Montbeliarde Cattle Society of Ireland
Breeding Programme
1st October 2024

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(1) The aim of the breeding programme
To improve the breed, by strictly adhering to the breeding programme and maintaining its main characteristics; the ability to function as a dual-purpose animal while continuing to improve dairy abilities, longevity, reduced cell count and keeping beefing ability, also to have a breeding objective of obtaining a calf per year.

(2) Name of the Breed
The name of the breed shall remain and only be Montbeliarde

(3) Breed Characteristics
A Montbeliarde shall be in general a large docile animal. They are red and white in colour with a full white or mainly white head standing on strong legs and have a correct mouth. A Montbeliarde coat may vary slightly to fawn and white but not any more than this. As a breed they will strive to function as a dual purpose animal by maintaining their beefing ability and higher protein percentage in milk output.

(4) Geographical Territory
The Montbeliarde Cattle Society will keep a herd book for animals residing on the island of Ireland.

(5) System of Identification of Animals in the Herd book
a) Each animal to be identified by the herd identification number under the National Identification and Registration System for Bovine animals.
b) Each animal must be named at registration, which will consist of the herd prefix and animal name. The first letter in each animal's name shall be the year designation letter, as specified by the Council of the Society, for the year of birth of the animal.
d) Prefix and animals name will not exceed 30 characters including spaces.

6) Registration of Animals and Recording of Pedigrees

The Herd Book will be divided into two sections: Main Section for male and female animals and a Supplementary Section for female animals only.

Main Section:
Certificates for the will be orange in colour.

Main Section of the herd book an animal shall:
a) have descended from parents and grandparents which have been entered in the main section of a breeding book of the same breed
b) be identified at birth according to Union animal health law on the identification and registration of bovines and the rules of this breeding programme

c) have a pedigree established in accordance with the rules set out in this breeding programme
d) be accompanied by a zootechnical certificate in the case of trade in or entry into the union of an animal and where that animal is intended to be entered in the breeding book.
e) be accompanied by a zootechnical certificate where an animal is produced from a germinal product which is traded, or which entered into the union and where that animal is intended to be entered in the breeding book.

The main section of the herd book shall be divided in to two classes:
Class 1 – animals in this class are sired by progeny tested sires with a coefficient of reliability of at least 50% for the main production traits, according to ICAR principles, in the country of their origin. These production traits are defined as a dairy animal with good milk and solid traits with a beefing ability.
Class 2 – animals in this class are sired by bulls other than those identified in Class 1 and will also include animals with any undesirable breed characteristics, e.g. animals that are black and white in colour but are full pedigree, animals that have deformities but are still well and healthy and able to perform and breed.

Supplementary Section

The supplementary section is divided into two sections: Section A and Section B. Certificates for this section will be blue in colour.

To qualify for recording in Section A of the supplementary section of the herd book a female animal shall be:

a) Be identified in accordance with Union animal health law on the identification and registration of bovines and the rules of this breeding programme.
b) Be judged to conform to the breed standard, which will be checked through visual assessment
c) be descended from a sire whose sire is registered in the main section of the herd book or in another EU approved herd book of the Montbeliarde Breed.

Females in this section shall have the letters '**ASR**' written after their name on their certificates.

To qualify for recording in Section B of the Supplementary Section of the Herd book an animal shall

a) be identified in accordance with Union animal health law on the identification and registration of bovines and the rules of this breeding programme.
b) be judged to conform to the breed standard, which will be checked through visual assessment
c) be a female whose Dam is registered in Section A of the Supplementary Section of the herd book, and whose sire is registered in the main section of the herd book or in another EU approved herd book of the Montbeliarde Breed.

Females in this section shall have the letters '**BSR**' written after their name on their certificates.

7) Upgrading of the progeny of the animal recorded in supplementary sections to the main section

To qualify for upgrading from the Supplementary section of the Herd book a female animal shall have descended from:

- a dam (Section B) and maternal grand dam (Section A) which are recorded in a supplementary section of the herd book and whose sire and two grand sires are entered in the main section of the breeding book or of another EU approved breeding book of the breed shall be eligible for entry in the main section of the herd book.

8) Procedures for registering an animal in the breeding book

Animals born in the Republic of Ireland must be registered through the ICBF animal events book or electronically through the Departments on-line service www.agfood.ie. An animal is considered as being requested for to enter the breeding book where a Pedigree name is entered at registration. The fees charged will be as per schedule of fees, which can be requested from the Herdbook Secretary. Late registration is defined as an animal being named 27 days after birth. Inspections shall be carried out where irregularities in herd registrations have been highlighted by random DNA testing. Where irregularities arise from a random DNA test the society may carry out further DNA testing. Where inspection is required an inspection fee will be charged to the breeder.

