

4.5 Freedom of Information

Teagasc came into the Freedom of Information (FOI) net on 1st November 2002. Freedom of Information is governed by the [Freedom of Information \(FOI\) Act 2014](#) which repealed the 1997 and 2003 Acts. The Freedom of Information Act gives rights to the individual that can be summarised as:

- The right to obtain records held by a body to which FOI legislation applies
- The right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting oneself
- The right to have official information relating to oneself amended where it is incorrect, incomplete or misleading

FOI is designed to allow access to information held by public bodies which is **not** routinely available. Access to information is subject to certain exemptions. Access to personal information is free of charge (and is available only to the person to whom it is personal) while all other requests are subject to an “up-front” fee as well as document search and retrieval fees.

There are specific procedures to be followed in making an FOI inquiry. Applications may be made by e-mail to FOI@teagasc.ie or in writing to the FOI Officer, Teagasc, Castlemeadows, Thurles, Co. Tipperary stating the request is for information under the FOI Act 2014.

The information required should be clearly specified. An application form is available on the T-net for submitting FOI requests. Teagasc must acknowledge the request within 10 working days and give a decision on the request within 20 working days of receiving the request. There is an appeal process in place which can be invoked at the requestor’s discretion.

The work of any member of Teagasc staff can be the subject of a Freedom of Information request at any time. This has implications for record keeping for every staff member. All activities of the organisation e.g. tenders, purchases, client files, resource management, animal welfare, research and education records may be sought.

Version	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Policy Owner
2.0	October 2020	Change of Contact Details	HR