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## CELLCHECK NEWS **P2**



## GUEST CONTRIBUTOR **P3**



## CELLCHECK TIP OF THE MONTH **P5**



## SERVICE PROVIDER NOTES **P6**



**CellCheck**  
NEWSLETTER

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## NEWS



# CellCheck

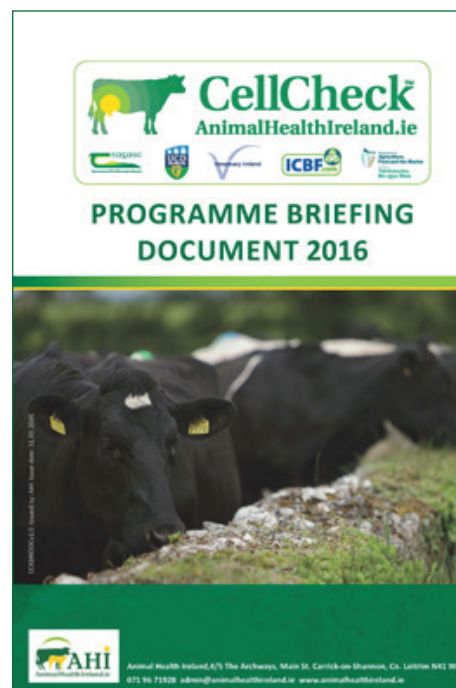
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**FINOLA McCOY, PROGRAMME MANAGER**

## CellCheck Briefing document 2016

**A REMINDER** that the *CellCheck* Briefing document for 2016 is available on the AHI website [\[click here\]](#). This document sets out the work plan for the year, as well as focusing on the work and achievements of the *CellCheck* programme including highlighting the significant reduction in SCC since the inception of the *CellCheck* programme. This is an important document for all Stakeholders involved in the *CellCheck* programme.



## GUEST CONTRIBUTOR



JIM WOULFE, CEO, DAIRYGOLD

# The Importance of Milk Quality for the Infant Formula Sector

**THE DAIRY** industry in Ireland has been a core supplier to the Infant formula (IF) sector over many years. A key feature of this relationship has been the development of effective partnerships and the ability to meet the exacting and demanding quality standards that the sector requires.

In fact, circa 15% of infant milk formula traded internationally is now manufactured in Ireland and three of the world's largest infant nutrition companies – Abbott, Wyeth and Danone – operate manufacturing facilities in Ireland.

Given that the sector represents a \$44bn market globally with growth rates of circa 10% per annum, it offers significant expansion opportunities for the Irish Dairy industry in meeting the sector's growth forecasts. However, in seeking to capture this market growth it must be recognised that the quality standards that the marketplace requires are not static but are in fact continually evolving and increasing.

The Irish dairy industry does have an advantage given its strong reputation for delivering the highest standards of product quality. In order to maintain and strengthen that reputation the Irish dairy industry must recognise quality in its broadest sense to include food safety, overall milk quality parameters, on farm standards and sustainable grass based milk production systems.

The implications of this are that we need systems across the supply chain that help improve quality parameters and provide continuous reassurance about the integrity of our products and how they are produced. Of course this must also be done in a way that provides a sustainable economic return to the primary producer.



There are a number of areas that have been central to our Industry's success to date and will form the bedrock for future growth as follows:

