



**NOTICE OF 62<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**



6 January 2017

**NOTICE OF 62<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**To: Each Member of the Executive Council (outgoing and incoming)  
County Vice-Chairmen, County Secretaries and Invitees**

Dear Member

As already notified the 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the IFA Executive Council will take place at **11am on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017 in the Irish Farm Centre.**

An Ordinary Meeting of the Executive Council will follow the AGM when each Committee Chairman will report on their Committee's objectives for 2017.

**The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed TD**, will address the meeting at 5pm and this will be followed by a question and answer session.

Our new **Director General Damian McDonald** will be taking up his position at the end of the meeting. Please note that a proposed rule change from the Executive Board will be taken at the Ordinary Meeting and the AGM. This rule change will abolish the position of General Secretary and create the new position of Director General and the new role of Secretary as previously agreed in principle by the Council.


Enclosed, please find AGM Agenda and reports, with further documentation to follow on proposed rule change and list of representatives on outside bodies.

The **2017 AGM Dinner** will take place in the Irish Farm Centre in the evening with overnight accommodation being provided in the Red Cow Moran's Hotel.

If you have not already done so, please contact Susan Ryan immediately on 01 4260329 to confirm your AGM attendance and hotel accommodation.

I look forward to seeing you in the Farm Centre on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January.

Yours sincerely



Bryan Barry  
Acting General Secretary





**The Irish Farmers' Association  
62<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**A G E N D A**

1. Adoption of Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting
2. Adoption of Auditor's Report, Income & Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet
3. Appointment of Auditors
4. Annual Report of National Committees and Commodity Sections
5. Reports from IFA Representatives on Outside Bodies
6. Presidential Address
7. Election of members of National Rules, Privileges and Procedures Committee  
**Barry Donnelly**, representing **Connacht** is retiring and is **ineligible** for re-election  
**Anne Keohane**, representing **Council** is retiring and is **eligible** for re-election
8. Ratification of IFA Representatives on Outside Bodies
9. Election of Honorary Life Members
10. AOB  
Proposed rule change re abolition of General Secretary and creation of new position of Director General and new role of Secretary to Executive Council.



**Minutes of 61<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the IFA Executive Council  
held on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016 in the Irish Farm Centre, Dublin at 11.00am**

**Attendance**

**Chairman:** President Joe Healy

**Members:** T O'Leary, T Turley, J McCarthy, J Murphy, B Stewart, J Bergin, J Bambrick, J Brady, K Bray, S Brosnan, C Buckley, H Burns, M Canning, T Cashman, M Chance, G Collier, P Collins, S Conefrey, R Connell, T Cooney, B Cotter, J Coughlan, T Cullinan, D Deane, P Donnelly, T Doyle, A Dundas, L Dunne, P Dunne, P Farrell, S Finan, J Finn, J Fitzgerald, P Collins, J Gallagher, M Gilvarry, A Gleeson, P Gohery, F Gorman, J Hanley, W Hanrahan, P Hennessy, J Hosford, P Joyce, J Keena, R Kennedy, H Kingston, D Lally, J Lynskey, P Maguire, F McCarthy, J McCarthy, M McGreehan, G Melia, P Murphy, P Murray, P O'Flaherty, S O'Leary, P O'Shea, N Renaghan, B Rushe, S Ryan, T Short, J Speares, M Stapleton, B Treanor, L Ward and A Woods.

**County Vice Chairmen:** D O'Donovan, E Monaghan, G White, M Twomey Casey (proxy Ian Wharton), J O'Connor, J Byrne, J Hatton, K Henry, M Browne, M Smiddy, P Shields and R Scally.

**County Secretaries & other guests:** A Munnely, U Sheehan (proxy A Baker), E Bannon, I Walsh, M Dalton, M Fleming, T Stanley (proxy M Knowles), M Looney, R Mackey, S McKenzie, S Galvin, N Cullen, A Mitchell, M Healy and B Campbell (IFC).

