ANIMAL HEALTH IRELAND

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

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Press Release
14th August 2025

AHI Announces first-ever 'Weanling Week' health series

Three mart events in the west of Ireland for suckler farmers supported by AIB

Ahead of the peak weanling sales season, Roscommon, Ennis and Mayo/Sligo Marts, along with Animal Health Ireland (AHI) are hosting a series of events aimed at ensuring calves are in top health for the sales. The events are supported by AIB.

The series, entitled **Weanling Week – Worth Their Weight in Gold**, will take place in three marts along the western seaboard.

AHI's Programme Managers, as well as local vets, will provide expert veterinary advice on how to manage cows and calves over the weanling period, whether calves are being sold or retained for breeding. Each event will be chaired by Eilish Gill from AHI's SPARC programme. A member of AIB will also be on hand to offer help and support to farmers from the locality.

Topics will include the need to know the calf's weight, correct dosage rates, calibration of dosing equipment, the importance of dung sampling, top pre-housing checks, the animal diseases you need to be aware of, the tell-tale signs of a sick animal, and when to intervene.

The events will take place at **Roscommon Mart** on 25th August, **Ennis Mart** on 27th August, and **Mayo Sligo Mart** on 28th August, all with a start time of **7.30pm.**

Speaking ahead of the event, Dr Natascha Meunier, Programme Manager of AHI **Beef HealthCheck**, said: *"We're looking forward to hosting these important weanling events in conjunction with Roscommon, Ennis and Mayo/Sligo Marts, which have a great pedigree of selling top-class weanlings. The weanling season is the most important time of the year for a suckler farmer. Having spent years breeding a good animal and months rearing the calf, it all comes down to the weanling sales season. Therefore, it is critical that farmers get this period of the year right. With live cattle prices where they are and strong demand in the marts, ensuring that your weanling is the healthiest it can be is critical. We will step farmers through the dos and don'ts of protecting their livestock around sales time. Anyone who is buying or selling weanlings is strongly encouraged to attend this hugely important series run by AHI."*

Dr Michelle McGrath, Programme Manager of AHI **CalfCare**, said: "*Whether you're buying or selling weanlings this season, the health of the animal is very important. Farmers have worked incredibly hard to rear their calves from birth. They want to ensure that the person who buys them is getting a healthy and thriving animal. The difference here comes down to the health management around weanling time. It is also important that the cow is managed safely over the period to ensure she has time over the winter to recover."*

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