to £580 a head.



Farmleigh Leonard

Wedding Bells

Major E. A. Boylan, the former Irish Olympic rider and pedigree Charolais breeder, of Hilltown, Drogheda, Co. Louth, was married recently to Miss Juliet Young of Fife, Scotland.

Major Boylan served for many years as a member of Council and during the Charolais Convention in Dublin he was one of the most dedicated workers in the organising committee. To the newly-married bride and groom we send our best wishes.

Registrations

All calves (pedigree and percentage) intended for registration must be birth notified to the office within 14 days of birth. A certain amount of misunderstanding has arisen regarding three-quarter bred or higher percentage bulls. It is necessary to have these bulls registered with the Irish Charolais Cattle Society before they can be accepted by the Department of Agriculture for licencing.

Membership Fees

If you have not yet paid your 1976 membership fee (£5) please do so immediately. I need hardly remind you of the high postal charges, stationery and staff time that is necessary to send out reminders. Post it today and help to build for yourself a more efficient Society.

R.D.S. Bull Sales 2nd March, 1976

For the first time, Charolais bulls were offered for sale at the R.D.S. bull sales. Out of a total of twenty bulls catalogued, thirteen were offered for sale.

The Show

After much deliberation the Judge, Mr. Dermot Cahill, Assistant Manager, Dovea A.I. Station, placed Lord Iveagh's bull Farmleigh Leonard as the Champion with Mr. John Bellingham's bull Glencara Licinius as Reserve Champion. Bulls from the herds of Mr. Monaghan, Mr. Bellingham and Mrs. Fagan were placed third, fourth and fifth respectively. The overall standard was satisfactory and presentation was excellent.

The Sale

The top price was paid by Mr. J. Dillon of Killuragh, Pallasgreen, Co. Limerick, for the Champion Farmleigh Leonard. This bull is to be used in a grading-up herd. The eleven bulls sold averaged 504 gns. This has shown a drop of almost £100 on our October sale at Maynooth. This can partly be attributed to the absence of North of Ireland buyers. Owing to the veterinary dispute those buyers are not allowed to take animals into Northern Ireland.

Honorary Member

At the A.G.M. it was unanimously decided to ask Mr. John Beatty, former Chief Livestock Inspector, to accept Honorary Membership of the Society. The members wished to make known their appreciation for the amount of work done by Mr. Beatty in the development of the Charolais breed in this country.

For Sale

Pedigree Charolais heifer. Date of Birth: 14.11.74. Sire: Simmonstown Figaro. Dam: Simmonstown (Imp. '70F) Enchere. 400 day weight: 1060 lbs.

Full particulars from: Mr. M. Leahy, Tel. 021 883152.

Two full French cows in calf to M.M.B. Apollon. Also one full French bull by Dovea Heritier. Date of Birth: 20.4.75. Particulars from: Mr. L. Walshe, Tel. 051 94126.

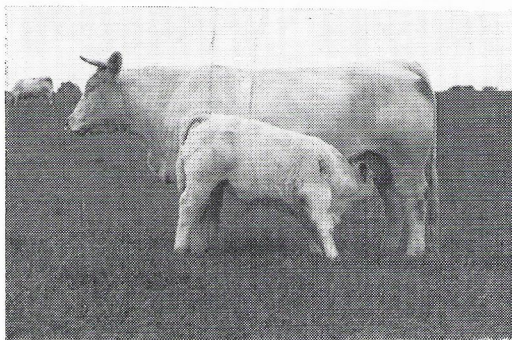
One outstanding yearling Charolais bull from the Castlemore herd.

Castlemore Lorenzo. Born: 5.5.75. Sire: Shamrock Ambassadeur. Dam imported from France. Actual weight on 18th March: 1090 lbs. Adjusted daily weight gain in excess of 3.5 lbs/day.

This bull has excellent conformation. Inspection invited. Apply: Castlemore Herd, Tullow, Co. Carlow. Tel. 0503 51249 or Dublin 783880.

