

**Centenary Thurles**  
Co-operative Society Ltd

# FEB - 2022

NEWSLETTER



# Welcome to our first and newly relaunched newsletter of 2022.



*With this new newsletter we are committed to giving you updates in Centenary Thurles every quarter. We want to keep you informed of what's going on in the Society-whether that is new developments in the technology we use, new products we are launching or challenges we are helping our stakeholders with. We also want to give advice on topical issues in agriculture and encourage a sustainable practice within our community.*

## In this edition:

- Rachael Blackmore announced as the brand ambassador for Tipperary Fresh
- 2021 Review & Staff Changes outlines
- Tips on feeding dairy cows during the transitional period
- AHI Cell Check Award winners announced
- Corporate Governance updates

If you would like to see some specific content in these newsletters or give us some feedback, please contact us on (0504) 91932 or email [cholmes@centenarythurles.com](mailto:cholmes@centenarythurles.com)

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48 sachets

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# 2021 Review

*2021 was once again a year where Covid-19 dominated both the conversation and actions that needed to be taken in all our lives. Our focus remained on keeping all of our activities operating - retail, production and administration. Despite the constraints, we were thankfully able to achieve this, despite at times being down in numbers. All our Board Meetings and our AGM were held via Zoom. It is important once again to acknowledge the patience of our customers and the contribution of our staff to keeping the wheels turning during 2021.*

The year opened with a severe lockdown which extended for many months, before some respite over the summer and autumn. The opening up of the economy did lead to further cases, which were deemed manageable until late in the year and the emergence of the new variant. The year ended with a significant number of positive cases in the population as a whole, but also amongst our staff and suppliers.

In March, Glanbia announced a Peak Supply Management Policy incorporating a Retirement Scheme. Problems with planning appeals restricted their ability to process significantly increased volumes from 2022. This caused concern amongst our milk suppliers who were in or planning a growth phase, with significant investment incurred and/or committed. Later appeals processes did mitigate some of the problems, but it is an issue that is going to affect our suppliers in the coming years.

In November the Government announced its Climate Action Plan with the ambitious plan to achieve a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Agriculture is tasked with making a significant contribution to the target by achieving a 22-30% reduction in emissions again by 2030. This will place further constraints on farmers' ability to increase supply.

## **2021 Business Performance**

From a business perspective, 2021 was a successful year. Milk intake exceeded 189m litres, growing by 4.8% from 2020. The supply growth since the abolition of quotas has amounted to 76m litres, or 67% from a similar number of suppliers. The era of such phenomenal growth, for a myriad of reasons, would now seem to be over. Incidentally, the simple average base price over the last 7 years post-quota was 30.7c, compared with 31.6c for the previous similar period. Milk price has remained resilient, despite the significant growth in volume. The future growth restrictions we may face have already commenced across the globe and that has helped to underpin milk price. Base Milk price started 2021 at 31.1c per litre but by December had grown to 40c. Combined with other factors such as weather, it ensured a positive financial outturn for most suppliers.

An impact of higher milk prices, whilst welcomed by suppliers, was to put an already ailing consumer foods industry under more pressure. Thurles Fresh Milk, despite its non-reliance on the own-label market was not exempt from the difficulties. Our focus is on growing niche brands including Thurles Fresh Milk and our offering produced from cows fed only non-GMO feed, Tipperary Fresh. Despite being hit by the pandemic, Tipperary Fresh continues to go from strength to strength. Over the coming months, we will endeavour to roll it out to further locations. This roll-out will be backed by an advertising campaign featuring our new brand ambassador and successful jockey, Rachael Blackmore. Essential milk price increases are starting to be achieved in the marketplace and so should mitigate somewhat the rising milk, logistic and production costs.

