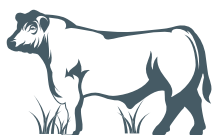


# REGIONAL REVIEW

TEAGASC WATERFORD KILKENNY ADVISORY REGION

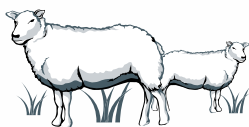
## FARM ENTERPRISE TYPES



**47,612**  
**SUCKLER COWS**  
**2,500 FARMS**



**193,017**  
**DAIRY COWS**  
**1,740 FARMS**



**93,611**  
**EWES**  
**831 FARMS**



**19,692<sup>ha</sup>**  
**TILLAGE**  
**FARMS 837**

## Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the Waterford Kilkenny Regional Review. This report outlines the main enterprises in the region and summarises the regional activities in 2021.



I am the new manager for the region and I look forward to working with all stakeholders over the next number of years. I have worked in this region for the last 20 years and I have a great understanding of the area.

We have 28 permanent staff in the region; 12 dairy advisors, 6 drystock advisors, 2 ASSAP, 1 tillage advisor, 1 education officer, 1 staff officer and 5 administrative officers. In the Regional Offices we also have contract staff, Walsh Scholars and agricultural students.

We provide a service to approximately 3,000 clients.

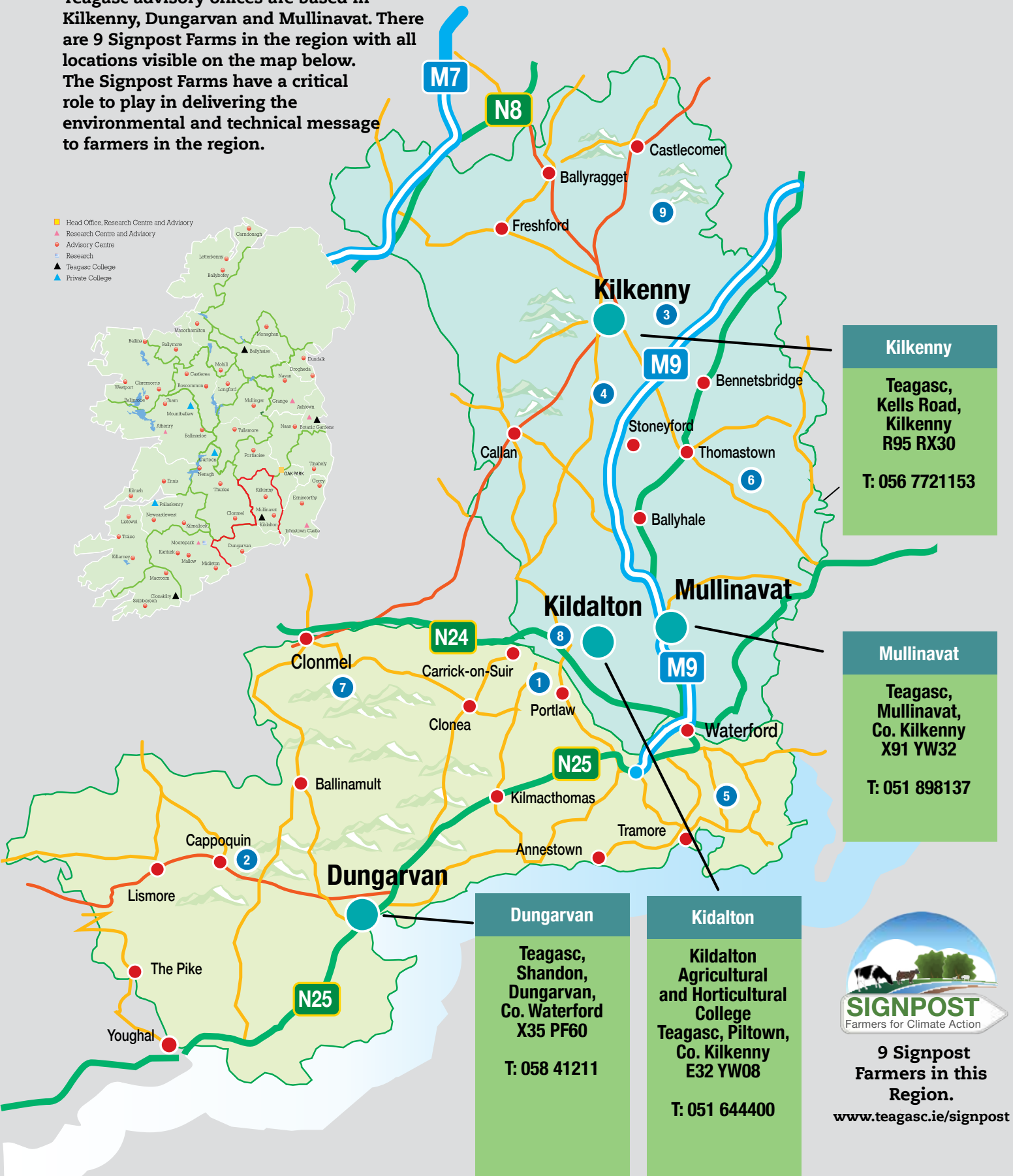
**Richard O'Brien**  
**Waterford Kilkenny**  
**Regional Manager**