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**PEDIGREE CHAROLAIS, BLONDE
d'AQUITAINE and SIMMENTAL**

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THE MONEYMORE HERD OF CHAROLAIS CATTLE

(Brucellosis tested)

Stock Bull:

LEGAKELLY INVER H.B. No. 1027

(son of Figaro)

(Jointly owned with Elmgrove Herd)

INVER is getting big fast growing calves with excellent bone and conformation. Completely free of calving trouble.

Full French and Graded Animals usually for sale.

**J., T., & E. KELLY, THE TWENTIES,
DROGHEDA. Tel. 041/8592.**

The Need for Better Beef Cattle

By Laurence Power, Agricultural Consultant,
Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12.

The unpredictable harvests in recent years have caused world grain supplies to move into a special place in the commodities market, as indeed a bad harvest in Russia or Asia can mean the difference between life and death for millions of people. As a result grains have become very expensive, both as a human food and as a livestock food, and the most efficient ways of using the supplies on hand is becoming more and more important.

In Western Europe the cost of grain has exploded since 1972, and nobody is forecasting a fall in prices in the years ahead. This huge increase in grain prices means the production of milk and meat, involving the use of grains, has greatly increased, and producers are of necessity looking much more closely at the efficiency of stock in converting cereals into milk or meat. The rush is on to have better and more efficient animals. As far as beef is concerned daily weight gain, feed conversion efficiency and carcass conformation are very important, and very frequently under Irish production systems the difference between operating a project at a profit rather than at a loss is determined by these factors. It is because of this that farmers in Ireland are looking at breeds of livestock that can give them better growth rates, better feed efficiency and better carcass conformation, and this in part accounts for the considerable interest in European beef breeds, especially Charolais and Simmental in recent years.

Another factor is, of course, the changing market situation. As we approach full membership of the EEC our cattle and meat will be on a more competitive basis in continental markets. Already the EEC has had a profound effect on Irish cattle prices, and will continue to have. We have an entirely new situation in having an entirely new customer who is a big meat eater and has the money to pay for it. Heretofore our dependence on the U.K. trade, with its demand for fattish type meat meant we were in many ways unprepared for the European market where fat is unwanted, and lean meat is in great demand. Added to this was our habit of feeding very little concentrates to stock with the result that a lot of our animals were and are unsuitable for the European market.

However, Europe is a huge market and a lucrative one, and we are fortunate many of our meat factories are taking a long-term view in catering for these markets. It is essential of course that the factories get the raw material required in the right type of animal, and there is no doubt in my mind what type

of animal is required, having some involvement in both the Italian live and dead trade. Italian live cattle buyers have an absolute preference for Charolais calves and cattle, because of their better daily weight gain potential, their feed conversion efficiency under the intensive feed lot systems operated in Italy, and because they end up with a premium price on the carcass which is further accentuated by paying the feeder 18 per cent on the added value of the carcass between purchase and slaughter. They have, of course, adequate statistical data on the performance of different breeds, and in nearly all cases the Charolais cattle or Charolais crosses come out on top. The Charolais has another advantage for the Italian feeder in that they can have the animals slaughtered over a wide range of weights — from between 600 to 800 kgs so they have them slaughtered at 600 if prices are high, or held to 800 kgs if prices are expected to move higher.

I have found that Italian buyers are prepared to translate this preference for Charolais stock, when buying, into hard cash and have paid up to 20 per cent more for Charolais animals than our more usual Friesians. This price premium is also reflected in Irish marts where Charolais stores and fat cattle continue to get a premium price, usually 12½ to 15 per cent over the other breeds.

The initial spurt in crossing dairy cows with Charolais bulls in Ireland has declined somewhat in recent years. This can partly be attributed to insufficient calving information data from the A.I. stations. While Charolais crosses tend to be bigger calves I feel that our dairy cow nutrition was also a big factor, our cows calve down too thin in Spring time, and a big calf takes too much out of a thin cow. Very recently there is developing a definite shift in opinion and Irish cows are now being better fed as a means of upping our very low yields. I feel that Irish dairy farmers could have 40 per cent of their calves born to a Charolais bull and be a lot better off as a result — as Charolais Friesian crosses do very well as borne out by the MLC trials in the U.K. There will be no bother in finding markets as the store feeder will pay a premium, as will the finisher because they get their pay-off in performance.

