

Innovating for Impact:

Improving competitiveness
and resilience in the
agri-food sector



Teagasc Strategy 2025-2028

Innovating for Impact:
Improving competitiveness and
resilience in the agri-food sector

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 Strategic Focus

Competitiveness & Resilience

Our Sectoral Priorities | An agri-food sector that will:



Be more
productive



Be more
**environmentally
sustainable**



Be more
attractive



Be more
innovative

Our Enabling Priorities | Teagasc will:



Develop **our
people** to their
best capability



Enhance
**operational
excellence**



Embrace **digital
technologies and
infrastructure**



Facilitate better
collaborations

Our Core Values



Fostering
RESPECT



Striving for
EXCELLENCE

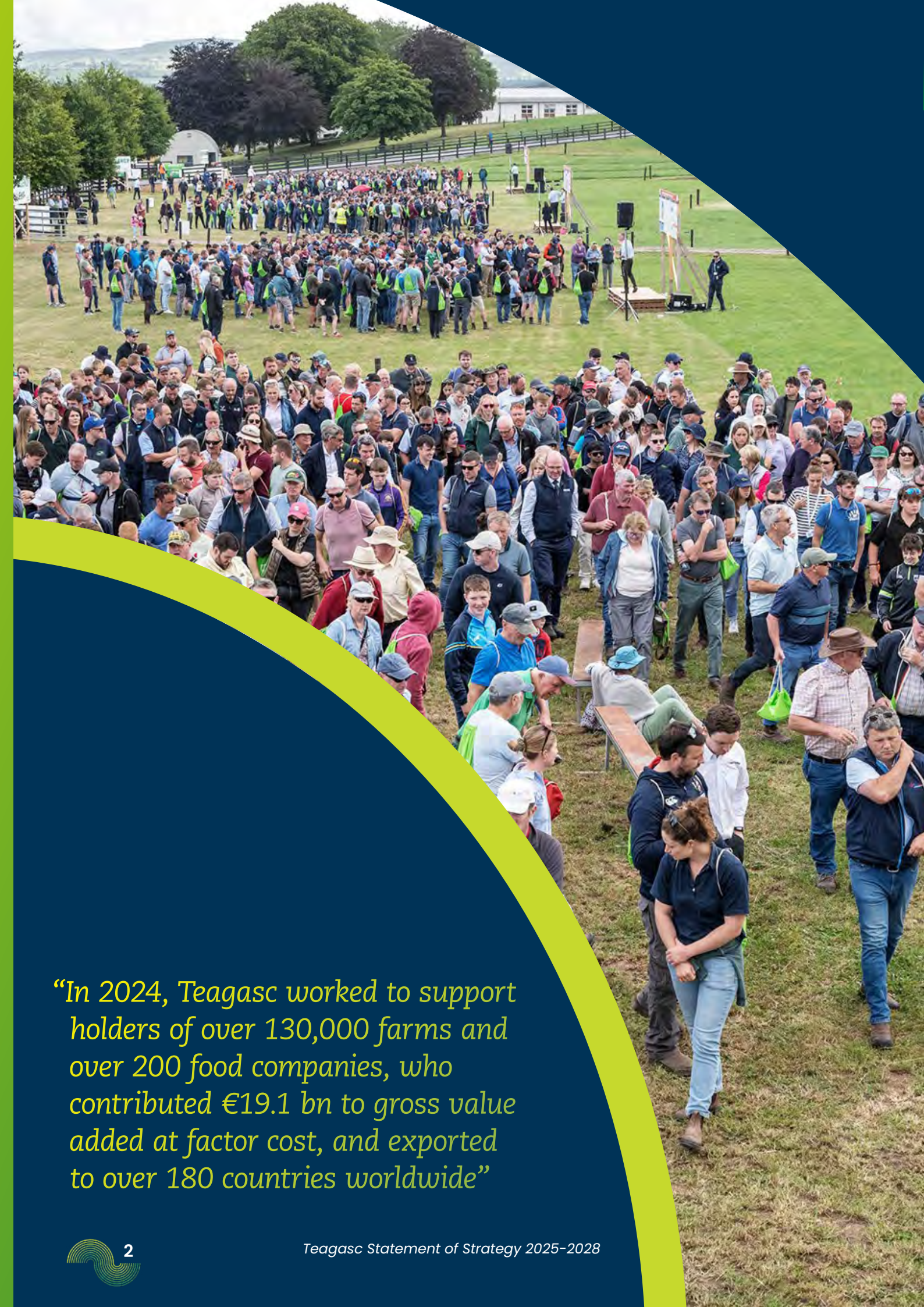


Acting with
INTEGRITY

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“In 2024, Teagasc worked to support holders of over 130,000 farms and over 200 food companies, who contributed €19.1 bn to gross value added at factor cost, and exported to over 180 countries worldwide”



Introduction from our Chair

Mr. Liam Herlihy, Chair, Teagasc Authority

I am very pleased to introduce you to the Teagasc Strategy Statement 2025–2028, which was adopted by the Teagasc Authority at our meeting on the 5th of November 2025. This Statement of Strategy is ambitious and future-orientated, and outlines our vision and plans to shape the next phase of development of the Irish agri-food sector.

Our key stakeholders including farmers, horticulturalists, farm foresters, food businesses, other agri-businesses, policymakers, and others involved in the sector, look to Teagasc for independent scientific leadership, expert knowledge and innovation support. This strategy continues our commitment to provide this to improve the livelihoods of farmers and others in the agri-food system, human and animal health and well-being, product safety and quality, and the environment on which we all depend.

The major focus of this strategy is to improve the competitiveness and resilience of the agri-food sector. It is a roadmap that ensures that Teagasc is a leader, a catalyst, a connector and a trusted partner for the sector and our key stakeholders, amidst an external environment that creates significant opportunities as well as challenges. We will deliver this strategy by focusing our advisory, education and research activities on productivity, the environment, the attractiveness of the sector, and innovation. We will invest in our people who are our key resource in the delivery of our services. We will also invest in our digital technologies and built infrastructure to ensure we can reap the benefits of new and emerging opportunities for the sector. Teagasc has a strong track record of collaborating for greater impact, and we will strengthen our partnerships and collaborations in the period of this strategy. We will continue to focus on good governance and strive for operational excellence in delivering our programme.

