

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Joining the Programme**

#### **1) How do I join the National Genotyping Programme?**

Applications must be submitted online at [www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com). To complete the online application, farmers will need the following details:

1. Herd Number
2. Direct Debit details
3. Contract rearers herd number (if applicable)
4. Milk purchaser
5. Tag supplier

All applications are subject to approval.

#### **2) How much does it cost?**

There is no cost in signing up, however herdowners must be members of **HerdPlus or SCEP**.

Dairy HerdPlus membership is charged at €100 base price, and 50c for every cow calved the year previous (If a farmer calves 100 cows : €100 base price + (.05 x 100) = €150 dairy HerdPlus membership).

If beef herds are not in SCEP, the beef HerdPlus membership is charged at €60 per year. The first year of genotyping is free, and each genotype will cost €6 thereafter and will be paid at tag purchase.

#### **3) What animals must I genotype?**

In year 1, you must genotype all your breeding stock (cows, heifers, followers, bulls), and in the following years you must genotype all calves born on the farm (No exceptions!)

#### **4) Do I have to genotype all animals?**

Yes, all animals born on the farm must be genotyped, with no exceptions.

#### **5) How do I buy the double tissue tags?**

Tags will be sent to you automatically for all ungenotyped breeding stock in year 1. For year 2, you can order double tissue tags from your tag supplier. It is your responsibility to buy the correct tag type.

#### **6) I am already a part of the SCEP programme, can I join this programme as well?**

Yes you can. We urge all SCEP participants to join this programme.

#### **7) I am in SCEP, will I get paid for genotyping extra animals?**

No, you will not be paid to genotype extra animals. The department will pay to genotype 70% of your reference number. It will cost you a further €4/head for each animal thereafter.

## **8) How is the programme being funded?**

The National Genotyping Programme partners include the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine (DAFM), Dairy Industry Ireland (DII), Meat Industry Ireland (MII) and participating farmers. The genotyping cost of €18 per sample will be divided equally between the three Programme Partners; 1. DAFM, 2. DII & MII and 3. Participating farmers (i.e. €6 contribution per programme partners).

## **9) Where is the €6 for genotyping going?**

ICBF will take €4 by direct debit after you purchase your tag from your chosen tag provider. The remaining €2 will be to cover the extra cost of the double tissue tag and postage.

## **SCEP Herds**

### **1) I am in participating in the new Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme (SCEP), can I still part take in this scheme?**

Yes, all participants of the SCEP scheme are advised to join the National Genotyping Programme.

### **2) I have to genotype 70% of my reference number every year, how will joining this scheme affect my payment?**

This will not affect your payment provided you meet the requirements of the scheme.

### **3) I was in BDGP and as a result most of my herd is genotyped. Can I still take part in the scheme?**

Yes, even if all your animals are currently genotyped you should take part in the scheme. NGP is the only option for genotyping calves prior to registration. This will be a big labour saving opportunity for the future.

### **4) If I join this programme, can I genotype the calves at birth or do I have to wait for the department to send tags?**

You can genotype all the calves at birth with double tissue tags. These will cover your genotyping requirement throughout the scheme. The department will not send any extra tags.

It is your responsibility to ensure you can meet your 70% genotyping requirement every year.

### **5) Can I tag all my animals at birth for the scheme in the future?**

Yes, all animals participating in the national genotyping programme need to be genotyped at birth from 2024 onwards.

### **6) I am a new entry into SCEP, and I was not in BDGP. What animals will I have to genotype this year?**

You will initially have to genotype 70% of your reference number through the SCEP scheme. If you partake in the National Genotyping Programme you will be able to genotype every non genotyped breeding animal in your herd this year free of charge. Every calf born on the holding must be genotyped thereafter.

## **7) How will I know what animals to genotype through the scheme?**

If you are in the National Genotyping Programme you will genotype all the animals born in the herd.

### **Phase 1 – Genotyping the cow/Replacement Heifers:**

#### **1) How do I genotype the cows?**

Upon joining the scheme, you will be sent button tags for each breeding animal with a corresponding tag number. You can tag these with your existing tagger and return the samples to the lab in the return envelopes provided.

#### **2) When will I receive my tags?**

You will receive button tags after you have been accepted into the programme.

#### **3) When must I send the tags back?**

Samples must be returned within 4 weeks of receiving the tags.

#### **4) I am selling a cow at the end of the year, do I still need to genotype her?**

No, if the cow/heifer is empty and you plan to sell her at the end of the year, then you do not need to sample her.

