Newford Open Day

Dawn Meats were delighted to host almost 1000 suckler beef farmers to our second Newford Farm open day on September 5th. Newford Farm is now four years into a seven year program and was originally set up to examine the commercial returns being achieved from suckler beef farming. Changing customer preferences for smaller portion sizes, lower price points and competition from other meats has meant that the traditional heavier carcases from continental breeds are less marketable than was once the case a number of years ago. As a consequence we have had to look critically at all aspects of the beef production and processing system to identify possible solutions to these challenges. The farm which is managed by Matthew Murphy, supported by Dawn Meats and Teagasc in association with The Irish Farmers Journal and McDonald’s sets out to examine viable alternatives to traditional suckler beef production, using the best science available, trialling new technologies and using established management practices which have been proven in other agri sectors and industry. Visitors to the farm on the 5th September were presented with the hard data, including a €300/hd reduction in operating costs which was achieved through a combination of improved conception and mortality rates, a compact calving period, grass land management, live weight gains and reduced veterinary costs. Improved weight gains were however less than what was targeted for steers at 20 months of age at slaughter and further work will need to be undertaken to address this shortfall in weight gain in the final 12 months of finishing. We believe we can make further progress and with this in mind we are investigating with our partners what potential there is to improve the cow genetics. Couple with this that we optimise further the feed regime on the farm. Keep an eye on newfordsucklerbeef.ie for further progress.

Dawn Meats would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in the Open day as well as the ongoing visits by the beef discussion groups and young farmers who question and challenge what innovations and alternative systems we set out to examine.

Pictured at the Newford Open Day (l-r): Matthew Murphy, Sarah Haire, Niall Browne and Richard Clinton of Dawn Meats.

Ploughing Ahead

In spite of the disappointment surrounding the unfortunate but necessary closure of Screggan on Day 2 of the Ploughing Championships, we were well engaged if not as busy as in other years. Procurement personnel from all our Dawn Meats plants – including Slane for the first time – were on hand each day meeting many of our farmer suppliers at our stand in the Irish Aberdeen Angus marquee.

Despite the tough year that our industry has faced since Ploughing 2017 it was heartening to hear farmers resilience, positivity and determination to take stock and budget ahead for the coming Winter and Spring season on farm.
Harvest Festival

Dawn Meats had the pleasure of supporting the 10th annual Harvest Festival from the 8th – 10th September.

Our ‘Taste of Dawn Meats’ marquee was located in the centre of Waterford city in John Robert’s square, hosting cookery demonstrations from Friday evening through to Sunday. The demo’s kicked off with an exciting battle of hurling legends (Barry Coughlan and Derek McGrath) with a ‘cook off’ in the kitchen compered by John Mullane.

Saturday’s line up of cooking demos included Fergal Phelan of Heery’s, Eric Theze from La Boheme, Antonio Binde of Emiliano’s Restaurant, Jenny Flynn of Faithlegg House Hotel, and Decky Walsh of Holy Smoke. Sunday’s demos continued to entice the crowds with the Gastro Gays followed by Tony Barry, Waterford Institute of Technology, Sam Burfield, The Tannery Dungarvan and finally Keith Boyle, The Bay Tree Bistro in Waterford.

Dawn Meats also supplied the Viking Feast lunch at Walsh’s Bakehouse and the End of Harvest Dinner at The Bay Tree Bistro.

Thanks to all those sending congratulatory feedback messages about the experience with Dawn at Harvest...we hope to see you all again next year.

Fodder Situation

We are all actively aware of the challenges on Irish and European farms over the past 12 months in terms of extreme and unusual weather events.

In Ireland’s case we have seen livestock housed early in Autumn 2017, fodder consumption exceeded budgets over the winter, heavy snow and rain which was followed by drought in the summer months, depleted already scarce stocks of fodder. Marketing beef has not been easy over the past few months as our major markets have themselves suffered from the same drought problems necessitating larger kills than normal in their own markets at a time of year that sees limited interest in many primal cuts.

As we move deeper into Autumn we are working hard to ensure better results as we edge towards the Christmas and early Spring.

ISO 50001

Dawn Meats has been awarded ISO 50001 energy management certification for our work in Ireland to hit sustainability targets of reducing our energy intensity by 40% by 2025. The award by Certification Europe recognises our comprehensive energy management system across eight of our Irish processing sites.

Niall Browne CEO Dawn Meats commented: “The team at Dawn Meats underwent a rigorous audit process with Certification Europe to progress our ambition to be Europe’s most sustainable meat company. Achieving certification to ISO 50001 standard is a clear recognition of the company’s commitment coupled with the energy champions and site teams directly involved.”

Health and Safety Week

We were delighted to once again hold our annual Health and Safety Week from 1st – 5th October.

Health & Safety Week is an internal initiative to promote Health, Safety and Wellbeing within the workplace. It is an integral part of our commitment to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all our colleagues. As well as focusing on Safety, it provided information on health issues to enable us to make informed decisions and choices on our health.

Some of the topics and activities during the week included:
- How to report Hazards and Near Misses.
- Information on First Aid in an Emergency.
- The importance of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and why we wear it.
- Facts and information on, heart health, healthy eating and diet.
- Health benefits of eating red meat.