- The investment by the industry in world class facilities that meet all regulatory and compliance standards and deliver products of the highest quality from facilities that are among the most efficient globally.
- Significant sectoral expertise and our collaborative industry approaches on milk quality. Stakeholders such as Animal Health Ireland (AHI), Bord Bia, Irish Cattle Breeding Federation (ICBF), Teagasc, Ornu, and the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine have worked together to roll out innovative milk quality programs and initiatives to benefit the collective dairy industry from primary producer to end customer. Both the Sustainable Dairy Assurance Scheme (SDAS) and the Cellcheck programme are excellent examples of this.
- At a more local level the majority of milk processors operate joint on-farm programmes in conjunction with Teagasc. These have the dual goal of improving farmers' incomes by promoting efficient production on farm and improving milk quality parameters.
- Other initiatives that encourage continuous improvement in milk quality are fundamental to retaining the competitive advantage of the Irish Dairy Industry. In Dairygold for example we developed a Balanced Scorecard Method of assessing milk quality. This initiative helps our milk suppliers to keep a clear focus on their overall milk quality across a number of parameters by rewarding them for achieving higher quality product. This has delivered a consistent increase in overall profitability at farm level and milk quality at factory level. Cellcheck, operated by AHI, has also provided the industry with an effective approach that once again has delivered real results at farm and dairy product level.
- Finally, as previously highlighted the recently launched independently accredited "Sustainable Dairy Assurance Scheme" is a unique initiative globally. Branded under the Origin Green label it demonstrates the significant advantage that Irish dairy products have from a sustainability perspective. With consumers becoming ever more aware of how their food is produced the opportunity that this presents for the entire Irish Dairy industry and its customers is hugely significant.

Infant milk formula is blended and manufactured to fulfil the nutritional needs of babies in the critical early development stages of life. Fundamental to this is the supply of the safest and highest quality raw material. Consistently providing the right quality milk is fundamental to the Irish dairy industry's success in supplying the Infant formula industry- a sector where any aspect of the supply chain cannot afford a "first mistake". To deliver a real and unique value premium to Irish dairy farmers, we must protect and promote the reputation, quality, taste and nutritional credentials of our grass-based and sustainable Irish dairy produce.

In summary, the priority focus for the industry as we move forward should be the continuous improvement in milk quality and our sustainability credentials. In that way we can maintain our market leadership position as the global suppliers of choice for premium infant formula. Let's build on the great progress to date and by continuing our focus on quality, deliver on our potential into the future.

# CELLCHECK TIP OF THE MONTH



## CellCheck Farmer Workshops-sign up today!

**DID YOU** know that you could increase your net farm profit by at least 1 cent per litre by improving mastitis control? Learn how at a CellCheck Farmer Workshop.....

This workshop will help you to understand the causes of mastitis and highlight how making simple changes in your everyday milking routine and management can improve and maintain lower SCC levels in your herd. CellCheck Farmer Workshops are delivered by teams of CellCheck-trained service providers, to provide you with the combined expertise of a farm advisor, a vet, a milking machine technician and a co-op milk quality advisor. The workshop is 2.5 hours in duration and is farm-based, with a mixture of classroom style learning, interactive and practical workstations, and group discussion. Group sizes are small to allow plenty of discussion and questions.

We are pleased to announce that DAFM has confirmed that CellCheck Farmer Workshops will be a component of the Dairy Knowledge Transfer (KT) measures under the new Rural Development Programme, which is due to start this June. In addition to participation in discussion group meetings, Dairy KT participants will be required to participate in a CellCheck Farmer Workshop if they haven't done so since 01/01/2015.

With approximately 7,000 dairy farmers expected to participate in the Dairy KT measures, it is anticipated that more than 400 workshops will be held throughout the country over the next 2 years. Following the positive feedback and outcomes from workshops held to date, this is a unique opportunity to continue to increase farmer engagement with the CellCheck programme and its resources, and to reap the benefits of better udder health.

# SERVICE PROVIDER NOTES



## Knowledge Transfer Programme Starting Summer 2016!

**AS OUTLINED** in the 'Tip of the Month', the eagerly-awaited Knowledge Transfer (KT) Programme is expected to commence this June. This creates a great opportunity for service providers to engage with their farming clients, through CellCheck Farmer Workshops. Dairy discussion group facilitators have been approved, and the process of registering their group participants will commence this month. Approximately 7,000 dairy farmers are expected to participate, with over 400 KT discussion groups around the country. One of the requirements of the KT Programme is participation in a CellCheck Farmer Workshop, within the first 18 months of the programme commencing. Any of your dairy farming clients that participated in a Farmer Workshops since January 1st 2015 will get recognition for this, and will not have to repeat the Workshop under the KT programme.