We had an excellent year in our trading division. Fertiliser tonnes sold grew by 12% on the back of strong demand in the last quarter, with some customers procuring supplies for use in 2022. Feed sales were steady and non-feed and fertiliser sales grew by 3.8%, despite the covid-driven surge in sales in 2020. It must be acknowledged however, that price inflation in this category is estimated at 9% for the year. Nonetheless, it seems that many of the customers gained during lockdown in 2020 have returned to us as their preferred location of choice.

Manufactured output from Centenary Feed & Grain fell by only 1.2% despite our decision to exit the pig business. The impact of this decision caused a reduction of 2,200 tonnes in output, but was made up for by growth in our dairy feed business. We had a very successful harvest, with intake growing by 3,000 tonnes to almost 20,000 tonnes. A well-managed drying and production schedule ensured we were able to cater for all our corn at Ballyduff, without recourse to outside drying and storage facilities. Growers benefitted from excellent yields and significant price increases over 2020 e.g. €53 per tonne + VAT for Barley and Oats. Feed Price increases were a natural follow on, but we delayed the implementation of and extent of the increases for as long as we could possibly do, to support our customers.

One of the significant events of 2021 was the disposal of our piggery at Burncourt after 20 years in our ownership. Financially we had good years and bad years, but the rationale behind our investment was to generate additional tonnes for our mill, which at the time was operating to a level of only 50-60% of what is being produced today. Whilst the contract for sale was signed in 2020, we continued to operate until all pigs were finished in June 2021. Hindsight would show that our exit was not a minute too soon as pigmeat prices are now 30c per kg lower and feed prices more than €50 per tonne higher. Significant Losses would now be accruing should we have retained ownership. It is important to acknowledge the contribution of our Managers over the years, Paudie Costelloe and Harry Morgan, for their dedication and commitment.

Around the same time that we purchased the piggery, we also purchased the Stockproof Fencing Products business. Over the last 20 years, it has been proven to be a successful acquisition. We have had many headwinds, particularly in the face of stiff competition, but have met the challenges year after year. Two constants have been with us over the 20 years - Tornado as our principle supplier and Tom Power our manager and driving force. Tornado retains its reputation for producing quality wire and our sales are based on that solid reputation. Steel price increases in 2021 contributed to the reporting of record turnover, but activity also increased significantly. Since the year end, the Tornado company has been sold to a Swedish company, so it will be interesting to see what the future holds. As of now it is business as usual for 2022.

**Challenges ahead in 2022**

2022 looks like it will present many additional challenges for us, irrespective of how Covid behaves, some new and some old. Whilst prices in most sectors are looking positive for the year ahead, there are many headwinds facing both farmers and the Co-op itself. Chief amongst these are increased regulation allied to significant cost inflation, with energy being the main driver. Feed, fertiliser and oil prices each finished 2021 at their highest level since milk quotas were abolished. Unfortunately, prices have continued to rise in 2022 with no sign of abating. The knock-on impact will be felt across other input categories. Pressure will also be felt on cash flow and credit facilities. We will work with customers who need access to additional credit and will take into account both our past experience and our customers’ ability to pay. The anticipation of strong product prices will be a factor in all decisions.

A lot of the concerns of farmers are replicated in our own businesses. Our electricity bill has more than doubled in 12 months; the labour market has tightened and increased regulation is likely to have a significant impact.

The sale of animal medicines is hugely important to our trading division, particularly our more agri-focused branches. Legislation is being introduced which may place additional costs on customers and reduce the level of trade carried on through co-ops. The first phase of this kicked in on the 28th of January last. Antimicrobials can only be dispensed by us on foot of a prescription from that date with a prescription required for antiparasitics from 1st June. Time will tell whether the desired impact of the Regulations, i.e. reduced blanket treatment and use of medication, will be achieved or whether there will be a shift in the retail base for sales.

2022 is also likely to see a renewed and increased focus on the environment. Ultimately, such focus is likely to lead to a curtailment on output growth in the coming years. We have already seen how such factors have delayed the new Glanbia plant proposed for Belview. It is acknowledged that the agricultural sector must play its part, but the credits require proper scientific assessment. The debits alone should not be used as a justification to reduce agricultural output.



