

Teagasc/AHI beef health events

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Teagasc and Animal Health Ireland (AHI) have again teamed up with Meat Industry Ireland and the meat factories to deliver five animal health events targeting beef farmers. All will take place on farms with the first on 22 June and the final one taking place on 11 July. The theme this year is: "Prevention is Better than Cure".

As farmers and food producers, we are being continually reminded about issues around food safety, traceability and sustainability. Proper animal health management is central in achieving all of these objectives and how we approach health management is changing.

In terms of sustainability and the whole area of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) some countries are looking at the amount of antibiotic used per kilo of beef produced. So we need to rethink our approach to things like routine dosing and disease prevention. Farmers and vets will need to work even more closely towards a more proactive prevention strategy with a greater emphasis on herd health planning.

Each event will have a mix of expert speakers from AHI, Teagasc and vets to cover four themes.

• Faecal sampling and parasite control: What can faecal sampling tell us about parasite levels in our herds. What can it detect? How often should we sample? How do we interpret the results? How will the results influence our dosing regime? Are there any differences emerging between bucket reared calves and suckled calves?

• Proactive herd health management: The host farmer and their vet will discuss the on-farm herd health plan and preventative measures including vaccination policy. The objective of this stand is to demonstrate what practical steps the host farm is taking to keep stock health while reducing the reliance on antibiotics.

• Beef healthcheck programme results: One year into the programme, the results have been collated nation-



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ally and regionally. Regional liver-fluke, liver abscesses and pneumonia results will be discussed. There will also be a practical demonstration on identifying health problems in slaughtered cattle.

• Neospora Caninum: An abortion threat – it has been estimated that approximately 9% of all bovine abortions in Ireland are as a result of neospora. Find out what the clinical signs are, how it can be diagnosed and what steps you can take to prevent or remove infected animals from

the herd. The case of one farmer who has been through the experience will be discussed.

The events will be beneficial to both suckler farmers and to non-breeding finishers.

With regard to animal health we are moving towards the old adage where "Prevention is Better than Cure". All events start at 11am and run until approximately 1pm.

• See events, page 6, for upcoming dates and locations.