**Staff:** Acting General Secretary B Barry, P Farrell, D O'Shea, K Kilcline, N Madigan, B Fitzgerald, R Malone, C Connolly, O Ní Stásaigh, J Kelly, T Bourke, K Kinsella, R Flynn, L MacHale, C Lascurettes, G O'Sullivan, R Dwyer, T Ryan, G Gunning, S Ryan..

**Apologies:** JP Cowley, I Wharton, A Baker and M Knowles.

These minutes record the formal business of the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the NFA/IFA Executive Council (44<sup>th</sup> IFA). The AGM was followed by an ordinary meeting, the minutes of which are recorded separately.

**Opening Remarks**

The President welcomed the Council members, in particular newly elected officers, together with the County Vice Chairmen, County Secretaries and others, who had been invited to the two day event.

**Minutes**

The minutes of the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Council held on **27<sup>th</sup> January 2015** were **AGREED** and signed by the Chairman. Proposed P O Shea, seconded S Conefrey.

**Adoption of Auditor's Report and Financial Statements**

Kevin Sheehan, representing the Association's auditor, Deloitte & Touche, was in attendance, as was Audit Committee Chairman Mr Martin Lenihan. A copy of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were presented to the AGM by National Treasurer J Bergin. The draft audited accounts had been discussed in detail at the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 Council meeting.

**RESOLVED:** “That the Auditor’s Report and Financial Statements of the Association for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2015 be formally ratified and adopted”. Proposed T Cullinan, seconded P Joyce.

The National Treasurer/Returning Officer J Bergin took the opportunity to wish the President and all the incoming officers well in their responsibilities and to thank all the outgoing officers for their contribution and work on behalf of farmers.

**Appointment of Auditor** A discussion took place on this item during which some members called for new auditors to be appointed. It was noted that work on the audit of the current year was already underway and that the Audit Committee would review the performance of the auditors as a matter of course. **AGREED that the Audit Committee would put the audit out to tender and report back to the Council.**

**Annual Report of National Committees and Commodity Sections** A copy of the Annual Report for 2015 of the National Committees and Commodity Sections had been issued in advance of the meeting. The President said the **reports would be taken as read** and any issues could be raised during the ordinary meeting. Proposed P Murphy, seconded T Doyle. **AGREED.**

**Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies** Reports for 2015 from Representatives on Outside Bodies and Boards had been circulated with the documentation. The President suggested that the **reports be taken as read.** Proposed S Brosnan, seconded B Treanor. **AGREED.**

**Address by Deputy President** The outgoing Deputy President T O Leary addressed the meeting on the issues that had arisen within the organisation in the past months which were directly related to the leadership of the IFA by the former General Secretary and his remuneration package, and the crisis which ensued. TOL indicated that he would miss his role of working on behalf of farmers and representing farmers in meetings with the Department on the Charter of Rights and on the board of Teagasc.

**Inaugural Presidential Address** The media joined the AGM for this item. The following summarises the main points of the Inaugural Presidential Address by Mr Joe Healy, a copy of which is recorded separately.

The new President said he was greatly honoured to be elected the 15<sup>th</sup> President of NFA/IFA. He thanked farmers for their support in the election and said **tackling the farm income crisis** would be his number one priority. He identified the immediate issues as product prices, retail regulation, input costs including IFA’s campaign on fertiliser and the Mercosur trade deal. He said it was totally unacceptable that farmers, who do most of the work in producing high-quality food, were receiving a price below the cost of production. He denounced the unrelenting downward pressure by powerful retailers and processors on farm prices saying it was not sustainable and there was an urgent need to rebalance power in the food supply chain. Fifty years after the Farmers’ Rights Campaign, he said IFA still had a really important job to do for farmers and he called for a dedicated Minister with sole responsibility for Agriculture and Food in the new Government.

