



Veterinary Ireland Media Release

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DIVERSE ROLES OF LIVESTOCK VETS CHALLENGED BY BREXIT 2019 Cattle Association of Veterinary Ireland Conference - Limerick

The Cattle Association of Veterinary Ireland (CAVI) represents veterinarians who support the Irish dairy and beef industries, key pillars in Ireland's important agricultural sector. Against a backdrop of Brexit and the continuing need for improved sustainability, the CAVI Annual Conference hosted by Veterinary Ireland takes place in the **Limerick Strand Hotel** this weekend (18 - 20th October 2019).

The conference was officially opened on Friday morning (18th October 2019) by **Jim Woulfe**, Chief Executive of Dairygold Co-op and **Conor Geraghty** MVB Cert DHH, Veterinary Ireland's CAVI Chairman. They also both participated in a panel discussion on '**Dairy Practice 2025**' joined by Doreen Corridan from Munster Bovine and Finbar Mulligan, Associate Professor of Animal Nutrition at the School of Veterinary Medicine, UCD.

Jim Woulfe said that the customer of the future will demand milk that is natural and nutritious, produced in a sustainable environment, from animals where husbandry and welfare are best in class - assembled and packaged in a safe, secure and compliant environment with the entire process underpinned by evidence based data.

CAVI Chairman **Conor Geraghty** said that the veterinary conference highlights the diverse and important role that Irish cattle vets play in helping Irish farmers to manage healthy livestock – but also supporting the high quality of the food produced by the Irish dairy and beef industries through clinical veterinary services; the promotion of best practice and standards; and the vigilance required to protect our national herds from exposure to major disease.

“Both of these veterinary roles – the role of supporting farmers through veterinary practices throughout rural Ireland and the role of supporting our top-quality food standards - are central to the dairy and beef sectors. These industries are a valuable part of the Irish economy,” said Mr. Geraghty.

“Given the uncertainties of Brexit, it is important to make sure that both of these Irish veterinary roles remain available and that neither role is compromised or adversely diluted by the movement of veterinarians from practices, to new jobs at our border and ports arising from Brexit. This could undermine the availability of veterinary services to the farming community and public.”

Antimicrobial Resistance

Conor Geraghty said that Veterinary Ireland continues to have a concern about Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), highlighting that the use of antibiotics will inevitably, over time, lead to resistance developing in the bacteria they are intended to target.

“The Veterinary Ireland Policy Document on AMR was ratified in May 2014. Education and awareness are an essential part of the solution - but reducing the usage of antimicrobials has been and continues to be a key goal of practicing vets in Ireland, demonstrated by the increasing use of vaccines.”

Mr. Geraghty said that proactive on-farm veterinary involvement increases herd health, reducing the need for antibiotic usage and increasing productivity. The net result is a more sustainable model of farming – less antibiotics, lower carbon emissions and better animal welfare outcomes, which is also more efficient for the farmer. He said that Veterinary Ireland will continue to highlight to its members the important role that vets play as custodians of antimicrobial use in animals.



The CAVI Conference featured a panel discussion on **The Future of Prescribing** including Rob Doyle, Senior Superintending Veterinary Inspector in the Animal Health & Welfare Division of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. It also included a presentation on **Anthelmintic Resistance in Dairy Calves** presented by James O'Shaughnessy MVB PhD, Researcher with the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine.

Veterinary Expertise

Some 28 experts and veterinarians are involved in presenting latest techniques to over 150 cattle vets during the Veterinary Ireland conference, with other subjects ranging from nutritional management and suckler fertility to stabilising emergencies and including surgical techniques.

The conference is not just looking at livestock health. David McKeown, BVMS CertSHP ARAgS MRCVS leads a Mini MBA session on **Worklife Balance**. His presentation gives tips to the vets on avoiding mental health issues in spite of modern-day stresses. His session explores human brain science and inevitable and unavoidable behaviour patterns and includes a practical session demonstrating a number of simple techniques for managing anxiety, overwhelm and stress.

Sean O'Sullivan MVB MRCVS, from Castle Vet Clinic in Castleisland, Co Kerry is covering Calving Difficulties **"My Way is Better – The Physical Challenge."** This presentation reviews changes in breeding strategies in Dairy and Beef herds and how this is impacting on calving. The role of the veterinary practitioner in servicing these herds and the expectation of the owner/herd manager has also changed. Sean believes that simple calving cases are few and far between in veterinary practice. The approach and management of the most difficult cases, including malpresentations, foetal oversize and foetal anomalies form part of his discussion.

IBR in the dairy herd was the subject of a presentation by Dr Maria Guelbenzu, BVD & IBR Programme Manager, Animal Health Ireland.

Infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) is a highly infectious disease caused by the Bovine herpesvirus type 1 (BoHV-1) which, in Ireland, is mostly involved in respiratory infections. It is estimated that 75% of dairy herds in Ireland have been exposed to this virus. Clinical signs of the infection include nasal discharge, conjunctivitis, fever, inappetence and on occasion, death. Infection can also be accompanied by decreased milk yield and a range of negative reproductive outcomes.

Outlining that Animal Health Ireland's IBR Technical Working Group (TWG) is currently developing options for a national control programme, Dr Guelbenzu also pointed to studies that showed that most vaccinating herds have a reduction in the within herd prevalence of animals positive to BoHV-1 with time, even in the absence of formal biosecurity measures.

Associate Professor Rory Breathnach, MVB MSc MRCVS PhD, School of Veterinary Medicine, University College Dublin, presented in a small animal workshop on **Atopic Dermatitis** – the second most common hypersensitive skin disorder in the dog, with many surveys suggesting the incidence is as high as 10% of all dogs. The clinical syndrome is much less frequently diagnosed in the cat. He reviewed the mode of entry of offending allergens, clinical signs and approaches to both diagnosis and treatment.

You will find a summary of the conference schedule here:

https://caviconference.com/images/cavi_programme_2019.pdf

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