Teagasc Customer Action Plan

2026 – 2028

Agriculture and Food Development Authority

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Foreword

I am pleased to introduce Teagasc's sixth Customer Action Plan, covering the period 2026 – 2028. We greatly value the farmers, students, industry partners, research collaborators and wider stakeholders we interact with every day and remain committed to delivering the highest standards of customer service to support their success. This plan reflects our dedication to understanding and responding to their needs, striving to ensure that every interaction with Teagasc is professional, timely and impactful.

Building on the achievements of previous plans, this Action Plan outlines how we will measure, report on and continuously improve our customer service across the organisation. At its heart is a recognition that effective communication and engagement with our customers is essential to planning and delivering services that meet their evolving needs. Cross-directorate collaboration has helped us identify emerging challenges and opportunities to enhance the quality, accessibility and relevance of our services.

This plan aligns closely with Teagasc's Statement of Strategy 2025-2028, "Innovating for Impact: Improving competitiveness and resilience in the agri-food sector", and supports our mission to empower the Irish agri-food sector to develop through scientific leadership, expert knowledge and innovation. Over the coming years, we will continue to support our customers in adapting to evolving challenges, fostering the adoption of new technologies, and enhancing innovation on farms and in food businesses. Our integrated model of research, advisory, and education services, supported by a strong operations function, ensures we can deliver these services effectively, with a national reach and taking advantage of strong collaborations both nationally and internationally.

The successful delivery of this plan relies on the dedication and collaboration of every member of Teagasc staff. Our people are our greatest asset, and we remain committed to supporting them as they implement the actions outlined here.

I extend my sincere thanks to all staff involved in developing this plan and to those who will help bring it to life in the years ahead. Guided by our values of Fostering Respect, Striving for Excellence, and Acting with Integrity, we aim to consistently provide quality customer service that meets and exceeds expectations.

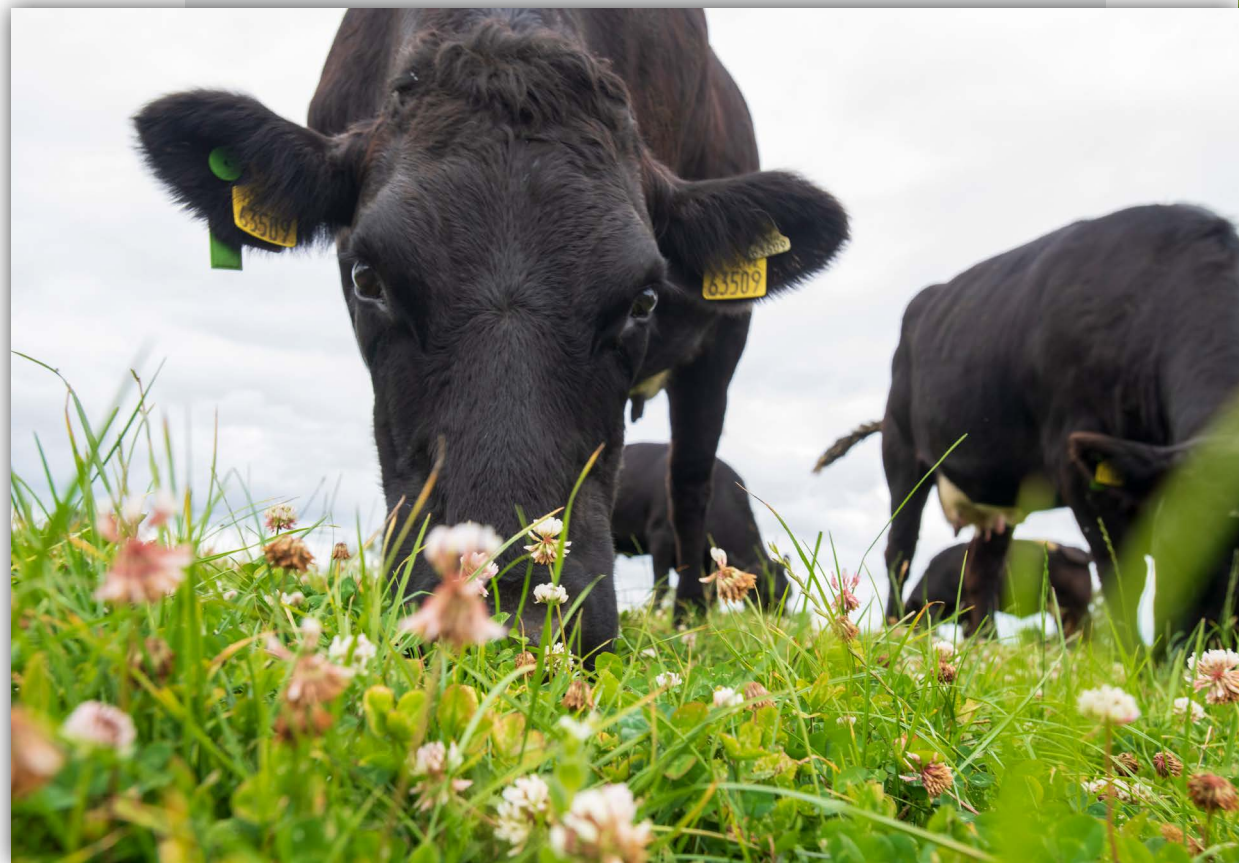
Professor Frank O'Mara
Director of Teagasc