The delivery model for CellCheck Farmer Workshops will continue to be the same, with the four person delivery team (co-op advisor, group facilitator, milking machine technician and vet). All delivery team members must have completed CellCheck Stage 2 Workshop training. The participation fee continues to be €40 per farmer, which goes towards covering the fees of those members of the delivery team who need to charge for their time, as well as the cost of materials. As before, this participation fee will be deducted from the supplier's milk cheque, with their permission.

For those of you that have completed Stage 2 Workshop training, but may not have had an opportunity yet to get involved in workshop delivery, make sure to contact your local CellCheck Regional Coordinator and express your interest. Workshops will be organised by the KT discussion group facilitators with the support of Regional Coordinators, so it's important that they know you are interested in being invited to join delivery teams.

## CellCheck Regional Coordinators

A Resource and Point of Contact for  
*CellCheck* Activities in your Area



- 1** Paul Cullinan  
087 2470803  
Mayo/Sligo  
Aurivo



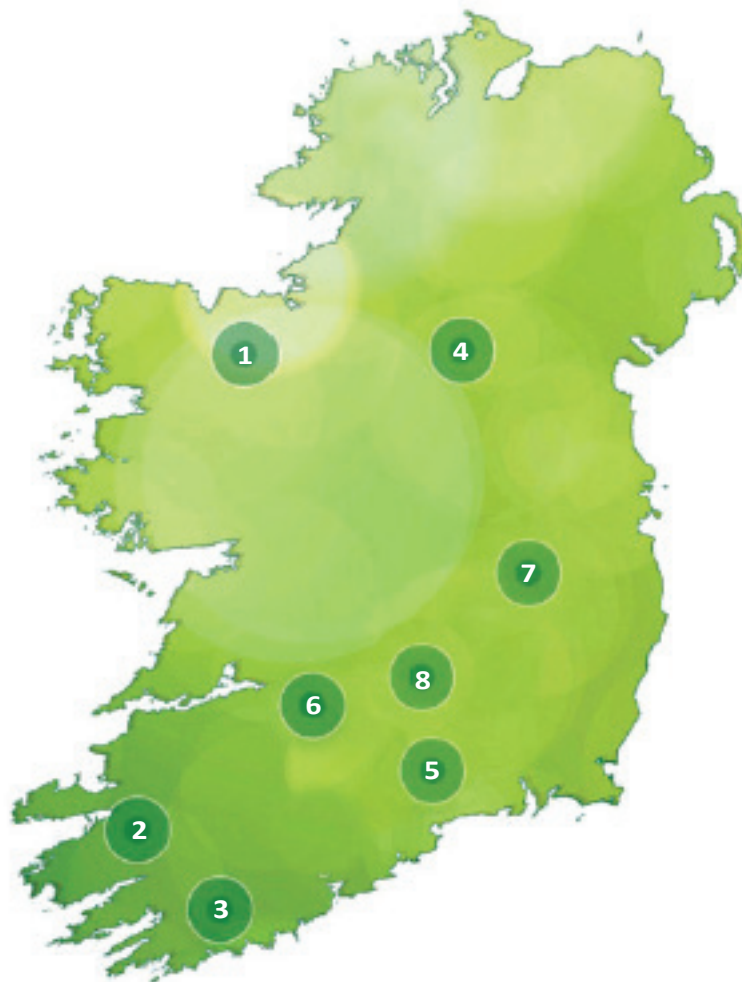
- 2** Joe Moriarty  
066 7163200  
Kerry/Clare  
Kerry Agribusiness



- 3** Enda Buckley  
023 8822369  
West Cork  
Carbery Group



- 4** Tom Downes  
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Longford/Monaghan  
Lakeland Dairies



- 5** Brendan Dillon  
087 2626851  
Cork/Waterford/  
Wexford/Wicklow  
Glanbia



- 6** Tom Starr  
087 6697010  
Tipperary/Limerick  
Arrabawn Co-op



- 7** John Fitzpatrick  
086 0426567  
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Glanbia



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