

## **Abstract by Brian Wickham - An information infrastructure for facilitating the delivery of improved profits on Irish cattle farms and improving the commercial viability of the Irish breeding industry**

ICBF was formed fifteen years ago in an effort to increase the rate of genetic gain in the national cattle herd and to benefit the breeding industry. This goal has large elements of industry and national good while its achievement depended on services from a number of organisations that operate with a strong focus on financial returns. ICBF is owned by a unique partnership of cattle breeding organisations and farmer representative organisations. It is recognised as a charity and is funded by a combination of government supports, an industry "levy" and service fees. It has focused its efforts on establishing a cattle breeding infrastructure covering genetic evaluations, information systems and breeding schemes. The ICBF database is the core of this infrastructure, it replaced some 40 semi-independent computer systems with a single integrated system and, it provides a wide range of information services to Ireland's cattle industry. The focus of this paper will be on the way this system has been organised and structured to deliver national, industry and commercial benefits to farmers and to the Irish dairy and beef industries.