

Teagasc/UCD Michael Smurfit course in business strategy

This course, accredited at level 8 by UCD, requires a total of just six contact days (in three modules plus some homework) to complete, offers farmers the opportunity to bring world-class business management skills to bear on their farm business.

"I found it excellent and it really tuned me in to what I needed to do to move my business forward," is how Meath dairy farmer Peter Mongey described the experience. The course is delivered by Smurfit Business School professors in collaboration with Teagasc and is held at Horse and Jockey in Tipperary.

The course will take place again this autumn (on October 15, 16, 17 and December 3, 4) with participants staying overnight in the Horse and Jockey Hotel. The group will consist of about 15 farmers from all over Ireland. There is no requirement for points or Leaving Cert, etc, to join the course.

Ger Reidy farms 200 acres in

Co Clare and is involved in beef production, renewable energy and rural tourism: "I really enjoyed it. The camaraderie in the group and the support provided by both the Smurfit and Teagasc staff was exceptional.

"What it gives you is the confidence to look at aspects of your business, and business generally that you might not be so familiar with. Any farmer who puts their mind to it could do it."

Executive education

The course is classified as executive education and the entry requirement is that you have been running your business for at least five years. The teaching style is informal and requires active engagement and sharing of business experiences by participants.

There are no exams but participants are required to produce a strategy document for their

business using learnings from the course. Delivering the document earns the 'students' a professional certificate in Business Strategy, which is QQI level 8.

"It made me look at our enterprise as more of a business than a family farm," said Waterford pig producer Jason McGrath.

"I particularly liked the material on how to manage negotiations." Topics addressed during the course include: insights on managing yourself; working with others be they family or staff; investment analysis; finance; preparing for a negotiation; strategy formulation and more.

Participants are expected to complete assigned readings from texts, case-studies and articles. Participants will also work in small project teams between modules. Teagasc staff will mentor participants. If you would like more information, please contact Mark Moore at mark.moore@teagasc.ie.

Placing a value on 'the shadow wage' of family labour on dairy farms

A study by Teagasc and the University of Galway estimates the 'shadow wage' of family labour on Irish dairy farms. The study was done using data from the National Farm Survey (NFS), which operates as part of the EU Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN). In the NFS, in line with FADN methodology, farm family labour is technically referred to as being unpaid with the return to labour accounted for in the definition of Farm Family Income (FFI).

Emma Dillon, Senior Research Officer at Teagasc, explains: "To obtain the shadow wage measure, we use a concept from economics called a production function. This assumes that the amount of farm output – milk and calves, for instance – depends on several factors: capital – money and equipment; labour – paid and unpaid hours; land; and other miscellaneous inputs. Each of these factors contributes a certain percentage to the total value of farm output, which is referred to as the production coefficient."

Emma continues, "We determined how much each hour of unpaid family labour adds to the value of farm output. This calculated value is known as the shadow wage of labour."

Using data from 2019, the researchers calculated that the average shadow wage of farm family labour (includ-



The average shadow wage value of family labour on dairy farms is €30.97/hour according to a Teagasc/NUIG study.

ing for the main operator) was €30.97 per hour.

They found that, as farm size increases, so does the shadow wage. For smaller farms (<43 cows), the shadow wage is €12.17, and for larger farms (>86 cows), the shadow wage is €43.94.

Value of education

The findings indicated that agricultural education influences the value of the shadow wage. The average shadow wage of farmers with formal agricultural education is almost twice that of those without, at €34 and €19 respectively. Consequently, the return of agricultural education on shadow wages is approximately €15 per hour.

This illustrates that the returns to family labour increase as the level of agricultural education increases highlighting the role agricultural education in enhancing farm viability. (TResearch)

Unlocking the potential of faba-lous beans

In response to global concerns about food security and climate change, there has been a significant shift towards plant-based diets.

Ireland has witnessed a sharp increase in beans and peas production, rising by almost 24% from 2022 to 2023, as reported by the Central Statistics Office.

Faba beans, in particular, have a high growth potential due to our agro-climatic conditions. It's a combinable crop (crops cut using a combine harvester) and well-suited in Irish rotations as a break crop for cereals (to break the cycle of pests and weeds). Their exceptional nitrogen fixation capacity naturally enriches the soil with inorganic nitrogen compounds, reducing the reliance on synthetic fertilisers.

Animesh Singh Sengar, a Walsh Scholar from the Food Industry Development Department at Teagasc Ashtown, is working on the Teagasc-funded Shift+Enter project that aligns with the deliverables of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine-funded U-Protein (Unlocking Protein Resource Opportunities To Evolve Ireland's Nutrition). "Our focus is to identify and



Faba beans are well suited to Irish conditions.

characterise faba bean varieties that will best grow in spring and winter seasons of Ireland," he explains.

Shivani Pathania, Senior Research Officer on the project, adds: "The project is fostering strong interdisciplinary collaborations by establishing feedback loops between the processing and crop research teams at Teagasc Oak Park."

Irish pulse protein

A scalable structure-forming technique, i.e. high-moisture extrusion of Irish pulse protein, is currently being assessed to develop a cross-linked and elongated

meat-like fibrous network. Four spring varieties (Tiffany, Lynx, Fanfare and Car-touche) and four winter varieties (Vespa, Irena, Tundra and Augusta) of faba beans have been assessed for their agronomic behaviour and yield.

The bean flours were systematically characterised, feeding into a comprehensive database that takes into account their nutritional profile, functional properties and thermal suitability for processing.

The project also explores the isolation and characterisation of proteins for the development of high moisture meat alternatives.

The high protein content of faba bean flours was evident from their 28-33% protein concentration, with winter varieties exhibiting higher protein content than spring varieties. "All the faba bean flours are rich in lysine amino acid, which has potential to lower cholesterol levels," says Animesh. "Their functional properties are comparable to the other commercially popular legume flours. Our findings reveal that Irish faba bean flours could serve as a viable source of alternative proteins." (TRResearch)

WHAT IS THE CBV?

The CBV is a tool that gives farmers an insight into the genetic value of animals that are destined for beef production.

CBV Traits	% of Overall CBV
Carcass Weight	35%
Feed Intake	24%
Factory Spec	12%
Carcass Conformation	11%
Finishing Age	10%
Docility	1%
Carbon	7%

Higher CBV animals are more likely to:

- Produce heavier carcass weights.
- Have a higher kill out percentage.
- Be more feed and carbon efficient.
- Meet factory specifications.



Watch our 'Understanding CBV' campaign developed in collaboration with Agriland.



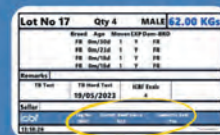
USEFUL INFORMATION



Pedigree breeders should consider the Dairy Beef Index (DBI), when breeding bulls for use in the dairy herd.



More than 620k calves were genotyped in 2024 with over 18k having breed errors corrected.



Genotyped animals will display their CBV on mart boards. If purchasing privately, information can be accessed via HerdPlus.



ICBF analysis of over 56,000 AA x FR steers finished in 2023, shows the top 10% on CBV made €275 more at finish than the bottom 10%.

HerdPlus
Profit through Science

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