# TEAGASC WATERFORD KILKENNY REGION OFFICES:

Teagasc advisory offices are based in Kilkenny, Dungarvan and Mullinavat. There are 9 Signpost Farms in the region with all locations visible on the map below. The Signpost Farms have a critical role to play in delivering the environmental and technical message to farmers in the region.

- Head Office, Research Centre and Advisory
- ▲ Research Centre and Advisory
- Advisory Centre
- Research
- ▲ Teagasc College
- ▲ Private College



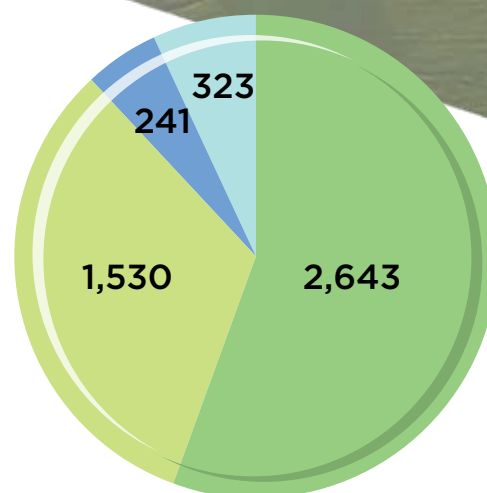
# REGIONAL REVIEW

## TEAGASC WATERFORD KILKENNY ADVISORY REGION

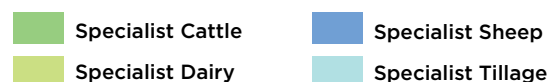
### Farming in the Region – Census of Agriculture 2020

The census of agriculture 2020 indicates that since the previous census of 2010, the number of farms in the region has fallen from 6,498 to 6,173 (a decrease of 5%).

The most prevalent enterprises are beef with 2,643 specialist beef producers and dairy with 1,530 producers according to the census. There are 241 specialist sheep producers and 323 specialist tillage farmers.



**Farm Type - Kilkenny Waterford**  
**Total Farms: 6,173**



**Average Age of Farm Holder** **56 yrs** **30%** of farm holdings are less than 20 Ha  
**Average Agricultural Area** **46 ha** **13%** of farm holders are female

#### Signpost Farmers in this Region (See Map on Left)

Name	Address	Main Enterprise	Programme
1. Shane & John P. Fitzgerald	Kilmagemogue, Portlaw, Co. Waterford	Dairy	Glanbia
2. Steven & Richard Fitzgerald	Graigie, Aglish, Cappaquin, Co. Waterford	Dairy	Glanbia
3. Cathal Moran	Curraghlane, Skeoughvosteen, Co. Kilkenny	Dairy	Glanbia
4. Ruairi Cummins	Rossenarra Demesne, Kilmoganny, Co. Kilkenny	Suckler Beef	Future Beef
5. Eamon & Donnchadh McCarthy	Carrigeen, Glendine, Co. Waterford	Suckler Beef	Future Beef
6. Peter O'Hanrahan	Kiljames, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny	Dairy Calf to Beef	Dairy Beef 500
7. Richard Long	Knockaun, Ballymacarbry, Clonmel, Co. Waterford	Dairy Calf to Beef	Dairy Beef 500
8. Kildalton Agric. College	Kildalton, Piltown, Co. Kilkenny	Mixed	Agriculture College
9. Frances Nolan	Knockallen, Coolcullen, Co. Kilkenny	Dairy	Glanbia

#### Teagasc Mission, Vision and Values

##### Mission

To provide scientific leadership and support to Irish farmers and food companies in achieving a sustainable food system.