It is because of the overall future prospects for the Charolais breed that I got involved with others, in establishing a Charolais herd, the Castlemore Herd, in 1973 when the opportunity arose. I feel, that by breeding from top quality dams, using the well-tested bulls of the breed that besides getting a return on investment there will also be a

positive contribution to the cattle breeding in this country — the bulk of which industry must find its way into export markets.

Maynooth Sale Spring 1976

Over sixty head of pedigree and three-quarter bred cattle were sold at the Annual Spring Sale on Friday, 2nd April 1976.

Top price of the sale, 2,300 gns., was paid for an in-calf cow 'Shamrock Heliotrope'. This animal was exhibited by the Earl of Iveagh and was purchased by Mr. Seán Conlon.

A very nice yearling heifer 'Glencara Lydia' bred by Mr. John Bellingham, was sold for 1,600 gns. This heifer was purchased by Mr. Paddy Pentony of Swords, Co. Dublin.

Bulls met a steady trade with good bulls making up to 700 gns. Top price for a threequarter bred bull was 540 gns.

With no animals going for export, owing to the veterinary dispute, prices generally were satisfactory but show a decline on the October sale.

Vichy Show 1976

A number of breeders have stated that they wish to visit the Vichy Show in September. I feel this Show is a must for all Charolais breeders. Should demand necessitate the organising of a party I would be only too willing to organise the trip. Your views and comments would be appreciated.

SPRING SHOW 1976

(4th to 8th May)

CHAROLAIS STAND:

No. 222

Some Relevant Points from Open Day at Grange

I will broadly outline two aspects of beef production from my recent visit to the Agricultural Institute at Grange.

CONTROLLED BREEDING IN COWS

Synchronization of heat involves the treating of cows or heifers with hormones to control the reproductive cycle so that they can all be inseminated on the same day or within a few days.

Progesterone Treatment Dairy and Suckler Cows and Heifers

This treatment consists of inserting rubber coils in the animal's vagina for twelve days and the animals are injected at the same time. After removal, animals are bred in either of the following ways:

1. AI as they show heat normally.
2. AI afternoon the second and third day.
3. AI once at a pre-determined time.

Prostaglandin Treatment on Sucklers and Heifers

This treatment is used only on animals showing normal heats before treatment. It consists of two injections of prostaglandin at eleven days apart. Some animals will show heat after the first injection but breeding is delayed until after the second injection.

Animals

Inseminated twice at 72 and 96 hours after second injection.

Prostaglandin Treatment in Dairy Cows

The same treatments as are used on heifers and suckler cows can be used on dairy cows. In addition different procedures will be tried out because a single injection of prostaglandin is not effective in cows for four to five days after heat.

The procedures are:

1. Heat check and inseminate cows for seven days — then inject prostaglandin and we would expect most of the other cows to be in heat two to four days later.
2. Inject prostaglandin and AI for seven days — then inject remainder of cows not observed in heat.

Fertility

The fertility between synchronized and non-treated cows is not different, averaging out between 50 and 60 per cent. However, there is variation in fertility from 0 to 100 per cent in both groups so that some people synchronizing cows will get low fertility. Over 4,000 animals have been treated to date and in general the results have been acceptable.

Limitations

Trials on heifers and suckler cows have shown that animals must be in good body condition and gaining some weight when treated. Results from heifers treated in winter have been variable mainly due to the variation in level of feeding provided.

Repeats

Most animals that do not go in calf to the inseminations at the synchronized heat will show repeat heat eighteen to twenty-three days later as happens normally in non-treated animals.

Fertility is normal here and a close watch should be kept at this time in order not to miss any heats.

In suckler cows and where adequate heat detection is not possible, consid-

eration should be given to the introduction of a bull so that a compact calving season will be obtained.

Some Advantages of Synchronization

1. Reduce the labour involved in daily heat detection.
2. Allow a farmer to plan his breeding programme properly.
3. Give a compact breeding programme and consequently a compact calving.
4. A greater number of cows to calve early in the breeding season.
5. Greater use of AI especially in beef breeds and maiden heifers and the use of much higher growth bulls, such as Charolais and Simmental.

Note—These treatments are not a substitute for good management. Rather, they are an aid to it.

