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OLD PROBLEMS – NEW PERSPECTIVES CATTLE ASSOCIATION OF VETERINARY IRELAND CONFERENCE 2015

“Old problems – New Perspectives” was amongst the themes at The Cattle Association of Ireland Veterinary Ireland (CAVI) 2015 annual conference in Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

The annual CAVI Conference in the Mullingar Park Hotel (Friday 9th – Sunday 11th October 2015), combined independent scientific content with practical presentations and workshops with over 190 Irish vets attending.

Speaking at the opening of the conference, Conor Geraghty, MVB, Chair of CAVI said that Irish vets were to be commended for keeping up to speed with latest research, best practice and for continuously updating their technical skills in order to provide the most up to date services to Irish farmers and other clients.

“Vets have the scientific expertise combined with the practical clinical experience to play a significant role in technology transfer, facilitating the improvement of animal health through on farm disease risk assessment and reduction.” said Mr. Geraghty. “Working in collaboration with organisations such as Animal Health Ireland and the Department of Agriculture, vets are best placed to enable Irish farmers improve efficiencies and production in line with the sustainable expectations outlined in the FoodWise 2025 strategy. In addition the sustainability of veterinary practice is essential to a thriving export-led agri-food sector.”

The focus on parasitology in Session five came from guest speaker Dr. Andy Forbes, a vet and ruminant specialist who worked extensively in the UK, South Africa and New Zealand. Dr. Forbes is currently the Chairman of the parasite control technical working group of Animal Health Ireland and a regular lecturer at the School of Veterinary Medicine in Glasgow. His presentations were tailored for practical application on Irish farms in the upcoming Animal Health Measures in the Knowledge Transfer scheme. “*The 45 minute parasite detective*” is an example of what will be required of vets in this scheme.

Mr. Geraghty also commended Temporary Veterinary Inspectors (TVI’s) for enthusiastically agreeing to collect and record clinical and pathological data from meat slaughterhouses as a means of providing more informed animal health strategies on Irish Farms. “This concept, long called for by Veterinary Ireland, was initially piloted at Slaney Meats and will be rolled out in Meat Industry Ireland plants from this autumn by AHI. The potential gain for the Irish agriculture industry is estimated at €200 million per annum in added value when slaughterhouses are equipped for post mortem health data recording and feedback from veterinary inspectors to farmers and vets.”

Pre-conference workshops on the morning of Friday 9th October featured Mastitis Problem Solving (Donal Murphy MVB & Don Crowley), Interpretation of Johne’s Test Results (Sam Strain MVB) and a Recent Graduate Workshop on Dealing with Difficult Clinical Situations (Finbarr Kiernan MVB, John Berkery MVB and Eoin Ryan MVB, MVM).



The conference opened on the afternoon of Friday 9th October with sessions on Fertility and Policy with speakers including Dr. Michael Diskin, Dr. Doreen Corridan, Dr. Margaret Good and Conor Geraghty MVB. Again the presentations were tailored to focus the skills of the attending vets to providing additional services that will be required by farmers in upcoming schemes such as Knowledge Transfer and the Beef Data & Genomics Scheme.

Mycoplasma was the focus of the first morning session on Saturday 10th October. Dr. Roger Ayling, a recognised specialist in this field with 20 years' experience, heads the Bacteriology Department in APHA and travelled from Surrey to deliver a number of presentations on the subject. He was joined by Dr. William Byrne who has undertaken a body of research in this area on Irish farms.

Neonatology was the subject of the second session on Saturday morning with Dr. John Mee discussing Managing the Cow at Calving, Eoin Ryan presenting new approaches to Leptospirosis management and Dr. John Mee discussing modern advances in Abortion Investigations.

Damien Barrett MVB, MVM, MSc presented about the Epidemiology of a pneumonia outbreak in an Irish feedlot as part of the 'Old Problems, New Perspectives' session which featured Dr. Andy Forbes on parasitology. His report outlined the staggering costs associated with such a disease outbreak, not alone in direct costs but in lost live-weight and days to slaughter.

Michael Cox presented a very interesting session on effective communication with clients. Feedback from this session was extremely positive indicating the open minded attitude of vets attending the conference.

The practitioner's forum on the morning of Sunday 11th October was led by Donal Murphy MVB, Kevin O'Sullivan MVB, Donal Lynch MVB and John Berkery MVB. This session allows practitioners to present interesting and challenging cases to their peers and is well received annually. This year the focus was on surgical cases, with novel approaches described to solve complicated clinical situations.

The final session on Sunday 11th October from Animal Health Ireland provided updates on Johne's disease, Beef HealthCheck, BVD, CellCheck and IBR. Speaking at the session the CEO, Joe O'Flaherty, commended the ongoing commitment of vets to the various Technical Working Groups and Implementation Groups within the AHI model. He said that Veterinary Ireland continues to be an important stakeholder in AHI and that the rollout of Targeted Veterinary Advisory Services next year will be a positive step for vets and farmers alike.

ENDS

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