On **IFA renewal**, the President pledged to bring trust, transparency and credibility to the heart of IFA and to strengthen governance and transparency. Members had been let down by failures in transparency, governance and decision making, however farmers needed a strong and adequately resourced IFA to fight for viable farm incomes in every sector and every part of the

country. The Lucey report had outlined a number of recommendations which would be implemented and the President set out further initiatives to strengthen governance and maximise transparency.

The new President also announced two initiatives to strengthen **representation**: the re-establishment of the National Animal Health Committee and a National Hill Farming Committee, each with a full seat on Council.

Other policy issues highlighted by the President were: farmers' need for access to lower interest rates; IFA's continuing assistance for farmers in financial difficulty; and the far-reaching consequences for Ireland and our agri-food sector of a negative vote in the UK Brexit referendum.

#### **Election of Members of National Rules Committee**

National Returning Officer J Bergin said that **Mr Matt McGreehan** was the only person nominated for the Ulster North Leinster seat on the Rules Committee and he declared him elected.

Following ballots among the relevant Council members, the National Returning Officer declared the election of the **Mr Paddy Donnelly** to the Council seat on the Committee, **Mr Pat Hennessy** to the South Leinster seat and **Mr Tim Cullinan** to the Munster seat.

#### **Election of National Treasurer/Returning Officer**

The outgoing National Treasurer/Returning Officer Mr Jer Bergin and the outgoing Mayo County Chairman Padraic Joyce had been nominated for the position of National Treasurer/Returning Officer.

Following a ballot of Council members, **Mr Jer Bergin was declared re-elected** as National Treasurer/ Returning Officer.

#### **Ratification of Representatives on Outside Bodies**

The President advised the meeting that more time was required to consider the list of IFA representatives on outside bodies and boards and therefore this item would be held over to the following meeting of the Council. **AGREED.**

#### **Election of Honorary Life Members**

The following members had been nominated for Honorary Life Membership of the Association by their respective County Executives:

<b>Name</b>	<b>County</b>
Michael Lynch	Clare
Charles Sheridan	Donegal
Cecil Cooke	Galway
Con Barry	Kerry
JJ McDonald	Kildare
Patrick Delaney	Kilkenny
Tommy Joe Keane	Leitrim
John & Eileen Nash	Limerick
John Quinn	Longford
Seamus Lambe	Louth
Liam Woods	Louth
Mary McGreal	Mayo

Kit Lee	Meath
Patsy Loughran	Monaghan
Edward Delahun	Offaly
Ambrose Kilcline	Roscommon
Nicholas Wilkenson	Sligo
Con Ryan	Tipperary North
Edmond Egan	Tipperary South
Anthony Ryan	Waterford
Donal Kelly	West Cork
Eunan Bannon	Westmeath
John Doyle	Wexford
Winifred Strahan	Wicklow
Michael Lynch	Clare
Charles Sheridan	Donegal
Cecil Cooke	Galway

**AGREED** unanimously that all nominees be elected to Honorary Life Membership. Proposed S Brosnan, seconded B Treanor.

The AGM was adjourned and an ordinary meeting of the Council took place. When the ordinary meeting was concluded, the AGM was reconvened.

#### **Any Other Business**

##### **Rule Change**

It was noted that the ordinary meeting had considered a proposal by Roscommon County Executive concerning part-time farmers holding senior positions in IFA and had agreed an amendment which would **remove the full-time farmer requirement for candidates for Regional Chairman**, as follows: "That the first sentence of Rule 75 (b) be retained and the reference to Regional Chairman be deleted, so as to read: 'A candidate for the office of President or Deputy President shall be a full-time farmer by occupation' ".

This proposal was put to the AGM and passed overwhelmingly and by more than the necessary two-thirds majority in a show of hands. The amendment was thus **RATIFIED and became effective immediately**.

#### **Conclusion**

The President thanked everybody for their co-operation and support, and this **concluded the business of the AGM**.