##### Vision

For Teagasc to be a globally recognised leader in developing innovative science based solutions for the sustainable transformation of our land resources into products and services for the benefits of society.

##### Our Values

Teagasc seeks to be professional, responsive, efficient, innovative, accountable, independent and scientifically excellent in carrying out its functions.



# TEAGASC KILKENNY WATERFORD REGIONAL ADVISORY TEAM

## Teagasc Regional Network Offices

Teagasc is the national body providing integrated research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry and rural communities. The overall goal of the Teagasc Advisory Programme is to support the on-going development of sustainable family farms in Ireland, through efficient and effective knowledge transfer (KT) activities. The programme currently supports almost 140,000 individual farmers with 42,000 farmers contracted to Teagasc for services annually.

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## Dairy Enterprise

There are 1,530 specialist dairy farms in this region according to the Census of Agriculture 2020 which represents about 10% of dairy farms nationally. Dairy cow numbers have risen by 50% since the last census in 2010 in the region.

2021 was a good year for dairying. The average dairy farm income was estimated at €94,000, a 28% increase on the 2020 average. This increase was underpinned by a number of factors including generally good grass growing conditions, increased milk yield per cow and an increase in the price paid for milk. However some increases in production costs were also observed including feed and fertiliser costs which increased by 16% and 10% respectively. Currently the 'typical Irish dairy farm' has a herd size, a stocking rate and an average farm size of 83 cows, 2.05 LU/ha and 60 ha respectively.



Assuming that normal weather conditions prevail in 2022, forecasts for the dairy sector indicate a decline in average farm income.







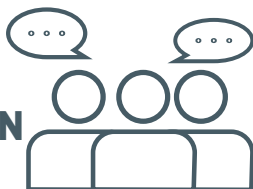
**1,530**  
FARMS

**193,017**  
DAIRY COWS  
AVERAGE FARM  
SIZE **110 COWS**



**12** ADVISORS

**43** DISCUSSION  
GROUPS



TEAGASC  
GLANBIA FUTURE  
FARM  
PROGRAMME

**4** SIGNPOST  
FARMS





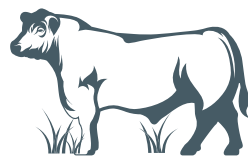
## Beef Enterprise

Suckler cow numbers in the region have decreased from 60,882 in 2010 to 47,612 in 2020. Over 70% of farmers in the region are involved in a beef enterprise. There are 6 drystock advisors, dealing with one to one consultations, discussion groups and schemes.

While beef prices are expected to rise in 2022, increased costs of production will make for a difficult year.

2021 on beef farms was characterised by a year of rising beef and mart prices but also of increasing costs. Weanling and store live prices rose by an average of 8% and 9% per Kg respectively with beef carcass prices 12% higher than in 2020. Total costs rose by an average of 8% due especially to increases in feed (+20%), fertiliser (+7%) and energy costs (+16%). Gross Margin per hectare on cattle rearing farms rose by 5% with a very small increase in net margin per hectare. Gross margin per hectare on cattle finishing farms rose by 10% with a modest increase in net margin per ha (+€72).

Total numbers of cattle slaughtered dropped by approximately 90,000 head in 2021 and live exports reduced by over 12,000 head. The number of calves born to the suckler herd dropped by 1% compared to 2020.



**47,612**

**SUCKLER COWS**

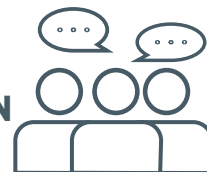
**2,500 SUCKLER FARMS**



**6 DRYSTOCK  
ADVISORS**

**17**

**BEEF  
DISCUSSION  
GROUPS**



**4 SIGNPOST  
FARMS**

**2 DAIRY BEEF  
500 FARMS**

**2 FUTURE  
BEEF FARMS**







## Sheep Enterprise

Sheep numbers in the region have remained fairly static since the 2010 census at over 90,000 ewes and 831 farms with sheep.

Irish lamb prices in 2021 are estimated to have increased in the order of 30% on the previous year, according to National Farm Survey (NFS) data, with record high prices being maintained right throughout the year. However, total costs also increased by around 20% resulting in an estimated 26% average increase in gross margin on mid-season lowland sheep systems. In particular, the cost of concentrate feed for sheep increased by 40% in 2021 due to a combination of an increase in the concentrate price coupled with a significant increase in the volume being fed at farm level.

