

Assisting Development of the Cut Foliage Sector



Department of
**Agriculture,
Food and the Marine**

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**

**Ted Massey, Agricultural Inspector.
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www.agriculture.gov.ie

Department of Agriculture views on the cut foliage sector:

- Significant potential to increase export sales and employment
- Valuable alternative farming option provided correct site, species choice and crop husbandry skills.

- Welcome Teagasc's plan to develop the cut foliage sector – especially emphasis on a market led approach, research and innovation.



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How?

**Scheme of Investment Aid for the
Development of the Commercial
Horticulture Sector.**



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What is the Scheme of Investment Aid?

- Competitive annual grant aid scheme
- Assists specialised capital investments
- Provides 40% grant aid on approved net investment costs (50% for young growers)
- Budget €3.25m for 2012

Objectives:

- **facilitate environmentally friendly practices**
- **improve quality**
- **improve working conditions**
- **promote diversification**



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What is funded?

- Specialised new equipment
- Specialised buildings
- Cut foliage plants and a portion of land prep and planting costs

Key points - all applicants:

- Minimum investment of €10,000
- Application must justify investment
- Application signed off
- Detailed quotes
- Can only cover investments made after approval letter issued

Specifically for foliage producers:

- Map / drawing showing location of proposed plantation
- Land proposed must be owned or leased on a long-term basis (at least 5 years)

To qualify for grant aid plants:

- On approved list of species as per Schedule of Approval
- Planted on land as per Schedule of Approval
- Satisfactory establishment

Plants and areas funded to date:

Year	Number of Plants	Approx Area Planted
2008	212,000	212 acres (86Ha)
2009	97,000	97 acres (39Ha)
2010	108,120	108 acres (44Ha)
2011	171,582	172 acres (69Ha)



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Over the period 2008-2011:

- €250,000 paid in aid for cut foliage sector
- Facilitated investment of ~€0.6m by growers
- Planted almost 600 acres
- In addition to plants, funded sprayers, foliage transplanter and a specially modified tractor

This year –what's going on?

- Funding for 185,000 plants – approx 75Ha. new plantation
- Funding soil prep. and planting costs of up to €0.20 per plant
- Also equipment – flail mower and compact tractor, inter-row sprayers
- Approvals issued covering €70,000 in aid to 14 applicants



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Future prospects

- 2013 – uncertain but optimistic
- Post-2013

What should you do:

- Consider your long-term options
- Plan for next year
- Know exactly what investments you seek and the land involved
- Prioritise your investments carefully

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