

people farming

Open day at Tulsk fruit farm

An open day will be held at Van Delft's fruit farm at Ardkeenagh, Tulsk this Saturday, May 8th, from 10 am to 3 pm.

The Van Delft's arrived in Tulsk three years ago from Holland and began growing apples, pears, plums and cherries and this year they also started to grow strawberries. The fruit is sold at markets in Roscommon, and Strokestown as well as from the farm. If you would like to see more of their Tulsk fruit farm, drop in to the open day on Saturday, from 10 am to 3 pm, and see for yourself the fruit trees that are currently in blossom.



Safety plans

The Irish Farmers Association has pledged to intensify its efforts to promote safety on farms. Among the initiatives included in a recent submission to government are safety training courses for farmers through IFA Skillnet, the promotion of the new online risk assessment service at branch and county meetings, and a Farm Safety media campaign.

Mrs. Patsy Beades, Chairperson, Roscommon IFA Farm Family Committee has urged all farm families to be particularly vigilant as they face into the busy harvesting season. "The latest farm tragedy in Co Leitrim should reinforce in everybody's mind the importance of ensuring that safety procedures are followed."

Beirne blasts carbon tax 'folly'

Roscommon IFA Co. Chairman, Mr. John O'Beirne, has called on the Government to scrap the carbon tax on farm diesel. "There has never been a greater need for a pro-enterprise view in Government as the economy seeks to return to growth. The Green agenda cannot be allowed to hijack the productivity of the agricultural sector just to shore up support among their dwindling membership."

Mr. O'Beirne said IFA had spoken to Government Ministers and rural TDs in recent weeks about



the harmful impact the carbon tax would have on agriculture.

He said the latest figures from the Department of Agriculture show that the carbon tax will reduce farm incomes by two per-

cent. "It will escalate costs for the tillage sector and agricultural contractors, who are struggling to pay the bills as things stand, never mind further increases."

"The tax will cost the Government a lot more than the revenue generated, with jobs lost and a delay in restoring competitiveness to the economy."

The IFA Chairman said, "Farm Incomes last year were at their lowest in a generation. The imposition of this uncompetitive tax on production will hamper the recovery of the agriculture sector and

its return to growth. The carbon tax on farm diesel in particular is simply an extra cost on production for farmers as no alternative fuels are available and farmers cannot pass on the extra cost to the market. Tillage farmers have endured two very difficult harvests and cannot absorb this extra levy."

Mr. O'Beirne continued, "I am calling on the Government to recognise the damage the introduction of the Carbon Tax will do to the productive agriculture sector and the negative effect it will have on farm incomes."

mart round-up

Castlereau

There were 900 cattle on offer this week with a very good attendance of buyers present, resulting in a good clearance and the demand for quality feeding stock was evident in all rings. Heifers: Ch 450 kgs €870; AA 490 kgs €850; Lim 540 kgs €955; Ch 500 kgs €882; B. Her 505 kgs €865; AA 440 kgs €785. Dry cows: R. Lim 630 kgs €822; Ch 715 kgs €937; Ch 750 kgs €1,047; R. Lim 595 kgs €950; B. Lim 580 kgs €695; Ch 460 kgs €785. Cows with calves at foot made from €800 to €1,410 per head. Springers made from €630 to €1,340 per head. Calves: Sim bull €300; AA heifer €175; Blue heifer €200; AA bull €202; B. Blue bull €385; Blue bull €330; Ch heifer €280; Ch bull €400. Weanling bulls: B. Blue 370 kgs €480; Ch 260 kgs €660; Lim 380 kgs €910; Ch 225 kgs €508;

Sim 260 kgs €515; R. Lim 300 kgs €705. Weanling heifers: Ch 310 kgs €630; Ch 250 kgs €490; Ch 300 kgs €585; AA 290 kgs €480; AA 270 kgs €420. Dairy stock: 25 Friesian maiden heifers were presented for sale and prices ranged from €265 to €770 per head. At the bullock sale on Monday, 26th April, there were 300 bullocks on offer, with a steady trade for all classes on offer. Ch 463 kgs €925; Lim 480 kgs €875; AA 520 kgs €1,025; Lim 740 kgs €1,180; Ch 600 kgs €1,025; Ch 640 kgs €1,100.