The **AGM dinner** took place that evening in the Irish Farm Centre at which the President made presentations to the former President Eddie Downey and marking the retirement of outgoing County Chairmen Andrew Dundas (Clare), Derek Deane (Carlow), Jimmy Hosford (Cork Central), Laurence Ward (Dublin), Matthew McGreehan (Louth), Padraic Joyce (Mayo), Pat Farrell (Kildare) and Pat Hennessy (Laois) and outgoing Committee Chairmen Henry Burns (Livestock), Flor McCarthy (Rural Development), Harold Kingston (Environment), Teddy Cashman (Liquid Milk) and Tom Doyle (Farm Business). The President thanked them all for their contributions to the Association and their work on behalf of farmers. In turn, the retiring officers thanked Council members and staff and offered the President and his new team their best wishes in their work on behalf of farmers.



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# **The Irish Farmers' Association**

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***FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR  
THE YEAR-ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH, 2016***

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**62<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**Irish Farm Centre  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2017**



The Irish Farmers' Association

Annual Report and  
Consolidated Financial Statements  
for the year ended  
31 March 2016

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**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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## THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

### STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

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The constitution and rules of the Association require the Executive Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association and the results of the Association for that period. In preparing those financial statements, it is necessary to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the Association Financial Statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the relevant financial reporting framework, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Association will continue in business.
- The Executive Council is responsible for ensuring that the Association keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the Association to be determined with reasonable accuracy and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of The Irish Farmers' Association for the year ended 31 March 2016 which comprise the Consolidated Income & Expenditure account, the Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Changes in Equity, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes 1 to 21. The relevant financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland ("relevant financial reporting framework").

This report is made solely to the Executive Council, as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Executive Council, those matters we are required to state to them in our auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Executive Council as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

### **Respective responsibilities of the Executive Council and auditors**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Executive Council's Responsibilities the Executive Council are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements giving a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with Irish law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

### **Scope of the audit of the financial statements**

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Executive Council's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Executive Council; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2016 to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

### **Opinion on financial statements**

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, of the state of the affairs of the Association as at 31 March 2016 and of the deficit for the year then ended.

Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm  
Dublin

Date:

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**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**CONSOLIDATED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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	<i>Notes</i>	<b>2016 €</b>	2015 €
<b>INCOME</b>	3	<b>18,977,049</b>	20,187,698
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	4	<b>(18,004,061)</b>	(19,254,064)
(Loss)/profit on disposal of fixed and financial assets		<b>(61,846)</b>	354,264
Interest Receivable		<b>51,264</b>	15,783
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS</b>	5	<b>962,406</b>	1,303,681
Share of operating surplus/(deficit) in associate undertakings	10	<b>131,211</b>	(180,563)
Loss on financial assets through profit and loss	9	<b>(2,894,416)</b>	(2,504,046)
<b>DEFICIT BEFORE TAXATION</b>		<b>(1,800,799)</b>	(1,380,928)
Taxation credit	7	<b>475,669</b>	275,419
<b>DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>(1,325,130)</b>	(1,105,509)

Results derive from continuing operations in the current and prior year.

The financial statements were approved by the Executive Council on ..... and signed on its behalf by:

) (President)  
)  
) (Honorary Treasurer)  
)  
) (Assistant General Secretary)

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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	<i>Notes</i>	<b>2016 €</b>	2015 €
Retained deficit for the year		<b>(1,325,130)</b>	(1,105,509)
Share of associate property revaluations		-	1,178,670
Total (deficit)/surplus for the year		<b><u>(1,325,130)</u></b>	<u>73,161</u>

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**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2016**

