

## Livestock Event achieves record attendance in July

The Livestock Event is clearly building on its success; a record 17,000 visitors poured through the gates at The NEC, Birmingham, a figure up 6% on the year. Furthermore we were also pleased to welcome visitors from as far afield as Australia, New Zealand, China and Kenya.

Visitors found there was plenty to see and do at the event which retained its true dairy roots with 98% of the 451 exhibitors offering products and advice for dairy farmers. The main trade halls buzzed as visitors explored the latest technology, discussed new business and placed orders, while the technical demonstrations proved a huge attraction, in particular the world's first live robot feeding and milking demonstration at an exhibition.

Farmers were challenged and inspired by a choice of 50 presentations daily, with the Farm Health Planning Seminars in particular packed out over the two days, whilst outdoors over 150 visitors seriously considering investing in the latest 4x4 and UTV models took the opportunity to test drive them around The NEC's off road track. Feedback from exhibitors was very positive with good quality leads received over the two days which is testimony to our strict exhibitor policy.

Livestock continued at the heart of the event. Cattle entries were up 31% on the year and relocating the main judging ring to the genetics zone proved to be a huge



National Dairy Show overall supreme and Ayrshire champion, Sandyford Clover 10 – see p2

success enabling them to be even more prominent and enhance the experience for both visitors and exhibitors who enjoyed our very modern air conditioned facilities.

The extended competitive beef section for performance recorded Aberdeen Angus, British Blue and Charolais together with the inaugural presence of sheep with classes for Lleyns, introduced a new dynamism to the event and one which we intend to grow.

We believe that the date change to July

has been well received. As dairy producers are becoming more market savvy, the event is giving them the opportunity to explore options earlier in the season and make forward buying decisions.

We subsequently look forward to continuing to build on the event's success in July 2015 and creating the opportunity for all livestock farmers to get away from their farms to gain more technical knowledge and do business.

**RABDF chief executive  
Nick Everington**

### Message from the chairman

I was pleased to see such a great turnout to Livestock Event, and I hope you all had a productive and informative day. The mood at the event tends to mirror that of the industry and this year was no exception; trade exhibitors reported doing good business with plenty of enquiries, reflecting the long-term optimism within the whole industry.

As I have stated before, long-term industry prospects look good due to the developing world's increased affluence

and population. However change will not come overnight; global demand is expected to increase by 2.5% per year at a time when the constraints of EU milk quotas are removed and higher dairy commodity prices are encouraging production, consequently the two lines of supply and demand will never run parallel.

Supply in the developed dairy nations increased by 18% in the first quarter of this year whilst China has been stockpil-

ing product and subsequently reduced its activities in the market place, as a result the lines of supply and demand have collided again. On the upside feed prices have fallen considerably, forage stocks, although variable, are large so alternative feeds will be more reasonable and the maize I see whilst traveling around the country looks in very good order. The message is, as always, feed efficiency and attention to detail.

**RABDF chairman, Ian Macalpine**



## National Dairy Show



Supreme interbreed champion, Sandyford Clover 10 with Blaise Tomlinson, his family and show team, with judge Selwyn Donald

Our congratulations go to Blaise and Debbie Tomlinson and their family with their Ayrshire champion, Sandyford Clover 10. After collecting the supreme breed honours, the 12 year old in her eighth lactation went on to lead the field in the interbreed line up, however the victory came after stiff competition from the Holstein champion, Neatishall Decker Rosina.

Both Clover and Rosina were awarded an identical number of points from the panel of six breed judges, after which it took several minutes of adjudication from the respective breed judges, Selwyn Donald, New Zealand and Hugh Neilson, Strathaven before declaring the winner. "It was a very, very close decision," said Mr Donald. "The Ayrshire has power and capacity and the Holstein a fantastic udder as well as overall quality. Cow colour doesn't matter, it's quality that counts. Unanimously, we've decided to go for this tremendous cow – the Ayrshire."

Clover added to yet another success in her illustrious showing career which

has included interbreed champion at The Royal, Royal Welsh and Great Yorkshire, as well as five times breed champion at the Livestock Event. "We're thrilled to bits," said Mr Tomlinson. "We brought her out of retirement four years ago, she collected this interbreed award two years ago, so entering her for this show at this stage of her career was a big, big gamble. As to her future, well, never say never; you never know, you may see her again."

