



## PRESS RELEASE

### AHI announces FBD sponsorship of the CellCheck Milking For Quality Awards



**Michael Berkery Chair FBD Trust, Charlie McConalogue, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michelle McGrath, acting CellCheck Programme Manager and James Lynch Chair, Animal Health Ireland.**

At the recent launch of the Milking for Quality Awards, AHI announced the renewed sponsorship by FBD of the **CellCheck Milking For Quality Awards**. The sponsorship is for a three-year period. This Award is given to the 500 milk suppliers nationally with the lowest weighted annual average somatic cell count (SCC) for the previous year's supply. It is an initiative to recognise and reward the excellence of Irish dairy farmers who are currently achieving high standards of udder health on their

farm. All 16 national Co-ops submitted data to the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine and all Coops have winners in the 'Best 500' category.

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Arrabawn Co-op          | Drinagh Co-op        |
| Aurivo                  | Kerry AgriBusiness   |
| Bandon Co-op            | Lakeland Dairies     |
| Barryroe Co-op          | Lee Strand Co-op     |
| Boherbue Co-op          | Lisavaird Co-op      |
| Callan Co-op            | North Cork Cremeries |
| Centenary Thurles Co-op | Tipperary Co-op      |
| Dairygold               | Tirlan               |

Attending the launch, the Minister Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConalogue T.D. said; "I am very pleased to be to be associated with what the CellCheck Milking For Quality Awards represents. These Awards give recognition to Irish dairy farmers and their families for their hard work in producing milk to the highest standard in terms of SCC. While these Awards are given to 500 winners from each of the Co-ops, they are representative of all the great work that is being done across the country when it comes to managing SCC".

James Lynch, Chair of Animal Health Ireland said; "I would like to thank the FBD Trust and especially Michael Berkery for their continued support. This allows us to celebrate the achievements of our CellCheck Milking for Quality Awards winners. Our Awards acknowledge the continued excellent work being done on Irish farms and it recognises farmers who are demonstrating what can be achieved in terms of excellent udder health, contributing to the continued sustainability of agriculture in Ireland"

Michael Berkery Chair of FBD Trust said; "We in FBD are delighted to continue our long-standing relationship with the Animal Health Ireland CellCheck Milking For Quality Awards. It is particularly gratifying to see the Awards ceremony being reinstated in 2022 after a 2-year break due to the pandemic. FBD has been supporting the Awards since their inception in 2014 and it is wonderful to see this initiative go from strength to strength. Animal Health Ireland is recognised for its immense contribution to the sustainability of Ireland's livestock sector and in particular with the CellCheck programme where the improvements in milk quality has paid off with increased income for farmers. I would like to congratulate all the winners with their on-farm achievements. These farmers are pioneers in the continuous improvement in Irish food standards and in our competitiveness as a food producing and exporting nation.

The CellCheck Milking for Quality Awards ceremony will be held on Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2022 in Killashee House Hotel, Naas, Co. Kildare.

CellCheck is the national mastitis control programme, coordinated and facilitated by Animal Health Ireland. It is being developed and delivered in partnership with industry bodies representing farmers, processors, service providers and government. This programme complements the work which Animal Health Ireland does in educating dairy farmers in achieving and maintaining a low somatic cell count level in of their herd. This delivers benefits to the herd and more widely in terms of improved profitability and welfare and reduced antimicrobial usage.

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