

Bord Bia Export Award goes to Flagship Irish Brand

~ Jameson a key contributor to €1 billion export expansion ~

~ Special Award recognises Kerrygold and Cashel Blue collaboration ~

Tuesday 22nd November 2011 As Irish food and drink exports approach a record €9 billion in 2011, the key contribution of Jameson Irish whiskey was recognised when it won the Bord Bia Food and Drink Export Award at a ceremony in Trinity College Dublin tonight. In 2010 the iconic brand passed a key milestone selling 3 million cases of whiskey globally and is set to reach 4 million cases by 2012. Meanwhile, Irish Distillers and Pernod Ricard are investing over €100 million in Ireland over the coming 3 years to sustain its rapid expansion.

Congratulating Irish Distillers on the Award, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Mr. Simon Coveney T.D. stated that *"Irish Distillers has shown huge marketing commitment to Irish Whiskey and its exceptional export performance is to be welcomed not only for the sustained double digit growth in exports, but for the fact that it promotes the Irish identity in more than 120 countries around the world. It is proudly rooted in Irish heritage and tradition and these global exports provide a platform to build awareness and enhance the brand reputation of our entire food and drink industry, a key element of Food Harvest 2020"*. Irish Distillers employs 500 people and a further 280 jobs are to be created through the expansion of its Midleton distillery over the next four years. It sources 33,000 tonnes of Irish barley each year, supporting 11,000 acres of farmed land. The Jameson brand has seen sustained growth on international markets related to a strategic advertising and market placement of the product.

Eight Irish companies in all were honoured at the Bord Bia awards ceremony in Trinity College. Speaking at the event, Michael Carey, Chairman, Bord Bia said *"in spite of all the challenges we face – it is also probably the most exciting time ever to be in our industry. The increase in exports would be impressive at any time but against the backdrop of global economic uncertainty and our own domestic difficulties it is truly remarkable. Equally remarkable are the achievements of the award winners, who have demonstrated success in areas critical to future growth, from innovation and branding to sustainability and entrepreneurship"*.

Kerrygold and Cashel Blue were also honoured with a Special Award in recognition of their co-branding or 'co-

opetition' initiative in the US market. Bord Bia is actively supporting the principle of co-opetition, where food companies work together to create synergies resulting in cost savings, improved returns and/or increased market distribution. As part of the initiative, the Irish Dairy Board, owners of the Kerrygold brand, has joined forces with Cashel Blue in a new co-branding and distribution agreement to build brand awareness and market share in the US. Speaking at the event Aidan Cotter, Chief Executive, Bord Bia commented *"this is an excellent example of co-opetition as a business strategy and how a large multinational company can collaborate with a smaller player to develop a mutually beneficial brand offering. Kerrygold has added an artisan product to its portfolio while Cashel Blue is leveraging on an established international brand with global distribution channels. It's a win-win situation and we look forward to working with more companies on this exciting new model to develop our exports further."*

Kevin Knightly, CEO, Rabobank Ireland plc said: "We are delighted to be associated with Bord Bia's Food and Drink Industry Awards and have been very impressed with the quality of the entries. In these difficult times, it is great to see companies working together to improve business performance. As a cooperative bank we understand the benefits of 'co-opetition' and working together to improve returns."

The dairy sector is expected to contribute as much as half the total growth in Irish food and drink exports this year, growing by well in excess of 20% or €0.5 billion. The volume of dairy exports is projected to grow by some 50% once EU quotas are lifted in 2015.

The Food and Drink Industry Awards, held in association with Rabobank, were open to all food and drink products manufactured in Ireland. This year, Bord Bia received a total of **184** award entries across the six categories. The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney TD presented the overall category award winners which included: *(See Notes to Editor for profiles)*

- **Innovation Award** – **Natasha's Living Food for Kale Crunchies**, a healthy crisp alternative made from dried locally grown kale
- **Domestic Success Award** – **Flahavan's**, one of Ireland's leading private companies, Flahavan's has been milling quality Irish oats for over six generations at the family mill in Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford.
- **Sustainability Award** – **Country Crest**, a family owned business, situated in north County Dublin. As part of its environment philosophy, Country Crest includes a wind turbine, water recycling, and a wildlife pond. The company aims to be energy self-sufficient by 2015.

