

CFN –press release n° 2 – issued 10 July 2012

EMBARGOED until 00.01am Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012

## MUSSELS, POTATOES & BEEF - safe & tasty choices

**Knowledge Transfer from Research Delivers Safe and Tasty Foods to Irish & European Consumers boosting home-grown consumer satisfaction, says CommNet at ESOF2012**

CommNet, the EC funded support action project, presents case studies at ESOF from Ireland's world-class food research & implementation programmes & suggests a link to Ireland's ranking in the OECD's Better Living index. Visit CommNet's Stand No 51 to find out more & attend CommNet's presentation by Rhonda Smith in Exhibition Hall Thurs 12 & Sat 14 July 10.30am.

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**Rhonda Smith, Chair of CommNet**, said at ESOF 2012 today (Thursday 12 July):

“With land and sea resources at its disposal, Ireland has combined these natural USPs with enterprise and investment to create renowned teams and institutes that deliver research-led techniques and processes for the production of safe, tasty and varied foods for consumption at home and abroad.

Communicating the knowledge generated by research so it can be applied by farmers, producers and retailers and understood by consumers is the most important final activity in the research chain.

Ireland demonstrates commitment to ensuring that final link in the chain clicks into place.”

The CommNet presentation at ESOF provides three examples of Irish research investment and expertise in food production, effectively communicated in words and pictures that interest the public, industry & professionals alike, creating impact & understanding.

Safe production and harvesting of **Mussels**, development of disease-resistant **Potato** varieties and safe handling of **Beef** products are covered in the presentation. (See Note below)

**Rhonda Smith** continues: “Ireland ranks highly in the OECD's *Better Life Index* compared with many EC countries with long life expectancy, life satisfaction, good work-life balance, safety & good health important positive factors. Investment in human capital in science & research and a focus on Ireland's USPs of aquaculture and agri-business will no doubt continue to support Ireland's sense of well-being.”

- Turn over -

**CommNet Coordinator Mario Martinoli concludes:** “CommNet’s mission is to help EC funded projects improve significantly the information flow from research to key target groups, the users and consumers of research results. Better awareness, understanding and utilization of research results will inevitably lead to the generation of innovative and sustainable products and policies that will improve our daily lives no matter where we live.”

**CommNet** is exhibiting at **ESOF2012** (11-15 July 2012, Dublin [www.esof2012.com](http://www.esof2012.com)) to promote membership of CommNet and its support services to the Bio economy research community. Currently around 100 projects have joined CommNet. **Ends/**

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. The three case studies being presented (visit CommNet’s Stand 51 to view videos)
  - **Mussels**, a major contributor to the aquaculture industry in Ireland (c €125 million in total), is a filter-feeder and from time to time can accumulate naturally occurring biotoxins. If shellfish containing such toxins are consumed, sickness and unpleasant side effects can result. Mussel farmers co-operate with the Marine Institute, Galway in a regular monitoring programme to safeguard consumers, production and Ireland’s reputation.
  - **Potatoes**, the third most directly consumed global staple food behind rice and maize, is consumed in much greater quantities in China and India than in Europe. With no ‘perfect potato’, Teagasc, Ireland’s Agriculture and Food Development Authority, is working to develop disease resistant varieties that will reduce spend on fungicides and control measures and reduce yield losses due to blight and potato cyst nematode (PCN) at a cost of c €5 billion a year.
  - **Beef** - Ireland is the largest net exporter of beef in the northern hemisphere with c. 90% of production being exported to the rest of Europe (worth €1.8 billion in 2010). As demand for beef protein continues to rise world-wide, it is vital that Ireland maintains its market share based on its reputation for high quality, safe products that can be maintained across the global food chain. The EC funded project ProSafeBeef co-ordinated by Ireland’s Teagasc addresses this challenge at home and abroad.
2. CommNet, the EC funded support action project, is helping teams across Europe tell their research stories and disseminate the results of their work in the Bio economy to the public, professionals, parliamentarians and industry. Projects and individuals can find full information on CommNet’s services at [www.commnet.eu](http://www.commnet.eu) and join by emailing Rhonda Smith, Chair of CommNet at [rhonda@minervacomms.net](mailto:rhonda@minervacomms.net).
3. CommNet is supported by the EU within Framework Programme 7 (FP7) Grant agreement no 289699. More information is available at [www.commnet.eu](http://www.commnet.eu). The CommNet partners are youris.com, Minerva UK, British Nutrition Foundation, PRACSIS and ttz Bremerhaven.

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