

## Josef Finke receives Life Time Achievement Award from Government



At his year's "Organic Oscars " ceremonies Minister Tom Hayes presented Josef Finke with the inaugural Life Time Achievement Award for his contribution to the development of the organic sector in Ireland.

Arriving from Germany 31 years ago, Josef and his wife Marianne established one of the first organic farms in Ireland and were instrumental in driving the organic sector to its today's volume of € 100m. For many years their Ballybrado Farm was a centre point for the organic movement in Ireland, attracting visitors from across the world.

Josef was the first to export organic produce from Ireland, demonstrating to Irish farmers that consumers are actively interested in organic food from a clean environment. In 1989 he founded Good Herdsmen, today the largest dedicated organic meat processor in Ireland and the UK; he was chairman of the Irish Organic Farmers and Growers Association and later director of the Organic Trust. He worked in several committees of the government, representing the voice of organic sector.

In a much noticed acceptance speech Josef urged his fellow citizens to actively involve themselves in shaping our society and not to stand by when important values are under threat.

“We all, producers and consumers, strive for a more just, humane society with good ethical standards, only recently called for by our president Michael D. Higgins.

Organic producers need encouragement and support from you. A shopping trolley is a most powerful tool for change.

Division of work was a great economic development at the time, but to my opinion cannot mean that we have no say anymore in the quality of food, the way it is produced and its effects on our health and the health of our environment. You have a say, so get involved and do say what you think is wrong with today’s food and food production.

Only when you take ownership of this important issue we can say **we have arrived** and – talking about life time achievement – this is, what I would like to achieve during my life time.