



The 39th ICOS National Conference

Convention Centre, Dublin
Tuesday, 3rd November 2015

better Farming, better Business, better Living
Can our Co-operatives do Better, Sustainably

F|B|D Trust

Welcome to the 39th ICOS National Conference

The 2015 National Conference will this year recall the slogan of Horace Plunkett, the founder of the co-operative movement in Ireland; 'Better Farming, Better Business, Better Living' in terms of the future sustainability of our co-operatives.

The conference will examine the economic, environmental and social sustainability of our co-operatives and how they need to adapt to deal with the challenges and opportunities facing co-operative producers in an increasingly globalised marketplace while maintaining their local roots.

Co-operatives have a major role to play in the Food Wise 2025 strategy, supporting the endeavours of primary producers and contributing to economic, environmental and social progress throughout Ireland.

ICOS are delighted to welcome Damien O'Reilly of RTE to chair the proceedings which will be channelled through three group panel discussions, an Environment Panel, a Social Panel and an Economic Panel.

ICOS would like to thank the support of the FBD trust for their sponsorship of this conference.

Martin Keane, President, ICOS

Speaker Biographies

Keynote:

Mr Phil Hogan is the EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development since November 1, 2014. Commissioner Hogan grew up on a farm in rural Kilkenny. From 1989 until he became Commissioner, he represented the Carlow/Kilkenny constituency in Dáil Éireann, where he served in the Fine Gael Party shadow cabinet and as spokesman on Europe, on the food industry, on consumer affairs and on regional policy. Between 2011 and 2014, he served as Minister for the Environment and Local Government. He has also occupied various senior posts at local, national and European level, including President of the Council of EU Environment Ministers (2013), Chairman of the European People's Party of Environment Ministers (2012-14), and Minister of State at the Irish Department of Finance (1994-95).

Environment Panel

Speaker: John FitzGerald

John FitzGerald has been a Research Affiliate at the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) since November 2014. Prior to that he was a Research Professor at the ESRI and Programme Co-ordinator of the Macroeconomics Research Area, Ireland. He joined the ESRI in 1984, after 12 years at the Department of Finance. He holds Master's

degrees in History and Economics from University College Dublin. In June, 2015, John was appointed as the Chairperson to Ireland's First Advisory Council on Climate Change

Panellists

Tom Arnold is Interim Co-ordinator of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement; which he was appointed by the UN in September 2014. He has served as Director General of the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) since November 2013, based in Dublin and was recently appointed to the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition (July 2015). A former CEO of Concern Worldwide (2001-2013), Tom was previously Assistant Secretary General and Chief Economist in the Department of Agriculture and Food in Ireland. Tom is a graduate in Agricultural Economics from University College Dublin and has Masters Degrees from the Catholic University of Louvain and Trinity College Dublin. He has received Honorary Doctorates of Laws from the National University of Ireland and Science from University College Dublin. He was awarded the 2014 Helen Keller Humanitarian Award.

Eamonn Farrell is an Agri & Food Policy Executive with ICOS. Previously he worked in the European Institutions in Brussels and Strasbourg. He graduated from UCD with

a degree in Agribusiness and Rural Development and a Masters of Economic Science in European and Public Affairs.

Harold Kingston is a dairy farmer from Courtmacsherry, Co. Cork and operates a milk production partnership with two neighbours. They supply the Barryroe Co-operative. He is also Chairman IFA Environment & Rural Affairs Committee.

John Muldowney MAgSc, is an Agricultural Inspector with the Climate Change and Bio-Energy Policy Division of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. He contributes to the development of sustainable agricultural policy, strategies and programmes at national, EU and international level by providing specialist analysis, advice and information on issues related to climate change and transboundary gases.

Economic Panel

Speaker: David Christensen

David manages Kingston Hill Farm Ltd, a family owned farming company operating dairy and beef farming enterprises in the Thames Valley some 10 miles to the west of Oxford. After graduating from the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne in 1990 he spent 9 months milking cows in New Zealand before joining the family business which farms 1300 acres of rented land on which 650 cows are milked and up to a further

800 cattle are reared. He is a former Chairman of the Maize Growers Association, has been a Director of the Orion Farming Group (a farm input buying group), was a farmer director of Milk Link and now sits on the Board of Representatives for Arla. He sat on the Farming Regulation Task Force Implementation Group, is on the steering group for the Prince's Rural Action Programme for Dairy Farming and is a Regional Advisory Board member for the NFU Mutual. David is a Trustee of the Oxfordshire Agricultural Society Trust, a charity which gives financial assistance for training and development to young people living in Oxfordshire and engaged in the agricultural sector.

Panellists

Sean Eustace is the Chairperson of Irish Woodland Owners Co-operative Society, a new private forestry growers co-operative established in 2014. The co-operative is looking to engage some of the 500 woodland producers in the county to develop enterprise opportunities for those producers. Sean is a former President of Macra na Feirme and former milk supplier to Avonmore Co-operative.