	<i>Notes</i>	<b>2016</b> €	2015 €
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible assets	8	<b>443,527</b>	450,453
Financial investments	9	<b>13,401,929</b>	17,041,920
Other investments	10	<b>1,811,841</b>	1,680,420
		<b>15,657,297</b>	19,172,793
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	11	<b>1,609,814</b>	1,409,246
Cash at bank and in hand		<b>5,853,545</b>	4,677,034
		<b>7,463,359</b>	6,086,280
<b>CREDITORS:</b> (Amounts falling due within one year)	12	<b>(5,901,365)</b>	(6,182,599)
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)</b>		<b>1,561,994</b>	(96,319)
Provision for Liabilities	13	<b>(1,426,573)</b>	(1,958,626)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>15,792,718</b>	17,117,848
<b>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>			
Accumulated surplus		<b>15,792,718</b>	17,117,848
		<b>15,792,718</b>	17,117,848

The financial statements were approved by the Executive Council on ..... and signed on its behalf by:

) (President)  
 )  
 ) (Honorary Treasurer)  
 )  
 ) (Assistant General Secretary)

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

	Notes	Accumulated surplus €	Revaluation reserve €	Total €
At 1 April 2014 as previously stated		11,318,411	8,052,975	19,371,386
<i>Changes on transition to FRS 102:</i>				
- Revaluation reserve reclass	21	8,052,975	(8,052,975)	-
- Recognition of deferred tax liability	21	(2,326,699)	-	(2,326,699)
		17,044,687	-	17,044,687
Total Comprehensive Surplus for the year		73,161	-	73,161
At 31 March 2015		17,117,848	-	17,117,848
Total Comprehensive Deficit for the year		(1,325,130)	-	(1,325,130)
<b>At 31 March 2016</b>		<b>15,792,718</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15,792,718</b>

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**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

	<i>Notes</i>	<b>2016</b> €	2015 €
<b>NET CASH INFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<i>14</i>	<b>289,867</b>	1,354,825
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
Interest received		<b>7,799</b>	15,783
Dividends and investment income received		<b>332,736</b>	405,301
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets		<b>(152,129)</b>	(160,178)
Payments to acquire investments		<b>(1,547,092)</b>	(1,935,126)
Receipts on disposal of investments		<b>2,245,330</b>	1,509,840
Receipts on disposal of fixed assets		-	18,497
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>886,644</b>	(145,883)
<b>INCREASE IN CASH AND BANK OVERDRAFT</b>		<b>1,176,511</b>	1,208,942
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT BEGINNING OF THE YEAR</b>		<b>4,677,034</b>	3,468,092
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF THE YEAR</b>		<b>5,853,545</b>	4,677,034

## THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016

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#### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. They have all been applied consistently throughout the financial year and the preceding financial year.

##### **General Information and Basis of Accounting**

The objective of the Irish Farmers Association is to protect, foster and advance the interests of all farmers and to do all things necessary for, incidental or ancillary to the protection, fostering and advancement of the interests of such farmers or farming, and to have all the powers necessary or incidental or ancillary to the achievement of such objectives. The association's address is the Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value, and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) issued by the Financial Reporting Council.

The prior year financial statements were restated for material adjustments on adoption of FRS 102 in the current financial year. For more information see note 21.

The functional currency of The Irish Farmers Association is considered to be euro because that is the currency of the primary economic environment in which the company operates.

##### **Basis of Consolidation**

The financial statements of the Association incorporate the financial statements of all core activities and entities controlled by the Association, as outlined in Note 17, together with those of all county executives. Transactions between the General Fund and the other entities have been eliminated in the Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account and the Consolidated Balance Sheet.

The results of associates are included in the consolidation using the equity method.

##### **Going concern**

The financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis. The Association had net current assets of €1,561,994 (2015: net current liabilities of €96,319) at the balance sheet date. The Executive Council, having considered financing arrangements currently in place, the ability to generate cash from special reserve fund assets, likely funding requirements in the short term and given a net asset position of €15,792,718 (2015: €17,117,848), have a reasonable expectation that the association and the group have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual financial statements.