## Fence Posts Spring Offer

Mon 14th February – Sat 30th April 2022

|                                   |               | Code    |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------|
| 5' x 3"- 4" Round Posts Creosoted | €5.95 for 60+ | 0142102 |
| 5' x 4"- 5" Round Posts Creosoted | €7.50 for 35+ | 0142103 |
| 6' x 4"- 5" Round Posts Creosoted | €8.50 for 35+ | 0142106 |
| 7' x 5" Straining Posts Creosoted | €27.50 for 5+ | 0142108 |
| 5' x 3.5" Certified Round Posts   | €4.30 for 50+ | 0142203 |
| 5' x 4" Certified Round Posts     | €5.00 for 50+ | 0142206 |
| 5' x 3" Round Posts               | €2.60 for 50+ | 0142002 |
| 7' x 6"- 8" Straining Post Rough  | €15.30 for 5+ | 0142062 |
| 8' x 6"- 8" Straining Post Rough  | €17.00 for 5+ | 0142064 |

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## AHI Cell Check Awards

Our Milk suppliers performed well with 12 of them featuring in the Top 500 nationally for low SCC. We would like to congratulate all 12 suppliers on their amazing achievement.

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>Martin Cleary</b>                   | Shinrone             |
| <b>Daniel Walsh</b>                    | Couraguneen          |
| <b>Patrick, Mary and Phillip Joyce</b> | Clonmore             |
| <b>Tom, Mary and Michael Ryan</b>      | Lisheen Lower, Moyne |
| <b>Thomas and Marie Ryan</b>           | Kylemakill, Moyne    |
| <b>Catherine and Edward Bowe</b>       | Two-Mile-Borris      |
| <b>John Fogarty</b>                    | Fethard              |
| <b>Richard Fogarty</b>                 | Ballyduagh, Cashel   |
| <b>John Ryan</b>                       | Holycross            |
| <b>Eugene O'Dwyer</b>                  | Camas                |
| <b>Denis, Teresa and David Bergin</b>  | Kilbragh, Fethard    |
| <b>TJ Maher</b>                        | Cassestown           |



Particular congratulations to Patrick, Mary and Phillip Joyce from Clonmore who were our overall winners.

## 2021 Agricultural Scholarships Recipients

Each year Centenary Thurles offers scholarships to sons and daughters of shareholders who attend agricultural college. Our 2021 recipients were Tomás Teehan, Birr, and Bill Ryan, Templemore, studying a Level 6 and Level 5 course in Gurteen respectively, and David Hennessey, Roscrea, studying a Level 5 course in Kildalton. Congratulations to Tomás, Bill and David and we wish them the very best of luck in their studies.

To enquire about scholarship applications for 2022 please contact Tom Nyland at **(0504) 34038** or [tnyland@centenarythurles.com](mailto:tnyland@centenarythurles.com)

## New energy-efficient boiler in Thurles Fresh Milk

We recently upgraded our boiler in Thurles Fresh Milk to a Viessmann Vitoplex 200 low temperature oil boiler. This three-pass boiler has low combustion chamber loading, resulting in clean combustion with low emissions. It includes a modulating boiler water temperature which means we will be environmentally responsible while improving efficiency in our dairy operations.



## Superstar jockey and local hero Rachael Blackmore gets behind Centenary Thurles' non-GMO initiative, Tipperary Fresh Milk



*There was only ever one contender. When it came to finding a sporting high-achiever with a natural connection to Centenary Thurles' Tipperary Fresh milk, we looked no further than one of our own. Rachael Blackmore, the first female winner of The Aintree Grand National, top jockey at the Cheltenham Festival and Killenaule farmer's daughter, was it. Her recent successes, continuing ambition and pride in her county, embodies much of what Tipperary Fresh milk is all about. And the bonus? Rachael admits "I'm unusual in that I actually prefer a glass of milk to coffee or tea!"*

From racehorses to dairy herds, in Centenary Thurles Co-op, John Martin, Dairy Operations Manager is excited about this new path. Tipperary Fresh is the first milk in Ireland that's produced on conventional dairy farms, at commercial scale, from cows fed exclusively on a non-GM diet. All supplementary feed, after grass and grass silage, is formulated without any GM ingredients.