Teagasc's Mandate

This mandate gives Teagasc responsibility for meeting the knowledge and technology needs of the entire food chain and the authority to integrate research, advice and education services to deliver the innovation support necessary to add value to Ireland's agri-food sector.

Teagasc - the Agriculture and Food Development Authority - is the national body providing integrated research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry and rural communities. It was established under the Agriculture (Research, Training and Advice) Act 1988, which states that its principal functions shall be:

- To provide, or procure the provision of, educational, training and advisory services in agriculture, including such educational, training or advisory services in agriculture as may be specified by the Minister for the purpose of giving effect to any directive, regulation or other act adopted by an institution of the European Communities.
- To obtain and make available to the agricultural industry the scientific and practical information in relation to agriculture required by it.
- To undertake, promote, encourage, assist, co-ordinate, facilitate and review, agricultural research and development (including research and development in relation to food processing and the food processing industry).



Our Vision

To be an independent and trusted driver of a competitive and resilient agri-food system.

Our Mission

To empower the Irish agri-food sector to develop through scientific leadership, expert knowledge and innovation support.

Our Values

Teagasc launched its new corporate values in February 2024. Created with input from staff across the organisation, these values shape our culture and guide how we engage with all actors in our sector.

Fostering Respect

We foster a culture of respect where we listen and take action to help everyone, prioritise inclusion, recognise the strength in our differences and promote positive well-being.

Striving for Excellence

We endeavour to consistently deliver excellence & value for money.

Acting with Integrity

We deliver our work with integrity for the common good, and we are accountable for our actions and decisions.

Our Strategic Focus

Teagasc will support the development of a more competitive and resilient Irish Agri-food sector.

Our Sectoral Priorities will empower the sector to be more:

- Productive
- Environmentally sustainable
- Attractive
- Innovative

We will deliver our strategy through four Enabling Priorities:

- Develop our people to their best capability
- Enhance operational excellence
- Ensure a modern and efficient infrastructure that deploys digital technologies
- Engage in better collaborations

Introduction

This Customer Action Plan provides a clear framework for developing Teagasc's customer service and advancing our strategic priorities. It was created by the Quality Customer Service Committee, composed of staff from across all Directorates and functions. The Committee is responsible for guiding the plan's implementation, promoting high-quality customer service throughout the organisation, and identifying emerging issues and opportunities for improvement. The plan aligns with the twelve Quality Customer Service Guiding Principles for the public service, as outlined by the Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation. By imbedding these principles, the action plan strengthens our Customer Charter and underlines Teagasc's commitment to continuously improving the customer experience. Through this approach, we aim to provide services that are accessible, responsive and effective for all our customers, ensuring their needs are met efficiently and professionally.

Context

Teagasc's overarching strategic goal is to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the Irish agri-food sector. In the years ahead, our work will be guided by key national and international policy developments as outlined in our Statement of Strategy 2025-2028 'Innovating for Impact' and will contribute directly to the delivery of Food Vision 2030.

