

The Layer Industry: The Next Decade

Hotel Kilmore, Co. Cavan Tuesday, 25th April 11am – 4pm





Agenda

Welcome

11am: Dr Stan Lalor – Teagasc

Session 1:

11:10am: The Future of EU Laying Hen Welfare Policy *Melanie Farrar, Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine (DAFM)*

11:30am: Heat Stress in Layers Dana Simpson, St David's Poultry Veterinary Team

11:50am: Red Mite Control Maureen Prendergast, MSD

12:10pm: Q&A

12:30pm: Lunch & Exhibition

Session 2:

2pm: Nutritional Strategies to Ensure Optimal Flock Performance *Sally Duffy, Trouw Nutrition*

2:20pm: Avian influenza in the UK – Lessons Learnt *Richard Jackson, St David's Poultry Veterinary*

2:40pm: Case Study of Solar Panels on a Layer Farm *Mel Gavin*, ATU

3pm: Q&A



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Speaker Biographies

Dr Melanie Farrar

Dr Melanie Farrar is a Veterinary Surgeon with extensive experience in large and mixed animal practices in Ireland and the UK. She previously held the position of Chief Veterinary Inspector for the ISPCA.

Melanie joined the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM) in 2006 as a Veterinary Inspector, and since then, has undertaken a range



of policy, audit, and investigation roles in areas including Animal Health and Welfare, Animal By-products and Food Safety. Her present responsibilities include farm animal welfare policy, strategy and compliance in DAFM's Animal Welfare Division, with a primary focus on poultry welfare.

Dana Simpson DVM MRCVS

Dana graduated in 2005 and spent the early part of her veterinary career in mixed practice, before moving to the poultry sector.

For a number of years Dana has focussed on working with layer producers, evolving the approachto flock management, to improve bird health, welfare and performance.



Working with farmers to jointly develop and implement more proactive and long-term veterinary health plans, has resulted in successfully extending the productive life of laying flocks – with some regularly achieving 100 weeks - in a way that is economically balanced. Dana is currently studying for a Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice, with the University of Liverpool.

Maureen Prendergast MVB, PhD, MRCVS

Maureen has been technical Manager, MSD Animal Health Ireland for 22 years, the last 7 years spent across Swine, Poultry and Aqua.

Maureen has spent much of her career training farmers and vets having previously taught at UCD as Lecturer in Veterinary Surgery.

She has a specialist interest in supporting

practitioners in the reduction of antimicrobial usage through prevention of disease and the use of vaccines.

Sally Duffy

Sally is a Poultry Nutritionist with Trouw Nutrition Ireland. Sally has been working with Trouw Nutrition since the 2018, working with the poultry nutrition team and key customers.

Her current role is made up of a variety and range of work, which includes account management, premix formulation and finished feed formulation with mill customers, egg packers, broiler, and turkey integrators.

Sally comes from a beef and sheep farm in Carbury, Co. Kildare, where she has a keen interest in the management of her pedigree Texel flock alongside the farm's commercial flock.





Richard Jackson BVMS (Hons) MRCVS

Richard is St David's Poultry Team Clinical Director and past President of the British Veterinary Poultry Association.

Pursuing a long-held ambition to develop a career in poultry veterinary medicine, having grown up on a commercial turkey farm in Ireland, Richard joined St David's immediately after graduating in 2010.

During the AI outbreaks of 2021-2023 Richard through his role in BVPA worked closely with the UK government vets and policy makers to discuss all aspects of AI.

Mel Gavin

Mel is a Chartered Engineer and Certified Energy Manager with over 15 years' experience in design and project management on a wide range of private and public projects including, sustainable buildings, renewable energy, energy efficiency, product and process design, waste and resource efficiency.

Mel currently manages the Contract Research Unit at Atlantic Technological University providing



outreach external engagement in research, development and innovation support to regional enterprises, communities and individuals.



Free EU Funded Biosecurity Assessment for Broiler and Layer Flocks



What is a biosecurity assessment?

The poultry industry faces ongoing challenges to prevent the introduction and spread of infectious diseases. Biosecurity refers to the set of measures used to address these risks. One of the best ways to understand and improve the biosecurity status of units is through regular independent assessment by a trained Private Veterinary Practitioner (PVP). The assessment reviews the current status of units and proposes areas for improvement based on the findings.

How much does it cost the Flock Owner or Keeper?

There is no charge for the Flock Owner/Keeper. These assessments are fully funded through the Targeted Advisory Service on Animal Health (TASAH) under the EU Rural Development Programme. The programme is overseen by Animal Health Ireland (AHI).

Who carries it out?