This strategy builds on our previous strategy, Teagasc Together, which harnessed the power of research, advisory and education to create a sustainable food system, and contribute to the delivery of Food Vision 2030. Teagasc Together had an overarching goal to make sustainability front and centre of all Teagasc activities. In response to this Teagasc launched its Climate Action Strategy in December 2022 and its Better Farming for Water 8–Actions for Change campaign in May 2024. Implementing these two major initiatives will remain a major focus through the period of this new strategy, as will a continued emphasis on supporting delivery of Food Vision 2030, DAFM’s Statement of Strategy 2025–2028 and other relevant Government policies.

In 2024, Teagasc worked to support holders of over 130,000 farms and over 200 food companies, who contributed €19.1 bn to gross value added at factor cost, and exported to over 180 countries worldwide. This strategy will firmly position us to build on this and deliver on our vision “To be an independent and trusted driver of a competitive and resilient agri-food system”. In implementing our new strategy, we will continue to rely on the funding and support of the Minister and Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the support of many other agencies, businesses, organisations, and of course farmers and others involved in land-based enterprises. I have no doubt that support will be forthcoming, and we will meet it with an equal measure of enthusiasm and commitment to deliver on this strategy.



Introduction from our Director

Prof. Frank O'Mara, Director, Teagasc

This strategy, “Innovating for Impact”, builds on Teagasc’s mission to empower the Irish agri-food sector to develop through scientific leadership, expert knowledge and innovation support, contributing to Food Vision 2030. Our previous strategy, Teagasc Together, delivered strongly on environmental sustainability. Building on this, our new strategy prioritises strengthening the sector’s competitiveness and resilience, including resilience to climate change and other shocks.

We have identified four sectoral priorities that will improve Competitiveness and Resilience: Productivity, Environmental Sustainability, Attractiveness, and Innovation. These will be enabled through People, Operational Excellence, Digital and Infrastructural Resources, and Collaborations. New initiatives across these areas will complement ongoing activities.

Teagasc will continue to focus on the role of technology in improving our farms and food businesses. Digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and other leading-edge technologies (e.g. fermentation and bio-transformation) can benefit the sector. To support greater adoption, we will create a national training and learning platform tailored to farmers, food industry personnel and professionals.

Another major initiative is establishing an Office of Agri-Food Innovation Support to give enhanced support to the food industry and other businesses to innovate. We will unlock decarbonisation opportunities and accelerate innovation through new ways of working with farmers and food businesses.

We will continue to strongly support our main farm enterprises, dairy, beef, sheep, pigs, tillage, horticulture and farm forestry, and will remain firmly committed to climate action, and enhancing water quality and farm biodiversity.

We will strengthen our support for other farm enterprises, rural development, generational renewal, diversification, and increase the scope of pilot plants, specialised facilities and test beds to support innovation. With collaboration as a cornerstone, we will work with other government departments, agencies and key stakeholders, to ensure a sustainable food system in Ireland and internationally. We will also continue our international development programme in support of the Irish government’s objectives.

“This strategy is made possible by our excellent staff and facilities”

This strategy is made possible by our excellent staff and infrastructure across advisory, education, research and operations. We will continue to invest in both, with details outlined in an implementation plan and annual business plans, recognising our committed, skilled and expert staff as our greatest asset.

With cutting edge facilities, excellent farm and laboratory research platforms, unique pilot plant facilities, coupled with the hugely valuable Walsh Scholars programme and committed research and Knowledge Transfer (KT) support professionals, Teagasc is well placed to deliver the sector's research needs.

Our trusted advisory programme serves all farmers, with approximately 44,000 farmers having a client contract. Increasing the technology and business development support, while continuing to support client access to income and investment support from schemes is the thrust of our new Advisory Strategy. With many channels of communication, events and a suite of digital decision support tools, it delivers a unique service to Irish farmers.

Our education service has over 3,500 learners in our full-time, part-time and distance programmes and supports the third level sector in delivering multiple higher education degrees. It plays a vital role in building human capacity for our land-based enterprises. A new Education Strategy will ensure that Teagasc continues to play a central role in training and educating the next generation of farmers, with continued responsiveness to learner and sectoral needs.

Teagasc is focussed on making an impact by leveraging its unique resource of having advisory, education and research services within the one organisation, backed by a superb team of support staff and operations professionals. It is most effective when these services operate in unison in the Teagasc Together way.

We will build on our key strengths of motivated and dedicated staff, our values of Respect, Excellence and Integrity, a national footprint with excellent facilities, a huge reach to the farming community with whom we are a trusted source of independent advice, and a strong network of national and international partners. Together, these elements will enable Teagasc to deliver greater value to our stakeholders and to society.

“Teagasc will continue to focus on the role of technology in improving our farms and food businesses”





“We provide integrated research, advisory and education services to deliver the innovation support necessary to create and maintain value for Ireland’s agri-food sector”

1. Our Vision, Mission and Values

Teagasc is the Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority. We have a statutory remit under the Agriculture (Research, Training and Advice) Act 1988 to support the knowledge and technology needs of the food chain from production to consumption. We provide integrated research, advisory and education services to deliver the innovation support necessary to create and maintain value for Ireland's agri-food sector. With a presence in 26 counties and 56 locations in the Republic of Ireland, and collaborations in over 40 countries internationally, Teagasc combines an important national sector support footprint with a strong international network to strive towards its vision, deliver on its mission, while grounded in Teagasc's core values.

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



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.



2. Strategic Context

Farming and food are essential parts of the Irish economy and society and are recognised as strategic sectors by the EU. Food security, safety and sovereignty are considered critical to European security. The EU, as the largest agri-food exporter in the world, makes an important contribution to global food security and Ireland's food exports are an important component of this.

Agriculture and food production make a significant contribution to Ireland's economy, particularly in rural areas, with over 171,000 people working in agriculture, food processing and ancillary industries, and €19.2 billion in exports in 2024. FAO/OECD outlook anticipates growing demand for food including livestock products, as the world's population is projected to be close to 10 billion by 2050. Ireland has a reputation for producing high quality, safe, nutritious food and is in a strong position to contribute to growing food demand. There are exciting opportunities to capitalise further on this position through innovation, digitalisation and biocircularity.