SINGLE SUCKLING AND BULL BEEF PRODUCTION

The anticipated scarcity of calves over the next few years and the resultant high prices will reduce the returns from beef systems based on calves from the dairy herd. When Friesian bull calves cost £55 to £60, single suckling gives returns comparable to a two-year-old beef system using dairy herd calves. To obtain best results from suckling, the following points are important:

- (a) Aim to sell a finished animal.
 - (b) Use a continental bull on mature cows (an increase in final liveweight by up to 80 to 90 lbs).
 - (c) Ensure high calf growth rates through adequate pasture in summer and good silage in winter.
 - (d) Use Hereford X Friesian cows.
 - (e) Leave males uncastrated (can increase carcass weight from 600 to 650 lbs).
- Fifty acres of pasture will carry forty cows and their calves to fifteen months.

The yearling calves on display were all bred from AI by the Charolais bulls Shamrock Deliverer and Shamrock Hamlet (Dublin District Milk Board). Both of those bulls are by Shamrock Brigand and dystocia in the case of those bulls does not seem to be any problem. The use of those bulls in the Friesian herds can be recommended.

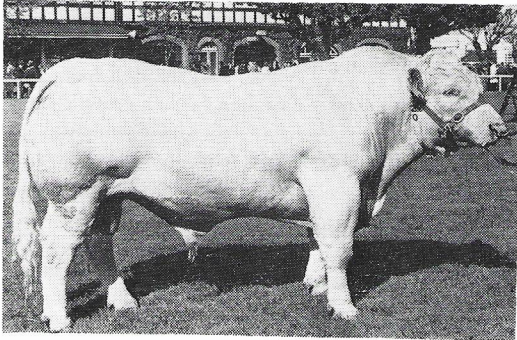
The simplicity of the housing for those yearling Charolais cattle must be seen to be appreciated. Topless cubicles with sawdust bedding is all that is required with adequate trough space for feeding the animals. The bulls are divided from the heifers and this is done by dividing the cubicle area into two sections. It is envisaged that bulls and heifers will be slaughtered at fifteen to sixteen months of age weighting 1060 and 900 lb on average respectively.



FARMLEIGH CHAROLAIS HERD

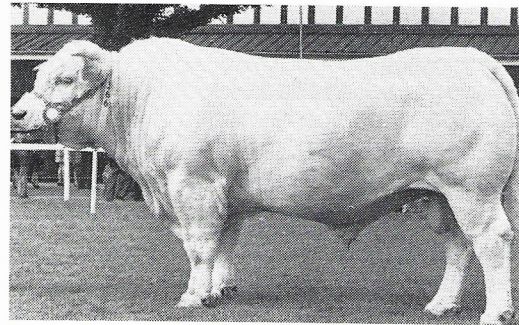
Farmleigh, Castleknock, Co. Dublin

Bred for easy calving and fast growth rate



FARMLEIGH HARMONIEUX

Reserve Male Champion
R.D.S. — 1974, 1975



FARMLEIGH EDOUARD

Overall Charolais Champion
R.D.S. — 1974, 1975

Also calves by . . .

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Charogal Ecosais
and
Emir de The*

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appointment.*

*Animals on offer at
Charolais Sales*

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MR. S. FITZGERALD

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DENVER — JANUARY 1976

By W. J. Feely, Secretary I.C.C.S.

The 70th National Western Livestock Show, regarded as the largest livestock show in America was held from January 16th to 24th, at Denver, Colorado.

Denver is a modern city by any standards. It is situated at an altitude of 6,000 feet and is dwarfed by the snow-clad Rocky Mountains. It is a perfect setting for this show and sale. Cattlemen from all over the States and Canada together with visitors from numerous countries around the world make this show truly international.

The Charolais Show and Sale

Colorado and the western part of the States have remained by and large, conservative in their choice of livestock. The English breeds are dominant here and it is fair to say that the propagators of those breeds have taken a leaf from the Charolais book in introducing size and range into Hereford and Angus. These two breeds dominate the cattle scene and now with their bulls being promoted as large, lean type animals, the exotics have an amount of research to do before convincing the ranchers to change their breeding programme. In all there were thirty-two classes for Charolais. Some of the classes were poorly represented and this left approximately ten classes with a good example of the type of Charolais cattle looked for by the American producer. Having closely studied those cattle I am firmly convinced that like Canada, the Americans are looking for a leaner less muscled animal. Emphasis is placed on weight recording, ease of calving and daily live weight gain. Their performance in feed lots, killing out percentage in the packing plants and the amount of marbling in the meat are all factors highly publicised. As the U.S.D.A.'s grading system stands at present it discriminates against Charolais and other exotics.