#### **5) How much will it cost to genotype my cows?**

There will be no cost for genotyping the cows in year 1. They will be done for free.

#### **6) How do I get tags for my cows?**

Tags will be issued by ICBF in the coming weeks.

#### **7) Can I use hair cards to genotype my cows?**

No, only tags will be used to genotype cows.

#### **8) What happens if the sample I send back is of low quality?**

Hair cards will be reissued free of charge for any animals genotyped in phase 1.

#### **9) My cow is already genotyped, do I have to do it again?**

No, once an animal is correctly genotyped, they do not need to be done again.

#### **10) I have a breeding bull on the farm, will he be genotyped as well?**

Yes, all breeding males will also be genotyped in year 1 free of charge. These are males that will sire progeny in your own herd.

#### **11) I am going to buy a bull for breeding 2024, will he be genotyped?**

If you buy a bull after the free genotyping tags are issued for your herd, you will need to pay the standard rate of genotyping for the animal.

**12) I am going to buy in-calf heifers next Spring, do I need to genotype them?**

Yes, you will need to genotype these heifers. You will need to pay the standard rate of genotyping for these heifers.

**Phase 2 – genotyping calves born 2024-2028**

Tagging the calf.

**1) When do I genotype tag the calf?**

You genotype the calf at birth, at the same time that you take the BVD sample.

**2) Can I send the DNA sample to the same place as the BVD?**

No, DNA samples will be sent to one specific lab. BVD samples will be sent to the lab you have been sending them for the past number of years.

**3) How often must I send away samples?**

It is recommended that you send DNA samples to the lab at least twice per week at peak calving. As calving slows down, it may be sufficient for samples to be sent once per week.

**4) How will I know which sample is BVD and which is DNA?**

All samples will be colour coded. DNA samples will always be Pink.

**5) How do I buy the double tissue tags?**

Double tissue tags will be available to you from your tag supplier in the Autumn.

**6) How will I pay for genotyping?**

A direct debit for the genotyping fee for Newborn calves will be triggered once calf tags are ordered from the Tag Provider. This will be collected from the herdowner, by ICBF, within approximately a month of the order.

**7) What happens if I lose a sample down the slats or a sample breaks when tagging?**

If a sample is lost or damaged, you can order a replacement button tag from your tag company. Please ensure that you specify that the sample required is a DNA sample.

**8) I already bought my tags for 2025, what can I do now?**

If you have single tissue national tags bought or left over from calving 2024, you will need to order corresponding DNA button tags to genotype these calves at birth.

**9) Do I have to sample every calf born in the herd each year?**

Yes. All calves must be sampled, regardless of sex or breed.

**10) What if the calf is dead?**

If a calf dies before it is registered, tag AND sample the calf before it is collected by the knackery. The samples must still be posted, and the rest of the registration carried out as with the live calves.

## **Posting the sample.**

### **1) Where do I send the sample?**

The DNA samples must be sent to the genotyping lab in the envelope provided.

### **2) How long will it take to register my calf?**

In 2022, the average lab turnaround time was 4 days. Including postage, the whole process can take on average 10-12 days.

### **3) How do I register my calf?**

After you send the DNA sample to the lab, you must create the calf as normal on the AgFood Website, or on your farm software package (FSP). Details such as dam, sire, DOB, calving difficulty, must still be recorded at birth.

### **4) Do I still need to record the details of the calf?**

Yes, details such as the dam, sire, DOB, calving difficulty, pedigree name, etc., must still be recorded at the time of birth.

### **5) What happens if I have recorded the incorrect parentage?**

If the genotype determines the correct parentage, this will automatically be updated on Agfood and the passport will be issued.

### **6) What happens if the registration is late?**

The normal 27 days registration limit still applies. However, once you submit your own registration records within 27 days, you will not receive a late registration notice even the unlikely event the genotype results are delayed.

## **Receiving the parentage.**

### **1) I have received confirmation that my calf is registered, how/when will I get the passport?**

You will receive the passport in the post as usual.

### **2) I made a mistake when recording the sire/dam of the calf, will this be fixed automatically?**

Yes, the genotype will rectify this and the animal will be registered accordingly.

### **3) The sample came back as a “Empty”, do I have to re-sample this calf? And is this calf registered?**

Yes, you will need to resample the calf. You will need to order a button tag as you would with

### **4) When will my calf have a genomic evaluation?**

Your calf will receive a genomic evaluation within 2 weeks of the sample result being returned from the lab. It is the responsibility of the farmer to return samples in a timely manner. The more regularly they are sent off, the quicker the turnaround time for registration will be.

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