



SRG



SUSTAINABLE RUMINANT GENETICS

# SRG User Guide



[www.srgni.com](http://www.srgni.com)

Unlocking Genetic Potential

## What is the Bovine Genetics Project (BGP)?

The Northern Ireland Bovine Genetics Project (BGP) is a key initiative led by Sustainable Ruminant Genetics (SRG). Through the delivery of key project objectives, SRG is driving positive, long-term outcomes for the bovine sector, supporting sustainable and profitable cattle production.

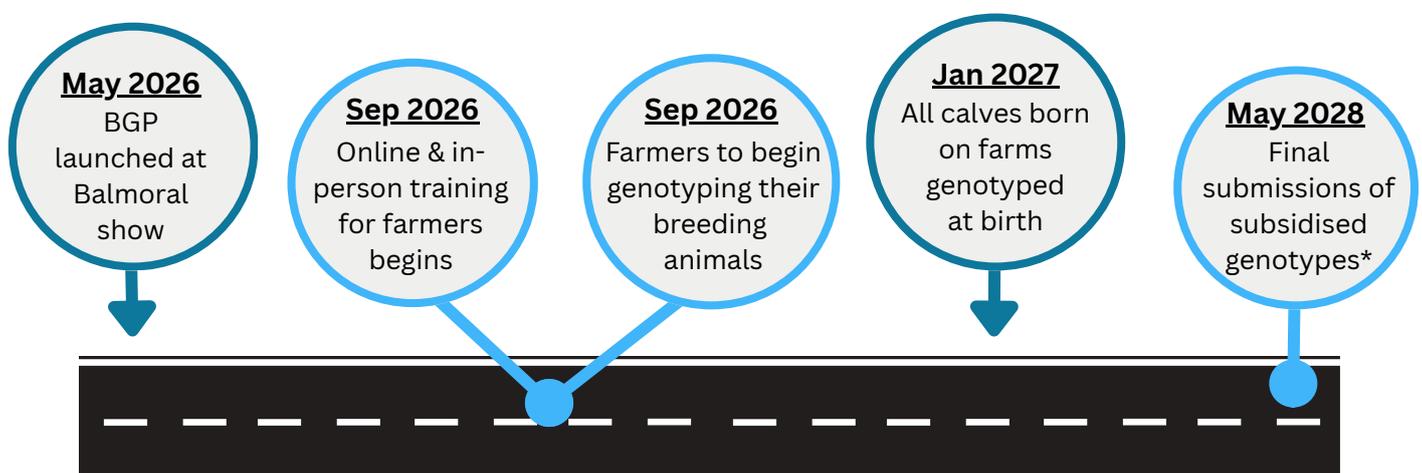
The BGP underpins long-term genetic improvement in cattle by leveraging high-quality data and robust evidence to deliver permanent gains in key traits, including:

- Improved efficiency and profitability
- Lower greenhouse gas emissions
- Improved animal health and welfare
- The ability to identify animals with greater resistance to Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB)

The project is delivered by SRG in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) as part of the Sustainable Agriculture Programme (SAP). Through the BGP, herdowners are provided with the information they need to make more informed management decisions through the SRG User Portal available on the SRG website. This will support the breeding and finishing of cattle that are more efficient, healthier, and productive, benefiting both farm performance and the wider environment.

Under the NI Bovine Genetics Genotyping Scheme, farmers will be eligible for subsidised genotyping from September 2026, initially covering all breeding animals (both breeding males and females). From 1 January 2027, the scheme will extend to include every calf registered on NIFAIS during 2027.

## BGP Timeline



\*Animals genotyped must have been in the herd between September 2026 and December 2027 to receive payment

## What is Genomics?

Genomics in cattle breeding uses an animal's DNA (genotype) to predict its genetic potential for traits like milk yield, disease resistance, or feed efficiency, allowing for earlier and more accurate selection of breeding stock than traditional methods. The DNA profile of an animal is analysed (tissue sample) and is compared to the DNA profiles of older proven animals also known as the reference population and looks for similarities. Performance data (milk yield, carcass weight etc.), ancestry data and genomic data are combined on the animal itself generating a more accurate prediction of the animal's genetic make-up.

