West Cork ning & Fisheries

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Why is Mizen peninsula missing from the Department's eco payments map?

BY MARK ROBINS

WEST Cork is celebrated for the wilder parts of its coun-

the wilder parts of the tryside.
That's why so many people visit our area or choose to locate their businesses here.
But, as every farmer knows, the heavier ground, the older ground, and the hill ground is also a tougher place to make an income.

an income.
With eyes on the payment possibilities in the new Cap (starting January 2023), will the environmental funding work well for our parts? Will Jarmers here have access to the highest payments?
While the Department waits for Brussels to sign off its new spending programme.

waits for Brusseis to sign out its new spending programme, important details are emerg-ing about its new 'agri-envi-ronment climate measure' (AECM). Last week the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Ma-rine, Charlie Mc Conalogue

announced his proposal for this €1.5bn flagship agri-en-vironmental scheme, where 20,000 farmers can earn up

20,000 farmers can earn up €10,500. These higher environmen-tal payments will come under an approach called 'co-oper-ation projects', the idea be-ing these are in areas of par-

ticularly high-nature value. Farmers in these areas will get access to these highest

rarmers in these areas wing et access to the the highest payments. Outside the areas there will still be environmental payments (under the general measure), but they will be at lesser rate.

So, how does West Cork fare? Is it in or out of the higher payment zone? The good news is yes, the Department is proposing a West Cork & Kerry focus area. The bad bit is that the zone doesn't look quite right to many eyes.

Minister McConalogue published a map that suggests large parts of Beara and Sheep's Head are in, but the Mizen misses out.

Sheeps Head are in, but the Mizen misses out.

The islands are all in, but the Mizen hills, its bogs, heaths and the coastal strip all seem to be missing.

These are our nature-rich areas, and they're not in sight apparently.

apparently.
While it's surely right that

While it's surely right that the new scheme prioritises the areas of high-nature value and those with significant carbon stores, but has it got its Mizen mapping right?

As an ecologist I know the map misses out on some very high environmental quality ground, and so the detail of



ed, urgently

the zoning looks questionable.
Right now, farmers on the
Mizen in particular are going
to miss out on the highest payments, and time is very short
to call for the Department to
adjust its zonino.

adjust its zoning.

Its closing date for bids to establish and manage Mark Robins lives on the Mizen and has worked with farmers and environmental schemes for many years. these co-operation projects is March 8th. Our TDs and

others can surely ask – very quickly – for an adjustment to the map of the West Cork & Kerry focus area. This appar-ent 'error' should be correct-

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Better incentives encourage switch to organic

INCREASED payments are now available under the just re-opened Organic Farming Scheme to encourage new entrants to convert their en-

And organic farmer Stuart Kingston from Farnanes is encouraging others to at least consider making the switch he made 20 years ago, when he felt conventional farming wasn't economically sustainable based on outside inputs. The scheme is open to new applicants until April Bth with an extra 65m in the budget this year.

an extra 65m in the budget this year.

Farmers entering the scheme could qualify for year-ly payments of up to 6220 per hectare during the conversion period and up to 6170 per hec-tare when they have achieved full organic status. Higher payment rates are available full organic status. Higher payment rates are available for organic horticulture and tillage farmers, and farmers who apply this year can also avail of any new rates intro-duced next year under the

This year, the area at which farmers will receive higher



Stuart Kingston says West Cork farmers are perfectly situated to benefit.

payments has been increased

payments has been increased from 60ha to 70 ha in recognition of the larger area farmed by full-time farmers. Teagase has organised a series of information events for farmers who are considering joining the scheme. A national webinar organised by their organic specialists will

take place on Wednesday, Feb-ruary 23rd at 7.30pm on the topic of Applying for the 2022 Organic Farming Scheme'. The webinar, on zoom, will give an opportunity to par-ticipants to submit questions during the live broadcast. A second national Teagasc webinar on 'Direct Selling of Organic Produce' is planned for Wednesday, March 30th, also at 7.30pm. The Teagasc advisory ser-vice has also organised a series of local webinars for its farmer clients and others interested in organic farming.

clients and others interested in organic farming.
Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture Pippa Hackett said she hoped the scheme's changes will attract many more farmers to consider farming 'in a way which can lead both to higher prices and a more sustainable way of farming.'

In a time of high input costs 'In a time of high input costs for farmers, this is an opportunity to diversify and I would really encourage farmers to consider this approach to farming,' she said. However, Stuart, who runs a beef and tillage farm, as well as growing potatoes and

whose only inputs are seeds and organic cattle for breed-ing, said high fertiliser costs shouldn't be the deciding fac-

tor.

'There's an impression that it's a matter of simply not using fertiliser, which is not the at all.

case at all.

'It's a completely different way of production, more biological, there's new learning involved, he stressed.

There's also far more planning involved compared to conventional farming when it comes to selling and sourcing markets he said markets, he said. 'But West Cork has huge

advantage as there's already a high proportion of organic farmers here, as well as an established food culture, so it's completely possible to make a living from this way of farm-ing,' he said. 'Having said that, the government talks about the government talks about putting more money into organic farming, but I feel more needs to be done, although we are headed in the right direction, he said.