The R.M.C.A. sale was a full domestic sale of purebred and half-full French cattle. Prices were depressed, the top price being \$2,050 for a bull and \$1,600 for an in-calf heifer. Other prices would be more of a commercial rather than a purebred state. I would like to emphasise that the sale was of domestic animals and as the first importation of Charolais into the U.S.A. occurred over thirty years ago a large number of domestic animals are now available. Sales of Charolais cattle generally are not as buoyant as heretofore except for full French and polled cattle. Emphasis now being placed on performance data is very striking and should Irish breeders wish to tap this market it will be necessary to have research carried out on all aspects of Charolais production. The striking similarity in the requirements for both

the Canadian and American markets can be clearly illustrated by their choice of herd sires. All herd sires must have good legs, well placed (to cover the vast distances on the ranges) and muscling must not be as dominant as in the present full French sires. They must also have smooth shoulders and strong top lines. Ease of calving, good daily live weight gain, good performance in feed lots and the ability to grade satisfactorily at the packing plant are all factors which influence the ranchers in their choice of herd sire. In this context let me add that the Hereford and Angus cattlemen have taken stock of the Charolais herd sire and have come up with an animal similar to the Charolais in both size and shape.

New Grading Standards

The U.S.D.A. has announced that the revised U.S. Grade Standards for beef, published in March 1975, will become effective on February 23rd. This new grading system was initially to have become effective on 14th April 1975 but an injunction in the U.S. District Court in Omaha halted implementation. An Appeal Court lifted this injunction and so February 23rd was D Day for its implementation.

The U.S.D.A. say that the new grades will result in slightly leaner beef qualifying for prime and choice grades. This will certainly mean a boost in the price of Charolais beef. At the moment this type of beef is discriminated against by the packers and the housewife as not containing sufficient marbling in its lean meat. Officials expect that the new grades will encourage producers to raise meat-type cattle with a minimum of excess fat.

As the system applies at present the standard set by the grades is a subjective one, nothing scientifically attached to it as each animal is assessed by the mentality of the grader. In future all graded beef carcasses will be graded for both quality and yield. As the system stands they can be graded for either or both. Quality grades such as 'prime choice' and 'good' identify the eating quality of beef (or so we are led to believe). Yield grading should lead to a reduction in the amount of excess fat on beef cattle. This should encourage the production of meat-type cattle and discourage excess fat. Conformation will be eliminated as a factor in the quality grades. Research in America has shown that conformation does not effect the palatability of beef. Slight reductions in the marbling requirements will result in slightly leaner beef qualifying for U.S. prime and choice. To sum up it is fair to say that the idea of producing lean meat will become more attractive to the

producer and this will certainly help the producer of Charolais cattle.

The Rocky Mountain Charolais Association

I was honoured to be present at the R.M.C.A. lunch and annual meeting. Their President, Mr. Ralph E. Walchle (Route Box 375, Ft. Lupton, Colorado), invited me to speak at this gathering in my capacity as Secretary of this Society. I think what I did say was well received and it certainly contributed to fostering a good relationship between the cattlemen in the R.M.C.A. and our Society.

C.B.F. Brochure

This brochure produced by C.B.F. in conjunction with the Pedigree Cattle Breeders Council of Ireland depicts the type of pedigree stock available in Ireland. The brochure was handed out at the hospitality suite hosted by C.B.F. to all visitors. It is the aim of C.B.F. to have this brochure as part of their international promotion. Cattlemen were impressed with this booklet and it certainly should do an amount of good in promoting the image of pedigree cattle in Ireland. The Charolais page has a photograph of four pedigree cattle with an Irish castle in the background plus a short history of the breed in Ireland. This brochure, together with our Newsletter has been distributed to several breeders attending the show. This literature has also been mailed to several other breeders and it is my opinion that this promotional effort will eventually pay dividends in the U.S.A.