Mountbellew

Large number of cattle on offer. Quality store bullocks were an excellent trade, store heifers were easier. Suckler cows were a good trade. Weanling heifers were a much stronger trade than previous weeks. Weanling bulls

were similar. There was a special sale of continental store bullocks and heifers on Friday, 14th May. Pre-booking. Midland buyers will be in attendance. Exporters in attendance each week for quality weanling bulls and heifers. Bullocks made from over €500 with their weight. Heifers: Ch X 480 kgs €870; Lim X 407 kgs €770; Ch X 515 kgs €970; Ch X 465 kgs €980. Heifers made up to €290 with their weight. Weanling bulls made up to €420 with their weight for the quality lots. Weanling heifers made up to €320 with their weight.

There was a smaller number of sheep on offer compared to the previous week. Increased demand for all lots on offer. Heavy stag ewes met with firm trade and there were strong bidding for ewes with lambs at foot. Spring lambs: Four lambs at 41.5 kgs

€102.50; three lambs at 55 kgs €117.50; 11 lambs at 43 kgs €109; nine lambs at 42.5 kgs €105; six lambs at 44 kgs €111. Hoggets: Three hoggets at 61 kgs €117.50; 12 ewe hoggets at 54 kgs €121; nine ewe hoggets at 50 kgs €109.50; seven hoggets at 51 kgs €108. There was a large number of stag ewes on offer again this week and an improved trade especially for heavier lots. Prices ranged from €60 to €120. Ewes with lambs at foot: One first crop ewes with single lamb at foot €170; two first crop ewes with three lambs at foot €190; six third crop ewes with six lambs at foot €132. Six second and third crop ewes with six lambs at foot €137. Sheep sale as usual on Saturdays. Stags 10 am, Lambs 11 am, Breeding Ewes 12 noon. Bookings and enquiries to (090) 96 79660.

MOUNTBELLEW MART CATTLE & Weanling Sale

FRIDAYS @ 11AM

Special sale of Continental forward Store Heifers and Bullocks

Friday May 14th - in conjunction with usual sale

Reduction/Dispersal Sales catered for Transport can be arranged

Sheep sale every Saturday at 10am

ENQUIRIES/BOOKINGS 090 9679660

Macra AGM

in Roscommon

The National AGM of Macra Na Feirme will be held in the Abbey Hotel in Roscommon Town on Saturday, May 8th 2010 kindly supported by the Kepak group.

Roscommon has the honour of hosting the event this year and the committee will be delighted to welcome members to the 18th century hotel for what promises to be a great AGM and action packed schedule of events.

The national finals of the debating competition will also take place later in the evening where Athboy Macra club from Meath and Clonakilty Macra club from Cork will debate the motion "That the State should no longer pick up the tab for those living unhealthy lives". It is sure to be an entertaining 'war of words'.

Following on from the debate a DJ will be there to entertain the crowd into the early hours.

TB change welcomed

IFA Animal Health Project Team Chairman John Waters has welcomed the announcement by the Minister for Agriculture Brendan Smith to change the TB testing rules to facilitate the slaughter of cattle up to 18 months since their last test. He said IFA has campaigned for this change for some time in order to reduce significant cost and hassle for cattle finishers.

Mr. Waters said the new arrangements will allow for purchased-in animals to be slaughtered up to 18 months since their last TB test, provided the herd is in 12-month test. It will remove the necessity for most finishers to have private tests carried out on bought-in animals out of test.

The private testing of these animals immediately prior to slaughter has been a major cost to finishers because of the loss of weight from assembling heavy cattle twice in three days, the veterinary expenses and the distortion to normal sale.

Mr. Waters said this change to the TB testing rule for slaughter animals is part of IFA's ongoing campaign to drive down costs and remove unnecessary red tape from day-to-day farming activities. He said IFA will be monitoring the introduction of this new arrangement very closely in order to ensure the conditions are not overly restrictive on farmers and their ability to continue to trade as normal.

John Waters said, "Our recent survey on TB testing charges identified average call-out fees of over €60 and €3.69 per animal tested. This new arrangement will remove this exorbitant and unnecessary cost for cattle finishers."

Prices up for finished stock

Factory prices for finished stock have increased in the last fortnight, according to ICSA national beef chairman Peter Fox.

"Finished stock numbers are drying up and this is coupled with the improvement in the weather and the fact that sterling is strengthening against the euro. With meat factories paying €2.80 per kg to €2.94 per kg for R and U grade cows, steer and heifer prices will have to take a giant step forward."

"Farmers have to get a minimum price of €3.22 per kg for R grades to break even. Processors are continuing to drag their heels on the base price and are using the QPS system to drag down prices paid to farmers for their stock."

"With the admission from the Department of Agriculture that there were inconsistencies in grades and fat scores in 2009, how can farmers have any faith in a QPS system that is based on mechanical grading? I am calling on the Department again to reinstate trained graders and employ an independent regulator to examine the whole mechanical grading system in all meat factories in the country."