To apply for the scheme see agfood ie and to register for the Teagasc seminars see teagasc.ie



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Know the details before you file your derogation application



Mark O'Sullivan



THE EU Nitrates Derogation provides farmers with an annual opportunity to make an application to farm at a higher stocking rate than 170kg organic nitrogen per hectare. The derogation is subject to certain key measures designed to protect the environment and meet the requirements of the nitrates directive. It is available to grassland farmers and has an upper limitor of 250 kg/ha. The terms and conditions for derogation 2022 were announced lately by the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine (DAFM) with the proviso that all applications this year will be provisional, pending the much-awaited finalisation of Ireland's fifth nitrates action plan with the European Commission in March of this year. The closing date for derogation applications and the filing of fertilizer accounts for 2021 will be April 14th (Holy Thursday), with all returns being made online only. Derogation farmers must spread all slurry by Less (low emission slurry spreading) and have all slurry spread by October this in 2022 (October lat is the proposed date for 2023

2023).
All derogation applicants must comply with the minimum slurry storage requirements of 16 weeks (Zone A).
Glas participants in derogation will no longer be eligible

tion will no longer be engine for Glas payments on either Less or protection of water-courses from bovines as these measures are now enshrined in law for all farmers farming

above the 170kg organic N/ Ha level.

Meal or rations fed to grazing livestock >2 years of age cannot exceed 15% crude protein in the period April 15th to September 30th.

Watercourses as identified on OSI 1:5,000 scale maps

watercourses as toetimined on OSI 15:000 scale maps must be fenced from cattle, a minimum of 1.5m from top of bank or water's edge with no water trough within 20m. New derogation applicant in 2022 with no soil samples will have to assume index 4 for phosphorous for farm. This means there will be no chemical P allowance. Existing derogation farmers who take on new lands owned or rented also will assume index 4 for phosphorous if no soil analyses are available. Any derogation farmers approved under the new DAFM soil sampling programmer.

proved under the new DAFM soil sampling programme must use the results of these analyses in their nutrient management plans if received before March 15th 2022. Course requirements stipulate that new derogation applicants will be required to complete a nutrient use efficiency module and a farming sustainably/water protection.

sustainably/water protection module by December 31st

Grassland management requirements stipulate that ex-isting derogation farmers who completed 20 grassland measurements on pasture base ire-land (PBI) in 2021 must again complete a minimum of 20

The requirement to incorgrass cover measures in 2022. New derogation farmers can a) complete 20 grass measures on PBI or b) attend



Biodiversity options include leaving at least one whitethorn or blackthorn plant to mature, per hedgerow, on the farm. (Photo: Shutterstock)

two grassland workshops and complete a minimum of three grass covers on PBI in 2022. This measure also applied to those existing derogation farmers who attended grass-land management courses in 2021

porate clover in reseeding mixtures remains as farmers strive to reduce chemical ni-

trogen application on farm to improve water quality and reduce greenhouse gas emis-sions on the farm. Biodiversity options include to cut and maintain hedges

to cut and maintain hedges on a three-year rotation (ie a third per year to ensure flow-ers and fruit in hedgerows on farm for wildlife). Another option is to leave at least one white/blackthorn

plant to mature, per hedge-row, on the farm.

For further information and assistance with your der-ogation application for 2022, contact the Teagasc office in Clonakilty, Macroom or Skib-bergen as each as perible Agrantic Macroom of Skibbereen as soon as possible.
 Mark O'Sullivan is a business and technology dairy advisor in the Teagasc office in Clonakilty.



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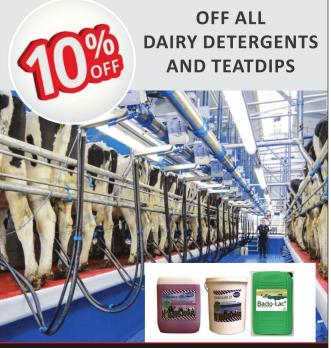
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David Brown launched its Q cab in in 1975 and later upgraded to the VQ cab in 1977, as shown here, with its widened doors for easier access.

Considerable power from a small engine

THE 1970s saw the intro-duction of turbocharging to four-cylinder tractors in order to increase horsepower. The performance and pop-ularity of tractors such as the Ford 7000 set many manu-facturers on a quest to add a turbocharged option to the top of their portfolios. Innovative David Brown announced their offering at Smithfield Show in 1974 in the form of the 9lh p 1410 and 1412 tractors.

The 1412 produces a considerable 91hp from its small 3.61 engine. A high specification tractor, Selectamatic hydrautractor, Selectamatic hydrautics, oil cooler, hydrostatic steering, as well as 540 and 1000 speed PTO all came as standard.

