



The Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Clinton (left), and Mr. Paddy O'Keefe, editor of the Farmers' Journal, at the 10th World Charolais convention in Dublin yesterday.—(Photograph: Eddie Kelly.)

CHAROLAIS BREED NOW REPRESENTS OVER 5% OF TOTAL CATTLE STOCK

Irish Times Reporter

THE PROGRESS OF the Charolais breed in Ireland, especially in recent years, was yesterday described by the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Clinton, as being "spectacular." He was speaking at the 10th World Charolais Convention in Dublin.

Mr. Clinton said that in 1965 the total number of Charolais inseminations was 5,032 or 5% of the total, but last year the figure had climbed to 61,869 or 5.2% of the total.

"A substantial number of these inseminations," said the Minister, "were performed on dual-purpose cows, but in our main beef-producing area the returns for 1972 show that almost 12% of the total inseminations were by Charolais bulls."

He said the healthy trend in the use of Charolais by commercial breeders was evidenced by the prices which Charolais crosses commanded, either for slaughter or for export live. Prices for all Charolais crosses, from calves to finished animals, were not exceeded by those of any other breed-type.

Mr. Omer Vanlandeghem, president of the Irish Charolais Cattle Society, said Charolais were worth £2 to £3 per cwt. more than Friesians, Ireland's next leanest beef breed, on the Continental markets. A switch to Charolais as the beef crossing sire, he forecast, would bring in an extra £25m. per annum to Irish meat producers.

He said that Charolais from France had only been in Ireland since 1964 and, since there were not yet enough pure-bred bulls to cater for the whole country, the society was carrying out an upgrading programme with half-bred Charolais heifers to supply seven-

eighth and fifteen-sixteenth bulls to fill the gap during the shortage of pure-breds.

Mr. Peter Needham, general manager, C.B.F.-Irish Livestock and Meat Board, said we exported 83% of our total beef production, and projections indicated that the cattle population would increase from the present 6.4 million to 10 million head by 1980.

He warned that up to the present we had placed too much attention on production techniques. What was increasingly required, he felt, was wholehearted and aggressive marketing. Selling was not marketing.

"The synthetic steak and synthetic convenience food may appear remote to us at the moment, but it is inevitable that the challenge already being felt in America will spread to Europe," said Mr. Needham. His board's strategy was to promote the naturalness of Ireland's beef.

DISEASE-FREE STATUS

Mr. Murt Hynes, director of the Irish Veterinary Services, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, said our disease-free status was very important, and every country in the world would accept our beef or cattle on health grounds. He expressed the hope that we would be allowed to continue to maintain our disease-free status when E.E.C.

animal health regulations came up for review in 1976.

Dr. Austin Mescal, Chief Livestock Inspector, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, said the majority of Irish cows must be "dual-purpose", as both beef and milk were vital to the economy. He regarded our Friesians as a classical dual purpose breed and had consistently tested the bulls for both the beef and milk potential.

Dr. E. P. Cunningham, of the Agricultural Institute, said we were fortunate in Ireland that we had a ready supply of beef cross dairy heifers as a source of suckler mothers. The big advantage of crossbred suckler cows was that they had more milk.

He warned delegates on the calving difficulties, and said that an extra 1% incidence in calf mortality put an extra £1 per head cost on other live calves born.

DEATH

KEARNEY (Rosnastraw, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow, and London)—August 31, 1973, at Balinglass Hospital (following an accident), Andrew (aged 3 years), beloved son of Noel and Violet, grandson of Thomas and Mary; deeply regretted by his loving parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts and a large circle of friends. Funeral leaving Balinglass Hospital at 2 o'clock to-morrow (Sunday), arriving at Kilpige Church at 3 o'clock. Burial after Service. "Safe in the Arms of Jesus."