



## **Veterinary Ireland Media Release – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

### **Worldwide Cattle Veterinary Experts Convene in Ireland for Global Congress #WBC2016**

Over 2,800 vets, researchers and experts in cattle health, will convene in Ireland in early July for The World Buiatrics Congress. Hosted by Veterinary Ireland in Dublin's Convention Centre from 3rd-8th July 2016, the Congress itself has attracted delegates from more than 65 countries and is expected to boost the Irish economy by approximately €5 million.

“Consumers and retailers are increasingly showing an interest in cattle health and welfare,” according to Irish vet Michael Sexton, who is Head of the Local Organising Committee for the World Congress. “Vets play a big role with their farmer clients in maintaining the health and welfare of cattle herds throughout the world,” said Mr. Sexton.

“In Ireland, the advisory, clinical and scientific expertise of vets is also at the heart of our superb track record in food safety and quality through the veterinary inspectorate services, supporting the positive reputation of our food and agricultural industry – a sector which is playing an important part in Ireland's economic revival.”

The agri-food industry provides employment for about 163,000 people in Ireland and saw exports of Irish food and drink increase in the years between 2010-2014, against a backdrop of recession. The Government's Food Wise 2025 strategy predicts that Irish agri-food exports have the potential to grow to €19 billion per annum in value by 2025.

“Cattle – both dairy and beef – are an important part of that, particularly given that our temperate climate favours grass-based livestock farming,” said Mr. Sexton.

“The Irish dairy and beef sector is worth protecting in so many ways, not just economic, but also because it is a way of life for so many farm families in rural communities,” said Mr. Sexton. “This in turn reinforces the importance of the work done by Irish vets in the eradication of animal diseases and in measures to defend Ireland from the threat of new disease outbreaks.”

Presentations by Irish vets reflecting the success of disease eradication programmes are amongst the 32 keynote lectures and 300 oral presentations to be delivered at the global Congress in Dublin. The sharing of latest scientific updates and clinical techniques extends to 700 poster presentations, workshops, symposia and round table discussions.

Buiatrics is defined as the study of cattle and their diseases. The World Association of Buiatrics (WAB) held its preliminary meeting in Hannover (Germany) in October 1960 with the objective of organising meetings on diseases and production in cattle, with a view to reporting and discussing the results of research work and other practical experiences associated with cattle health.

The World Buiatrics Congress is recognised as the “Olympic Games of conferences” for people who study cattle. This congress is the official gathering of the World Association of Buiatrics, of which Veterinary Ireland is a member organisation. The WBC congress is held in a different part of the world every 2 years since its inception in 1960. The World Buiatrics Congress was last hosted in Ireland in 1986.

Further details at [www.wbc2016.com](http://www.wbc2016.com) – conference enquiries to MCI 01-280 2641.

**ENDS**

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*The Congress organising team will also be available on the ground **within and throughout the conference** to help with media questions at the event: **Hugh 085-7608091 & Ali 086-4010353***