## What is a Selection Index?

A cattle selection index is a single, pound-valued (£) score that combines multiple genetic traits (like growth, carcass quality, fertility, milk) into one value, helping farmers pick the most profitable animals for a specific production system. It translates complex genetic information (Estimated Breeding Values or EBVs) into an easy-to-use figure representing expected net profit per cow, making balanced decisions simpler than looking at individual traits separately.

Examples of selection indexes include the Profitable Lifetime Index (PLI), Maternal and Terminal Indexes, Dairy Beef Index (DBI) and Commercial Beef Value (CBV). These indexes are explained in more detail in this document.

## What are the Benefits of Genomics?

Genotyping an animal and having access to its genomic results has huge benefits for the herdowner, some benefits include:

- **Higher Index reliability** – Greatly increases selection index reliability (i.e., PLI, Maternal/Terminal Index, DBI, and CBV) before the animal has any of its own progeny.
- **Parentage verification** – Genotyping can confirm the sire & dam of an animal.
- **Major Genes** – Animals can be identified as carriers of major genes responsible for both desirable and detrimental traits (e.g. Myostatin, polledness, dwarfism etc.).
- **Full traceability** – Ensures traceability of a product back to the animal it originated from.
- **Identification of outliers** – Genotyping can allow farmers to identify those animals with elite genetic potential and also those animals with poor genetic potential.
- **Spin-off services** – Genotyping enables access to additional value-added services, such as Genocells, a next-generation milk testing service that uses an animal's genomic profile to determine individual cow somatic cell counts (SCC) from a single bulk tank milk sample.

Genomics supports farmers in making more informed and confident decisions, from selecting the next generation of dairy and beef replacements to identifying superior animals for finishing.

# Profitable Lifetime Index (£PLI)

## What is Profitable Lifetime Index?

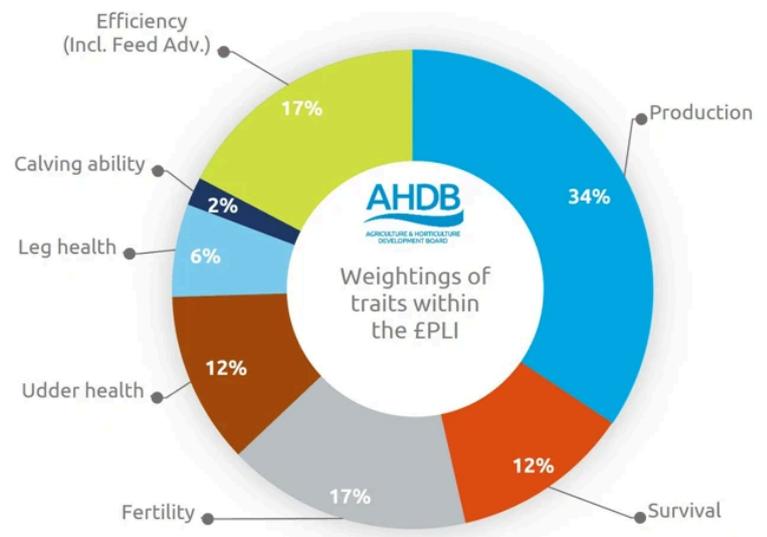
The Profitable Lifetime Index or £PLI indicates the additional profit that a daughter of a high £PLI bull is expected to earn over her lifetime, compared with a daughter sired by an average bull with a £PLI of zero.

£PLI is made up of numerous traits, each of which is weighted by its relative economic importance. £PLI is suitable for use in year-round-calving herds, and is a within-breed genetic index, meaning you can only compare animals of the same breed using this index.

### The £PLI will:

- Promote yield, while protecting milk quality
- Increase emphasis on fertility
- Improve functional type
- Improve feet, legs and udders
- Improve longevity
- Improve udder health and lameness
- Reduce costs associated with maintenance
- Improve calving performance

In addition to £PLI dairy farmers will have access to other indexes including the Spring Calving Index (SCI), Autumn Calving Index (ACI), EnviroCow and TBAdvantage.



