

# BEEF

September 2024

## Beef Welfare Scheme 2024

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*Meal feeding is a mandatory aspect of the Beef Welfare Scheme.*

If you are interested in signing up to the Beef Welfare Scheme you have until midnight on September 24 to apply online at [agfood.ie](https://agfood.ie). As mentioned in last month's newsletter, there are two components to the Scheme. The first is meal feeding (which is mandatory) and second is vaccination (which is optional). You can vaccinate for pneumonia on its own and/or clostridial disease. Where the clostridial vaccines are concerned, you could opt for an eight in one, 10 in one, or just vaccinate for blackleg. Choose whatever is most appropriate for your farm. The key with both vaccination and meal feeding is that you record the dates and have purchase dockets to prove you have completed the tasks.



**THE  
GOVERNMENT  
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450,000<sub>ha</sub>  
NATIONWIDE  
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ORGANIC  
STANDARDS  
BY 2030.**

## Online SCEP training

For those in the Suckler Cow Efficiency Programme (SCEP), one of the mandatory components is the online training course. This must be completed by November 14. According to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), only about 25% of participants have logged into the online system. You will have received a reminder of your PIN to log into [www.sceptraining.ie](http://www.sceptraining.ie) in the last few weeks. You only need to use this PIN in your initial log in and then you can set your own password. The course contains seven modules, which you can complete in one go or over a number

of sessions. You need to have them all completed by mid November. The consequence of not completing the training is that you will be removed from the SCEP.

The Department obviously wants as many people as possible to complete the course online. For individuals with no internet access the DAFM will run some training courses. There will be a limited number of these courses and some people may have to travel quite a distance to attend one. The duration of these courses will be a minimum of four and a half hours.

## Creep feeding

In a year such as this where grass supply is tight on many farms, creep feeding offers a number of advantages. Firstly, for those of you selling weanlings it will boost weight gain in the run-up to sale. Bull weanlings in excess of 300kg are commanding €3-3.50/kg at the sales. With a ration cost of €350/t and a conversion of 5:1, the cost of putting on 1kg liveweight with meal is €1.75/kg and the return is up to €3.50/kg. Ideally, forward creep grazing weanlings through a gate or under a raised wire and feeding using troughs will



The cost of putting on 1kg liveweight with meal is €1.75/kg, allow you to monitor which calves are consuming meal, and to better regulate the amount fed per head. Heifer weanlings can also be creep fed but avoid the temptation to feed more than 1-2kg/head/day. Over-fleshed weanling heifers will put buyers off.



Teagasc Grass10 advisor, **Niamh Doyle** has a new monthly update on the Beef Edge podcast discussing grass management tips for the month ahead

Available on Saturday the 7th of September

[www.teagasc.ie/thebeefedge](http://www.teagasc.ie/thebeefedge)



Scan the QR code to listen to The Beef Edge Podcast

## New research on organic beef systems

Ireland has ambitious targets to increase organically farmed land to 450,000ha by 2030. Financial support is available in the form of an enhanced Organic Farming Scheme. This Scheme is proving attractive to farmers. There are ~5,000 organic farmers in Ireland, with 60% of these being converts since 2022. To prevent animal 'leakage' from organic suckler beef systems into conventional markets (thereby forgoing any market premium) and to facilitate the continued development of organic farm systems, the sector needs information on cattle systems which optimise animal performance and profitability from weaning to finish. Within the 'Growing Organic Farm Systems' project funded by the DAFM, experiments at Teagasc Grange and Johnstown Castle will develop blueprints for organic beef cattle systems. The Kildavin Farm at Johnstown Castle will undergo organic conversion and a suckler weanling-to-beef study will be carried out. This will compare the



*Organic farming has increased hugely since 2022.*

performance of spring-born weanlings finished at the end of the 'second' grazing season (about 20 months old), at the end of the second winter (about 24 months old), and during the third grazing season (about 28 months old). A parallel winter-finishing experiment will be carried out at Teagasc Grange to compare the performance of finishing cattle on organically produced diets, including red clover silage, combi-crop silage, and combi-crop grain. The results of these studies will help to inform the growing numbers of organic farmers on the most efficient, productive and profitable organic beef production systems. An assessment of animal and farm environmental impacts will also be carried out.



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine

## Silage testing

Once silage is four to six weeks in the bale or pit, fermentation should have stabilised. This means that you can take a sample for testing. The results will determine the quality, energy levels, protein levels, dry matter, and stability of the silage. These things all matter because they will be a good indicator of what performance can be expected from the

forage on its own and what level of supplementation may or may not be needed. In a year where silage volumes on many farms will be tight, testing will give a good indication as to how supplies can be stretched without compromising on animal performance. Contact your advisor if you are interested in submitting a silage sample.

## PTO shaft cover grant



A 60% grant is available on PTO shaft covers.

The National Farm Safety Measure 2024 provides a financial contribution to participating farmers for up to four PTO shaft covers.

Closing date for applications is November 1, 2024. The grant aid will be at a rate of 60% subject to a maximum eligible cost of €100 per PTO shaft cover. For further information talk to your advisor or go to: <http://www.gov.ie/farmsafety>.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

## Upcoming event

# Future Beef

## Opportunities in Suckler Farming

Wed, 11<sup>th</sup> September | 6pm

Shane & Grainne Keaveney,  
Ballybane, Ballinlough,  
Co. Roscommon F45 W599

*Topics discussed will include:*

- Producing quality weanlings for the farm system
- Red Clover Silage – meeting winter weight targets
- The New EIP Island River Catchment scheme
  - an opportunity for local farmers?
- Physical & Financial Performance of the farm
- Beef Market Outlook with
  - Brendan Egan, Castlereagh Livestock Mart
  - Anthony O'Dowd, Dawn Meats



For more information see [www.teagasc.ie/futurebeef](http://www.teagasc.ie/futurebeef)