While the 1410 has a 12-speed synchromesh gearbox, the 1412 is fitted with Da-



its widened doors for easier

vid Brown's ground-breaking 'hydrashif' transmission.
Controlled by a lever to the right of the dashboard, 1-4 can be engaged on the move, without clutching, while also providing engine braking.
A single floor-mounted lever to the right of the seat selects H-M-L-R totalling 12F and 4R years. left of the dash, while a stop

selects H-M-L-R totalling 12F and 4R gears. David Brown launched its Q cab in in 1975 and later up-graded to the VQ cab in 1977, as shown in the photo, with

access.
Sitting in the high driving position gives a particularly good view ahead of the 1412s long nose.
The hand throttle is to the

left of the dash, while a stopy run lever is conveniently locat-ed underneath, within arm's reach from the ground. Also to the left of the driv-er's seat is the PTO handbrake clutch which had to lifted high before engaging the PTO lever

VITAL STATISTICS

Years of manufacture 1974–1979

under the driver's seat to the

under the driver's sear to the right, in a type of gymnastics move for the operator! The cab is rubber-mounted with the foot throttle tucked into the right of the dash con-sole – often leading to a stiff knee after a long day. Sliding top and rear win-

Engine

also on offer.

The right wing of the cab Tractor David Brown 1412 Horsepower

offered a single opening win-dow, with a toolbox housed on the opposite wing. Also worthy of note was the Deluxe Sekura cab option. Interestingly, the half a mil-

dows closed off the rear of the cab with a heater and radio

Interestingly, the half a mil-lionth tractor produced by Da-vid Brown at Meltham, West Yorkshire, was a 14!2 and to celebrate the milestone, the tractor was treated to royal purple paint on the top of the cab as well as purple decals. The tractor was auctioned at the Smithfield show in 1977, with the proceeds donated to

with the proceeds donated to the Queen's Silver Jubilee Fund.

• Contact Peter at psob1987@ gmail.com or see Instagram @ flashphotoscork

Save money by saving time for financial planning



AS we have passed through the opening month of 2022 As we have passed through the opening month of 2022, we look forward to longer brighter days, with relaxing Covid restrictions, positive Govid restrictions, positive growth projections coming from our Central Bank, so let's grasp on to this optimism and believe, as Dermot Kennedy's song goes, that 'better days are coming.'

e coming. This theme is also apt for our farming community, as de-spite the increased workload, it's the time for new life on the farm, with calving season and indeed lambs appearing here and there. FDC GROUP

Before looking forward, it would be remiss of me not to review 2021 and comment on it as a whole from a finance

Despite the challenges, Despite the challenges, 2021 will be recorded as a very positive year of returns for most sectors. Strong eq-uity returns witnessed from March 2020 continued right through 2021 with global stock markets finishing the

tor, we saw some sectors perform better than others such as energy albeit coming from record lows, pharmaceutical, technology, along with real estate and finance.

These positive returns were shared and experienced in varying portions dependent on the assets held by individuals in their financial planning portfolios.

We have seen significantly

We have seen significantly

'It is imperative that we review our individual unique set of circumstances and move forward'

year up 32%. The year begun in an optimistic fashion with investors drawn to positive developments in relation to developments in relation to vaccines, the continued sup-port of government policies globally, and the green shoots of renewed economic activity. No different to the agri secgreater engagement from our farming community therein, as they too now see this aspect as a key pillar to the management of their enterprise both now and into the future.

That said, there are real inflationary fears as this is evidenced on the ground at

present with significant price hikes on basic inputs required year on year. We are led to believe that this is transitory—

beneve that this is transitory— but what is transitory? In a sense it means 'that its duration will be short enough so as not to permanently affect economic behaviours and in-flation expectations.' Central Banks are very con-

scious of this real threat and

are cautiously planning for-ward a step-by-step approach to dealing with same, so as not to impact on global growth. 2021 has been a strong year for most sectors of the econ-omy despite the significant challenges it brought with it, so it is imperative that we re-view our individual unique set

view our individual unique set of circumstances and move forward better informed to face the headwinds of 2022. It's inevitable that each year will bring its own challenges—but as a labour force, the agri sector is no different, we have become more better skilled and educated to assess these headwinds and there are varieties. headwinds and there are var-ious advisory services to en-gage with and chat it out.

Proper planning and mak-

ing time for this, is key in any management role and the farming enterprise is no dif-

larming enterprise is no dif-ferrent.

Discussion and engage-ment with various parties will assist not only from a mone-tary point of view, but also a more visible roadmap to iden-tify opportunities in a support-ed environment.

Farming, like many other industries, has become such an intensive business, that it easy to keep the head down without looking at the bigger picture.

Everyone seems to haveless free time, but it is imperative that we make this time for our own well-being

own well-being.

own well-being.

Striking a good balance ideally with planning will absolutely help the work and life synergy to better outcomes under so many headings.

In summary, 'better days are coming under so many aspects, with obvious challenges, so let's plan and embrace, to ontimise the outcome to optimise the outcome.

• Seamus O'Mahony is a financial planner with FDC Group in West Cork.



Despite the challenges, 2021 will be recorded as a very positive year of returns for most sectors.

(Photo: Shutterstock)



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