However, some of the existing watchwords also remain and full exploitation of the opportunities will require challenges in the areas of gaseous emissions, water quality and biodiversity to be addressed. Climate change is projected to greatly impact food security, costing EU agriculture up to €40 billion in 2050. Ireland's National Adaptation Framework and sectoral adaptation plans emphasise the importance of preparing for the impacts of climate change across all sectors which for agriculture means withstanding extreme weather, changing rainfall, and new pest and disease pressures. Progress has been achieved in recent years with Teagasc's MACC curve providing a template for

advancing sectoral Greenhouse Gas Emission (GHG) reduction and carbon removal (forestry) targets, supported by our Signpost Programme and interactive data systems such as AgNav. Furthermore, scientific and technological development enhances the potential for co-product valorisation and waste management strategies, in line with circular bioeconomy principles. These demonstrate the potential for technological solutions, particularly if adopted on a widespread sectoral basis. However, the sector is still challenged in reaching its environmental targets and ambitions as highlighted in recent Environment Protection Agency (EPA) reports.

In addition, generational renewal is a significant concern in Ireland and many other countries. The Teagasc National Farm Survey found that the average age of Irish farmers is 59 and that nearly 40% of farmers over 60 do not have an identified successor. Low farm incomes and workload are significant issues for the sector, with average family farm incomes in 2024 of just €35,937, and the average weekly hours worked of dairy farmers was 52 hours in 2023. Low incomes and a buoyant off-farm labour market have contributed to the emergence of part-time farming as a widespread practice which is likely to grow further.

Existing and emerging technology, and farm system change have a role through increasing productivity and profitability, reducing environmental impact, and reducing workload. This is where Teagasc contributes by developing, evaluating, and assisting farmers with adoption of technologies, system improvement and diversification. The livelihoods and profitability of Irish farmers and food businesses remain a central priority.

The Food Vision 2030 strategy was developed with the aim of balancing economic, social and environmental sustainability, with Ireland taking a leading position internationally as an advocate of Sustainable Food Systems. There are many other important national strategies and priorities which are very relevant to the agri-food sector such as the Climate Action Plan, Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy, the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030, National Forestry Programme, and related areas in the Programme for Government such as enhancing animal health and welfare and addressing One Health issues such as antimicrobial resistance. In addition, there are many pieces of relevant EU law and policy that relate to agriculture and food. The EU Commission recently published 'A Vision for Agriculture and Food' which identified four priority areas to 2040 that included making farming a viable and appealing career; increasing the competitiveness of the agri-food sector in global markets; embracing innovation and sustainability for long term resilience; and valuing food and fostering fair living and working conditions in rural areas.

“The livelihoods and profitability of Irish farmers and food businesses remain a central priority”

During the timeframe of our strategy, many important developments will happen. Proposals from the European Commission on the shape of the EU Common Agricultural Policy for the period 2028-2034 were published in July 2025 and negotiations on the form of the new policy between Member States, the Commission and European Parliament will take place over the period to the end of 2027. Pressure will remain to meet climate, water quality and ammonia targets, and we must also increase efforts to adapt to climate change. Ireland's application for a derogation from the Nitrates Directive will shortly be decided, and the Nature Restoration Law requires a National Restoration Plan to be developed. Policy and markets will seek to create diversification options for farming and land use. This strategy is informed by these national and EU strategies, policies and regulations.





3. Our Strategic Focus

The context within which Teagasc works presents both opportunities and challenges for what we do and how we do it. The current and likely future context demands an emphasis on ensuring **competitiveness and resilience** for the sector, which is the focus of this strategy.

Competitiveness is central to the future of Ireland's agri-food sector. As a small, export-driven country, Ireland must continue to deliver high-quality, sustainable food while competing in increasingly complex global markets. For Teagasc, competitiveness means enabling farmers, producers and processors to thrive economically by improving productivity, embracing innovation, diversifying and meeting evolving sustainability standards. This strategy supports the sector to be more efficient, more climate-resilient and better equipped to deliver value across the supply chain.

Resilience is about ensuring the sector can withstand and adapt to disruption—whether from geopolitical tensions, trade barriers or climate extremes—while continuing to deliver safe, high-quality food and safeguarding rural livelihoods. Farming is inherently exposed to volatility, and building resilience requires a systems-level approach that protects the environment, supports farm and industry viability and strengthens community wellbeing. Through this strategy, Teagasc will empower the sector to be stable, sustainable, attractive and responsive in the face of change.

“Teagasc will empower the sector to be stable, sustainable, attractive and responsive in the face of change”





We have identified several priorities, with a set of targeted objectives, to deliver on our strategic focus. These objectives will, in turn, be supported by new initiatives to complement programmes and activities already in train. As we implement our strategy, we will continue to review, refine and update the range of initiatives underway to ensure we meet our objectives.



4. Our Sectoral Priorities

In driving the competitiveness and resilience of the sector, Teagasc will harness the strengths and talent within Ireland's agri-food sector by delivering on four sectoral priorities, which will empower the sector to be more **productive**, more **environmentally sustainable**, more **attractive** and more **innovative**.

4.1 Productivity

Irish agriculture is highly productive and technologically advanced, with amongst the highest yields of grass and crops globally. However, it faces high costs of production in some areas due to scale, high input costs and continued challenges to animal, crop and soil health. Productivity improvements are a key driver of sustainable growth, competitiveness and resilience, and must deliver value, enhance climate resilience, while minimising environmental impact.

Productivity enables farmers and food businesses to do more with less, and achieve better market returns.

Diversification – through new land uses, new crops or value-added products, including organics – helps to spread risk as well as opening new market opportunities and income streams. These developments must align with environmental sustainability, hence decarbonisation efforts need attention. Animal health and welfare, and the One Health approach to soil, plant, animal and human health also require consideration. Taken together, these elements foster more competitive and resilient food systems that are better able to respond to changing consumer demands, climate change impacts and geopolitical uncertainties.



