

Owned
Platform
Biodiversity

10.95 %

Average Field
Size

5.1 ha



Farmland Biodiversity

Farmland biodiversity includes the range of native flora and fauna and the habitats they live in, which are found on farms.

Irish dairy farmers, like Shay and his family, play a crucial role in the protection and improvement of farmland biodiversity.

Planning for Biodiversity

In order of priority, planning and decisions about the management of biodiversity on this farm aim to;

1. Retain and maintain existing habitats

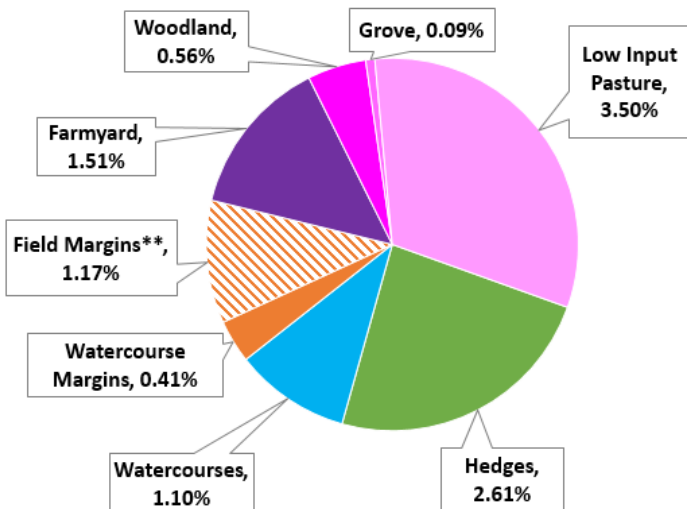
2. Enhance existing habitats

3. Create new habitats

SPACE FOR NATURE



Ryan Family Farm
New Ross, Co. Wexford



These maps were created through a process of co-creation with the Teagasc-Tirlán Signpost Future Farmers as part of research carried out by Aoife Leader through the UCD Agricultural Innovation Support Programme and funded by the Teagasc Walsh Scholarship Scheme.

Figures associated with these maps are based on criteria specific to the study.



Hedges

On the Shay's farm there are almost 6Km of topped and escaped hedges and grassy banks.

Escaped hedges are only cut along the side while the aim with topped hedges is to encourage density at the base and good height.

Shay encourages height in the topped hedges by taking a little and often approach to hedge cutting during the cutting season and the occasional whitethorn tree is left uncut.

These practices ensure that hedges are tall enough to provide cover for nesting birds and that they produce a food source of flowers for bees and fruit for birds and small mammals throughout the year.



Field Margins

Shay avoids the application of sprays, slurry and fertiliser within field margins. He also retains a minimum margin width of 1.5m wide when cultivating.

These practices encourage native wildflowers and grasses to grow naturally which in turn provides food and shelter for insects, mammals and birds.



Watercourses

The streams and drains that flow through this farm provide space for wildlife along the margins and banks, in the bed and in the water.

On this farm all watercourses are fenced, and there are no livestock drinking points. In addition to the existing 1.5m wide watercourse margins, Shay plans to gradually increase the width of margins along all watercourses and open drains. These practices enhance of the habitat as a space for nature and help to protect water quality.

Woodland

Two woodland areas also contribute to the space for nature on the farm. This grove contains a variety of native trees such as oak and plants such as ivy and bramble. During the summer months these corners are alive with birds and bees who benefit from the food and shelter supplied by these areas.



Low Input Pasture

An area of grassland on the farm is managed with reduced fertiliser input, and no pesticide use or cultivation.

This low input pasture is maintained with light grazing which ensures that the grassy habitat structure is maintained while also encouraging plant diversity in the sward and creating a fantastic habitat for wildlife.