The Montfort Feed Lot

The Montfort Feed Lot near the foot of the Rockies in Northern Colorado is the largest complete enterprise of its kind in the U.S.A. Montfort feeds between 500,000 and 675,000 steers annually. The steers are purchased direct from the ranchers weighing between 800 and 850 lbs and after a short isolation period, all animals are integrated into the unit. Animals are slaughtered as they reach 1150 lbs. The animals are then processed in the company's packing plant at Greeley. This town of 50,000 inhabitants is situated fifty miles north of Denver. This plant is also one of the largest in the U.S.A. for the processing of lamb. The climate of this area lends itself to this type of cattle enterprise, with warm days, cool evenings, generally mild winters and low rainfall (13 inches). Water and air pollution are very well controlled and all waste water is recycled to irrigate farmland. It is planned to have shelter belts located on the perimeter of this

—Continued on page 10

A Woman's look at Irish Agriculture

By Miss N. Maher, Duagh, Waterford

I hold no special brief for Women's Lib., in fact quite a few of their aims and escapades disgust me. But I am convinced that Irish women hold a very special place in Irish farming; thousands of women are helping in the running of the farms, physically and theoretically. Recently on a programme on calf rearing, a statement was made to the effect that the most efficient calf-rearer of all was the farmer's wife. This was, I think, doubted by the panel. But surely a woman would bring more nursing skill to bear on the job, would be more compassionate and painstaking, would count the time well spent in coaxing and dosing a small sick animal back to life and health.

I know only too well the depression of having calf after calf go down with one or other of the (little?) illnesses of calf-hood — like white scour, salmonella and for the past year, coccidiosis — but there is the joy of seeing your one-time patient back to health again, kicking his heels in abandon and galloping round in circles on his bed of fresh yellow straw.

For longer than I would care to mention, I have been muddling along happily with my cattle and my horses, making my decisions and my mistakes and maybe learning a little as I went along. Horses have always been my first love, with cattle a close second. In between a lot of hard work on the land, I managed to fit in two-days-a-week hunting, which as I look back on it now, was bliss indeed. Of late years I have retired (gracefully, I would hope!) from hunting, and now have a couple of small brood-mares producing a foal regularly every April, and adding a lot of pleasure (and extra work) to my life. I think there is no joy to compare with the delight of coming on a new-born foal, on an April dawn, and to marvel at the mobility of the little elfin creature not more than a couple of hours old, and already cantering along by its proud mother's side.

And then in 1965 came the first Charolais to our A.I. stations and as the novelist might say, life has never been the same since. I remember the excitement of waiting for my first half-bred Charolais calf to be born — even my vet was excited, and as he happened to be doing a job here that morning he waited on to see the new arrival. I remember seeing (and buying) the first Charolais heifer calf at Waterford Mart. I also remember the gales of laughter that greeted the appearance of this first bright yellow calf in the mart and the amusement of the wise males when I

bought this calf for all of £8! That calf is still with me, after producing a good calf every year, and rearing four calves on every lactation.

I don't know why I became a Charolais addict right from the start — was it because I liked something different, or because I liked the challenge of a breed as yet unknown in Ireland? At any rate, I have become deeply attached to this great breed, and found the Charolais a pleasure to have in every way. They are placid and easy to handle, and nobody needs to be told of their fantastic growth rate — just watch the photographs and results of every fat-stock show over the past six years — the heavy-boned, heavy-muscled Charolais has shouldered his powerful way through Angus, Hereford and Friesian.

But as with any other breed, care must be taken. It is unnecessary to feed large amounts of meal to an in-calf cow. And I think it is unwise to cross a heifer of any breed with a continental bull (although the breeders of pedigree Charolais assure me that this causes no problems), and I know that the narrow Jersey cow has no trouble with a Charolais cross calf. I believe it is good sense to superintend all Charolais calvings; it seems to me to be the height of stupidity to look after and feed a cow for nine months, and then in that one crucial twenty-four hours of her gestation to neglect her.