Objectives

To enable the sector to increase productivity, Teagasc will:

- **Drive productivity in Irish agricultural and food systems** using improved plant and animal genetics, other technologies and management systems (supported by Initiatives 1-4 and 6)
- **Stimulate increased added value in the food processing sector** by process and product improvement, new product development, the application of technology, and new food opportunities arising from the bioeconomy (supported by Initiatives 1 and 3-5)
- **Unlock opportunities for decarbonisation and innovation** in the sustainable circular bioeconomy (supported by Initiatives 1-6)
- **Increase uptake of diversification opportunities by farmers and food businesses** and support entrepreneurship in food and non-food businesses (supported by Initiatives 2-5)

Initiatives

Initiatives delivering on these objectives will include the following:

1. Develop a **Future Technologies Programme** to foster competitiveness and resilience by increasing productivity at farm level and increasing food added value:
 - Productivity at farm level can be increased by adopting precision farming practices, using improved animal and plant genetics, improving animal, crop and soil health, and implementing digital technologies for farm management. When coupled with decarbonisation, these two elements foster a resilient food system that is better able to respond to the impact of climate change.
 - The value addition of food production can be increased by shifting to higher value products and exploring new and emerging markets. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI)/digitalisation, smart packaging, bio-transformation, precision fermentation have an important role to play in increasing added value.
2. **Enhance technology advisory supports** to any farmer seeking enhanced technical and farm business development advice and support. This service will be delivered by prioritising more advisors to technical and business development advice, while maintaining the key role of advisors in income support schemes (as outlined in the Teagasc Advisory Programme Strategy to 2024-2030).

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3. Create a new **Office for Agri-Food Innovation Support** that will translate research into business impact across the agri-food and ag-tech sectors. Supporting enterprises at all stages, this office will provide streamlined pathways to Teagasc's scientific research expertise and pilot-scale facilities. Its dedicated team will work proactively with companies to identify opportunities, embed innovation, and provide strategic insights on emerging trends and technologies. The Office will play a central role in collaborating with national and international Research Providers and other agencies to foster a coordinated innovation ecosystem aligned with Food Vision 2030 and the EU Vision for Agriculture and Food.

 4. Launch a **National Training and Learning Platform** to enable greater adoption of technologies on farms and in food businesses. Targeted at farmers, food industry, agri-business, senior executives and professionals, it will increase skills and build capability to adopt new technologies and improve systems and develop leadership capacity. This platform will deliver continuous digital and in-person training, education, and upskilling across the entire agri-food ecosystem. Delivered in close collaboration with the Office for Agri-Food Innovation Support, the platform will provide tailored training linked to real-time trends and emerging insights from research. With structured credit recognition (e.g. CPD), it will support the development of competencies and leadership capacity across all professional levels, strengthening innovation and long-term sectoral resilience.

 5. Launch a new **Diversification and Rural Development Programme** to advise and assist farmers and agri-food SMEs to assess diversification options for their farms, food businesses and other agri-food related farm enterprises. Teagasc will work closely with other agencies and organisations in the delivery of this programme.

 6. **Develop new indicators** of Irish agriculture's productivity and competitiveness to monitor and track competitiveness, market impacts, farmers' incomes and the impact of productivity gains.
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Key results

Results in this priority area will include measurable improvements in on-farm productivity and the provision of direct support to at least 100 food or non-food SMEs to enhance diversification and increase added value.



Ongoing initiative

Teagasc Advisory Programme Strategy 2024–2030

The Teagasc Advisory Programme Strategy 2024–2030 outlines a transformative renewal of Teagasc’s Advisory Programme to strengthen farm viability, climate action, and sustainability. Key initiatives include specialised advisory roles, integrated Farm Sustainability Plans, digital modernisation, and enhanced collaboration across the agri-food sector. By rebalancing workloads and expanding access, the strategy aims to deliver more impactful, tailored advice to farmers. The outcome will be a more responsive, innovative, and effective advisory service supporting national goals for environmental, economic, and social sustainability.

4.2 Environmental Sustainability

Producing food while protecting ecosystems, conserving and enhancing natural resources, reducing climate impacts and adapting farming systems to climate change is vital for the Irish agri-food sector's long-term viability, and to meet national, EU and global targets and commitments.

Climate-smart agriculture – through innovative technologies like AI, Internet of Things, improved crops and forages, animal breeding, and nature-based solutions such as forestry – presents opportunities for the sector to have a positive environmental impact while maintaining viability.

Objectives

To align environmental goals with sector viability and support adaptation to growing climate challenges, Teagasc will:

- **Support farmers to take action to reduce emissions**, sequester carbon, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity, supporting achievement of national targets and obligations (supported by Initiatives 1-6)
- **Advance research and adoption of carbon farming and nature-based solutions** in Irish farming systems (supported by Initiatives 1-6)
- **Harness opportunities for optimising land use in Ireland**, and the trade-offs and synergies within and across different aspects of sustainability (supported by Initiatives 3-6)

Initiatives

Initiatives delivering on these objectives will include the following:

1. Implement the Teagasc **Climate Action Strategy** through the Teagasc Climate Centre, the Signpost Programme and the AgNav benchmarking and decision support tool, including an expanded climate adaptation research programme to identify and address the key threats and opportunities climate change presents for Irish agriculture, horticulture, and forestry.
2. Implement the '**Better Farming for Water**' campaign in collaboration with key stakeholders to improve water quality, by supporting farmers in the adoption of the '**8-Actions for Change**' based on a catchment approach.

3. **Harness emerging technologies**—including AI, digitalisation, remote sensing, GIS, and nature-based solutions—to drive innovative research that enhances environmental sustainability within economically viable farming systems, **using a living lab approach**.
4. **Develop a biodiversity strategy and action plan**, aligned with the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan and Climate Action Plan, to support nature positive outcomes including soil health and ecosystem resilience.
5. Develop robust scientific models and spatially targeted decision support tools to **enable the implementation of carbon farming and nature-based payment schemes**, empowering farmers to optimise environmental outcomes and access new income streams.
6. Initiate a national research programme to **develop an integrated land-use model** that underpins sustainability and climate adaptation and incorporates agronomic, environmental and socio-economic factors.

Key results

Results for this priority will include demonstrating and supporting the agriculture and forestry sectors to make a significant contribution to national climate, water quality and biodiversity targets as set out by various directives and regulations.

Ongoing initiatives

Better Farming for Water-8 Actions for Change campaign

Currently, just over half of Irish surface water bodies (rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters) are achieving at least good status. The EU Water Framework Directive requires that all water bodies are achieving at least good status by 2027. In 2024, at the request of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Teagasc launched a multi-actor 'Better Farming for Water 8-Actions for Change' campaign. The objective of the campaign is to support all farmers in the adoption of sustainable farming practices that minimise the impact of agriculture on water quality. The 8-Actions for Change can be divided into three areas of practice improvement: Nutrient Management (3), Farmyard Management (2) and Land Management (3).



