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## **Global dairy leaders gather in Austria for inaugural summit**

At the Future-Proof Dairy International Summit, speakers concluded that high herd health is essential to the long-term sustainability and profitability in the dairy sector, with user-friendly technology playing a vital role in achieving this goal.

The inaugural event, which took place in Graz, Austria on 19 July, was attended by dairy farmers, vets, politicians, technology experts, and academics from across the globe.

Event organiser smaXtec, which runs an innovative health monitoring system for dairy farmers, said the summit was a platform to bring together the brightest minds in the dairy industry to share knowledge and innovation.

“We have a track record for cutting-edge technology and advancements in dairy management,” says Chris Howarth, global sales director at smaXtec.

“We wanted to bring together key industry leaders to initiate a sector-wide dialogue on the role of technology in helping the sector meet any challenges and opportunities head-on. Whether it be reducing the environmental impact of milk production, or improving welfare standards on-farm, we are confident technology can help farmers and the sector as a whole.”

With a programme combining speakers and a lively panel discussion, topics relating to milk production, post-processing, technologies and data processing were covered.

Keynote speakers included Aidan Connolly, founder and president of AgriTech Capital – a strategy and investment firm which specialises in innovation and technology in the agri-business sector.

He said: “Technology allows us to make more informed decisions about the health of the animal, nutrition and the milk production. Making us smarter through smart devices that is the key.

smaXtec, as the fastest growing health monitoring system, makes a significant contribution towards this.”

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smaXtec has already demonstrated how technology can help the dairy sector with the launch of various advances – including the new Level Zero standard for mastitis detection\*. Dr Stefan Scherer, CEO of smaXtec believes that bringing advances such as Level Zero to the forefront was a key motivation for introducing the summit.

"We are proud that we were able to give international visionaries a presentation forum. Our goal of the event was to provide inspiration to all participants in order to become even more future-proof. And we achieved that," he says.

More information about smaXtec and its ruminal bolus technology is available [here](#).

**ENDS**

\*Level Zero – Is a new early diagnostic standard that has identified a specific temperature pattern indicating the early onset of mastitis through in-depth analysis of data collected through smaXtec's health monitoring boluses.

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## **About smaXtec**

We offer professional dairy farmers the most technologically advanced health system aimed at preventing diseases in dairy cows. As a result, farmers achieve stable high milk yields, reduce the use of antibiotics many times over and significantly increase animal welfare. Through 24/7 monitoring and optimisation of time-consuming daily tasks, the entire work process on dairy farms can be made more efficient. In this way, we make an important contribution to the stability and profitability of dairy farming worldwide.

For more information, please visit us at [smaXtec.com](http://smaXtec.com)

## **Further material for media usage:**

"smaXtec has already demonstrated how technology can help the dairy sector with the introduction of several innovations, including the new Level Zero standard for mastitis detection, which is now being gradually adopted by science books. With more than a quarter of a million cows in smaXtec monitoring, farmers thus have the most advanced early disease detection and can take important preventive measures."

*Maria Leitner, Chief Marketing Officer at smaXtec*

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“The Future-Proof Dairy International Summit exemplifies smaXtec's commitment to creating value for farmers through innovative technology, thereby significantly improving the animal welfare of dairy cows. With this new annual Summit, we are focused on making the dairy industry sustainable and future-proof through collaboration and technological advancements.”

*Stefan Scherer, smaXtec CEO*

## **SPEAKERS**

### **Aidan Connolly - Founder & President, Agritech Capital**

Topic: "The future of dairy farming - How technology will change today's procedures."

Aidan Connolly is founder and President of AgriTech Capital, a global consulting and investing company specialized in the field of AgriTech. He is keynote speaker as well as author of various publications. His recent book “The Future of Agriculture” addresses the digital and technological disruptions taking place in the food and farming business, and a vision of what is the future of agriculture.

### **Hayden Lawrence - Co-Founder, Spatial Solutions and Farm Owner**

Topic: "Why technology is needed throughout dairy farming, even at pasture-based farms."

Hayden Lawrence completed a PhD in Agriculture Engineering in 2005 specializing in Precision Agricultural Systems. He developed and patented the Rapid Pasture Meter, a device used to measure pasture herbage mass. Hayden is also owner of a 177ha farm in New Zealand, milking 400 cows, on which technology and systems management are helping him to keep his business at the forefront of pasture-based technologies.

### **Julio Giordano - Associate Professor, Animal Science Cornell University**

Topic: "Improving fertility while reducing hormones."

Julio Giordano holds a Master of Science from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in Animal Science and a PhD of the University of Wisconsin, Madison in Dairy Science. His research program focuses on dairy cattle reproductive physiology, health, and the implications of health and reproductive performance on the economics of dairy farms.

### **Rosario Ibarra - General Manager, Grotegut Dairy Farm**

Topic: "Animal welfare matters. No matter what size of dairy you have."

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Rosario Ibarra is General Manager at Grotegut Dairy, a dairy operation with approximately 3000 dairy cows and 50 full-time employees. Rosario began her career in the dairy industry studying agronomy at Tecnológico de Monterrey – Campus Querétaro in Mexico which had a partnership with University of Wisconsin, Madison. The opportunities for female leadership within dairy businesses in Wisconsin provided a launching point for Rosario to eventually become General Manager at one of the most progressive dairies in the state.

**Johannes Holzner - Professor for Applied Farm Management and Business Planning, University of Applied Science Weihenstephan-Triesdorf**

Topic: "Challenges in Dairy Farming – Which factors will most impact future milk production? "

Johannes Holzner is professor at the University of Applied Sciences Weihenstephan-Triesdorf. There he is responsible for two master degree programs in International Agricultural Management. He has been strategic advisor for McDonald's Germany and several Dairies in southern Germany for more than 10 years. Together with his family he runs a farm with 140 dairy cows.

## **PANELISTS**

**Horst Bischof - Vice Rector for Research, Graz University of Technology**

Horst Bischof received his Master of Science and Ph.D. degree in computer science from the Vienna University of Technology in 1990 and 1993. Since 2011 he is vice rector for research at Graz University of Technology, where his field of responsibility lies in the strategic orientation of research cooperation projects with industry and research and technology transfer. From October 2023, he will devote himself to a new challenge as rector of Graz University of Technology.

**René Schwager - Managing Director of mooh Genossenschaft**

Previously, Schwager was managing director of Nordostmilch AG. Since 2016, he has been part of the mooh Genossenschaft, a sales company of more than 4000 Swiss dairy farmers, where he has been managing director for around 5 years. His motivation for the company is to find the most valuable sales channels for the 2 million kg high quality milk their farmers produce every

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day. Schwager is a passionate dairy expert and likes to set new trends and to capture new market opportunities.

**Sebastian Auernig - President of Austrian Breeders Association and Austrian Agriculture Cluster**

Auernig started his career as a teacher for animal breeding and business management at the Agricultural College (LFS) Althofen, which he headed as director from 2004. Since 2021, Sebastian Auernig has been chairman of the Austrian Agricultural Cluster (AAC), an international export platform with 22 member associations for the joint development of the predominantly South-Eastern European market. In the course of the Fleckvieh World Congress last year, Auernig was elected both European and World President.