The Council reserves the right to refuse the notification of birth of a calf where the data provided is deemed to be deficient or inaccurate.

9) Embryo Collection Registration

a) The embryo registration form ET1 together with the prescribed fee should arrive at the Herd book Manager's office of the society within 21 days of the embryos being collected. Thereafter a late registration fee will be payable for each period of 30 days or part thereof that an Embryo Registration Form is received beyond the aforementioned 21 days as per schedule of fees.

b) A Breeders copy of the ET1 form shall be retained by the owner of the embryo until submitted with the Birth Registration. The approved embryo collection team will retain the collection unit's copy.

c) The society is to be informed of the following changes are seen as they occur

1. Transfer of ownership of the frozen embryo.
2. Embryo thawed and implanted.
3. Embryo destroyed
4. Transfer of ownership or destruction of the recipient dam.
5. Loss of the ET calf if it occurs at any time prior to registration (these details are required for record purposes only)

Changes of circumstances are to be notified on an Embryo Amendment form ET2, copies of

which are supplied to ET units.
d) In the event of a frozen embryo or recipient dam being sold a copy of the relevant embryo registration form, ET1 should be given to the new owner by the breeder to assist him or her in the registration of the calf.
e) In the case of calves being born as the result of embryo transfer both the donor sire and dam must be blood/DNA typed. All donor sires must have undergone genetic evaluation and donor females undergone genetic evaluation or performance testing.
f) All calves born from ET are required to be parentage tested for sire and dam
g) All ET registration and amendment forms are available from the herd book manager on request.
h) Where donors are entered in another breeding book for the breed, all embryos must be accompanied by the appropriate zootechnical certificate issued by an authorized body and submitted with the request for registration of the offspring in the breeding book.
i) Breeder should follow the procedure for entering the offspring in the breeding book as outlined above for registering an animal. The Animal Events record should show the natural dam on the first line and the number of the genetic dam on the next line.

10) Controls

Where AI technicians are not using handhelds or where DIY AI is taking place the Society may ask for, where relevant, AI statement, proof of semen purchase, records of bulls use during insemination and DIY AI license number.
One in twenty-four heifers registered will be selected randomly for DNA profiling, this selection is made by ICBF who will send out a DNA kit to the breeder. This is paid for by the breeder. This is to ensure correct parentage is being registered. In the event of this animal not having its parentage verified, the Board could decide to carry out further DNA testing.
In the case of Breeding Stock bulls being registered a DNA profile is required and both sire and dam parentage verification.

11) Imports

In the case of a live female or male, embryos imported from outside the Republic of Ireland, the breeder who owns that animal or embryos must submit a zootechnical certificate from the country of origin, in accordance with the legislation in force. Imported LIVE ANIMALS shall be entered in the Societies's Herdbook and will retain the herdbook name and number from the country of origin.
If an animal is in calf when it arrives in Ireland the appropriate section of the Zootechnical Certificate must be completed.

12) System for Recording Pedigree of Purebred Breeding Animals

Taurus Electronic Database is used to record information through ICBF from the breeder.
The following information is gathered:
Breeders name, herd number, address, owner details, animal pedigree name, national tag number, sex, calving type, single/twin, date of birth, dam, sire, section of breeding book, class, back pedigree, genetic defects (as relevant), genetic evaluations (as relevant).

13) Selection and Breeding objectives of the breeding programme.
The breeding objective of the Montbeliarde breeding programme is to achieve a strong, docile animal with good dairy ability but also maintaining the beefing ability characteristic of the breed. This may be monitored through weigh ins put in on ICBF for young stock or kill out percentages for cull cows/bull beef at factory.

An ideal female example would be weighing 550-700kgs, with 283 days gestation, with a calving interval of 365 days capable of providing seven lactations and be free from lameness. Milk production of 7000-8000 litres of milk with 4% fat, 3.75% protein and somatic cell count of less than 150,000 cells/ml.
To meet this breeding objectives a breeder can use the services of the French semen company, Coopex, Groupe Umotest (coopex.com), for annual specific herd mating plans using the top AI proven bulls available. Currently Coopex are the only suppliers of Montbeliarde semen to Ireland.
When selecting on the female side, milk recordings of her dam and of her own lactation history (if applicable) should be considered. A breeder should also look at her sire, her dam's sire and review their historical figures from Coopex. Inspection of the animal in person considering feet and legs and general type is also important to be aware of.

