



World Charolais Technical Congress
4th – 12th August 2019, Ireland

***THE IRISH CHAROLAIS CATTLE SOCIETY WELCOMES YOU TO
THE EMERALD ISLE***

Sunday 4th August 2019

Delegates will arrive in Ireland today and will be transferred by the Irish Charolais Cattle Society from Dublin Airport to our first Congress Hotel, the beautiful **Grand Hotel**, Malahide, Co. Dublin.

Ideally located by the sea in Dublin's most attractive town, Malahide, the Grand Hotel is also close to Dublin International Airport and the M1/M50 motorways. The Grand Hotel features the best accommodation in Malahide offering a range of bedroom types, some with sea views, all built and designed to a high four star standard. The Hotel has an extensive leisure Centre, the renowned Arena Health & Fitness Club, with swimming pool and gymnasium.

Malahide is a unique seaside retreat, home to a variety of stylish restaurants, cheerful bars, chic shops and many natural attractions, including Portmarnock beach and stunning coastline.



On arrival to the Hotel delegates will register for the Congress at reception. This will be followed by an informal dinner at 7 pm, where the Irish Charolais Cattle Society will officially welcome all delegates to the Congress.

Monday 5th August 2019

The first day begins with breakfast in the Grand Hotel, Malahide, followed a visit to the stunning **Powerscourt Gardens** in County Wicklow, one of the most beautiful gardens in Ireland! Powerscourt Gardens were recently voted No.3 in the World's Top Ten Gardens by National Geographic. This will be followed by a tour of **Weatherby's Scientific's** facilities. Weatherbys is a privately owned family business, which has been operating successfully since 1770. They have been involved in Parentage Testing since 1985 and today they are one of Europe's premier facilities. At Weatherby's they carry out Genomic Testing, Parentage

Verification, SNP Parentage Verification, Pedigree Scanning, Breed Assignment, and Genetic Disease and Major Gene testing in Bovine animals.



Following lunch in the beautiful Palmerstown House Estate, we will proceed to our first farm visit, the **Skidoo Pedigree Charolais** herd in Swords, Co. Dublin. The Skidoo Charolais herd needs no introduction in Ireland, as it is one of the oldest and largest Charolais herds in the Country. Established in 1966 by Omer Van Landeghem, Skidoo is located in Ballyboughal, Co. Dublin, a mere 10 minutes from Dublin Airport. In 1995 Skidoo farm and herd was purchased by local businessman and farmer, Pat McDonagh. Today the farm is managed by Donal Callery and the herd consists of 100 pure bred registered Charolais cows, which are run in conjunction with 160 commercial cows.



Sires like Shamrock Ambassador, Flambeau, Emperor, Uranus and Commander were many of the iconic bulls Skidoo introduced to Ireland. In the early years, Skidoo was always prominent in winning rosettes at the RDS with prominent sire lines, such as Skidoo Champion and Skidoo Pacha. Today they sell most of their stock on the farm to a strong customer base which they have built over the years. Skidoo offers a bit of everything, it is as fine a farm as you are likely to see anywhere on the island and promises not to disappoint.

This evening we will enjoy dinner in Nancy Hand's, where delegates will enjoy some real Irish hospitality and traditional Irish music.



Tuesday 6th August 2019

Following breakfast, our first visit this morning will be to the **Teagasc Grange Research Centre** in County Meath, for an overview of beef production in Ireland, the role Charolais plays within it, and an insight into research trials currently being undertaken in Grange. This will involve presentations from Dr. Mark Mc Gee, Research Officer Teagasc, Dr. Edward O' Riordan, Enterprise Leader Teagasc and Aidan Murray, Beef Specialist Teagasc.

Following our visit to Grange, we will make our way to the **Guinness Storehouse Dublin** where we will have Lunch. We will then spend a couple of hours in the Guinness brewery experiencing the tale of Ireland's famous beer, with tastings and spectacular views from the rooftop bar. Housed in an old fermentation plant, this seven-storey visitor experience brings you on an unforgettable and magical journey deep into the heart of the world famous Guinness brand and company.



Following some free time on Grafton Street in Dublin's city centre, we will be treated to dinner in the highly rated Fire restaurant. The Gaiety Theatre then awaits us, where we will

attend the famous show “**Riverdance**”. This show was made famous at the Eurovision Song Contest in 1994 and has played all over the world ever since.



Wednesday 7th August 2019

Today following breakfast, we check out from the Grand Hotel, Malahide and depart for Meath and Kilkenny our next destinations.

Our first visit this morning is to the **Kepak Feedlot** in Clonee, Co. Meath. Here we will get an informative overview and explanation of the beef industry in Ireland, the current grading system, and the performance of Charolais cattle going to slaughter. Presentations will be provided here by Jonathan Forbes, Livestock Procurement and Agriculture Manager Kepak, and Joe Burke, Beef and Livestock Sector Manager Bord Bia.

We will then travel south for a visit to the **Tully Test Performance Centre** in County Kildare for an update on current Research being undertaken at the Centre and a review of trials carried out there. Tully is the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation’s progeny performance test station. Each year some 500 young animals are purchased from breeding farms and tested for numerous efficiencies here.



Following lunch, we will visit the **National Stud and Japanese Gardens** in Kildare. It is the home of equine royalty, immaculately-bred stallions who can be seen and admired alongside protective mares, frolicking foals and athletic yearlings. We will also visit the Japanese Gardens. These gardens are said to trace the passage of a soul from birth to death and beyond, at the same time providing a meeting place for the cultures of East and West.