Nutrient Management		
01	Reduce purchased nitrogen (N) & phosphorus (P) surplus per hectare	
02	Ensure soil fertility is optimal for lime, phosphorus and potassium	
03	Ensure application of fertiliser and organic manure at appropriate times and conditions	
Farmyard Management		
04	Have sufficient slurry and soiled water storage capacity	
05	Manage and minimise nutrient loss from farmyards and roadways	
Land Management		
06	Fence off watercourses to prevent bovine access	
07	Promote targeted use of mitigation actions such as riparian margins, buffer strips & sediment traps to mitigate nutrient and sediment loss to water	
08	Maintain over-winter green cover to reduce nutrient leaching from tillage soils	

Teagasc Climate Action Strategy

Teagasc's Climate Action Strategy, launched in December 2022, outlined a roadmap for Irish agriculture and land-use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2030, in line with government targets. The strategy focused on supporting farmers to adopt new technologies and sustainable practices, including agroforestry, while maintaining farm profitability. There are three key pillars to the strategy: (1) a Signpost Advisory Programme to support farmers to respond to the challenge which builds on the Signpost Demonstration Farm Programme; (2) a Sustainability Digital Platform, AgNav, to help farmers to identify mitigation strategies on their farm to deliver on climate action and (3) a virtual Teagasc Climate Centre to accelerate the development of new technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance carbon sequestration, increase climate resilience and enhance and restore farmland biodiversity.



AGNAV



4.3 Attractiveness

With a growing global population and climate-related production challenges, global food demand is rising and food production remains vital. Nonetheless, farming and food production face challenges such as aging demographics, part-time farming, workforce decline, succession gaps, and negative perceptions of environmental and health impacts. Market and policy supports can enhance attractiveness.

In support of Ireland's family farming model, Teagasc will work in collaboration with others to attract people to employment and livelihoods in the sector, broaden our support to young, female and part-time farmers, facilitate generational renewal and improved work-life balance, and foster sustainable farm structures. In addition, we will work to strengthen the connection between Irish farming and food production practices and evolving market and societal expectations to ensure long term competitiveness.

Objectives

To ensure a vibrant and attractive sector into the future, Teagasc will:

- **Lead the design and adoption of more attractive, resilient and labour efficient farm systems** that are supportive of sustainable livelihoods and farmer, plus worker, well-being (supported by Initiatives 1-7)
- **Support generational renewal** through facilitating and supporting inter-generational farm transfer, new entrants to farming, collaborative farming opportunities, and gender balance and inclusivity across the sector (supported by Initiatives 1 and 3)
- **Deepen understanding of societal, market, and cultural factors shaping the attractiveness of farming**, and consumer and public perceptions of farming and food production, to better align practices with evolving expectations and future opportunities (supported by Initiatives 6 and 7)

“Teagasc will work to attract people to employment and livelihoods in the sector”



Initiatives

Initiatives delivering on these objectives will include the following:

1. Launch a **Generational Renewal Opportunity** initiative to deliver a bespoke service to farmers and professionals engaged in progressing generational renewal.
2. Increase research and knowledge transfer focus on labour efficient practices including digital technologies and robotics, including the establishment **of labour saving testbeds and demonstration sites for different farming systems**, relating to full and part-time farming, enabling better work-life balance and enhancing farmer and worker health and safety.
3. **Develop a new advisory package** offering three years of enhanced support including discussion group membership and training through the new national training and learning platform **to new entrants to farming, farmers changing enterprise and female farmers** to catalyse innovation and ensure vibrant rural communities.
4. Provide more **targeted education and advisory support for part-time farmers**, including developing farming systems templates suited to part-time farmers, based on their needs.
5. **Market careers in agriculture and food to school and college leavers** to ensure talent is available as the cornerstone of innovation, competitiveness, sustainability and resilience.
6. Undertake social science **research to further understand the process of farm family formation and renewal** and **expand the set of indicators of social sustainability** published by Teagasc to include indicators relating to farm succession and inheritance and generational renewal.
7. Undertake social and behavioural science research to **deepen understanding of the connection between farming, food production and society, informing policies and practices that enhance sectoral sustainability and foster public support.**

Key results

Results in this area are focused on reducing the average age of those working in agriculture.



Ongoing initiative

Teagasc Education Strategy 2025-2030

The Teagasc Education Strategy 2025–2030 outlines a vision to modernise land-based education through 19 strategic actions. Key initiatives include curriculum revalidation, enhanced learner supports, expanded continuous professional development opportunities, and new progression routes into tertiary education. The strategy prioritises practical, science-based training that is central to the unique role of Teagasc in land-based education. Outcomes include a skilled, future-ready workforce and stronger national alignment across Further and Higher Education. This positions Teagasc as a cornerstone of sustainable agri-food and land-sector education in Ireland.



4.4 Innovation

Innovation within and outside the farm gate is essential to unlocking greater value and building resilience across the Irish agri-food sector. Teagasc will build the capacities of farmers, food businesses, entrepreneurs and workers to innovate and foster new enterprises.

In addition, working at national, regional and local levels with clients, we will introduce new initiatives to stimulate the uptake of technologies and accelerate innovation that delivers for clients and stakeholders.

