



Irish agribusiness continues to flourish

BY GRAHAM CLIFFORD

With Canada recently lifting its ban on the importation of Irish beef the emergence of the new market is expected to have a major impact on Irish farming.

It comes, of course, on the back of similar news from the US earlier this year, and Ireland will soon start exporting beef to Oman for the first time in the coming months.

Dairy exports from Ireland to China are up by 25 per cent on last year, while agri-food exports to that country now amount to €620 million per annum. Given the vast size of the Chinese market, plans to increase Irish exports, in areas such as dairy and infant formula, are at an advanced stage.

Overall, the agribusiness sector – be it in beef, dairy or other produce – is flourishing in Ireland, with at least a quarter of a million people directly or indirectly employed in it.

On Tuesday, December 8, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Dublin, those industry leaders will be honoured for their efforts at the inaugural Agribusiness awards organised by Dublin-based Company, Event Strategies.

In all, 44 companies have been shortlisted across 13 awards categories with the overall Agribusiness of the Year and the award for Agribusiness Leader of the Year to be presented on the night.

Among those shortlisted for other awards is Dawn



Meats. First established in Co Waterford in 1980, it is now a €1 billion company with more than 3,700 staff across 12 countries. It will be vying for the Beef Agribusiness of the Year award.

Dawn Meats chief executive Niall Browne told the Sunday Business Post: “Ireland has a stellar reputation for the excellence of its food industry, so to be shortlisted for this award is a real honour. It is further recognition of Dawn’s position as a premium supplier of sustainably produced, quality Irish beef.”

“Awards such as these showcase excellence right across the food industry in Ireland, and underpin Ireland’s well-deserved reputation as a food island. They also help to drive an even greater focus on quality, provenance and sustainability, all of which are demanded by increasingly discerning customers.”

Seamus Banim, the Group Communications Director with the ABP Food Group which has also been short-listed in the Beef Agribusiness of the Year category and is in the running for the Sustainability award, said: “As a business that has put

sustainability at its core, it is particularly pleasing to be shortlisted in the sustainability category. Award recognition gives a company and its staff independent recognition for the work they are doing in a particular area, as well as being a welcome addition to external marketing plans.”

The Meade Potato Company has been short-listed in three categories, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Agribusiness of the Year, the Agribusiness Sustainability Award and in the Agribusiness Health and Safety category.

Business Operations Manager Eleanor Meade said: “To be shortlisted for three awards is a real credit to our entire team and to the quality of produce we grow, source, pack and distribute. With approximately 240 staff as well as our team of growers, these three award nominations acknowledge our work in all of our priority areas.”

“In the fruit and vegetable sector, most products are sold under our various retailers’ private labels. These awards are a way of singling out the successful suppliers behind the private labels on a national stage. The various

categories for these awards illustrate all the work that goes on behind the scenes to bring consumers the amazing food that has made the Irish agribusiness sector such a world leader in quality.”

Two of the awards sponsors FBD insurance and Emydex Food Processing Software, believe in the event’s unique importance to the Irish Agribusiness sector.

“These awards recognise and reward vision, innovation and excellence and we are very proud to sponsor them. We hope they will come to be recognised as a key catalyst for continuous improvement in Ireland’s agribusinesses of all sizes,” said a spokesperson for FBD.

An Emydex spokesperson said: “This is the only event that brings all of our customers together under the one roof at the same time, so it is a great opportunity for Emydex to show their support and appreciation to all involved in these awards.”

Eugene Bortolozzo, chief executive of Event Strategies, paid tribute to all those who entered the awards and said he expects this event to grow year on year. “Our independent panel of recognised and expert Judges were immensely impressed with the standard of entries. We are confident that, with each passing year, this awards ceremony will become the showpiece event of the year for agribusiness in Ireland.”

To find out more about the Agribusiness awards 2015, or to book a table at the event, please visit agribusinessawards.ie

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