A KC Roses Chatter Red daughter and out of a homebred dam from the Tomlinson's 160 cow Ayrshire herd which runs alongside 160 Holsteins based at Charley Crossroads, Leicester, Clover 10 is classified a maximum Ex 97. A September calver, so far she has completed 12,000kgs in 305 days, and 105,000kgs in her lifetime.

Standing below her was Neatishall Decker Rosina from fellow Leicestershire breeders Nick and Louise Sercombe, Knaptoft. A third calver by Far O La Debbi-Jo Decker, she is currently yielding 50kg daily.

## RABDF Livestock Machinery & Equipment Award



Quill Productions' Graham and Steve Crocker receive the RABDF Livestock Machinery and Equipment Award from left, RABDF award judge Angus Wielkopolski and RABDF president, Prof David Leaver

The RABDF Livestock Machinery and Equipment Award made to the product that delivers the most economic value to the livestock sector was presented to Dorchester based Quill Productions for its Quill Hoof-Spray System, claimed to be a revolutionary new system to tackle digital dermatitis. Designed for use in the milking parlour, it allows Intra Hoof-fit Spray Liquid to be applied to hooves without the need for lifting the feet. "The entry was a clear winner," commented Angus Wielkopolski, RABDF council member and chairman of the three-strong judging team. "We were impressed by the very practical and cost effective system which uses minimal quantities of liquid and has been proven to be highly effective."

Quill Production's managing director, Graham Crocker said "We are thrilled to win this prestigious award. Having spent many years as a dairy farmer myself, I am very aware of the huge impact that digital dermatitis is having on the industry and I'm passionate about finding ways to

eradicate it. The Quill Hoof-Spray System is a totally new concept and the result of a successful collaboration with Ambic Equipment."

### RABDF Prince Philip Award

The RABDF Prince Philip Award was presented to Genus ABS for research and development in the field of dairy farming and the most practical, relevant and best technical exhibit.

The company's winning entry was the Valiant Foam-Active, a unique foaming pre-wipe, designed to provide a convenient one-step preparation routine, delivering a superior standard of cleaning.

A Certificate of Merit was awarded to XL Vets and its exhibit featuring 'make your farm your fortress', a campaign designed to put biosecurity at the top of farmers to do lists.

### Prize Draw Winner

The Livestock Event visitor survey prize draw was won by Michael Ramsell, Mold, who received a pair of John Deere overalls.

## RABDF NMR Gold Cup winner



Michael Eavis with herd managers, Pam & John Taylor & estate manager, Steve Kearle, NMR chairman, Philip Kirkham, RABDF president, Prof David Leaver & RABDF's Lyndon Edwards

Michael Eavis from Glastonbury, Somerset is the winner of the 2014 RABDF NMR Gold Cup. His 230ha unit carries a 385 cow Holstein Friesian herd which is managed on a day-to-day basis by husband and wife team, John and Pam Taylor with help from a team of four staff. Regular meetings with Michael are used to monitor progress, set targets and develop new ideas.

RABDF chairman of judges, Lyndon Edwards described the unit as unique in its building layout and exceptional in the attention to detail. "Positive environmental impact has been achieved through the sympathetic design, while internal layout has ensured that the highest standards of cow health and welfare are met which is being reflected in performance," he said.

The herd averaged 12,101kg of milk at 3.96% butterfat and 3.11% protein on twice a day milking with an average lifetime daily yield of 15.39kg, average SCC 173,000/ml and calving interval 398 days.

**Runner-up:** David, Sheila and James Tomlinson, Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire. Their 230-cow Bilsrow pedigree Holstein herd averaged 10,942kg of milk at 4.34% fat and 3.10% protein on twice a day milking.

**Finalists:** Neil Baker, Haselbury Plucknett, Somerset; John Harvey and family, Beeswing, Dumfries; Darren and Stuart McMurrin, Banbridge, Co Down; Mark Verity, Clitheroe, Lancashire.

**The Lily Hill trophy for the highest placed Jersey herd:** GM and DJ Pye, Carnforth, Lancashire.

**The Murchland Perpetual Trophy for the highest place Ayrshire herd:** Gavin Lawrie, Prestwick, Ayrshire.

**The Chris May Memorial Award for highest lifetime daily yield:** Higgins family, Shrewsbury, Shropshire. Their 350 pedigree Holstein herd recorded an average 18.42kg lifetime daily yield.