We will then proceed to Kilkenny and the luxurious **Lyrath Estate Hotel** for check in. Lyrath Estate Kilkenny is unique, located on 170 acres complete with picturesque lakes, historic gardens and woodlands; it is the definitive country resort hotel while also boasting a location in Kilkenny City, the historic heartland of Ireland. Lyrath Estate boasts 139 unique bedrooms, the multi award winning Oasis Spa and the Kilkenny Convention Centre.

This evening we will travel into Kilkenny City for dinner at the trendy, Langton's House Hotel, located in the heart of Ireland's Medieval capital.



Thursday 8th August 2019

This morning following breakfast, the AGM of Charolais International will take place. Delegates then have the option of attending the **Technical Conference** in the Lyrath Hotel or visit **Kilkenny Castle** in Kilkenny City.

The topic of the technical conference will be “**Genomics**” and will include presentations from some of the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation’s top geneticists and researchers, Donagh Berry, Geneticist Teagasc/ICBF, Ross Evans, Geneticist ICBF, and Clodagh Ryan, Researcher ICBF. Each Country will then get the opportunity to present on the topic of Genomics in their own Country.



That evening we will travel to the **Knockmahon Pedigree and Commercial Charolais herd** in Castlewarren, Co. Kilkenny, where they will host us for a barbeque and barn dance on the Farm. Here delegates will get the opportunity to taste prime Irish Charolais steaks from the Kepak group. Owned by Christy Comerford and his family, this 90 cow suckler herd runs alongside the family’s well-known Knockmahon pedigree Charolais herd which is made up of 40 breeding females. Christy bought his first Charolais heifer when he was just 6 years of age and what a wise purchase it has proved to be. In 2014 Christy won the Supreme Charolais Champion at the National Livestock Show in Tullamore with his homebred heifer, Knockmahon Hyacinth. The herd is renowned for producing top quality commercial Charolais Cattle. This is highlighted in the fact that the herd has consistently picked up the red rosette for the best pen of Charolais weanlings in Kilkenny Mart for the past number of years.

Friday 9th August 2019

Today following breakfast, we will check out of the Lyrath Hotel. Our first visit this morning will be to the famous **Coolmore Stud**, Fethard, Co. Tipperary which is situated in Ireland’s “Golden Vale”. Coolmore Stud is generally acknowledged to be the world’s biggest and best thoroughbred racehorse breeding operation.



We will then travel on to Tullamore, Co. Offaly to visit the **Tullamore Distillery**, home to Tullamore Dew a very famous triple distilled whiskey. Here we will enjoy lunch, followed by a guided tour by one of their whiskey experts through the distilling process, beginning with the birth of a blend and finishing with your very own tasting.

We then proceed to our next and final hotel, the **Sheraton Hotel**, Athlone, Co. Westmeath, a four-star hotel in the centre of Athlone Town, Ireland's heartland. A local landmark in Athlone thanks to its 12 storey glazed tower, this Hotel offers all of the comfort you can expect from a four star hotel, with many spectacular views over the River Shannon and Ireland's Lakelands, as well as outstanding spa facilities. Health & Leisure facilities include a remarkable aquatics area with an 18m pool, 3 feature pools and state of the art fitness equipment.

Tonight we will travel by boat down the beautiful River Shannon to the **Wineport Lodge**, for a Gala Dinner. The Wineport Lodge is situated on the banks of Lough Ree and is renowned for its excellent food and wines.



Saturday 10th August 2019

We start today at a more leisurely pace with breakfast at the Hotel, then we travel northwest to Enniscrone Co. Sligo where we will visit the newly established **Bostonia Pedigree and Commercial Charolais Herd**. The herd was established in 2013 by Brendan and

Gregory Feeney. Today the 250 acre grass based farm comprises of 120 commercial cows, 20 pedigree Charolais cows and 30 Charolais embryo calving's each year.



The success of the herd began when Bostonia Indigo and Bostonia Invincible III were awarded Junior Champion and Reserve Senior Champion, respectively, at the Christmas Cracker Sale in 2014. This was followed by a couple of successful show seasons for the herd, before Bostonia Joy was awarded the Senior Female Champion at the Christmas Cracker in 2016. In 2018, the herd enjoyed remarkable success with Drumshane Mademoiselle, who was Overall Charolais Champion in Balmoral and Overall Charolais Champion at the National Livestock Show in Tullamore. Overlooking the stunning western coastline, Bostonia is a picturesque farm on the duller of days.

Following the trip to Bostonia, we will travel back towards Athlone, taking in a visit to Cathal Gill's herd of outstanding Commercial Charolais Cattle, before enjoying dinner in the Hodson Bay Hotel, situated on the banks of Lough Ree.

Tonight we will have some leisure time to see Athlone, stroll down to the River Shannon and maybe visit one of the oldest pubs in Ireland "Seán's Bar".



Sunday 11th August 2019

On our final day, we will attend the **National Charolais Show** which will be held at the **FBD National Livestock Show in Tullamore**, which is Ireland's largest one day agricultural show

held on the second Sunday of August each year. The success of Tullamore Show has ensured its position as one of Ireland's major attractions and the program of Tullamore Show events incorporates many elements including cultural, commercial and competitive interests, ranging from livestock, equestrian, home industries, inventions, vintage, fashion, style and performing arts. This year promises to be a wonderful spectacle, with the best Charolais Cattle from all corners of the island going head to head in two judging rings, which will run side by side.



Tonight the Irish Charolais Society will host a Farewell Dinner for all delegates in the Sheraton Hotel Athlone, where we will enjoy prime Irish Charolais Beef from the Kepak group. Here we can reflect on the week gone by, celebrate our last night in style and say our final farewell until we meet again.

Monday 12th August 2019

Today delegates will depart from the Sheraton Hotel, Athlone, transferred by bus from the Hotel to Dublin Airport.