I suppose it is true to say that some bulls of every breed cause calving problems. I remember one year having terrible problems in a bunch of small Friesian heifers in calf to Aberdeen Angus. I suppose I was trying by heavy feeding of nuts over a long period before calving to make up for lack of size in the heifers; chaos was the result. I remember many years ago when I was using a very well-known Friesian bull 'Okery Extra' — every bull calf born by him was huge — broad at shoulder and hips. So it is only to be expected that the odd Charolais calving will be difficult.

I can say truthfully that over the past ten years, out of about 120 Charolais calvings, only three calves have been lost. All three were bull calves, and two of them were out of heifers.

So if one cannot cross a heifer with a Charolais, what then? — the Angus every time. And if the heifer is half-bred Charolais, or better the resulting calf will almost always bring the Charolais colour, and will be a thick, well-made calf with plenty of growth — and in a couple of years you may have a potential fatstock winner on your hands.

And now I must add one of my pet grouses. Why is there so much over-

mechanisation on so many farms — high-powered tractors sloshing around doing oddjobs, that a horse and cart could do much more cheaply and with a lot less damage to the land. I believe that a tractor without all the implements necessary is a wash-out. But this is completely impractical (financially) on medium-sized or small farms. I hold that a competent contractor is the answer, with a handy man standing by for daily jobs round the yard. A pony will thrive on a couple of pounds of nuts a day and some hay, while living out all the year round. And what tractor has the gaiety and intelligence of a sharp Connemara pony that fodders cattle all week, and will step out in a glistening trap for a Sunday jaunt?

And so I say in conclusion: 'Long live the land girls of Ireland.'

Continued from page 9

Denver January 1976

enterprise, this will help to control dust blowing and give the environment a more 'park' like appearance.

The whole enterprise is completely automated with trucks being loaded every twelve seconds to take food to the cattle. This is completely controlled by computer and as such it is impossible to either overfeed or underfeed any particular group.

American Breeders Service

I visited an A.I. unit where bulls from approximately twelve different breeds are housed. Each bull is performance tested and recorded under seventeen different headings. The objective of A.B.S. is to provide a total beef programme for its customers. In order to provide each producer with the know-how to improve his herd's efficiency in terms of lbs of beef produced per animal unit, A.B.S. has launched a programme aimed at doing this. The most outstanding Charolais bull on show was Excalaber, bred in France by Dessauny and Fils. This bull by Vainquer had no calving problems and his progeny weighed 475 lbs at 205 days. Semen from this bull has been exported back to France. The birth weight of his calves averaged 94.8 lbs with the dam gestation period being 281 days.

What impressed me most was the amount of factual information available both to the breeder and to the people intending to use a particular sire.

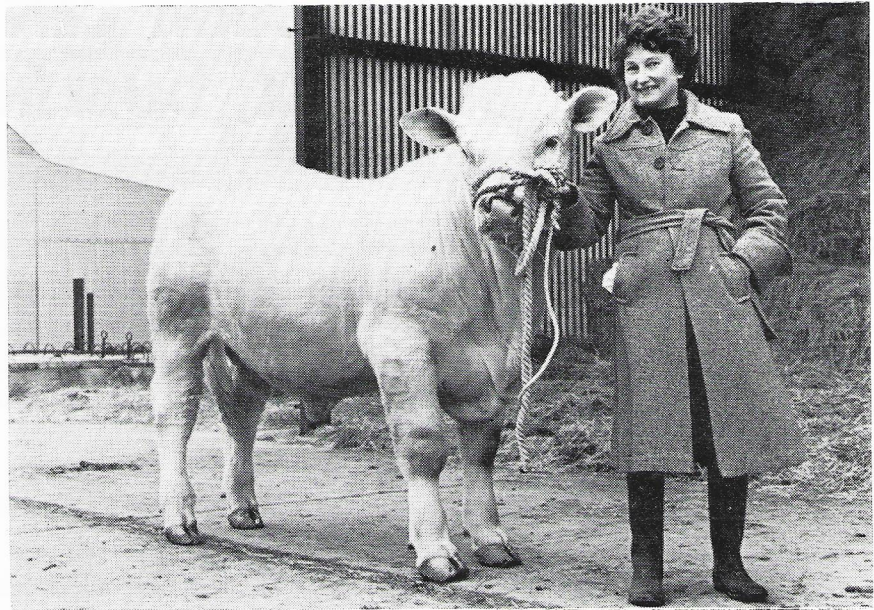
TOP PRICE CHAROLAIS AT TULLY GOES TO WEST OF IRELAND

The following are the performance test results of the third group of Charolais bulls which have completed the test.

