

Environment Knowledge Transfer Department



Environment Knowledge Transfer Programme

Strategic Vision: To underpin the economic and environmental sustainability of Irish agriculture.

Department Objective: To support the sustainable development of the agri-food industry through the delivery of high quality environment knowledge transfer programmes and services.

Sub-Program Objectives

- To improve nutrient efficiency and soil fertility on farms.
- To reduce the impact of agriculture on water quality.
- To reduce greenhouse gas & ammonia emissions and improve the carbon footprint of Irish Agriculture produce.
- To maintain and enhance biodiversity in Irish agricultural systems.

The Environment KT department works closely with a broad range of industry partners to achieve these objectives



Policy Challenges

- Achieving expansion targets in Food Wise 2025 while achieving environmental targets.
- Improving quality of all waters but especially in Priority Areas for Action through the work of the ASSAP advisers (Nitrates and Water Framework Directive)
- Reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions/increasing carbon capture (EU Climate and Energy Directive, National Climate Action Plan)
- Reducing national ammonia emissions (National Emissions Ceiling Directive)
- Halting and reversing the decline of biodiversity (EU Habitats and Birds Directives)
- Achieving improvements in soil fertility while reducing losses to the environment



Department Staff



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Human Resources: 5 FTE

Department Structure

Lead Staff



Human Resources: 5 FTE

Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management Planning



Objective: The Soil Fertility & NMP KT programme is focussed on improving our farmers skills in managing soils and improving soil fertility

- Developing and utilising NMP online to improve soil fertility management
- Improving the management of chemical and organic fertilisers to achieve improved environmental outcomes (GHG, Water and Biodiversity)
- Improving nutrient management skills of advisers and farmers
- Improving management of soils to improve soil health and avoid losses
- Improving the quality of land drainage to sustainably improve crop growth



Gaseous Emissions



Objective: Reduce gaseous emissions and improve carbon footprint of Irish agriculture produce.

- Support the adoption of mitigation technologies on Irish farms
- To demonstrate and get implementation of farming systems which have low carbon footprint and low ammonia losses
- Increase adviser, farmer and student knowledge of emissions mitigation and climate adaptation
- Develop and rollout the Carbon Navigator to support emissions reduction

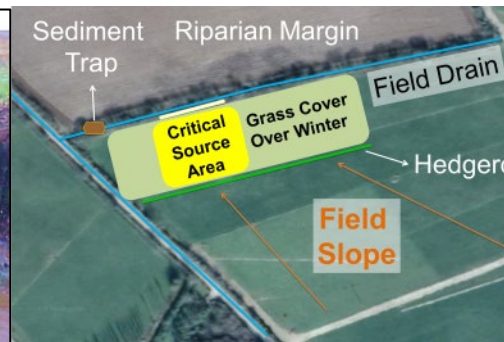


Water Quality



Objective: To improve water quality in agricultural catchments

- Reduce nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment losses to catchment by improving practices at farm level
- Deliver the ASSAP advisory service in Priority Areas for Action (PAAs).
- Improve adviser and farmer knowledge and skills in managing nutrients to avoid loss to water
- Improve pesticide management to avoid losses to water
- To support farmers in the implementation of water quality regulation





Objective: To maintain and enhance biodiversity in agricultural systems.

- Enhancing biodiversity in agricultural systems across a gradient of intensities and enterprises
- To improve management practices of farmers in protecting and enhancing habitats
- To improvement farmers knowledge and understanding of the positive and negative impacts of farming and to the measures that can improve outcomes
- To assist farmers in developing of management systems which can protect high value ecosystems
- To improve ecology in intensive farm



Agri-Environmental Schemes



Objective: To support farmers in the application and implementation of Agri-environmental schemes to achieve scheme objectives

- Supporting advisers to work with clients to apply and implement actions
- Provide education to support effective implementation of measures
- To assist farmers and stakeholders in development of locally led Agri-environment schemes (EIPs)
- Provide backup support services to clients



Compliance and Investment Scheme Support



Objective: To support farmers in the meeting the requirements of regulation (cross compliance) and in applying for investment grants (TAMS)

- Supporting Teagasc and private advisers assist farmers in meeting cross compliance requirements
- Providing planning, records and other supports to 4,500 farmers applying for nitrates directive
- Supporting advisers and farmers in planning, implementing and applying for grant assistance for farm investment schemes through the TAMS schemes
- Providing input to the development of regulation by responding to policy consultation through the Teagasc working Groups



Recent activity/Output Highlights

- NMP On-line plans to 60,000 Farmers
- GLAS Plans, education and support for 15,000 Clients
- Carbon Navigators completed for 30,000 Farmers
- Implementation of the ASSAP water quality advisory programme
- Improvement in soil fertility following many years of decline
- Training and support to all advisers including private consultants and industry advisers



Recent Impact Highlights

- 13,000 Teagasc clients successfully in GLAS
- 60,000 NMP Online Plans completed.
- Liming campaign led to an increase from 34 to 54% of samples having optimal soil pH.
- The soil fertility campaign has stabilised the falls in soil P and K levels