- Information on exercise options.
- Winter driving tips.
- The importance of drinking water and staying hydrated.
- External activity events to promote exercise such, daily lunch time walks and hill/park walks/runs.
Clean Livestock

Building on our messaging to date about the necessity to present cattle and sheep as clean as possible to your processor, we decided to go one further with a physical demonstration at our recent open day at Newford.

The feedback was very positive with many farmers commenting that the physical display really brought the message home. This along with vet Frank O’Sullivan’s ventilation exhibit certainly raised the profile of the subject for all present.

Tullamore Show

It is always remarkable how quickly August and the Tullamore Show - or more importantly for us - the National Livestock Show comes around. Indeed this amazing one day event is a real gem as it highlights the wealth of quality beef that our breed societies maintain which must be adapted and preserved as we continue to create demand in Europe for our world class quality beef.

Iverk Show

Notwithstanding the new date for the All Ireland Final. Kilkenny hurlers finished their campaign earlier than expected this year and it was left to the Iverk Show to take centre stage which they did with a championship winning display. A huge crowd were treated to everything from the best home cooking to class livestock competitions. We were delighted to once again take part in Ireland’s oldest agricultural show and to meet so many of our suppliers for a bit of craic and chat throughout yet another dry Iverk Show day...roll on 2019.

Blas na hEireann Awards

Dawn Meats were honoured to receive 2 gold awards at the 11th annual Blas na h’Eireann awards ceremony in October. Blas na h’Eireann are the Irish Food Awards and are the biggest competition for quality Irish produce on the island of Ireland. Over 2500 products were entered into the 2018 competition to win Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards in over 100 food and drink categories of which Dawn Meats were proud to have received ‘Best in Waterford’ as well as Gold for our Vintage Reserve West of Ireland 50 Day Dry aged French trimmed bone in Rib of beef and our Bone-In Striploin.

Procurement Contacts

If you require further information please contact our procurement team:

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Paul Mullaney  |  Dawn Charleville  |  087 9614323
Daniel Bergin  |  Dawn Charleville  |  087 9178779
Conor Howley  |  Dawn Charleville  |  087 9113953
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Sean Behan  |  Dawn Grannagh  |  087 2561836
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Walter Cleary  |  Dawn Grannagh  |  087 7382295
John Neville  |  Dawn Grannagh/Charleville  |  087 2232469
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Double Winner at Lean Business Ireland Awards 2018

Dawn Meats has been recognised with two awards at the prestigious Lean Business Ireland Awards 2018 in Croke Park, Dublin. The Lean Business Ireland Awards recognise and celebrate the lean and enterprise excellence achievements of companies in Ireland.

We have been awarded the prize for “Most progress made towards Organisational Efficiency” as well as the Lean Business Ireland “Audience Choice Award” which was voted on by the audience itself on the night. Our submission focused on achievements at our plant in Carroll’s Cross, Co Waterford.

Our Carroll’s Cross site is fully committed to implementing lean thinking throughout all of its activities. After completion of an initial training phase, site management recognised the benefits of utilising Lean tools and identified 6S Workplace Organisation, P.I.T. process monitoring, standard work and A3 projects as key factors in achieving improved organisational efficiency.

Particular efforts were made to ensure that the initial lean approach which was driven by consultants and senior management was embraced and incorporated into the work of all employees at the site. All employees are now empowered, trained and motivated in Lean thinking practices.

Niall Browne, CEO of Dawn Meats commented “We knew that to successfully integrate Lean thinking into everyday business we needed to have every member of staff acting as a lean champion and not solely rely on the area managers to try to accomplish this. As a result, every member of the team can take ownership and be extremely proud of these two awards. To be awarded the Audience Choice award is particularly special and great recognition for the whole team by their peers in industry.”

Chef Network

Dawn Meats Foodservice are delighted to partner with Chef Network educating chefs in the art of butchery.

We have completed two demonstrations in CIT and WIT where John Dunne from Dawn Meats Ballymount partnered with Sam Burfield, Head Chef, The Tannery. John showed packed houses how to debone and cut a beef forequarter, whilst Sam showed how to use these cuts and the value than can be achieved from them. We are on the road again in October with Chef Network with two demonstrations in Dublin and Galway. Booking will be available on the Chef Network website. Follow us on social media for more detail.

Savour Kilkenny

We are delighted to be involved once again in Savour Kilkenny. We have a fabulous cook off with two legends of Kilkenny hurling – Jackie Tyrell and Paul Murphy.

Renowned chefs Edward Hayden and Anne Neary will partner with the two hurlers in this epic clash! Throw in at 2.30pm on Saturday October 27th. We are challenging former Kilkenny captain Jackie Tyrell and right corner-back Paul Murphy to make their favourite dish using Dawn Meats’ premium beef. Jackie and Paul will have spent an afternoon with Anne and Edward, honing and perfecting their culinary skills, to discover if they can be champions in the kitchen as well as on the field of play. We’ll have a very special referee on the day to decide if these two hurling legends can rustle up a dish of champions! Our Premium Butcher shop will be present on the Parade serving our best range of meat cuts for you to enjoy after a great day out at Savour.