

people farming

FURY OVER MERCUSOR DEAL

Pauline Scott

James Gleeson, Vice-Chairman of the IFA National Livestock Committee warned this week that if a trade deal is done with the Mercosur countries of South America to allow South American beef into the EU, "it would wipe out the beef industry here".

A bus load of farmers from Roscommon were among those who protested about the proposed deal at the EU Commission office in Dublin on Wednesday last.

"It would have an awful effect on our prices. We can't compete against South American beef, we have to produce beef to high standards. The talks are going on today (Tuesday) in Spain. Ireland is spearheading the campaign against this deal and is being backed by about ten countries. There is a bilateral deal on the table in Spain to be signed before the end of June as part of the World Trade Talks," said Mr. Gleeson.

"Brazil is destroying two million hectares of rain forest each year for beef production and the EU Commission's own Food and Veterinary Office has produced a series of reports highlighting the continuing failure of Brazilian beef to meet EU standards.

"Brazil fails to meet basic EU producer and consumer standards on food safety, identification, traceability, animal health and disease



Roscommon farmers led by Roscommon Co. Chairman, John O'Beirne, and James Gleeson, Vice-Chairman, IFA National Livestock Committee pictured at the IFA Livestock at the EU Commission office in Dublin over the planned EU trade deal with Brazil and other South American countries which IFA say will decimate the livelihoods of 80,000 livestock farmers and inflict losses of €350m on the Irish beef sector.

control. By accepting Brazilian beef imports it will put EU consumers and livestock producers at unnecessary and unacceptable risk because it's not up to our standards," concluded Mr. Gleeson.

The Taoiseach and the Minister for Agriculture

must put the full resources of the Government to work to reject further progression of the EU Mercosur trade talks, which were re-launched in Madrid last week, according to IFA President John Bryan.

The fact that 14 EU agriculture Ministers at

their meeting in Brussels, on Monday, May 17th, signalled their opposition to re-launching trade talks with Mercosur countries indicated how serious a threat it was considered by EU countries with commitment to retaining viable family farm structures,

according to Marian Harkin MEP, as she called on the government to engage in the strongest possible opposition to the proposed Mercosur trade talks in co-operation with other EU countries which shared common concerns.

Electronic sheep tagging deferred

Independent MEP Marian Harkin has warmly welcomed votes in the European Parliament, which have called for the deferment of compulsory electronic tagging of sheep and goats which was imposed by the European Commission on December 31st 2009.

The Parliament voted on Tuesday, 18th May to defer the measure because of the excessive cost to farmers in a time of economic crisis, Marian Harkin said. The Parliament also called for an amnesty of three years on cross compliance penalties related to the compulsory tagging measure, she said.

"The Parliament has also called for the European Commission to conduct a thorough review of the Regulation given that it is a complex technology and will require some time for farmers to become used to and test," Marian Harkin MEP concluded.

Suckler Beef Open Day

Teagasc is holding a major Suckler Beef Open Day at its beef research centre in Grange, County Meath on Tuesday, 15 June. Farmers will have the first opportunity to visit the new Suckler Beef Research Demonstration Farm "Derrypatrick Herd" which was set up in 2009. With an ambitious financial target of achieving a gross margin of €1,000 per hectare on the unit, the open day will provide an opportunity for beef producers from all over the country to examine and discuss the key technical steps for achieving this target.

Younger workers most at risk on farms

Teagasc has called on all farm families to give farm safety and health the utmost attention as the busy summer season approaches.

Teagasc Health and Safety Officer, John McNamara made the call against a background of a significant increase in farm injury related deaths; 11 deaths have occurred on Irish farms to date in 2010, the same number as for all of 2009. He also revealed a major shift in the demographic pattern of farm workplace deaths.

The Teagasc Health and Safety Officer, who is a chartered member of IOSH, said that a major shift in the demographic pattern of fatal farm accidents has taken place since 2008, with just 12 percent occurring to victims over the age of 65 compared to 41 percent for the previous seven-year period. Seventy-six percent of farm fatal accidents have occurred to persons in the 17 - 65 age category with 37 percent to those in the 46 - 65 age category.

A significant shift has also taken place in the cause of accidents since 2008, with incidents resulting from tractor or machine contact now accounting for 59 percent of deaths and a further 15 percent associated with tree felling or timber cutting. This compares with 44 percent and three percent, respectively, for tractors/machinery and timber related deaths for the previous seven years.

Design a scarecrow

Every young grower knows that birds can be a real pest in the veggie patch and that the tried and trusted method of a scarecrow is the best way to keep them away!