John explains; "Currently, Irish dairy farmers use imported GM ingredients like soya bean and maize as important energy and protein sources in animal feed. By removing soya (intensively grown in vulnerable areas such as the Amazon rainforest) from our herds' feed for the Tipperary Fresh milk product, not only are we making the sustainable choice, but we're purchasing barley, oats, rapeseed and beans from local growers, then adding non-GM protein mostly from Europe."

He continues; "For smaller co-ops like Centenary Thurles, we're proud to bring our innovations to the wider industry table. And with Tipperary Fresh milk we're producing a premium, clean, green product that we're confident will appeal to Irish consumers' increasing appetite for sustainable produce." Subsequent to this partnership, Rachael was announced as BBC World Sports Star of the Year; RTE Sportsman of the Year and Irish Times/Sport Ireland Sportsman of the Year. We hope her association with Tipperary Fresh will be lucrative for our business.

The launch of Tipperary Fresh milk also meant re-purposing the Co-op's busy bottling plant in Thurles to accommodate the product's infinitely recyclable bottles with its colourful, stand-out design. As John says; "it's the kind of milk bottle you'd be happy to leave on the table!"

## Teagasc Signpost Programme

May 2021 saw the launch of the Teagasc Signpost Programme. The objective of this programme is to lead and support the transition of Irish farming towards more sustainable farming systems. We were delighted that John and Debbie Sheridan of Killoskehane, Drom came on board to become our Signpost Farm.

Image (below): **Mark Bourke**, Signpost Advisor, joins **John Sheridan**, as part of a growing network of demonstration farms. The initiative will create farmer-led innovation and knowledge hubs, and build a national test bed for on-farm carbon sequestration measures.



## 2022 Calendar

With the new year comes a new calendar and we are thrilled to include our Tipperary Fresh brand ambassador, Rachael Blackmore, amongst our eco-heroes such as non-GMO feed milk suppliers Jimmy and Kieran Cummins and our SignPost farmer John Sheridan.



## Advice on feeding the dairy cow in the transition period

*from Howard Stanley, Centenary Agri's Animal Nutritionist.*

The transition period refers to the 10-14 day period before a cow calves and 2 weeks after calving.

In the dry period a dairy cow will normally eat low energy feeds with high fibre. As a result of this there are low levels of starch digesting bacteria in the cow's rumen.

Introducing 1-2kg of a 16% balanced feed into the diet will give the cow's digestive system a chance to get used to this type of feed and the starch digesting bacteria will start to become accustomed to the early lactation diet.

### 5 top tips for a successful transition period:

1. Ensure cows are still getting pre-calving minerals with high magnesium and low calcium. Remember, if you are getting a lot of retained cleanings or milk fever cases it may be because of a mineral imbalance. This can be usually fixed by increasing dry cow minerals or including magnesium chloride into the diet.
2. Be pro- active rather than reactive. For example, have your silage tested so that you know you are feeding good quality, palatable silage to cows and ensure fresh feed is given to maintain a good intake of feed.
3. Keep the diet simple to suit your own situation. The introduction of an energy source from barley or oats, good quality digestible fibre such as beet pulp or soya hulls and soya bean meal to provide a quality protein source.
4. Less is more. Feeding small quantities is more effective than trying to overfeed with big volumes of feed that might lead to digestive upset or left displaced abomasum (LDA).
5. Talk to your feed advisor in Centenary Agri to see how we can help you ensure your herd has a successful transition period.