Agriculture and food production will continue to face major challenges over the coming years, as global population growth and rising food demand coincide with workforce decline, succession gaps and concerns around environmental and health impacts. These challenges will shape the future of farming, food processing and rural communities. Teagasc will respond by supporting productivity gains that deliver value while minimising environmental impact, by strengthening market and policy supports, and by driving innovation to enhance resilience. With a commitment to collaboration, expertise and science-backed solutions, Teagasc is well positioned to deliver meaningful change.

These sectoral challenges will also directly affect our customers, whose needs and expectations are evolving. Our diverse customers increasingly expect digital access to services, clear and timely communication, and tailored advice that helps them meet sustainability goals. They will also look for strong collaboration on innovation, skills development and knowledge transfer to remain competitive in a rapidly changing marketplace.

Meeting these expectations requires a proactive approach to customer service, built on innovation, efficiency and continuous improvement. Teagasc is committed to meeting these evolving needs while building trusted partnerships with all of our customers.

Our Customers

Teagasc has a wide range of customers, including, in no particular order:

- Farmer clients
- Existing and prospective students
- The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Our staff
- The general public
- Other government departments and agencies
- Farm organisations
- Agriculture and food industry stakeholders
- Collaborating researchers and research institutions
- Suppliers

How we deliver services

Teagasc is a leading public organisation in the fields of agriculture and food research in Ireland, undertaking innovative research, advisory and education covering the following broad thematic areas:

- Animal and Grassland Research and Innovation
- Crops, Environment and Land Use
- Food
- Rural Economy and Development

Teagasc is unique internationally in providing integrated research, advisory and education services within one organisation.

Photo by Maximilian Schughart, Teagasc

Research

Teagasc's internationally competitive research programme is delivered by approximately 250 PhD-trained researchers, supported by technical, farm, operations and administrative staff. The Walsh Scholarship Programme cultivates the next generation of scientists and agri-food professionals through advanced research training in agriculture, food, environmental, rural development, and related disciplines.

Teagasc is a much sought-after research partner for more than 150 international research institutes and universities and collaborates closely with industry. Our research consistently achieves national and international recognition: in 2024, Teagasc ranked 13th for Horizon Europe funding in the Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment cluster, and 8th nationally for total funding awarded. Four of our researchers were included in the 2024 Clarivate list of highly cited researchers, reflecting their broad and lasting impact.

Teagasc also drives innovation and collaboration with industry, supporting both large and small enterprises. Through access to scientific expertise, technologies, research services, and talent, industry partners can develop new ideas, adopt innovative solutions, and leverage intellectual property to enhance competitiveness and sector growth.

This integrated approach ensures that Teagasc research not only advances knowledge but delivers tangible benefits for the wider agri-food sector.

Advisory

Our advisory services support farmers in adopting research-based technologies to improve competitiveness and address sustainability challenges. Approximately 300 front-line advisors deliver a variety of programmes nationwide, providing a public good service to Ireland's approximately 130,000 farmers, with almost 44,000 actively availing of our farm advisory services. We also play a key role in water quality initiatives such as the Signpost Advisory Programme, the Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP), the Better Farming for Water campaign and the Farming for Water EIP.

The provision of support services to contracted clients around supporting applications and compliance with farm schemes and regulatory requirements related to farm income support, generational renewal, environment, practice adoption and technical performance on-farm, and capital investment are all key to the range of services delivered by Teagasc advisors.

Balancing these services, which are critical to farm incomes, while also ensuring that Teagasc has an effective technical and farm business development advisory programmes is a key objective for the Teagasc Advisory programme.

Launched in 2024, the Advisory Programme Strategy 2024-2030, 'Supporting Sustainable Farming', focuses on enhancing the quality, reach, and impact of the programmes technical, business development and sustainability services. Key priorities include improving farm livelihoods, supporting diversification and value added opportunities. It also emphasises innovation through digitalisation and modernisation, while improving the sustainability of workloads for advisory staff to maintain a professional, high quality service.

While digital tools are increasingly valuable, farm visits, discussion groups and one-to-one support remain essential, particularly for environmental advisory work, which now accounts for a growing share of our activity.