However, with much higher production costs in 2022, in particular feed and fertiliser, gross margins are expected to fall.



**93,611** EWES  
**831** FARMS

AVERAGE  
EWE NO'S **110**



**2** ADVISORS







## Cereal Enterprises

Tillage farming in 2021 could be described as ideal. Despite the cold first half of the year there was adequate plant stands, moisture and sunshine to give high yields.

Good weather at harvest allowed all crops to be saved in good condition and the excellent prices increased margins of all crops. The average gross margins increased by 90% compared to 2020. This resulted in a predicted net margins increase of €525 per hectare compared to 2020.

There are significant challenges ahead for 2022 with nitrogen fertiliser prices close to three times the costs in 2020. However this cost is somewhat offset by the continued buoyant prices for cereals at the moment.

 **19,692<sup>Ha</sup>**  
**TILLAGE**  
**837 FARMS**

    
**CLIMATE CHANGE**  
IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING  
FARMERS OVER THE NEXT DECADE

## Climate Change and the Environment

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing farmers over the next decade. There is a lot of negative commentary about farming in the media as agriculture accounts for 36% of GHG emissions in Ireland.

Ambitious targets have now been set for Irish agriculture between now and 2030 to reduce GHG emissions by between 22-30%. Teagasc have designed a roadmap to help achieve this target but it requires immediate buy-in from farmers. This is the purpose of the **Signpost Programme** – to identify and demonstrate to farmers locally, what measures farmers need to adapt now to assist Irish agriculture reach these targets.





# What is the Signpost Programme?

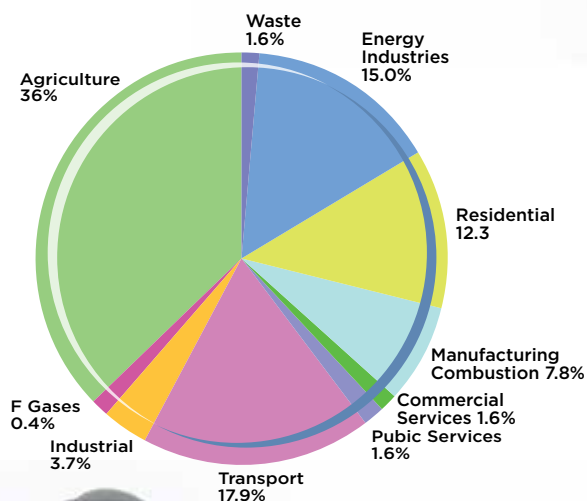
The Signpost Programme is a multi-annual campaign to lead climate action by all Irish farmers, and achieve early progress in reducing gaseous emissions from Irish agriculture while also improving water quality, maintaining and in some cases improving biodiversity, reducing costs and creating more profitable and sustainable farming enterprises.

It will also act as a test bed for on-farm carbon sequestration measurements so that this can, in time, be taken into account by the EPA in the national Greenhouse Gas inventory.

It is a collaborative programme, led by Teagasc and including all relevant industry partners and state bodies such as Bord Bia.



**Figure 1: Profile of GHG Emissions 2020**



## ASSAP/ Water Quality

### Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme

In addition to the GHG issues, there are also water quality issues and targets to be met. Priority areas for action have been selected for a targeted campaign aimed at improving water quality in certain catchments. We have 2 ASSAP advisors in the region.

Since 2019 in Kilkenny and Waterford ASSAP are working in 11 Priority Areas for Action. Nitrate, phosphate and sediment are the predominant pressures. Directed advice and support continue in these areas. MCPA was detected in a catchment a focused campaign is ongoing.







## Education

All our education courses are run in Kildalton College, which is located in the centre of the unit.

In 2021 one hundred and two students graduated from the Distance education course and forty one from the Part time course. Fifty percent of the students that completed these two courses are from the Waterford Kilkenny Region. We have one Education Officer in the region who also organises other courses including health and safety courses.

### Derogation Courses

Over 600 farmers completed the three derogation courses in 2021.

**The region ran:**

- 19 Grassland courses
- 21 Sustainability courses
- 17 Phosphorous Build Up courses

These courses were delivered mainly over Zoom with some outdoor courses also.