Richard Harnett is the manager of Castleisland Co-operative Mart for the last 35 years. He has overseen many changes over this time including the improvement of facilities in livestock marts,



Phil Hogan



John FitzGerald



Tom Arnold



Eamonn Farrell



Harold Kingston



John Muldowney



David Christensen



Sean Eustace



Richard Harnett



Gabriel D'Arcy



Dr. Sean Brady



Colm Brady



Maire Ahern McCarthy



Sean Finan



Paddy Gallen



Damien O'Reilly



Minister Simon Coveney

a greater emphasis on farm safety and the overall evolution of the beef sector. Richard has been a long proponent of greater amalgamation of co-operative marts.

Gabriel D'Arcy was appointed CEO of Town of Monaghan Co-operative in November 2014 and is now CEO of Lac-Patrick Co-operative following Monaghan's merger with Ballyrashane Co-operative in September 2015. Prior to this Gabriel was Managing Director of Bord na Mona and led its transformation from being a peat based entity into a leader in Renewable Energy over the past 7 years. Gabriel moved to Bord na Mona from Kerry Ingredients where he held a number of positions over previous 18 years resigning as Commercial Director of Kerry Ingredients Europe.

Social Panel

Speaker: Dr Sean Brady

Dr. Sean Brady is a former Managing Director of Irish Sugar and was chairman of

the Food Harvest 2020. He is a director of Irish National Stud, Animal Health Ireland and a number of Private Companies. He is also the chairman of the Golden Jubilee Trust Board.

Panellists

Colm Brady is the National Co-ordinator of the National Federation of Group Water Schemes. He has worked with the Federation for thirteen years and has been National Co-ordinator since 2010. The National Federation of Group Water Schemes is the representative and developmental organisation for community owned and managed Group Water Schemes around the country. The NF-GWS and most Group Water Schemes are organised as co-operative societies which is the NFGWS recommended corporate structure for the sector. An important element of Colm's role is the development and delivery of best practise governance and management policies and

advice for GWS boards and management – including the encouragement of the active involvement of the Group Water Schemes' members.

Maire Ahern McCarthy is from Innishannon Co. Cork. With her family they have a dairy and beef enterprise, supplying milk to Bandon Co-op. Maire is a serving member of the Board of Bandon Co-op and is a Qualified Financial Adviser. She has completed a Diploma in Food Business and Corporate Governance in UCC. She is currently working with South Western Services as Head of Auditing. Maire previously worked with the AIB, with Crowley McCarthy Accountants as a financial adviser and as a regional development officer with Irish Grassland Association. Maire is a 2015 Nuffield Scholar

Sean Finan is the 35th President of Macra na Feirme. He sits on the ICOS Rural Business Committee since 2015. Sean is a founding member

of Castlerea Macra and was elected as North West Vice President in 2013 and worked as a construction project manager with Sisk until taking up his full time role as President with Macra na Feirme.

Paddy Gallen is the General Manager of Inishowen Co-operative for the past 20 years. Paddy has been involved in the co-operative sector since the early 1980's. He previously worked with Donegal Creameries and Connacht Gold prior to his current role with Inishowen Co-op.

Facilitator: Damien O'Reilly

Damien has been working in RTÉ Radio 1 since 1998. He produces and presents Country Wide on RTÉ Radio One each Saturday morning at 8.30am. He also, occasionally, stands in for Joe Duffy on Liveline and presents the sport on Morning Ireland from time to time. Before joining RTÉ in 1998, Damien worked in Shannonside Northern Sound Radio for five years.



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Programme

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| 9:30 | Registration |
| 10:00 | Opening address: <i>Martin Keane, ICOS President</i> |
| 10:15 | Keynote Address: <i>Phil Hogan, Commissioner for Agriculture and Food</i> |
| 10:45 | Environment Speaker: <i>John Fitzgerald</i> |
| 11:05 | Environment Panel: <i>Tom Arnold, John Muldowney, Harold Kingston & Eamonn Farrell</i> |
| 11:45 | Environment Panel Q&A |
| 12:00 | Social Speaker: <i>Dr Sean Brady</i> |
| 12:20 | Social Panel: <i>Maire Ahern McCarthy, Sean Finan, Paddy Gallen & Colm Brady</i> |
| 13:00 | Social Panel Q&A |
| 13:15 | Lunch |
| 14:30 | Economic Speaker: <i>David Christensen</i> |
| 14:50 | Economic Panel: <i>Gabriel D'Arcy, Richard Hartnett & Sean Eustace</i> |
| 15:30 | Economic Panel Q&A with Minister Simon Coveney |
| 15:45 | FBD Address on Champions for Change Programme: <i>Ciaran Roche, Vice Chair, Farm Safety Partnership & Risk Manager</i> |
| 16:00 | Closing Address: <i>Minister Simon Coveney, Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine</i> |
| 16:15 | Close |