**Judges:** Lyndon Edwards, Philip Kirkham and Tom King, who visited six farms selected from the initial group of 959 qualifying herds.





## The Dairy APPG launched

Next month sees the official launch of APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group) on Dairy. The new group has been developed by RABDF working more closely with DairyUK. RABDF chairman, Ian Macalpine together with Council member Lyndon Edwards who is also chairman of the DairyUK Farmers Forum, have had various discussions with DairyUK's chief executive, Judith Bryans. One of the ideas mooted was a joint parliamentary group on dairy that would complement the APPG on Cheese which DairyUK has run for several years.

Neil Parish, the Tory MP for Tiverton and Honiton has agreed to chair the group, whilst the vice chairs are former Defra Minister, Jim Fitzpatrick, Roger Williams and Mark Spencer.

So far a further 27 MPs and members of the Lords have signed up, relatively few compared with the group size of over 100 members when RABDF ran the APPG for Dairy Farmers in 2006/07; I suspect the small number reflects a perception among MPs that the dairy sector is alive and well.

Needless to say, this APPG needs more members. If you have contact with your MP or anyone in the House of Lords, then please ask them to join

So far, suggested topics of interest for the programme of work and activities include

- Trade, exports and import substitution, new market development
- Quality and competitiveness of milk production
- Encouraging consumer demand for milk and dairy
- Health benefits and consumer/retailer perception of dairy nutrition
- Events similar to the Northern Ireland Milk Cup

I'm currently working with Neil Parish and DairyUK's communications director, Caroline Leroux to draft the Terms of Reference and a work programme for the next 12 months.

**RABDF policy director**  
Tim Brigstocke

## RABDF Dairy dates

- 4 Sep** Commercial goat farm walk, Skipton  
**9 Sep** Farmers Weekly Sheep Farmer of the Year winner farm walk, Powys  
**25 Sep** RABDF Youngstock Walk, Dorset  
**8 & 9 Jul 2015** The Livestock Event, The NEC, Birmingham

## RABDF Farm Health Management Awards



Susan Carr and Rebecca Hodgson receive their trophies and certificates from David Neville, Volac and John Sumner, chairman of the judges

Rebecca Hodgson, a BSc Agriculture student at Myerscough College and Susan Carr studying at the Royal Veterinary College have each received the RABDF Farm Health Management Award sponsored by Volac, an awareness raising initiative for younger members of the industry. The awards were presented at the Livestock Event where Susan and Rebecca were each awarded a £500 cash prize.

A certificate was presented to the two other finalists short-listed for the award: Victoria Read studying FdSc in Agriculture at Plumpton College and Emma Stuart, a student at the Royal (Dick) School of Vet Studies, the University of Edinburgh.

This annual award which is open to agriculture, livestock and veterinary students from any course year includ-

ing postgraduate students required the applicants to write a 1,500 word essay on proactive farm health management - a key element of the GB's Animal Health and Welfare Strategy, and the benefits it brings to animal health and welfare and farm business profitability.

David Neville of award sponsor, Volac said: "This award has provided us with the opportunity to stress the importance of taking an holistic approach to best practice in livestock management. We would like to commend each of the finalists for having an awareness of the importance of adopting a proactive approach to farm health management covering all aspects, from biosecurity and environment to housing and nutrition. We are confident that this awareness will be of huge benefit in their future careers."

## Obituary: Prof David E Beever March 1944 - June 2014



David Beever was a renowned research scientist who not only made enormous advances in understanding energy and protein metabolism in dairy cows, but also had the unique ability of making a complex subject understandable to farmers and consultants. These outstanding services to the dairy industry led him to be presented with the RABDF HRH Princess Royal Award 2009.

Prof Beever was brought up on a small family farm near Sheffield where he learned his love of dairy cows from

his father. After graduating from the University of Newcastle, he went on to dedicate his 40 year career to research in the livestock sector, in particular ruminant nutrition, milk secretion and environmental pollution. He authored more than 450 research publications.

For two decades he worked at the Grassland Research Institute, Hurley where he went on to head the Ruminant Nutrition and Metabolism department, he then joined the University of Reading where he was involved in developing CEDAR as a research unit of international status. In the latter part of his career he joined Richard Keenan and Co as chief scientific advisor.

Prof Beever was recognised widely, including by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), for his contribution which earned it a Nobel Prize in 2007.