**85 PLUS**  
COMPLETED H&S  
COURSES IN 2021



**PRACTICAL  
SKILLS**





## Farm Management

**This work is not enterprise specific, but is primarily focussed on key areas which include:**

- Financial efficiency of the farm business using the Teagasc Profit Monitor analysis
- Farm planning
- Certification of business plans for Government tax reliefs
- Farm succession
- Basic Payment Applications
- Collaborative farming support and promotion on collaborative farming methods
- Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme (TAMS) support.

In 2021 a major upgrade of the **Teagasc Profit Monitor** analysis software was completed. Last year advisors completed some 43,000 Basic Payment Scheme applications. Farm succession is a challenge with the age profile of Irish farmers, and supporting families to make important decisions on this topic while keeping farms viable will continue to be prioritised in 2022.

### SCHEME PAYMENTS FOR THE REGION

<b>BPS</b>	Basic Payment Scheme	<b>€76,626,848</b>
<b>BDGP</b>	Beef Data and Genomics Programme	<b>€1,814,145</b>
<b>BEEP-S</b>	Beef Environmental Efficiency Programme	<b>€1,999,136</b>
<b>ORGANICS</b>	Organics	<b>€240,509</b>
<b>TAMS</b>	Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme	<b>€3,028,024</b>

## Forestry

**In Co. Kilkenny, forestry cover accounts for 9.8% of land area or 19,825 ha. This is both privately owned forestry and Coillte owned. There are currently 852 forest owners in the county with a cumulative area of 9,611 Ha owned by farmers.**

The percentage of forest cover in Co. Waterford is 14.8%. Waterford is one of the few counties in Ireland where the forest cover is over the national average of 11%. There are 705 private forest owners in Waterford. The evolving Irish forest sector is highly important to rural economies and at a national level.

There are now 390,000 hectares nationally of private forests. Since 1980, almost 19,000 farmers have received support to establish new forests. Many private forests are approaching maturity and the forecasted net realisable timber volume is 1.74 million cubic metres (m<sup>3</sup>) for 2022, up from 1.46 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2021. The mobilisation of this important resource represents both a challenge and an excellent opportunity. In Co. Kilkenny alone over 4,200m of forest road was constructed in 2021. This figure for Co. Waterford was 1,219 m for the same year.



**9.8% Forestry cover in Kilkenny**

**14.1% Forestry cover in Waterford**

New planting in 2021 was about 2,000 ha nationally, down from 2,434 ha in 2020. The challenge is to sustainably increase planting levels to approach national targets set at 8,000 ha. DAFM's Afforestation Grant and Premium Scheme supports planting through afforestation grants and annual premium support. Annual premiums are paid for 15 years and typically range €510 to €680/ha. New forests may also be eligible for a Basic Payment.

During 2021 the Teagasc Forestry Development Department was very active and continued to provide advisory, training and educational support to new and existing forest owners through a wide range of engagements. These include comprehensive one-to-one advice and a range of local and national events such as forestry workshops, virtual forest walks, live broadcasts, timber marketing and wood use webinars, forest owner group support, on-site events and forestry input to agricultural education courses. An extensive range of events planned for 2022 can be viewed on the forestry section of the Teagasc website.

<https://www.teagasc.ie/crops/forestry/>

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the valuable information provided by and co-operation of:

- Census of Agriculture 2020 CSO Office
- Teagasc National Farm Survey



## Pigs

There are 81 commercial pig producers in Waterford Kilkenny with an average size of 660 sows. There has been no expansion in recent years but numbers have been stable.

The Irish pig sector is the third most important agricultural enterprise in Ireland after milk and beef, accounting for 8% of GAO and employing 8,500 people. There are 280 commercial pig farms comprising 200 sow breeding/integrated farms with an average herd size of 700 sows and 80 specialised finisher farms, with a national output of 3.9 million pigs. The sector enjoyed a buoyant period of profitability in 2019 and 2020, with export value reaching almost €1 billion in 2020. Unfortunately higher feed ingredient prices and a lower international pigmeat demand reduced the sector's profitability in 2021.

**81** COMMERCIAL  
PIG PRODUCERS



The annual average feed cost in 2021 was 118 cent per kg dead weight. That is 9% higher than the 2020 and 5 year average of 109 cent per kg dead weight. At 159 cent per kg dead weight, the 2021 Irish pig price was significantly lower than the 174 cent per kg average for 2020. This price of 159 cent per kg dead weight is marginally lower the five year average (2017-2021) of 161 cent per kg dead weight.

The 2021 'Margin Over Feed' (MOF) per kg was 41 cent/kg dead weight. During 2021 the monthly MOF reached a peak at 53c/kg in May and then gradually decreased to 19c/kg dead weight in December.