## NDC/ Kerrygold Milk Quality Awards



**Tommy Ormond** was our nominee for the NDC/Kerrygold Milk Quality Awards. Tommy reached the final six nationally and received the Sustainability Award at the event held in September in conjunction with the Moorepark Open Day.

# Staff Changes 2021

*On the HR side of our business, 2021 has proven to be an exceptionally busy year. Recruitment has been strong and we are always on the lookout for new talent that can enhance our business. We thank all those who have retired, relocated to other parts of the country or emigrated and those who have simply moved on in their careers, in many cases after lengthy service. Unfortunately, we were unable to officially mark staff retirements in 2021 but we hope to return to that this year. We wish all well in the future.*

## The following people departed Centenary Thurles in 2021:

|                     |                          |                        |
|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| John Paul Morrissey | Retail Assistant         | Cashel                 |
| Ned O'Connor        | Dairy Operations Manager | Thurles Fresh Milk     |
| Patrick Ryan        | Production Operative     | Thurles Fresh Milk     |
| John Crowe          | Technical Sales Advisor  | Head Office and Cashel |
| David Cantwell      | Mill Operative           | Feed & Grain           |
| Tim Bergin          | Maintenance Fitter       | Feed & Grain           |
| Tom Ryan            | Branch Manager           | Thurles Mealstore      |

## The following people joined Centenary Thurles in 2021:

|                 |                          |                        |
|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Brendan Caplice | Retail Assistant         | Cashel                 |
| Noel O'Brien    | Retail Assistant         | Cashel                 |
| Neil O'Dwyer    | Dairy Operations Manager | Thurles Fresh Milk     |
| Ciara Holmes    | Marketing Executive      | Head Office            |
| Martin Delaney  | Technical Sales Advisor  | Head Office and Cashel |
| Paddy Joyce     | Storeman                 | Loran                  |
| Thomas Spillane | Mill Operative           | Feed & Grain           |
| Darren Walsh    | Maintenance Fitter       | Feed & Grain           |
| Daniel O'Meara  | Retail Assistant         | Thurles, Mealstore     |

### Change in Management

Eamon Healy joined the stores division in 1989 having previously worked in Suttons Goolds Cross. He was later appointed branch manager of our Ballyduff branch. In 2003 he was appointed Retail Manager in our Trading division when a programme of modernisation of our branch network commenced.

He helped to make our stores more relevant and attractive to all our shareholders and customers. Eamon will retire on the 24th February and he is wished health and happiness after 33 years service to Centenary Thurles Co-op. Michael Grant, formerly based in Cashel, is appointed as the new Retail Manager in succession to Eamon and he is wished every success in his new role.

## Corporate Governance

May saw the final Committee Meeting to be attended by Jerry Sutton after 24 years' service. Jerry had replaced Pat Donnelly and whilst ably representing the Montore Electoral Area, he also contributed to the greater discussions involving both this Society and the co-operative movement in general. Joe Smyth from Dunkerrin succeeded Jerry at the subsequent AGM.

Tom Shanahan from Kingstown Cashel was elected to the Committee in November to replace Roger Kennedy who had retired from the Committee at the end of 2020.

Our AGM was held via Zoom on the 9th of June. This was the final meeting at which Jim Russell presided as Chairman. Paddy Daly was elected to succeed Jim at our June monthly meeting. Paddy paid tribute to Jim for leading the Society in good times and not so good, including through the abolition of milk quotas. Commenting that Jim had a deep knowledge of the Dairy Industry including ICOS and Ornuá, both of which he served as a board member, he thanked Jim for his commitment and dedication throughout his eight years as Chairman. Pat Kennedy was elected as Vice-Chairman, taking over from Paddy Daly.



1st February — 31st March 2022

## Spring Promotion

Buy 14 bags get

**ONE BAG FREE**



- 18% Calf Starter
- 18% Calf Pencils

Calf starter range includes our specific Greenline calf mineral pack.

For more information please contact any of our sales representatives or branch managers.