##### **Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, of each asset on a *reducing balance* basis over its expected useful life, as follows:

Office equipment	10% - 25%
Fixtures and fittings	10% - 20%
Motor vehicles	25%

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

**Financial instruments**

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Group becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the Group after deducting all of its liabilities.

(i) *Financial assets and liabilities*

All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs), except for those financial assets classified as at fair value through profit or loss, which are initially measured at fair value (which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs), unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction. If an arrangement constitutes a finance transaction, the financial asset or financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Non-current debt instruments which meet the following conditions are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method:

- (a) Returns to the holder are (i) a fixed amount; or (ii) a fixed rate of return over the life of the instrument; or (iii) a variable return that, throughout the life of the instrument, is equal to a single referenced quoted or observable interest rate; or (iv) some combination of such fixed rate and variable rates, providing that both rates are positive.
- (b) There is no contractual provision that could, by its terms, result in the holder losing the principal amount or any interest attributable to the current period or prior periods.
- (c) Contractual provisions that permit the issuer to prepay a debt instrument or permit the holder to put it back to the issuer before maturity are not contingent on future events, other than to protect the holder against the credit deterioration of the issuer or a change in control of the issuer, or to protect the holder or issuer against changes in relevant taxation or law.
- (d) There are no conditional returns or repayment provisions except for the variable rate return described in (a) and prepayment provisions described in (c).

Debt instruments that are classified as payable or receivable within one year and which meet the above conditions are measured at the undiscounted amount of the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received, net of impairment.

Other debt instruments not meeting these conditions are measured at fair value through profit or loss.

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

Commitments to make and receive loans which meet the conditions mentioned above are measured at cost (which may be nil) less impairment.

(i) *Financial assets and liabilities (continued)*

Financial assets are derecognised when and only when a) the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are settled, b) the Group transfers to another party substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of the financial asset, or c) the Group, despite having retained some significant risks and rewards of ownership, has transferred control of the asset to another party and the other party has the practical ability to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party and is able to exercise that ability unilaterally and without needing to impose additional restrictions on the transfer.

Financial liabilities are derecognised only when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

(ii) *Investments*

Investments in non-puttable ordinary or preference shares (where shares are publicly traded or their fair value is reliably measurable) are measured at fair value through profit or loss. Where fair value cannot be measured reliably, investments are measured at cost less impairment.

(iii) *Fair value measurement*

The best evidence of fair value is a quoted price for an identical asset in an active market. When quoted prices are unavailable, the price of a recent transaction for an identical asset provides evidence of fair value as long as there has not been a significant change in economic circumstances or a significant lapse of time since the transaction took place. If the market is not active and recent transactions of an identical asset on their own are not a good estimate of fair value, an entity estimates the fair value by using a valuation technique.

**Associates**

In the Group financial statements investments in associates are accounted for using the equity method. Investments in associates are initially recognised at the transaction price (including transaction costs) and are subsequently adjusted to reflect the Group's share of the profit or loss and other comprehensive income of the associate. Goodwill arising on the acquisition of associates is accounted for in accordance with the policy set out above. Any unamortised balance of goodwill is included in the carrying value of the investment in associates.

The carrying value of the investment in associate undertakings represents investments in associate together with a share of the associates' profit/(loss) to date.

**Impairment of assets**

Assets, other than those measured at fair value, are assessed for indicators of impairment at each balance sheet date. If there is objective evidence of impairment, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss.



**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**Taxation**

Current tax, including Irish corporation tax, is provided at amounts expected to be paid (or recovered) using the tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date. The current tax also comprises of capital gains tax based on the disposal of shares and deposit interest retention tax (DIRT) suffered on interest income.

Deferred tax is recognised in respect of all timing differences that have originated but not reversed at the balance sheet date where transactions or events that result in an obligation to pay more tax in the future or a right to pay less tax in the future have occurred at the balance sheet date. Timing differences are differences between the Group's taxable profits and its results as stated in the financial statements that arise from the inclusion of gains and losses in tax assessments in periods different from those in which they are recognised in the financial statements.