Objectives

To drive innovation, Teagasc will:

- **Build on existing and new pilot plants and research assets to accelerate impact** across enterprises in the agri-food sector, enabling value creation through leveraging opportunities across the sustainable circular bioeconomy, biotransformation, precision fermentation, and healthier food systems (supported by Initiatives 1-3)
- **Grow innovative capacity of the agri-food industry** through enhanced capture, adoption and exploitation of high value commercial opportunities from research (supported by Initiatives 1-4)
- **Build and support the digital, technical and entrepreneurial capacity** of farmers, farm staff, food businesses, food operators, etc. to accelerate innovation and value addition (supported by Initiatives 1-4)

“we will introduce new initiatives to stimulate the uptake of technologies”

Initiatives

Initiatives delivering on these objectives will include:

1. **Expand and integrate the specialist and pilot scale facilities, test beds and living labs** hosted by Teagasc to fast-track testing, technology validation and scale-up across emerging food and agri-tech innovative opportunities (including biocircularity, healthier foods, decarbonisation, smart packaging, fermentation, biotransformation, remote sensing, etc). Focused on sustainability, digitalisation, and competitiveness, this will de-risk innovation, strengthen industry partnerships, and position Ireland as a global leader in agri-food technology.
2. **Develop Teagasc colleges and research centres as regional centres of rural innovation**, collaborating with Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), Enterprise Ireland, InterTrade Ireland, and others, stimulating collaboration and innovation, and acting as nodes for the National Training and Learning Platform.
3. **Leverage greater innovation and impact from Teagasc's world class food and agriculture research programmes through strategic partnerships** with research providers and key organisations in the food and ag-tech areas, including Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia and Bord Iascaigh Mhara.
4. Conduct a **Foresight study** to identify the technologies and sustainable, resilient production systems that will be important for Irish agriculture and food production over a 20–30 year horizon so that Teagasc can ensure its research and development programmes, alongside technology adoption supports, are properly orientated. Teagasc will assemble a team of national and international partners for this study.

Key results

Results in this priority area will be assessed according to an increase in the number and value of R&D collaborations, amongst other metrics.





5. Our Enabling Priorities

To deliver on this Statement of Strategy, it is essential that Teagasc continues to invest in strengthening and advancing the capability and capacity of our organisation to deliver for Ireland's agri-food sector. We will do this by taking initiatives across four enabling priorities:

1. **Develop people to their best capability**
2. **Enhance operational excellence**
3. **Ensure a modern and efficient infrastructure that deploys digital technologies**
4. **Engage in better collaboration.**

We will deliver on our enabling priorities through targeted objectives and associated initiatives. Continually improving programme delivery and operations, and ensuring strong governance, is critical to the delivery of this strategy.



5.1 People

Teagasc's highly educated, skilled and motivated staff, from more than 50 different countries, are critical for delivering value to our stakeholders. This includes our farm, technical, administration, operations and research support staff. Effective teams working together have been the bedrock of our culture and this is reinforced by our

values of fostering respect, striving for excellence and acting with integrity. To ensure we have the skills and capabilities needed for the future we must invest in our staff, enable agility and mobility, and strengthen our collaborative way of working internally and externally.

Objectives

To develop people to their best capacity, Teagasc will:

- **Build a future-ready Teagasc workforce** equipped with the skills, agility and capacity to meet evolving challenges and opportunities (supported by Initiatives 1-4)
- **Foster an inclusive, high-performing work environment** that makes Teagasc a great place to work while delivering world-class services to its stakeholders (supported by Initiatives 2-5)
- **Position Teagasc as an employer of choice** delivering high added value to its clients and stakeholders (supported by Initiatives 2, 4, and 5)

Initiatives

Within a new People Strategy, initiatives to deliver on these objectives will include the following:

1. Develop an updated **skills and competency framework**, supported by new learning programmes in areas such as innovation, digital, data management, influencing, project management and collaborative skills. New programmes for learning such as job rotations, secondments and sabbaticals will be encouraged both within Teagasc, and with partner organisations.
2. Develop **new career pathways and roll out Personal Development Plans** to invest in career development. These pathways will support early and mid-career planning and progression and a tiered leadership development framework for emerging to senior leadership roles.

3. **Strengthen collaborative working** by promoting internal and external networking, recognising voluntary collaborative contributions, and enhancing the visibility of staff activities and skills in this area. New initiatives stemming from our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and associated staff survey will be progressed. Actions will include enhancing people management training and a focus on people metrics.
4. Create new **'step- across' assignments and more short term roles** to allow Teagasc respond more quickly to strategic and emerging priorities of stakeholders. Facilitated by the adoption of advances in operational excellence, system integration, AI, and Lean strategies, routine tasks will be reduced, providing space for staff to deliver higher level and rewarding work programmes.
5. Implement an **employer branding campaign** that will promote new recruitment models, brand ambassadorship, a breadth of flexible working options and highlight Teagasc as a diverse, inclusive, vibrant and great place to work.

Key results

Results will focus on people and the work environment, including a target that 90% of staff will have Personal Development Plans.



5.2 Operational Excellence

Good governance is a given within Teagasc to meet the justifiable demands from society for the highest levels of corporate governance from all public bodies. At the same time, change is constant in the world of work and digital technology and AI are developing rapidly. Teagasc must be innovative, responsive and efficient in delivering its programme and embed continuous change, Lean methodologies and system improvement as a natural way of working.

To achieve this Teagasc will develop an **Operational Excellence Programme (OEP)** to introduce new systems and work practices that will reduce the administrative burden on staff, support effective prioritisation and deliver a better service to clients and stakeholders. This OEP will empower our 70 business units to drive operational excellence and good governance through a focus on process improvement opportunities based on leveraging technology and Lean and project management methodologies.

Objectives

To deliver operational excellence, Teagasc will:

- **Deliver improved operational efficiency** while ensuring good corporate governance (supported by Initiatives 1-5)
- **Increase the use of financial and other information to inform data-driven decision making** through harnessing data visualisation and analysis tools to improve alignment between budgets, income generation, resources and service delivery goals (supported by Initiatives 1 and 2)
- **Ensure systems and structures are optimised** and use technology and digitalisation to the greatest extent (supported by Initiatives 1, 2 and 5)

“Teagasc will develop an Operational Excellence Programme (OEP) to introduce new systems and work practices that will reduce the administrative burden on staff”

Initiatives

Initiatives delivering on these objectives will include:

1. **Rolling out a new suite of Management Insights Reports** across the organisation to further strengthen management reporting through use of visualisation and data analytic tools. Therefore, every business unit (i.e. College, Advisory region, Research Department) will have detailed visualised business metrics.
2. Establishing a **Business Delivery Support function** to provide 'at your side' support to managers in implementing policies and procedures. Using information from the Management Insights Reports, and drawing on a strengthened Finance Partner Model, the Business Delivery Support Team will provide targeted one-to-one support to individual managers. They will also identify improvements that are needed in new or existing policies to align with the strategic direction of the organisation and to streamline implementation of new high value programmes for clients and stakeholders.
3. **Reviewing management structures** to ensure that the existing span of control of management units is appropriate and aligned to the new strategic direction and future demands of stakeholders.
4. In parallel with initiative 3, **review people management** training to ensure delivery of strategic priorities, good governance and budgetary practices and the provision of excellent career support to individual staff.
5. Progressing key **digital operations projects** that will deliver improved services for stakeholders, increased organisational efficiency and reduced administrative burden on staff.