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## SPECIALIST DIET IMPROVES EWE & LAMB PERFORMANCE



Robert Power runs a mixed farm with his wife Grainne in Co Tipperary, with a March-lambing flock of Belclare and Suffolk crosses. The ram is introduced to the ewes in mid-October, with scanning rates standing at 1.8 lambs/ewe. "Two months out from lambing, we start to increase the ewe's concentrate intakes, relative to the number lambs they are carrying," explains Robert. "During the pre-lambing period, we feed a high DMD haylage with concentrate, and this has worked really well."

"The aim is to have lambs finished and off the farm from September onwards. With most lambs finished on grass with no concentrate, it is vital that they are

getting plenty of milk from their mothers to support good growth rates and performance."

With this in mind, he asked for some advice from Howard Stanley, Nutritionist at Centenary Feed & Grain Ltd, prior to the 2021 lambing season.

"The lambing and post-lambing period puts a lot of demand on the ewe's energy reserves," explains Howard. "If ewes are going to produce a good volume of high-quality milk, they need proper nutritional support themselves. Grass alone is unlikely to provide them with all the energy needed, especially if they are supporting triplets."

Howard suggested that Robert started feeding 19% Maxisaf Ewe & Lamb Cubes to support ewe performance.

"The feed provides 19% crude protein, largely through soya, and contains 1.5kg each of Actisaf® live yeast and Safmannan® premium yeast fraction per tonne of feed. The protein supports milk production and ewe condition,

while Actisaf® improves rumen function and feed digestibility. Safmannan® also supports the colostrum quality of ewes, ensuring a good transfer of immunity to lambs. This is critical for good health and performance in young lambs at a time when they are most susceptible to disease."

Robert has been very pleased with the results so far, with no ewes showing a shortage of milk post-lambing.

"I have noticed a marked improvement in the ewe's feed intakes and improved feed digestibility, which has supported strong milk yields," reflects Robert. "As a result, lambs have performed really well and got off to a great start. Even triplets required minimal intervention."

"Lambs have been full of vigour and we have had very few health issues. As someone who takes a very targeted approach to antibiotic usage and wants to minimise their use on farm, this is very good news, and it is great to see the lambs looking so healthy."

SafMannan ActiSaf<sup>Sc 47</sup>



# Dairy Hygiene Spring Promotion

Offer ends 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

Terms & Conditions Apply.  
Delivery Charge Applies.

|                                       |        |   |       |
|---------------------------------------|--------|---|-------|
| Co-Op Source Turbosan CF 1000Lt       | €1360  | Co-Op Source Duo-TeatShield 1000Lt  | €1215 |
| Co-Op Source Turbosan CF 200Lt        | €315   | Serpent 5Lt   | €60   |
| Co-Op Source Turbosan CF 20Lt         | €44    | Serpent 10Lt  | €84   |
| Co-Op Source TurboAcid CF 1000Lt      | €4000  | Serpent 25Lt  | €170  |
| Co-Op Source TurboAcid CF 200Lt       | €935   | Romit BF 21Kg   | €74   |
| Co-Op Source TurboAcid CF 20Lt        | €108   | Sorgene Xtra 5Lt  | €54   |
| Co-Op Source Turbo Clean Powder 20 kg | €63    | Clus-Ster xx 10Lt   | €59   |
| Co-Op Source Descaler 5Lt             | €12.95 | Co-Op Source Super Teat Foam 20Lt   | €48   |
| Co-Op Source Descaler 25Lt            | €49    | Quarter Milker Bucket 10Lt  | €49   |
| Co-Op Source Duo-TeatShield 20Lt      | €39    | California Mastitis Test Kit<br>(Paddle/Solution/Bottle)  | €18   |
| Co-Op Source Duo-TeatShield 200Lt     | €275   | Opti-heel and Opti-heel plus, Circodine CF,<br>Maxidine C, Fam 30 and Multisan CF also<br>available at reduced prices |       |

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