Unrelieved tax losses and other deferred tax assets are recognised only to the extent that, on the basis of all available evidence, it can be regarded as more likely than not that there will be suitable taxable profits from which the future reversal of the underlying timing differences can be deducted.

When the amount that can be deducted for tax for an asset (other than goodwill) that is recognised in a business combination is less (more) than the value at which it is recognised, a deferred tax liability (asset) is recognised for the additional tax that will be paid (avoided) in respect of that difference. Similarly, a deferred tax asset (liability) is recognised for the additional tax that will be avoided (paid) because of a difference between the value at which a liability is recognised and the amount that will be assessed for tax. The amount attributed to goodwill is adjusted by the amount of deferred tax recognised.

Deferred tax liabilities are recognised for timing differences arising from investments in subsidiaries and associates, except where the Group is able to control the reversal of the timing difference and it is probable that it will not reverse in the foreseeable future.

Deferred tax is measured using the tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date that are expected to apply to the reversal of the timing difference. Deferred tax relating to property, plant and equipment measured using the revaluation model and investment property is measured using the tax rates and allowances that apply to sale of the asset.

The tax expense or income is presented in the same component of comprehensive income or equity as the transaction or other event that resulted in the tax expense or income.

Current tax assets and liabilities are offset only when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the amounts and the Group intends either to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Deferred tax assets and liabilities are offset only if: a) the Group has a legally enforceable right to set off current tax assets against current tax liabilities; and b) the deferred tax assets and deferred tax liabilities relate to income taxes levied by the same taxation authority on either the same taxable entity or different taxable entities which intend either to settle current tax liabilities and assets on a net basis, or to realise the assets and settle the liabilities simultaneously, in each future period in which significant amounts of deferred tax liabilities or assets are expected to be settled or recovered.

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**Income**

- (i) Affiliation fees are accounted for in the financial year during which they are received.
- (ii) All other income is accounted for in the financial year in respect of which it is receivable.

**Retirement benefits**

The Association operated a defined benefit pension scheme which terminated in 2012. The scheme was administered by trustees and was independent of the Association's finances. Contributions were paid to the scheme in accordance with the recommendations of independent actuaries to enable the trustees to meet from the scheme the benefits accruing in respect of current and future services. The Trustees have placed the scheme in wind-up.

The Association participates in a defined contribution scheme for certain employees which is funded by the payment of contributions to a separately administered fund. The assets of the funds are held separately from those of the Association. For the defined contribution schemes the cost of providing benefits is charged to operating profit as incurred.

**2. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING JUDGEMENTS AND KEY SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY**

In the application of the Group's accounting policies, which are described in note 1, the directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

**Critical judgements in applying the Group's accounting policies**

The following are the critical judgements, that the directors have made in the process of applying the Group's accounting policies and that have the most significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

**Key source of estimation uncertainty**

**Voluntary Member expense**

Due to the nature of the voluntary member expense accruals and the time lag noted around members claiming expenses that they have incurred but not yet claimed; management note that there is a greater degree of estimation uncertainty associated with these expenses. Management estimate the expense based on estimated amounts incurred and historical claim patterns.

**Legal claims and costs**

Legal claims and their associated costs by their nature are uncertain, where there is a potential expense this is accrued based on consultation with legal counsel and their best estimate of settlement of such claims.

## THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016

#### 3. INCOME

An analysis of the Group's income by class of business is set out below.

Turnover:	2016 €	2015 €
Broadband and phone service sales	7,376,994	7,386,041
Affiliation fees	5,922,205	5,996,784
European involvement fund levies	4,183,761	4,692,386
Trust fund contributions	1,059,045	1,308,333
Investment dividend income	229,336	346,770
Other income	205,708	457,384
	<b>18,977,049</b>	<b>20,187,698</b>

All group income was earned in the Republic of Ireland.