Key results

Results will focus on processes, systems and structures, including the completion of 10 process improvement projects annually.



5.3 Digital and Infrastructural Resources

The range of capital infrastructure, assets and digital infrastructure across our property portfolio at 56 individual locations are critical to the delivery of our services. In line with Irish Government strategy, Teagasc will adopt a Digital by Default approach to internal and external service delivery. Furthermore, as a knowledge-based organisation, Teagasc aims to be a leader in the adoption of

digital technology. In parallel with digital transformation, Teagasc facilities must be fit for purpose for a modern, scientific and knowledge-based organisation. In addition to this, we must meet commitments under the Government's Climate Action Plan and Public Sector Mandate by demonstrating leadership and decarbonising our buildings and fleet.

Objectives

To achieve this, Teagasc will:

- **Maximise the use of data and digital technologies** in supplying services to clients and stakeholders and in leveraging operational efficiencies internally (supported by Initiatives 1-4)
- **Enhance and integrate our digital and social communications channels** to communicate more effectively with our key stakeholders (supported by Initiatives 1 and 2)
- **Ensure our facilities are fit for purpose**, meet the needs of a modern, scientific and knowledge-based organisation and demonstrate leadership in sustainability (supported by Initiatives 4, 5, 6)

“Teagasc aims to be a leader in the adoption of digital technology”

Initiatives

Initiatives delivering on these objectives will include:

1. **Develop a Teagasc Client Portal** that will be a client-centred, mobile, single-user interface portal that empowers clients to access information relevant to their business, make their own decisions and perform their own administrative tasks. When integrated with a recently developed CRM system, it will serve as a primary platform for communicating targeted technical messages to farmer clients.
2. **Build a Data Value Platform:** Advances in areas such as Artificial Intelligence and data visualisation and analytics tools can be used to process large volumes of data and improve the quality of research output. This requires Teagasc to continuously improve its data governance including its collection and quality control, curation and archival. Therefore, as outlined in the Teagasc Digital Transformation Strategy, we will continue to build a data value platform both for cataloguing data and ensuring options to valorise via open source or licensing, in order to leverage the power and impact of Teagasc's research data for the benefit of all stakeholders.
3. **Establish a dedicated Research Support Unit in Statistical Analysis and Data Science.** This unit will play a central role in elevating Teagasc's analytical capabilities by embedding best practice in data integration, advanced modelling, and AI-enabled inference. Leveraging the rich and expanding Teagasc databases of high-resolution phenotypic and other data, the support unit will position Teagasc to extract greater value from existing resources, enhance predictive modelling capabilities, and support more informed decision-making in areas such as precision agriculture, sustainable food systems, and animal and crop improvement. The unit will be a strategic enabler supporting Teagasc's goal of becoming a data-driven, future-ready research institution.
4. **Ensure technology driven operational excellence:** Digitalisation to increase internal operational efficiency will be a considerable driver of the Operational Excellence Programme (OEP). A move to a digital by default policy will see a focus on generative AI tools for task-specific databases and systems.
5. Continue planning for the delivery of the **Teagasc Capital Plan**, including additional advisory office upgrades, modernisation of college infrastructure, and strategic investments in research facilities.
6. Continue progress towards achieving **energy and decarbonisation targets** and initiatives as listed in our 'Energy & Decarbonisation Strategy – Towards 2030' and introduce an **Environmental Management System** that will ensure compliance with environmental related legislation and position Teagasc as an exemplar of best practice.

Key results

Results will assess the integration and effectiveness of digital and infrastructural investments. A key result in this area will be to increase targeted digital communications to clients by 25%.





**DOWNLOAD the
new Teagasc APP**

Ongoing initiative

Strategic Communications

Effective Communications is at the core of everything Teagasc delivers, from disseminating research results, to exchanging knowledge with farmers and industry personnel, educating the next generation of farmers, to collaborating with national and international researchers. Traditionally, Teagasc has used face-to-face communication through farm walks, open days, discussion groups, conferences, seminars, workshops, and one-to-one advice. This has been supplemented by hard copy print publications. Over the last twenty five years, Teagasc has embraced digital to communicate with its multiple audiences, through the development of www.teagasc.ie, Tstor, 12 web-based eNewsletters, a flow of

content through Teagasc Daily/Teagasc App 365 days per year, a suite of seven Podcasts and multiple webinars. The wider dissemination of these digital products to clients through an improved customer relationship management system is a priority in this strategy. Five social media platforms are used to push targeted content, packaged as video and images, to a wide external audience. The positioning of Teagasc information on external digital platforms, facilitates its use and dissemination by both humans and AI tools. All strategic communications actions will both enhance and complement the four key pillars of this strategy: Productivity, Environmental Sustainability, Attractiveness, and Innovation.

5.4 Collaboration

The need for collaboration across the agri-food sector has never been greater if it is to rise to the challenges currently facing the industry. There is a strong culture of collaboration within Teagasc across its research, advisory and education functions, as seen in the “Teagasc Together approach”, which must be built on and strengthened. Teagasc has a large network of national stakeholders and partners and can both benefit from

and provide leadership to this network. Teagasc will act as a convenor where appropriate to instigate collaboration where we identify opportunities that working together will increase the competitiveness and resilience of the sector. We will strengthen collaborations with international leaders and industry players to ensure we are at the forefront of emerging thinking, build knowledge and accelerate innovation for the benefit of clients and stakeholders.

