



Irish Business Network Saudi Arabia

شبكة الأعمال الأيرلندية - المملكة العربية السعودية



Guest Speaker

Alastair McGuckian

Founder of Masstock - Almarai

Alastair McGuckian is the founder and chairman of Masstock who along with his brother Paddy established Almarai in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1976. For nearly 50 years Masstock have been market leaders in the Agri – Food sector with activities in food, farming and agrichemicals in the Middle and Far East, Africa, Eastern Europe, UK and USA.

Alastair was born into a Co. Antrim entrepreneurial farming family at the end of WWII. Educated in Garron Tower Boarding School on the Antrim Coast, Alastair went to Greenmount College where he was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship to study farming systems throughout Europe.

The McGuckian family have had a long association with large scale farming operations. Alastair's father's family were well known porcine farmers, while his father was a pioneer in grassland development and livestock housing.

In the 1960s, Alastair and his brother Paddy continued the McGuckian family tradition by setting up the Masstock Farming System from their 700acre farm in Masserene Park in Co. Antrim. During this time Alastair was also a key member of the Agricultural Trust in Northern Ireland and initiated key projects like grass drying, as well as serving as Chairman and founding member of the Ulster Grassland Society.

In May 1976, Masstock partnered with Prince Sultan bin Mohammed bin Saud Al Kabeer to build state of the art dairy farms across Saudi Arabia, resulting in the creation of the Almarai brand in 1977. Almarai has subsequently grown to become the leading food brand in the GCC, the largest vertically integrated dairy company in the world and is a key reference brand for many international bodies and food companies in the GCC.

Today, Alastair actively supports emerging companies in the Healthcare and Pharma industries and is a board member of The Crean Group plc and Prime Active Capital plc. An accomplished pianist and tin whistle player, Alastair has recently written highly acclaimed musicals and operas, some of which were written in Saudi Arabia during Gulf War 1 in the 90's. Alastair and his wife Marjorie have four children and now reside in Dublin.



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