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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **WEATHERBYS SCIENTIFIC RELOCATE TO STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY**

Weatherbys Scientific which undertakes the parentage verification of all Irish born Thoroughbreds has transformed its business in recent years as a result of huge investment in genetic technologies.

It is now established as one of Europe's foremost laboratories offering services to customers anywhere in the world and not just for horses, where its work originated, but also for cattle, pigs, sheep, dogs and other animal species.

It offers many specialist DNA services, high density genotyping, parentage verification, genetic traits, pedigree searching, species identification, forensic testing and biobanking using an array of cutting edge technologies.

These new techniques have delivered a wealth of new data from over 1.5 million samples, representing 80 billion data points over the past 3 years. One project undertaken for the Irish Cattle Breeders Federation has been the largest of its type anywhere in the world.

The business growth in the past 5 years has resulted in the need for Weatherbys Scientific business to relocate to a state-of-the-art and purpose-built facility at M7 business park, a short distance outside of Naas.

Dr. Rebecca Weld, Operations Director of Weatherbys Scientific, commented:

“Our Scientific business has grown tenfold in the last few years and we expect that this growth will accelerate further in the coming years. Our new laboratory at the M7 business park will mean that we will be able to grow with confidence and manage the business within a specialist facility complete with custom built laboratories housing state-of-the-art technology platforms, designated sample receipt areas and extensive biobanking capabilities.

“We are extremely grateful to our former landlords at the Irish Equine Centre and our move has simply been a question of outgrowing that facility. It is hoped that the Equine element of the Scientific business will return to the IEC in time. Indeed Weatherbys General Stud Book will themselves possibly relocate from their office in Naas to the IEC as and when the re-development plans at that site are complete.

“Equines are in our DNA and we would like to see this element of our business thrive in its own right and are conscious of the key role we have in supporting industry stakeholders. Our vision is to become the “go to” scientific resource for the global thoroughbred industry through our fast-growing genetic capabilities.”

Sarah McNicholas, Chief Executive of the Irish Equine Centre, commented:

“The Weatherbys DNA laboratory team have been tenants and friends of the IEC for over thirty years and it was sad to see them relocate, but it was understandable as their business needs had outgrown the facilities we could offer them. We are, however, actively working on a redevelopment project for the current IEC site that, if successful, would enable Weatherbys’ equine activities to return to the IEC in the future. This potential reunion of the IEC and the Weatherbys equine team would be very welcome and consistent with our joint objective of offering the Irish equine industry the best scientific service possible.”

**Ends.**

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **ABOUT WEATHERBYS SCIENTIFIC:**

Weatherbys Scientific commenced parentage testing thoroughbred horses using blood typing technology in 1985, and established operations at a facility on the same site as the Irish Equine Centre in Johnstown, County Kildare, Ireland.

In 2000, the technology for parentage verification changed to microsatellite DNA markers. We started offering parentage testing services for other species – bovine, ovine, canine, companion and exotics. As the level of scientific expertise developed in the business, so too did the suite of DNA based services offered, and in 2010 the laboratory commenced genotyping cattle using SNP technology. The team quickly developed a reputation for service and versatility and genotyped cattle using the Illumina 7k low density SNP chip in 2012.

Weatherbys Scientific’s reputation for service has been strengthening over time. Close relationships were established with the Irish Cattle Breeders Federation (ICBF) in 2012 and 2013, and the Weatherbys Scientific team collaborated, through a research project, in the development of a customised SNP chip (IDB) for dairy and beef breeds, genotyping 25,000 cattle/week (the largest program of its type in the world).

Weatherbys Scientific has achieved significant technical milestones – it is an institutional member of the scientific body of the International Society of Animal Genetics (ISAG) and it is also accredited by the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR) and is an accredited ICAR Data Interpretation centre. It is also approved with Propel certification by Illumina, and has been selected as an Illumina Beta testing laboratory for new technologies.

**[WeatherbysScientific.com](http://WeatherbysScientific.com)**