Objectives

To engage in better collaboration, Teagasc will:

- **Leverage the advantage of having research, advisory and education in the same organisation** to accelerate impact from our activities (supported by Initiative 1)
- **Provide sectoral leadership through thought-leadership** and proactively engaging with government, industry and international organisations to advocate for competitiveness focused innovation and sustainable, science-driven practices (supported by Initiatives 2 and 3)
- **Enhance international networks** to maximise learnings from international best practice in research and knowledge transfer and ensure we have access to leading-edge thinking (supported by Initiative 3)

“The need for collaboration across the agri-food sector has never been greater”



Initiatives

Initiatives delivering on these objectives will include:

1. **Build on Teagasc Together** to further develop the culture of collaboration within Teagasc. In addition to new initiatives within our new People Strategy, the system of annual programme development will be strengthened to ensure externally focused programmes are integrated across Teagasc's functions, capitalising on the strengths of having them in the one organisation.
2. **Develop a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy** to underpin a strong external partner network with state agencies, farming organisations, industry, research performing organisations, and non-governmental organisations. The goal will be to identify programmes and projects where collaboration enhances progress and industry impact, building for example on the success of collaborations such as AgNav and the Signpost Programme.
3. **Enhance our international networks** to support our research, education and advisory activities and enhance policy support. Teagasc will identify a small number of leading research / knowledge transfer organisations of relevance to our mission, and seek to develop partnerships around knowledge sharing, staff exchange, and collaborative programmes. It will also engage with European policy makers and actively seek leadership roles in European and international networks to ensure thought leadership.

Key results

Results in this area will span internal, national and international collaborations, including hosting three international networking events per year.





Ongoing initiative

Teagasc – Supporting International Agricultural Development

Teagasc has established a targeted international development programme to provide support to institutes in developing countries involved in agri-food research, extension and education. This programme directly supports the policies and ambitions set out by the Department of Foreign Affairs (A Better World) and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Food Vision 2030). Under this programme we also contribute to the work programme of Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (SFSI), the Ireland Africa Rural Development Committee (IARDC) and the International Forum for International Development (IFIAD).



6. Measuring Success

Teagasc places a strong emphasis on achieving impact from research, advisory and educational services through three main pathways: technology development and adoption, capacity building and policy information and support. This impact can be measured and evaluated at the levels of:

1. Overall performance of the sector
2. Technical and sustainability performance metrics for individual farms and food businesses
3. Delivery of Teagasc activities that underpin the progress of the sector.

These impacts are sought while also delivering value for money and within the highest standards of excellence and good governance as a public sector agency.

Embedding a culture that considers impact from the outset is critical to achieving impact. We will strengthen our culture of impact across the whole organisation and enhance our evaluation approach to assess Teagasc's contribution to economic, social and environmental impacts across a range of dimensions.

The impacts that will be assessed will relate to improving the overall competitiveness and resilience of the sector, through the four sectoral priorities of improving productivity, improving environmental sustainability, enhancing attractiveness, and driving innovation. We will assess where we contribute both positively and negatively to desired outcomes and acknowledge trade-offs in terms of sustainability within a food system.

This strategy does not set out to identify all Teagasc activities over the period of the strategy. Rather it seeks to set a clear direction, through the identification of objectives, by which strategic decisions can be made about future programmes and initiatives.

We will review the strategy at mid-term to assess progress towards objectives, and redirect resources as needed. We will also conduct a review towards the end of the period to lay the foundations for the subsequent strategy.

In assessing Teagasc's contribution it is recognised that impacts can occur over the short, medium and long term. Furthermore, while we note the unique leverage point that Teagasc has in the innovation system as a trusted, independent source of knowledge, we acknowledge that we depend on others within the innovation system to help us deliver impact through collaborations and partnerships.



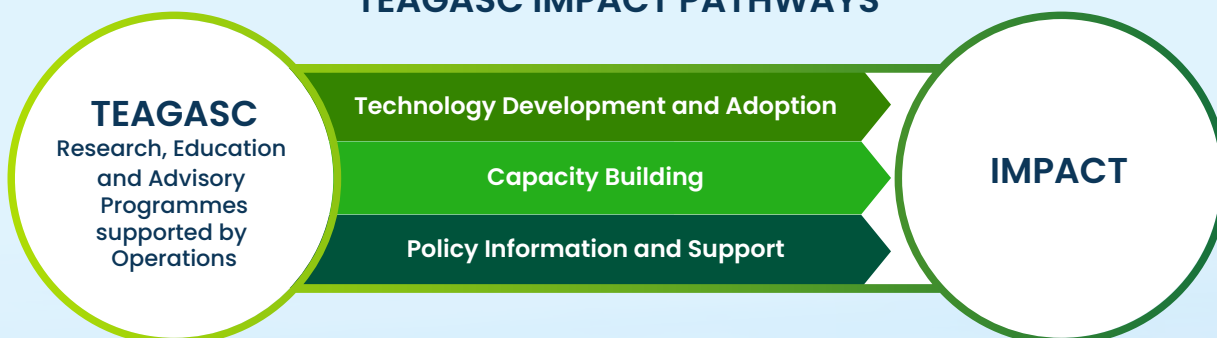
Pathways to Impact

The three Pathways to Impact that Teagasc has identified are interlinked, with a recognition that the capacity building pathway builds the capacity of the agri-food sector to innovate and transform itself. While this three-pathway framework has been used to evaluate programmes and other areas, it has not yet been used as an aide to reflect on our strategy and to consider impacts at sectoral level. Assessing our contribution to sectoral level impacts requires consideration of our degree of control and influence across the system. The framework below provides the foundations for developing this further during the period of the strategy.

Example: How to evaluate our contribution to Women in Agriculture

Teagasc has long supported women's active participation and leadership in agriculture, aligning with the National Dialogue on Women in Agriculture Action Plan. As we continue this work, it is timely to review our contribution, critically assessing our role, and how our initiatives drive change across different impact pathways. How has Teagasc influenced policy, developed capacity, and engaged with women to support them as key decision makers in the adoption of technologies, and how can it enhance this impact in future? This reflection will help sharpen our focus, strengthen impact, and ensure that women are empowered as farm workers, managers and leaders.

TEAGASC IMPACT PATHWAYS



Area of Control — Field of Influence — Sphere of Interest

Teagasc at a glance 2024

1,600

staff of 50+ nationalities



42

nationalities of 220 Walsh Scholar PhD students



56

locations in 26 counties



70%

of staff hold degrees

100

pursue postgrad annually



€194 million

total income, of which 38% earned income*



43,735

farmer clients served



142,834

1:1 advisory contacts

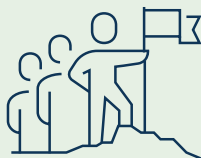
7,607

farmer discussion group members



67

ongoing Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects



599

refereed publications published



200+

food company engagements



3,600

learners enrolled



26%

females in 4,723 QQI-awarded learners



*Excluding pensions



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