14) Performance Testing or Genetic Evaluation
The Montbeliarde breed society undertake 'Performance Testing' and 'Genetic Evaluation' as part of their breeding programme.

Performance Testing
The following data is collected as part of performance testing through ICBF:

- Calving surveys
- Milk performance through milk recordings
- Gestation length
- Weights
- Slaughter weights.

Calving Survey
Each member records ancestry and calving data on their calves through the 'Animal Events' recording system.
The Calving Survey options are:
1 = Normal Calving,
2 = Some assistance,
3 = Considerable difficulty,
4 = Vet assistance.
'Abortion or 'Calf died at birth may also be recorded.
This data is used in the calculation of calving difficulty of an animal.

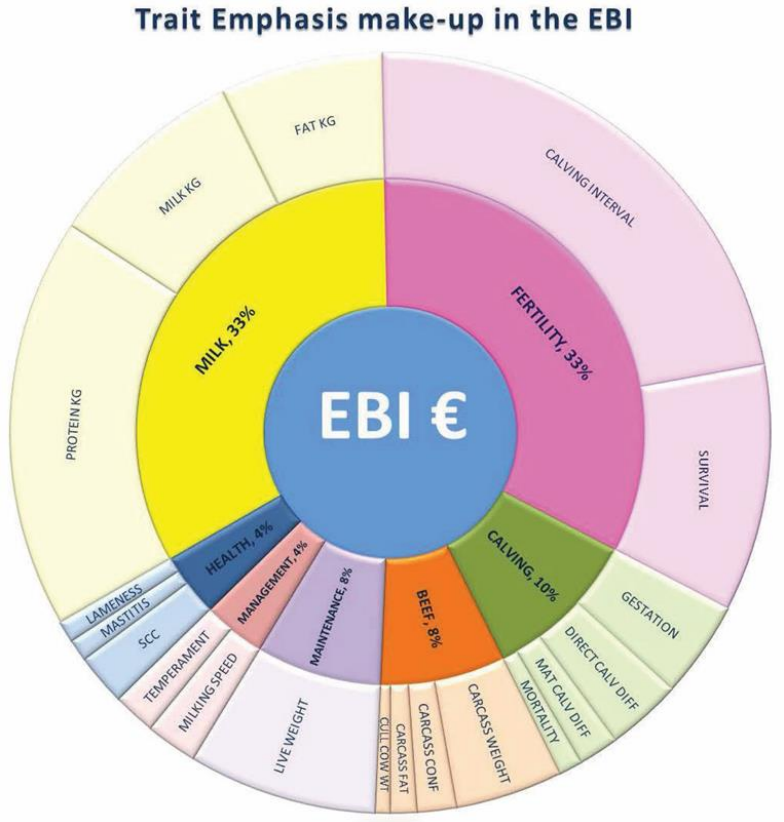
Milk Recording
A service provided by the milk processing co-ops. The data collected from milk recording includes:

- milk weight,
- milk solids and components,
- somatic cell counts,
- yield per lactation and overall lifetime yields.

Each herd owner receives a monthly milk recording report used to make assessments of performance. Data from the milk records is centralised with the ICBF database and populates the zootechnical certificate.
Gestation length is recorded through breeders input to ICBF with calving dates, insemination and confirmation of in-calf status. This effects the calculation the fertility of the animal.
Weights may be recorded through farm software and transferred to ICBF when regular weighings are taken by the farmer.
Slaughter weights are transferred directly to ICBF from factory weights recorded at slaughter.

Genetic Evaluations

ICBF provide genetic evaluations (prediction of breeding values) called EBI (Economic Breeding Index) and are estimated based on the animal's own records and the performance of known relatives.
Performance data such as calving surveys, milk recording, weights, birth and death dates are processed to provide a genetic evaluation. A single figure profit index, Economic Breeding Index, (EBI) comprises of information on seven sub-indexes related to profitable milk production and are weighted accordingly, see diagram. These are; (1) Milk production, (2) Fertility, (3) Calving performance, (4) Beef Carcass (5) Cow Maintenance (6) Cow Management and (7) Health