Average feed cost 2021 118c per kg dead weight/5 year average is 109c per Kg dead weight/2021 margin over feed was 41c per Kg dead weight.



## Rural Enterprise

### 1. Options

Each year an Options course is offered in the region. Expert speakers are invited in over 4-6 nights to inform interested farmers of opportunities to further develop and diversify their farms.

This can include adding value to existing production or diversifying into something new. The 2021 Farm Business Options webinars provided an innovative channel to communicate farm business messages to farm families.

Teagasc works closely with Leader and other agencies to help farm families.

### 2. Equine Enterprise

2021 was an excellent year with a record number of five figure sales returns at public auctions, thanks largely to online marketing improvements. The equine advisory team provides support across breeding/production, husbandry, sustainability and income generation, all of which were covered in the Let's Talk Equine Webinar series on the first Tuesday of the month. The specialist team is also now supported by 12 equine contact advisors across the country to provide local equine support.





# Media and Social Media...

The Waterford Kilkenny Region has an excellent profile on most media platforms.

There are almost weekly articles in the local newspapers in addition to an active online presence on Twitter and Facebook, and most advisors use WhatsApp groups with their clients. During Covid, Zoom and LYNC have been used to deliver discussion group meetings and webinars have become useful platform in replacing face to face events. We ran 15 webinars in 2021 and these proved very popular among farmers and is a very convenient way of delivering a message to farmers, without them having to leave their home. We also produced 50 videos in the year and have learned that short videos of approximately 30 seconds have greatest impact and

## Communication Content

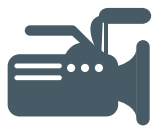
Articles	4/Month
Videos	3-4/Month
Radio Interviews	2/Month
Webinars	15/Year
Social Media Posts	Daily

## Communication Media

Regional Webpage	Updated Weekly
Social Media.....	FB/Twitter/You Tube
Zoom	
Local Radio	
Local Press	
Texting	1-2 texts per Week
WhatsApp	
Facebook	2100 Followers
Twitter	480 Followers



**15** WEBINARS  
**100** AVERAGE  
ATTENDANCE



**50**  
VIDEOS



**50**  
ARTICLES



**60**  
RADIO  
INTERVIEWS

During Covid, Zoom and LYNC have been used to deliver discussion group meetings and webinars have become a very useful platform in replacing former public events.



### 3. Organic Farming

At present in Ireland, there is approximately 90,000 ha under organic production, which represents 2% of the agricultural area. The current Programme for Government has a target to align Ireland's organic land area with that of the current EU average of 7.5% approx.

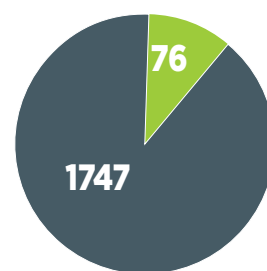
There are currently 1,823 organic farmers participating in the DAFM Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) of which 76 are in the Waterford Kilkenny Region. Funding for the 2022 Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) is up €21 million from the €16 million 2021 allocation, allowing for the opening of the OFS for new entrants in 2022.



**IRELAND AGRICULTURAL  
ORGANIC AREA 2%  
ORGANICS WORTH  
€0.24m TO  
WATERFORD KILKENNY**



**76 (4%)  
ORGANIC FARMS  
IN WATERFORD KILKENNY**



**1,823 ORGANIC  
FARMERS NATIONALLY**

## The benefits of being a Teagasc client

**Clients have access to Teagasc advisors by phone, arranged on-farm visits, discussion groups etc. Teagasc regional offices are also in regular contact with clients via text and other media about deadlines and other urgent messages.**

Teagasc clients receive technical newsletters, tailored to their enterprise mix, ten times per year through the post. In addition the Teagasc magazine **Today's Farm** is also delivered to clients six times per year.



The advice provided by Teagasc regional staff is underpinned by four research programmes

- **Crops, Environment and Land Use**
- **Food**
- **Rural Economy and Development**
- **Animal and Grassland Research and Innovation**

The Teagasc annual research portfolio comprises some 300 research projects, carried out by 500 scientific and technical staff in our research centres throughout Ireland. In addition to the education officers in each region Teagasc education offers a wide range of agricultural, horticultural, equine and other courses at four Teagasc colleges and works closely with three private colleges.

### How do you become a Teagasc client?

Contact your local Teagasc office