- **Branding Award – Largo Foods for Tayto**, Ireland's Number 1 crisp and snack brand and Ireland's 5th largest grocery brand (Nielsen). Over 3 million bags of Tayto are sold in Ireland each week.
- **Entrepreneurial Award – Arun Kapil, Managing Director, Green Saffron**. In 2007, Arun Kapil set up Green Saffron in Midleton, Co.Cork. The company specialises in premium, farm-fresh whole spices and blends for use in home and professional kitchens.
- **Export Award – Jameson**

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NOTES TO EDITOR

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Judging

All entries were assessed by an independent judging panel chaired by John Fanning, Chairman of Bord Bia's Brand Forum. The panel also includes Gilles Boumeester, Global Head Food & Agri Coverage, Rabobank International; Gordon Campbell, Managing Director, Spar International; Matt Dempsey, Editor, Irish Farmers Journal; Senator Feargal Quinn; Margot Slattery, Divisional Director, Sodexo Ireland; Tim Mobsby, former European Area President, Kellogg Company; Bartley O'Connor, Head of Sustainability, PWC and Fran Walton, Director, The Futures Company.

Rabobank

Rabobank is a full range financial services provider which operates on the basis of co-operative principles. Its origins lie in local loan co-operatives founded in The Netherlands over 115 years ago by enterprising individuals who had no access to capital markets. Today, it is comprised of 141 independent local member banks.

Outside of the Netherlands, Rabobank is a leading food and agribusiness bank with a presence in 30 countries supported by a dedicated research division. Rabobank has been in Ireland since 1994. It recognises that innovation, sustainability and excellence in the Irish food and drinks sector create value for society and strengthen the competitiveness of the industry in domestic and global markets.

Overall Category Winners – Company Profiles

Innovation Award: Natasha's Living Food for Kale Crunchies

Natasha Czopor established Natasha's Living Food, an innovative, health food manufacturing company, three and a half years ago. Raised as a vegetarian, Nastasha felt there were no alternatives on the market for truly healthy snacks. Her new product – Kale Crunchies – are made from locally grown kale, covered in sunflower seed pate, then dried at 40 degrees thus preserving the flavour, minerals and vitamins. According to Natasha "they are healthy crisps!" Her products are sold in Supervalu and in a number of independent health food stores, delis and cafes.

Sustainability Award – Country Crest

Based on a four generation family farming tradition, Country Crest (based in North County Dublin) prides itself on its strong environmental and sustainability ethos in all aspects of its business from farming 2000 acres, growing and packing 500 tons of potatoes and 120 tons of onions to producing 80,000 prepared meals per week. In tandem with its business expansion, Country Crest has not lost sight of its green roots and includes a wind turbine, water recycling, and a wildlife pond, as part of their environment philosophy. Energy management, together with an 800kW wind turbine, have resulted in reduced reliance on fossil fuel for power requirements. This together with an Anaerobic Digestion plant planned in the near future will help to reach Country Crests aim of energy self-sufficiency by 2015.

Export Award – Jameson

Over one billion glasses of Jameson are consumed around the world each year. Jameson is a global brand with a presence in over 120 markets. In 2010 the iconic brand passed a key milestone selling 3 million cases of whiskey globally and is set to reach 4 million cases by 2012. Irish Distillers and Pernod Ricard are investing over €200 million in Ireland over the coming 3 years to sustain the rapid expansion of the brand.

Domestic Success Award – Flahavan's

Flahavan's, one of Ireland's leading private companies, has been milling quality Irish oats for over six generations at the family mill in Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford. Flahavan's has seen strong growth in its market share of the hot

oats cereal category (66.1% Market Share Value, Kantar World Panel 52 w/e 12th June 2011) and continues to maintain its leadership position in the Irish market. Key customers in the domestic market include Musgraves/Superquinn, Tesco, Dunnes Stores, independents and forecourts.

Branding Award – Largo Foods for Tayto

In 2006, Ashbourne based Largo Foods purchased the struggling well known brand Tayto for €68 million. At the time, Tayto was in a difficult position with an ageing and slowly declining loyalty base. The only path forward for the brand was to reinvigorate its personality and to protect and grow its number 1 status in Ireland. To compete successfully with the global multinationals, creativity had to be the key ingredient. This meant developing many non-traditional ideas and using some not so obvious mediums. These included running Mr. Tayto in the general election, including a Mr. Tayto song in the Irish download charts, classified ads, Bebo, Youtube & Facebook profiles, a bestselling autobiography and biggest of all, a crisp theme park called Tayto Park. Tayto is currently Ireland's Number 1 crisp and snack brand, with over 3 millions packs sold in Ireland each week.

Entrepreneurial Award – Arun Kapil, Managing Director, Green Saffron

In 2007, Arun Kapil set up Green Saffron – an award winning family business based in Midelton, Co. Cork. The company specialises in the premium, farm-fresh whole spices and blends of exceptional quality for use in home and professional kitchens alike. Green Saffron products are currently sold in farmers markets, select supermarkets and in over 80 speciality food, farm shops and cookery schools throughout Ireland including, Avoca, Donnybrook Fair and Fallon and Byrne.