Education and Training

Education and training are central to Teagasc's mission, positioning us as the leading provider of education and training for the farming and agri-food sector and a key training partner for the food industry. As a registered training provider with Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI), Teagasc collaborates with universities and other education stakeholders to deliver high quality, applied programmes. These are delivered through our four Teagasc colleges and in partnership with three private agricultural colleges.

Teagasc delivers a range of land-based apprenticeships through our colleges and in collaboration with farming and horticulture consortia. These programmes provide practical, industry-focused pathways into the farming and agri-food sectors. In 2025, the first cohort of students graduated from the higher education apprenticeship programmes - a milestone that reflects the growing demand for advanced skills and applied expertise in the sector.

In 2025, we also launched Teagasc Education Strategy 2025-2030, which addresses the evolving needs of the agri-food sector. The strategy focuses on closer integration with the Further Education and Training sector, ensuring a consistently high-quality learner experience, better coordination of programme delivery - including apprenticeships and higher education - and the development of new and improved progression pathways for learners.

Beyond the land-based sector, Teagasc remains committed to supporting the wider food industry by facilitating access to cutting-edge research, advanced infrastructure and highly skilled graduates, helping to drive innovation and knowledge transfer across the sector. Increasing the focus on continuous professional training and development opportunities for farmers and agri-food industry professionals is also a key component of Teagasc's overall education and training programmes and services.

Teagasc
Agriculture and Food Development Authority

Customer Charter

Our commitment to quality customer service

This **Customer Charter** outlines the standard of service you can expect from Teagasc. It explains our commitments to you and how you can work with us so that we can deliver the highest quality service.

Our commitments to you

When providing services, we will:

- Respond promptly, helpfully and courteously.
- Treat you fairly and professionally.
- Protect your personal information.
- Make it easy to access information about our services.
- Safeguard persons under 18 in line with the Children First Act 2015 and Teagasc Safeguarding Policy.

When providing information, we will:

- Endeavour to keep our website up-to-date, accurate and accessible.
- Present technical information in clear, easy to understand formats.
- Deliver information to a consistently high standard.

When arranging events, we will:

- Notify you at least three days in advance.
- Ensure events are well signposted and start on time.

We will strive to ensure our facilities are:

- Safe, accessible, clean and comfortable.
- Clearly and appropriately signposted.

For classes, meetings or farm visits we will:

- Keep all scheduled appointments.
- Inform you promptly of unavoidable delays.

To maintain the high quality, we will:

- Consult with stakeholders to ensure relevance to industry and student needs.
- Undertake regular international peer review of our research services.
- Promote publication of research results in international peer-reviewed journals.

Help us to help you

To help us in providing quality services, we ask that you:

- **Make appointments for consultations or visits.**
- **Notify us in the event of delay or cancellation.**
- **Treat our staff with courtesy and consideration.**
- **Notify our staff of issues for discussion in advance, so we can prepare.**
- **Provide requested documents or information in a timely manner.**

What to expect when you contact us

We aim to:

- ✔ Answer your calls promptly during office hours.
- ✔ Connect you with someone who can help, or arrange a call back.
- ✔ Respond to queries promptly.
- ✔ Include full staff contact details on all correspondence.

Target response times:

Phone: 2 working days
Email: 2 working days
Letter: 5 working days

When more time is needed, we will let you know when you can expect a full response.

Our detailed Customer Action Plan is available on our website here.
View Customer Action Plan

Fostering RESPECT | Striving for EXCELLENCE | Acting with INTEGRITY

We value your feedback

Your comments help us improve.
Email qcs@teagasc.ie or complete a Customer Comment Card at any Teagasc office or online via our website.

Submit Feedback to Teagasc

If you are unhappy with our service, please tell us. We will investigate fairly, correct any mistakes, and your complaint will not affect how we treat you in the future.

How to make a complaint

1. Speak with the staff member you normally deal with, in person, by phone or in writing.
2. If you are not satisfied, you may request a local review by their manager.
3. If you remain dissatisfied, contact our Quality Customer Service Officer on 059 9170200 or email **qcs@teagasc.ie** to request an independent review.