## Farmer Testimonial

### Stephen Montgomery, Co. Londonderry

- Dairy Farm
- 180 cows
- Herd established in 2008 on a greenfield site
- 10,500 litres
- Twice a day milking



*"I started genotyping in 2018 so all my cows are now genomically tested. I use genomics to find the best cows and replacements to breed from by ranking them based on PLI to work out the top 30% of my herd. I use sexed semen for the first month and any cows with a high PLI (top 30%) get a sexed straw and anything lower gets an angus straw. 70% of the heifers get sexed semen. Within your herd you will find the maiden heifers and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> calvers will show higher PLI figures compared to older cows."*

## What is the Dairy Beef Index?

The dairy beef index (DBI) is a tool for dairy farmers to select beef bulls. It is designed to generate high-quality beef cattle from the dairy herd by combining desirable calving traits, such as ease of calving, with valuable beef carcass characteristics for finishing. It achieves this by ranking beef sires for use in dairy herds based on their genetic performance across key dairy-beef traits.

### The DBI will select for:

- Easy calving, short gestation and less calf mortality.
- Faster growing animals of greater conformation and in-spec fat score.
- Cattle that are polled, carbon efficient and have lower feed intake are rewarded within the index.

## Maternal and Terminal Indexes

### What is the Maternal Index?

The Maternal Index focuses on key maternal traits for suckler cows, including fertility, milk and calving ability, while maintaining performance in weanling production. Suckler farmers breeding replacement heifers should prioritise this index, as it identifies cows that are fertile, efficient and resilient, and capable of producing progeny with good carcass weight and conformation.

The Maternal Index will combine an animal's breeding values into one single pound-valued score.

### The Maternal Index will:

- Improve calving ease
- Improve fertility
- Increase milk production
- Improve longevity
- Improve cow maintenance or liveweight
- Increase maternal weaning weight
- Improve carcass traits

### What is the Terminal Index?

The Terminal Index focuses on the beef traits of an animal such as carcass weight and conformation. Beef farmers wanting to breed animals for finishing or sale as weanlings should focus on the Terminal Index. The Terminal Index will combine an animal's breeding values into one single pound-valued score.

### The Terminal Index will:

- Reduce calving difficulty
- Reduce days to finishing
- Improve carcass weight
- Improve carcass conformation
- Improve carcass fat in-spec
- Other (bTB, Docility, Polledness etc.)

## What is CBV?

The Commercial Beef Value (CBV) is designed to assist non-breeding beef producers by indicating an animal's genetic capability for key beef traits. Like the Maternal and Terminal Indexes, it is measured in pounds (£), with higher CBV figures reflecting stronger beef genetic merit. All animals which have been genotyped and are destined for finishing, from both suckler and dairy herds, will receive a CBV figure.

## Does CBV Work?

This table shows the CBV of over 100,000 genotyped Dairy x Beef steers finished in 2024. The difference in CBV between the top 10% and bottom 10% is £139, with the top 10% in CBV achieving a 67 kg heavier carcass weight and finishing four days earlier than the bottom 10%. This highlights the value of genetic information in supporting more informed buying and selling decisions for farmers.

Dairy x Beef Steers finished in 2024 by CBV					
No. CBV	CBV £	Num.	Weight Kg	Finish	Age Pence/KG
1	£162	14,968	363	843	462
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10	£23	14,944	296	847	455

Annotations in the table: A vertical double-headed arrow between rows 1 and 10 indicates a difference of +£139 in CBV. Another vertical double-headed arrow between rows 1 and 10 indicates a difference of +67kg in Weight Kg. A third vertical double-headed arrow between rows 1 and 10 indicates a difference of -4 days in Finish Age Pence/KG.

## SRG User Portal

### Logging in

Follow these steps on the SRG website:

Log In

1. Go to [www.srgni.com](http://www.srgni.com)
2. Select the Log In button at the top of the screen
3. Login using your Government Gateway or NIDA details



**nidirect**  
government services

NIDA Sign in / register

Sign in using the Northern Ireland Civil Service Identity Assurance (NIDA) provided by nidirect.  
Find out more [🔗](#)

For advice on logging in via nidirect contact: 0300 200 7868 or nida@nidirect.gov.uk



**Government Gateway**

GG Sign in / register

Sign in using your DAERA online services Government Gateway account.  
Find out more [🔗](#)

For advice on logging in via Government Gateway contact: 0300 200 7848

## Services available on the User Portal

Farmers will be able to access:

- **Herd Profiles** - Here farmers can view their herd information and profiles such as their Genomics profile, Co-op profile and many more.
- **Record Events** - Here farmers can record herd information such as liveweight, birth events etc.
- **Reports** - Farmers can access reports on their herd such as Calving Reports etc.

