



Previous winners: Barry McCleary, Megazyme; and Peter and Richard Cullen, Aran Candy

Irish talent recognised

The European profile for SFA National Small Business Awards winners has been raised this Week, running for the second time this year

FOR THE second year running an SFA National Small Business Awards finalist has been chosen to be profiled as part of the European SME Week brochure.

This year it's Megazyme, founded by Dr Barry McCleary who is also CEO and technical director of the research-based biochemical company, which won the Innovator category last year.

In the Eighties, McCleary developed a method to test for the presence of a polysaccharide called beta-glucan: the chemical that makes oats a healthy foodstuff. His method is now the world standard.

Megazyme started life in two garages off McCleary's family home, and a healthy appetite for innovation and growth brought the company to Bray via Sydney in 1996. It now focuses on the development of pioneering test methods in kit form for the measurement of components that dictate food and beverage quality.

In 2009, winner of the 2008 overall SFA

Candy was profiled as part of European SME Week. Branded throughout the world as The Jelly Bean Factory, Aran Candy is dedicated to producing gourmet jelly beans.

Father-and-son duo Peter and Richard Cullen set up the company in 1998, which now distributes throughout Europe, Scandinavia, the Middle East, Far East, Australia, New Zealand and Canada and now has sales offices in Ireland, the UK and the Middle East.

The objectives for European SME Week, taking place from 25 May to 1 June, are the same as those for last year, which was the first time such a week was organised:

- To inform existing entrepreneurs about the support available to them at European, national, regional and local level
- To promote entrepreneurship and encourage more people to become entrepreneurs.

Business workout is the theme for this year's SME week and it is all about 'getting fit for the market'.

'The main target audience for SME Week events is existing and prospective entrepreneurs. Our aim is to help them find the support that is available to them, particularly support offered at EU level'