External escalation

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may contact:

Office of the Ombudsman
6 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2 D02W773
Phone: +353 (0) 1 639 5600
Website: **www.ombudsman.ie**

Ombudsman for Children
Millenium House,
52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1, D01 F5P8
Phone: Freephone 1800 202040
Email: **ococomplaint@oco.ie**
Website: **www.oco.ie**

Service through Irish

- We will endeavour to provide service through Irish where requested, including responding in Irish to correspondence received in the Irish language.
- All major publications will be available in Irish and English on our website.
- The Irish language version of the Customer Charter is available on our website:
  View Irish language Customer Charter

Email: gaeilge@teagasc.ie

Contact Us:

Teagasc Head Office
Oak Park, Carlow, R93 XE12

General Enquiries
Email: info@teagasc.ie

Quality Customer Service
Email: qcs@teagasc.ie

Phone: +353 (0)59 917 0200
Website: www.teagasc.ie

Teagasc Registered Charity Number: 2002754

January 2026

Actions

Teagasc will undertake a range of actions to improve the quality of our customer service during the period of the plan. The actions are set out in accordance with the twelve Principles of Quality Customer Service for the public service, as defined by the Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation.

Principal 1. Quality Service Standards

Publish a statement (Customer Charter) that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

1.1	Promote and raise awareness of our Customer Charter
1.2	Report annually on progress in achieving service standards and propose action adjustments if required
1.3	Encourage and facilitate feedback from customers
1.4	New programmes in the Statement of Strategy to consider QCS

Principal 2. Equality/ Diversity

Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community).

Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

2.1	Implement actions in the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy
2.2	Implement Public Sector Equality & Human Rights Duty through ongoing assessment, addressing of issues and annual reporting
2.3	Maintain access to Teagasc for advisory clients at a geographic disadvantage
2.4	Endeavour to provide information in accessible formats
2.5	Continue to encourage participation of a diversity of learners on Teagasc education courses
2.6	Ensure continued support for women in agriculture

3. Physical Access

Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards, and as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

3.1	Ensure access is a priority concern in all new building or renovation works
3.2	Maintain clean, accessible public buildings that comply with health and safety legislation
3.3	Ensure locations can offer clients privacy if required

4. Information

Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication. Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.

4.1	Ensure that Teagasc information communicated to the public is clear and accurate

5. Timeliness and Courtesy

Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer. Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of ongoing transactions.

5.1	Adhere to the timeliness and courtesy protocols detailed in the Customer Charter
5.2	Provide and promote customer service training

6. Complaints

Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.

6.1	Publicise our customer complaints procedure widely
6.2	Monitor customer complaints and feedback to identify opportunities for improvement

7. Appeals

Maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

7.1	Ensure customers are aware of their options if unhappy with how a complaint has been dealt with

8. Consultation and Evaluation

Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

8.1	Maintain regular stakeholder partnership group meetings
8.2	Carry out surveys with external customers
8.3	Evaluate a range of Teagasc programmes and activities

9. Choice

Provide choice, where feasible in, service delivery, including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

9.1	Provide training and education courses through a variety of channels
9.2	Provide a client portal while maintaining choice in payment options
9.3	Communicate information to customers using a range of appropriate channels

10. Official Languages Equality

Provide quality services through Irish and /or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

10.1	Ensure Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan are available in both Irish and English
10.2	Continue to implement provision of Irish Language services through Irish in Teagasc under the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021

11. Better Coordination

Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

11.1	Collaborate with Universities particularly through the Walsh Scholarships Programme and QQI-approved agricultural training courses
11.2	Continue to develop and implement joint programmes with industry

12. Internal Customer

Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

12.1	Ensure continued collaboration with staff in managing organisational change through Partnership
12.2	Provide and promote customer service training
12.3	Encourage QCS improvement suggestions from staff
12.4	Introduce a new Staff Recognition Programme
12.5	Conduct regular surveys to evaluate internal customer satisfaction and address issues arising
12.6	Gather feedback from departing employees to identify trends and support continuous organisational improvement

Contact Details:
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Oak Park, Carlow, R93 XE12
Email: info@teagasc.ie
Website: www.teagasc.ie
Phone: +353 (0)59 917 0200

Teagasc Registered Charity Number: 2002754

Quality Customer Service Officer:
Email: qcs@teagasc.ie

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