GIY (Grow it Yourself) Ireland in association with the Incredible Edibles is calling on all primary school kids to get involved in a National "Design a Scarecrow" Challenge for Bloom (June 3rd - 7th 2010). GIY Ireland, a not-for-profit organisation wants kids to design and build a miniature scarecrow to keep crows and other birds out of the GIY Ireland Edible Garden at Bloom 2010.

The winning scarecrow will get pride of place in the GIY garden at Bloom 2010 which GIY is putting together with support from Woodies DIY and award winning designer Fiann O'Nuallain. The winning scarecrow designer will win a family ticket for Bloom and a €100 Woodies DIY voucher. In addition they will win for their school an installed and fully planted raised vegetable bed courtesy of Quickcrop. A selection of photos of the best scarecrow designs will be displayed on the GIY website. For more details visit Incredible Edibles at www.agriaware.ie



mart round-up

Castlerea

There were 850 cattle on offer this week with all classes of stock receiving a lift in demand. With live exporters and more farmer activity, a good clearance resulted. Heifers: Ch 440 kgs €890; Lim 480 kgs €845; Ch 645 kgs €1,200; Ch 530 kgs €945; Ch 618 kgs €990; B. Blue 535 kgs €920. Dry cows: Ch 605 kgs €850; R. Lim 660 kgs €895; Sim 635 kgs €845; Fr 610 kgs €500; B. Lim 660 kgs €780; AA 685 kgs €910. Cows with calves at foot made €760 to €2,045 per head. Springers made from €580 to €960 per head. Calves: AA bull €225; B. Her bull €220; AA heifer €142; Fr. Bull €122, Ch bull €375, Sim heifer €175; Ch heifer €290; B. Blue heifer €395. Weanling bulls: B. Blue 400 kgs €1005; Lim 420 kgs €935; Ch 300 kgs €692; Ch 230 kgs €582; Sim 320 kgs €712. Weanling heifers: B. Blue 300 kgs €920; Ch 310 kgs €695; Ch 295 kgs €600; Lim 400 kgs €825; Ch 330 kgs €695; AA 260 kgs €450. Bullock sale: At the bullock sale on May 10th, there were 200 bullocks on offer with very good demand for all classes on offer. Prices: Ch 460 kgs €960; Ch 510 kgs €1,015; Lim 580

kgs €1,040; Sim 750 kgs €1,250; Sh 660 kgs €1,000, Her 495 kgs €752.

Mountbellew

Larger number of cattle to previous week. Plenty of buyers for quality stock with some excellent prices being achieved for continental quality lots. The suckler cows on offer were much sought after. Store bullocks made up to €500 with their weight. Store heifers made up to €360 with their weight. Weanling bulls made up to €430 with their weight while weanling heifers made up to €320 with their weight. Two nice quality Charolais heifers weighing 325 kgs made €750. Suckler cows made up to €1000.

Bullocks: Ch X 520 kgs €900; Ch X 550 kgs €970; Ch X 580 kgs €980; Ch X 665 kgs €1,090. Heifers: BB X 380 kgs €720; BB X 370 kgs €700; 2 Ch X 345 kgs €650; Ch X 375 kgs €685. Weanling sale, exporters in attendance. Bulls: Ch X 345 kgs €740; 2 Lim X 307 kgs €620; Ch X 400 kgs €790; Lim X 390 kgs €810. Heifers: Ch X 360 kgs €640; Ch X 350

kgs €630; Lim X 360 kgs €680.

Sheep

Similar number of sheep on offer to previous week. Good demand for stag ewes and also for fleshy spring lambs. Hoggets slightly easier trade. Ewes with lambs at foot remain firm trade. Spring Lambs: Eleven lambs at 42 kgs €108; one lamb at 50 kgs €120.50; six lambs at 44.5 kgs €109.50; ten lambs at 46 kgs €110; twenty lambs at 41.5 kgs €104; three lambs at 51 kgs €123. Hoggets: Five ewe hoggets at 50 kgs €140; five ewe hoggets at 48 kgs €136; two wether hoggets at 42 kgs €80; eight wether hoggets at 49 kgs €98.50.

Stag Ewes: Firm trade especially for heavier lots. Prices ranged from €60 to €130. Ewes with lambs at foot: Four second and third crop ewes with nine lambs at foot €218; two second crop ewes with three lambs at foot - €208; eighteen hogget ewes with eighteen lambs at foot €160; one second crop ewe with two lambs at foot €195; sheep sale as usual on Saturdays. Stags 10 am, Lambs 11 am, Breeding Ewes 12 noon. Bookings/Enquiries (090) 96 79660.