# Herd Profiles

## Genomics Profile

View the genomic status of the herd to date.

Monitor the status of the animals through each stage of genotyping (i.e. “sent to farmer”, “genomic evaluation”, etc.)

View Major Genes / Myostatin

Genomic Herd Profile Myostatin + Polled Lethal

25 Showing 203 entries (filtered from 1,010) Search:

Columns Reset Filters Hide Filters

Jumbo	Animal Number	Start Date	S	Breed	Name	Sire	Sample Received	Genotype Received	Major Genes	Status	Genomic Eval.
00145	<a href="#">UK957166100145</a>	14-DEC-14	F	SHB (44%), GAL (41%)			Yes	Yes	<a href="#">View</a>	<a href="#">GENOTYPE RECEIVED</a>	No
00487	<a href="#">UK581948600487</a>	28-MAR-15	F	GAL (81%)			Yes	Yes	<a href="#">View</a>	<a href="#">GENOTYPE RECEIVED</a>	No
00547	<a href="#">UK954130300547</a>	27-MAR-17	F	GAL (84%)			Yes	Yes	<a href="#">View</a>	<a href="#">GENOTYPE RECEIVED</a>	No

## Record Events

## Record Liveweight

Recording live weights of animals in your herd will help you to identify the best performing animals. Weaning weights at 150-250 days play a crucial part in the daughter milk trait within the beef Maternal Index.

Add animal weights and click save

Record Animal Weight

Currently In Herd Departed Herd

Date of Weighing: 27/01/2026

25 Showing 130 entries Search:

Columns Reset Filters Show Filters

Jumbo	Animal Number	Sex	Date of Birth	Purpose	Breed	Last Weighing Date	Last Weight	Weight
0315	<a href="#">UK906273260315</a>	F	20-APR-25	Beef	AA (53%), SHB (25%)			35kg
0352	<a href="#">UK906273260352</a>	F	20-APR-25	Beef	LIM (53%), SHB (22%)			
0385	<a href="#">UK906273260385</a>							
0422	<a href="#">UK906273260422</a>							

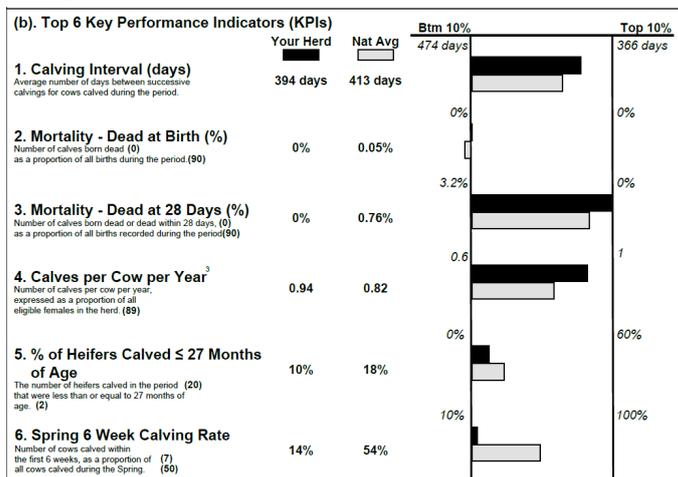
Multiple animals can be selected and saved at once. Changes detected in 1 row(s)!

Save

## Reports

## Calving Reports

Use the Calving Report to get an in depth assessment of the calving performance of your herd. Benchmark your herd against the Northern Ireland National Average and Top 10% for Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) such as Calving Interval, Calves per Cow per Year, Current Replacement Rate and many more.





# SRG



## SUSTAINABLE RUMINANT GENETICS

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Sustainable Ruminant Genetics NI

## Unlocking Genetic Potential