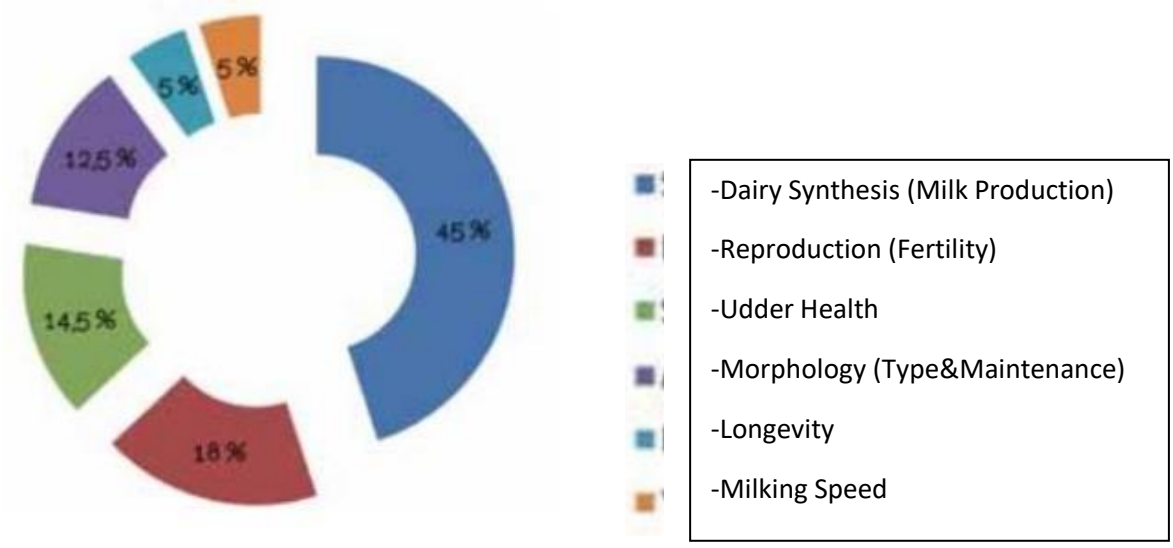


This information on the cow side is gathered directly from farmers inputting information into ICBF, from milk recording records and from factories and co-ops. Further information can be found on the following link: https://www.icbf.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Understanding-EBI-PTA-BV-Spring-2020.pdf

In the experience of the Montbeliarde breed as all A.I. bulls come from France, their performance data coming from France does not always translate from the French system, 'Unique Synthesis Index' (ISU) to the Irish system (EBI) so it is reccommended to also use ISU as a tool to aid in breeding choice. This is not applicable to Irish bred stock but is useful for bull semen selection when breeding. The ISU is calculated by information received from French breeders in the following breakdown:

Dairy synthesis	Protein + 0,1 Fat + 0,5 Fat content + 3 Protein content
Reproduction	50% cows fertility + 25 % heifers fertility + 25 % Calving-1stAI Interval
Udder health	60 % Somatic Cell Count + 40 % Clinical mastitis
Morphology	40% Udder + 30 % Body + 15 % Posture + 10 % Rump + 5 % Muscularity

This information is then weighted as in the diagram below:



Genomics

The society offers genomic evaluation to breeders if they so wish. This is outsourced to ICBF. Results of this genomic test is then added to the data. This can be done through hair samples from dam and progeny to prove parentage and more recently through tissue tags through the National Genotyping Programme.

Further information on Genomics can be obtained at the following link: Montbéliarde Association - Selection goals (montbeliarde.org)

Montbeliarde - Coopex Montbeliarde catalogue - Summer 2021 by Coopex Montbeliarde - Issuu

15) Outsourcing of technical activities
The following services are outsourced:

- Performance testing and genetic evaluations
- Genomic testing
- Zootechnical Certificate Generation and Supplementary certificate generation
- Provision of electronic breeding book

Contact details: ICBF, Link Road, Ballincollig, Co.Cork, P31 D452
Tel: (023) 8820222
Email: query@icbf.com

16) Authorised Derogations on the issuing of Zootechnical Certificates
None.

17) Zootechnical Certificate and Supplementary Certificates
The zootechnical certificate with the animal's ancestry will be printed on Society paper which is orange in colour.
Where an animal is recorded in the supplementary section, a supplementary certificate will be provided blue in colour.
The certificates shall be issued within one month when all registration criteria are met. In the context of these certificates, the Breeder is the person who entered the animal into the breeding programme. The onus is on the breeder to verify that all information on the certificate is correct and if not, to contact the societies office with corrections within in two weeks of receipt.
On sale or transfer within Ireland of any animal the vendor should supply its zootechnical/supplementary certificate. Purchasers of animals should return the zootechnical/supplementary certificate together with the appropriate transfer fee to the Society in order to change the ownership details.
If a breeder chooses to de-register an animal they can however if it is sold and the new owner chooses to re-register the same animal they are allowed to do so.

Revised October 2025