ANIMAL HEALTH IRELAND

To contribute to an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable farming and agri-food sector through improved animal health and welfare

Animal Health Ireland, 2-5 The Archways, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim, N41 WN27
Phone | 071 9671928 Email | ahi@animalhealthireland.ie

Press Release
3rd July 2025

New videos launched to help farmers tackle lameness in cows

A new series of short AHI videos on dairy cow lameness, now available online were launched yesterday, 2nd of July by the Noel Grealish TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, at the Teagasc Dairy Open Day in Moorepark, Fermoy, County Cork.

The SCIP project (Sound Cow Innovation Programme) was also launched, which is an EIP-funded initiative involving Animal Health Ireland (AHI), Teagasc, UCD, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, ICBF, ICFTA (Irish Cattle Foot Trimmers Association), Tirlán, veterinary input and Farm Relief Service. It aims to pilot a lameness control programme on Irish dairy farms.

Speaking at the Open day, Dr Muireann Conneely, Teagasc researcher and chair of the AHI Hoof HealthCheck Technical Working Group, said; "Lameness is one of the most pressing health and welfare challenges facing Irish dairy farms. Recent Teagasc research found that approximately 1 in 10 Irish dairy cows is lame at any one time, with levels rising to over 30% in some herds. The top 20% of Irish herds maintain lameness prevalence below 5%."

Michelle McGrath, Hoof HealthCheck Programme Manager at Animal Health Ireland said "For the average 100 cow dairy herd with 10% lameness, the cost of lameness is approximately €8,750 per annum. The SCIP programme is key in highlighting a preventative approach to lameness in dairy herds, while complementing how farmers are successfully approaching lameness. The programme will be a first step to having a lameness control plan for all farms in Ireland."

The first in the series of videos on dairy cow lameness explores why lameness matters, not just for animal welfare, but also for farm productivity, sustainability and public trust.

On Teagasc Daily, an article will accompany each video, as part of a five-part series aimed at helping farmers tackle lameness through practical, evidence-based solutions. Follow www.teagasc.ie/daily for updates.

ENDS