Animal Health Ireland have trained a number of Private Veterinary Practitioners (PVPs) in the assessment process. A full list is available on the AHI website www.animalhealthireland.ie, or by contacting AHI on +353 (0) 71 9671928. Flock Owners/Keepers should contact one of these PVPs to avail of this service.

What is involved?

The biosecurity assessment can be divided into external and internal components.

- External biosecurity focuses on the contact points of the farm with the outside world and aims to stop disease entering or leaving the farm. This applies both to exotic diseases (e.g. Avian Influenza or Newcastle disease) and to endemic diseases (e.g. Campylobacter).
- Internal biosecurity includes all measures taken to limit or stop the spread of pathogens within a farm.

What will the free assessment tell the Flock Owner or Keeper?

After analysing this information, an objective picture of the farm's biosecurity is generated, highlighting the points of greatest risk. This provides the opportunity for the Flock Owner/Keeper and the PVP to agree achievable measures to improve biosecurity. While there is no legal obligation on the Flock Owner/Keeper to implement the agreed measures, implementation of the measures identified will assist in enhancing the biosecurity status of the units. The Flock Owner/Keeper will receive a report detailing the results of the biosecurity assessment, including the scores in each biosecurity section and the agreed measures to address identified weaknesses. The information contained in the assessment will be treated in confidence.

How often is it conducted?

Free assessments are available on a yearly basis. Repeating the assessment each year will allow improvements over time to be demonstrated. While not currently available, there is also the potential to compare performance against national rankings.

How do I arrange an assessment?

Contact one of the trained PVPs directly to request an assessment. Alternatively, contact AHI on +353 (0) 71 9671928.







Paper Synopsis

The Future of EU Laying Hen Welfare Policy by Melanie Farrar

The Farm to Fork Strategy adopted by the EU in 2020 announced that the Commission will, by the end of 2023, revise the animal welfare legislation to align it with the latest scientific evidence. As part of this process, Council Directive 1999/74/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens will be revised.

The Commission requested the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to develop a scientific opinion on the 'welfare of laying hens on farm' which will feed into the legislation review.

This presentation will provide a broad overview of this scientific opinion and the future direction of laying hen welfare requirements.

Heat Stress in Layers

by Dana Simpson

The rising temperatures in 2022 saw the risk of flocks developing heat stress rise to – a condition that has a huge impact on bird health, welfare and performance.

Vet Dana Simpson will explore heat stress in more detail. She will explain what measures can be put in place to reduce the risk, behavioural changes to look out for and what to do when heat stress occurs – both during and after - to support flock health.

Managing Poultry Red Mites

by Maureen Prendergast

Poultry red mites (PRM) may be small, but they can have a huge effect on the productivity and profitability of individual farms. It has been estimated that in high infestation environments, productivity losses can be up to \leq 2.50 per hen per year. With all farm costs increasing, maximising productivity has never been so important.

PRM feed after dark on the blood of the hens, causing irritation and distress. The birds are often noisy and restless once they come in at night and this can prevent them from resting and eating properly. If the problem continues, they will start to become thin, lose condition and suffer feather loss. These welfare issues can also affect egg production. PRM reproduce rapidly during the warm summer months when their lifecycle is accelerated but can be an issue yearround.

Nutritional Strategies to Ensure Optimal Flock Performance by Sally Duffy

The outline of this presentation is to demonstrate the importance nutrition plays in the rear stage and the transition and use of pre-lay diets within layer flocks to optimise future flock longevity and production.

Additionally, the importance of gizzard development and its role to enhance digestion and adsorption of feed will be discussed.

Avian influenza in the UK – Lessons Learnt by Richard Jackson

Since the start of the current outbreak of avian influenza in 2021, there have been a record number of cases confirmed in commercial poultry flocks in the UK.

During this time, Clinical Director Richard Jackson, served as British Veterinary Poultry Association president and worked closely with UK government regarding the AI outbreak.

Richard will share information on the UK's approach over the last eighteen months, and what lessons have been learnt, that has influenced how best to manage this and any future outbreaks, going forward.

Solar Options for a Layer Farm *by Mel Gavin*

The EU funded AgroRES project aims to support increased uptake of renewable energy in the Agri and rural sectors.

ATU and Teagasc are developing a new Advisory Service based on targeted renewable energy solutions for appropriate farm sectors. This includes Solar PV, Solar PV with batteries and Biomass heating in the Pig, Poultry, Dairy and Horticulture sectors.

This presentation will illustrate key outputs from ongoing projects in poultry and dairy.

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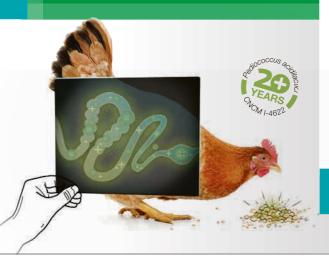
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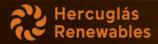
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