Bulls for performance test were selected on the basis of weight for age, conformation, and sire and dam information. All the Charolais bulls entered the test station in September. Bulls were approximately 200 days of age when they entered. Bulls were evaluated under uniform conditions of feeding and management. They were fed to appetite three times a day with a diet consisting of equal parts of rolled barley and grass cubes supplemented with the required minerals and vitamins. A limited quantity of hay (approx. 2 lbs per day) was fed to help rumination.

The following test results are provided for each bull:

1. Adjusted 400 day weight (lb).
2. Relative performance at 400 days, i.e. the number of lbs which the bull was above or below the average adjusted 400 day weight of his contemporaries (bulls of the same breed which entered the station at the same time).
3. Average daily gain from birth to start of test and during test (lb).
4. Feed conversion rating. This rating is based on the bull's feed conversion figure which was adjusted for variation in weight at start of test and is relative to his contemporaries.
5. Relative height at the withers at 300 days of age, i.e. the number of centimeters above or below the average of his contemporaries.
6. Adjusted 300 day weight.



Mrs. David Fitzgerald, Larchill, Loughrea, Galway, in a happy mood after purchasing 'Glencara Labienus' (bred by Mr. J. Bellingham, Glencara, Rathconrath, Westmeath), top price Charolais bull at the sale of performance tested bulls, Tully, Co. Kildare.

CHAROLAIS AUTUMN SALE MAYNOOTH MART FRIDAY, 8th OCTOBER

Length of Test: 154 days

Name of Breeder	Name of Bull	Daily Gain (lb)							Price paid Guineas
		Adjusted 400 day weight (lb)	Relative Performance at 400 days (\pm lb)	Birth to Start of Test	During Test	Feed Conver- sion Rating	Relative 300 day withers height (\pm cms)	Adjusted 300 day weight (lb)	
The Earl of Iveagh	Farmleigh Laurence	1065	-128	2.4	2.5	Below Av.	-2.5	848	420
Mr. Monaghan	Meath Liberator	1245	+ 52	3.0	2.5	Below Av.	+2.5	995	740
Mr. Lillingston	Goldenvale Luke	1238	+ 45	2.7	3.1	Good	-1.5	909	620
Mr. Bellingham	Glencara Laocoon	1229	+ 36	3.1	2.4	Good	+1.5	974	620
Mr. McCarrroll	Carn Lucifer	1059	-134	2.8	1.9	Average	-0.5	821	520
The Earl of Iveagh	Farmleigh Leo	1159	- 34	2.8	2.4	Below Av.	+5.5	893	600
Mr. Bellingham	Glencara Labienus	1315	+122	3.1	2.9	Average	+3.5	973	860
Mr. T. Doyle	St. Wolstan's Launcelot	1058	-135	2.7	1.9	Average	-2.5	796	Withdrawn
Mr. North	Northbrook Lon	1219	+ 26	3.0	2.5	Above Av.	+1.5	947	680
Mr. Lillingston	Goldenvale Lord	1309	+116	2.9	3.0	Average	-1.5	990	540
Mr. Duffy	Goldview Lynx	1071	-122	2.6	2.3	Above Av.	-3.5	774	540
Mr. Walshe	Graigueshoneen Larkspur	1201	+ 8	2.5	2.9	Average	-5.5	868	Withdrawn
Mr. Clancy	Cregg Lamont	1347	+154	3.0	2.9	Below Av.	+3.5	991	560
	Average	1193		2.8	2.6	Below Av.		906	

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In 1975 we successfully arranged the Irish Delegation to the World Charolais Convention in Calgary, Canada.

THIS YEAR we are organising the **HEREFORD DELEGATION** to their **CONVENTION** in **CALGARY**. Departure, 26th June, return, 10th July.

WE ARE ALSO ORGANISING a group to the Calgary Stampede, departing 30th June and returning 15th July.

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