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Kerry Group Reaches Sustainability Milestone with Certification of Milk Suppliers

Kerry has become the first major milk processor to achieve 100% certification of its milk suppliers in Ireland under the Sustainable Dairy Assurance Scheme.

Kerry Group today announced that it has completed the certification of all its 3,300 milk suppliers under the internationally accredited, Sustainable Dairy Assurance Scheme (SDAS). The first national programme of its kind, SDAS is a comprehensive quality and sustainability programme that independently audits performance at farm level every 18 months.

Developed by Bord Bia (the Irish Food Board) in collaboration with key stakeholders, SDAS was launched in December 2013, under Origin Green, the world's first national food sustainability programme. A founder member of Origin Green, Kerry has become the first major milk processor to achieve complete certification under SDAS across its entire Irish milk pool.

The Group's 3,300 milk suppliers located in South West Ireland provide Kerry with over 1.2 billion litres of milk annually. Using a natural grass based production system, they are already considered to be among the most sustainable producers. These family farms are now demonstrating a further commitment to continuous improvement through independent assessment every 18 months.

The SDAS audit will satisfy Kerry's longstanding requirements on quality, food safety and traceability at farm level while the evaluation of performance on sustainability criteria such as environmental management, animal health and welfare, pasture management, and health and safety will now help to ensure more sustainable production.

Through the audit process, Bord Bia also determines a carbon footprint for each individual farm using an accredited footprinting model. With feedback provided to the farmer directly, the process helps to monitor environmental impacts and supports ongoing improvement.

Since the introduction of SDAS, Kerry's Agribusiness division has been actively engaged with its milk suppliers to help guide them through the certification process. Having reached this milestone, Kerry's focus will now turn to supporting farmers as they continue to optimise efficiencies and sustainable production.

The announcement by Kerry Group was welcomed by **Minister of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Michael Creed, T.D.** Commenting on Kerry's achievement he noted that the future expansion of Irish agriculture was deeply linked to sustainable intensification and Bord Bia, through Origin Green, had provided a unique model through which this could be successfully achieved, under a nationally accredited and independently certified programme linking milk suppliers and processors.

Tara McCarthy, CEO of Bord Bia, stated that Kerry's achievement represented a milestone for the SDAS scheme and was a further endorsement of Bord Bia's work to integrate sustainability into all their farm assurance programmes.

Edmond Scanlon, CEO Designate of Kerry Group hailed the work undertaken by the Group's Agribusiness division and the engagement shown by farmers. 'It is increasingly important that we can demonstrate to customers and consumers that their food is safely and sustainably produced. Kerry's heritage lies in processing the highest quality, natural, grass fed dairy and the achievement of SDAS certification by all our milk suppliers is an important part of the Group's broader sustainability goals.'

Editor's Notes

Kerry Group's Taste & Nutrition Division, Kerry, provide the largest, most innovative portfolio of Taste & Nutrition technologies and systems and Functional Ingredients & Actives for the global food, beverage and pharmaceutical industries. Our consumer foods division, Kerry Foods, is also a leading consumer foods processor and supplier in selected EU markets.

Our industry leading technologies are backed by the industry's most robust in-house processing capabilities. We apply our processing expertise to address manufacturing challenges and help customers design winning consumer products.

Quoted on the London & Irish Stock exchanges, with headquarters in Tralee, County Kerry, Ireland, our 2016 Group revenue was €6.1billion.

Origin Green is the only sustainability programme in the world that operates on a national scale, uniting Government, the private sector and food producers through Bord Bia, the Irish Food Board.

Independently verified, it enables Ireland's farmers and producers to set and achieve measurable sustainability targets – reducing environmental impact, serving local communities more effectively and protecting the extraordinarily rich natural resources that the country enjoys.

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