Essential Technologies – Fertility Beef

1 Pre-breeding Health Check of the Breeding Herd

Demonstrates selection of the breeding herd based on herd health status and fertility. Demonstrate calving 2 year old heifers weight for age targets. Demonstrate the recording of disease incidence in replacement heifers in the herd. Demonstrate in-out planned dates for breeding. Demonstrate body condition scoring of cows to aid adjustment of feeding to body condition score. Demonstrate weaning a calf weighing half of the suckler cow body weight at 200 days.

2 Heat Detection Systems

Demonstrates systems which accurately estimate the time of conception and therefore accurately predict the calving date for example, visual observation and record keeping, tail painting, teaser bull etc.

3 Pregnancy Diagnosis

Demonstrates cow or bull fertility awareness and give an indication of the herd calving index. Demonstrate pregnancy diagnosis 6 weeks after bull is removed from the breeding stock and batch weaning and 30-35 days for heifers.

4 Herd Health Plan

Demonstrate use of AFBI Herd Health Scheme. Demonstrate an annual herd health plan (agreed with farm vet) including things such as vaccination policy, worm and fluke policies etc. Demonstrate the use of blood sampling to determine blood mineral profiles in the herd. Demonstrate benchmarking antibiotic use in the herd.

5. Sire Selection

Demonstrate the use of beef performance recorded bulls to increase beef output. Demonstrate the use of current herd genetic summary reports to aid sire selection, using bull genomic analysis and demonstrate cross breeding to maximise calf performance.

Desirable Technologies

1 **Calving Monitors**

Demonstrate use of innovative technology to monitor cows that are due to calve. For example, moocall, calving camera or web based digital camera system that links to mobile phones.

2 Calving Data Recording

Demonstrate data collection in order to monitor cow performance. Measurements include calf weight using weighband or walk over weighing, calving difficulty, gestation length etc. Demonstrate colostrum quality testing and subsequent ZST blood sampling of calves.

3 Synchronisation program or Oestrus control

Demonstration of the innovative use of artificial hormones to synchronise cows or control oestrus.

4 Suitable Infrastructure

Demonstrate straw bedded transition cow management facilities for calving. Demonstrate farm facilities to include walk over weighing, drafting gates and safe bull handling pens.