

## *Big investment in grain store and mill at Bretts*

Bretts mill in Callan has traditionally used native grain as the main raw material, and the last year saw the completion of a €6m investment in grain handling, drying and storage. Our new 20,000 tonne grain store was completed just in time for harvest'13, and we now have a highly efficient central grain facility, which uses the newest available technology to ensure efficiency and energy savings.



The focus has now switched to the development of the animal feed mill to facilitate the growing demand for our feed range, especially from dairy farmers during the exciting new opportunities that lie ahead after the end of quotas next year.

With this in mind Bretts are embarking on an exciting development, adapting the most up to date technology available to increase the cubing capacity by more than 50%. These mechanical and software upgrades in the mill will deliver total product security to our customers.

This development is expected to be fully operational in July and will help to make our Callan site one of the most efficient mills in Europe.

### Staff Profile



#### **James Irish, Agronomist, Brett Brothers Ltd.**

James Irish, from a mixed farm in Glenmore, Co Kilkenny was recently appointed Agronomist within Brett Brothers. An Agricultural Science graduate from UCD, James has also completed a research masters analysing financial management on tillage farms, and developed a widely adopted Machinery Cost Calculator.

Central to Brett Brothers is assisting our grain growers to reach optimum performance and yields, and provide them with the tools to do so. As a registered pesticide advisor James will be advising these grain growers on best practice to maximise crop yields in a cost effective way, with the least impact on the environment.

As well as offering advice to our tillage farmers, James will also be of immense assistance to livestock farmers in the area of grassland management.

**James can be contacted at the Callan office.**

## *Brett Brothers customer Jim White speaks about winning the 2013 National Heifer Rearing competition*

As the 2014 competition approaches, we went to see Jim White at the foot of the Slievenamon mountains, to chat about what he felt were the key contributors to winning the 2013 National Heifer rearing competition.



Jim White, PJ Barron, Bretts Area Rep & Sean Brett

Good heifer rearing is fundamental to the future of any dairy herd, and Jim certainly has his eye on the ball with regard to this. He operates a very precise system, paying close attention to good calf husbandry and heifer performance, but also cites the inclusion of high EBI animals as key to getting the desired performance from them. His current EBI reports show an overall average EBI of his heifers at €200, and €126 for fertility.

Incorporating the Bretts Heifer Rearer Cubes means that he can get his heifers to the desired weights at particular stages. He is keen to stress that he does not rush his heifer calves onto grass, but waits until they are ready, and describes his system as an indoor calf rearing one. The quantity of Heifer Rearer Cubes fed is completely dependent on the individual animals' performance and requirements.

Jim first weighs his heifers in August, expecting to have achieved an average weight of 180kgs. Anything under 150kgs are grouped separately and fed all through on 2kgs of Heifer Rearer Cubes. Another weigh-in takes place in February, with a desired weight of 280kgs.

Anything under 250kgs are again grouped and fed the Heifer Rearer Cubes. By continuous grouping, Jim operates a very efficient feeding system and silage quality is also a determining factor on how much meal is required.

When asked why he chooses the Heifer Rearer Cubes, he explains, 'It allows me to bring on my lighter heifers who are not performing or meeting my weight targets and get them to a desired level'.



Among a number of factors, the competition came down to, how many of Jim's 100 cows had come through his heifer rearing system, and are still there 3 years on. Speaking with Jim and looking at his stock, it is clear to see Jim is doing a lot of things right and we at Brett Brothers are delighted to be part of that.

**Heifer Rearer Cubes are for the sole purpose of growing replacement heifers to the optimum size and weight for entering their first lactation.**

- Achieve target weights at the critical stages of rearing and breeding.
- This high protein feed prevents fatty tissue depositing in the udder and maximises future milking ability if fed right through rearing.
- Improves longevity in the herd due to good skeletal development.



**Order your Heifer Rearer Cubes from your local Brett Brothers branch.**

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