

03 June 2011 - For immediate release

Over 10,000 Festival Goers to Descend on Kilkenny

Clik Pour On All Ireland and International Sheep Shearing & Wool Handling Championships

The countdown is on for the multi-million euro revenue booster for the entire south east region, the 2011 Sheep and Wool Festival which includes the Clik All Ireland and International Sheep Shearing & Wool Handling Championships.

The two day festival is shaping up to be Ireland's biggest sheep, wool and family event ever and will take place at the Cillín Hill exhibition centre on the edge of Kilkenny city on June 4 to 5.

Organisers expect the festival to draw upwards of 15,000 visitors, including competitors and spectators, to the city and surrounding counties over the festival weekend.

Commenting on the imminent event, festival Chairperson Micheál Nolan said, "This annual festival and competition is a very important element of the annual agricultural calendar and we will have competitors and spectators from all over Ireland and the UK and as far away as Australia, New Zealand and mainland Europe descending on Kilkenny this weekend. It will be a massive revenue spinner in tourism terms for the entire South East region."

The event includes the All Ireland and European Young Sheep Farmer Competitions and the National Sheep Breeders Association will host their All Ireland Championships at the event. Upwards of 2,000 sheep will be shorn by Irish and international competitors at the two day competition.

The festival also includes sheepdog trials, a pet dog show, felting workshops and exhibitions. World Famous Felting Designer, Thomas Horst, will showcase his fashion designs for the first time ever outside of the US at the exhibition centre. It's all part of a focus on Irish Craft and Design and a Felting Workshop hosted by Irish felter Nicola Brown. The established teacher, who is registered with the Crafts Council, will run morning and afternoon workshops throughout the two day festival.

A host of alternative events will also be on offer at the festival, including strongman and wrestling shows, a 24 hour, charity sheep shear, a funfair, circus and magic shows, live music, a mobile farm and a festival dance with The Conquerors on Sunday night.

The festival will feature an array of trade stands and will also be a major showcase event for craft and food exhibitors. It will provide a platform for national craft exhibitors and indigenous, artisan producers.

Kilkenny is definitely the place to be over the June Bank Holiday as the Sheep & Wool Festival coincides with the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival. The festival has also organised shuttle buses to travel to and from the city centre on the first day so festival goers can enjoy all that Kilkenny has to offer over the June Bank Holiday weekend.

The international event is supported by Clik Pour On, Eamon Langton, FBD Insurance, Kilkenny Farm Relief, LEADER and Failte Ireland, Kilkenny Leader Partnership, FRS Farm Services and Bord Bia.

- For further details, log on to www.sheepshearing2011.ie

Ends – Wednesday, 01 June 2011