#### 4. EXPENDITURE

An analysis of the Group's expenditure is set out below.

Expenditure:	2016 €	2015 €
IFA Telecoms expenses	6,606,205	7,003,286
Total staff costs	5,297,064	5,730,086
Voluntary costs	1,507,681	1,809,488
Premises	492,626	480,267
Communications	478,875	689,869
Research	35,344	29,565
Public relations	617,264	767,595
Professional fees	616,442	338,408
Affiliation fees	135,813	144,931
Financial charges	348,930	427,523
Foreign travel	33,678	45,399
Brussels office	597,284	581,692
Membership recruitment	416,075	422,487
Membership promotion	439,619	291,081
Other overheads	23,013	16,033
Extraordinary expenditure	343,428	476,354
Loss on Disposal	14,720	-
	<b>18,004,061</b>	<b>19,254,064</b>

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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**5. DEFICIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION**

Deficit on ordinary activities before taxation is stated after charging/ (crediting):

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<b>144,126</b>	153,858
Interest received	<b>(51,264)</b>	(15,783)
Grant income (i)	<b>72,462</b>	65,372
	<u><u>          </u></u>	<u><u>          </u></u>

(i) The grant income was received during the year, all conditions associated with the granting of the income were met during the period.

The analysis of the auditors' remuneration is as follows:

Auditors' remuneration for work carried out for the group  
In respect of the financial year is as follows:

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
Audit of group accounts	<b>32,500</b>	32,500
	<u><u>          </u></u>	<u><u>          </u></u>

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

**6. REMUNERATION OF KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL**

The salaries and payments paid to key management personnel analysed under the headings required by company law are set out below:

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
<b>General Secretary</b>		
Salary	<b>197,292</b>	295,000
Employer pension contribution	<b>109,628</b>	145,197
	<b>306,920</b>	440,197
<b>President</b>		
Salary	<b>98,333</b>	147,500
<b>Deputy President</b>		
Salary	<b>35,000</b>	35,000
<b>Executive Management</b>		
Salary	<b>481,290</b>	540,217
Employer pension contribution	<b>110,361</b>	103,363
Key Management compensation	<b>591,651</b>	643,580
<b>Executive Management</b>		
Labour replacement payments	<b>238,805</b>	354,032

The Lucey Implementation committee retained Mercer Consultants to benchmark the salaries of the IFA staff positions and committed to disclosing the average remuneration of the top 15 salaried positions after Executive management. This average does not form part of the key management personnell data

The average remuneration for the top 15 staff after the executive management was:

Salary	<b>103,912</b>	103,299
Employer pension contribution	<b>23,773</b>	23,000
	<b>127,685</b>	126,299

The benchmarking process carried out by Mercer noted "Overall remuneration levels were broadly in line with what we would expect from an organisation such as the IFA. However there did seem to be a wider range of salaries than we would have expected at an executive secretary level (which we understand reflects the value of the sector an individual represents and the experience this requires").

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**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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**7. TAX ON PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES**

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
The tax charge comprises:		
Current tax on profit on ordinary activities		
Irish corporation tax	<b>56,384</b>	92,654
Credit movement in deferred tax liability (Note 13)	<b>(532,053)</b>	(368,073)
Total tax on profit on ordinary activities	<b>(475,669)</b>	(275,419)

The differences between the total tax charge shown above and the amount calculated by applying the standard rate of Irish corporation tax to the profit before tax is as follows:

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
Deficit on ordinary activities	<b>(1,800,799)</b>	(1,380,928)
Before tax 12.5%(2015:12.5%)		
Tax if charged at standard corporation rate	<b>(225,100)</b>	(172,606)
Capital allowances in excess of depreciation	<b>(355)</b>	(267)
Income/Expenses not taxable in determining taxable profit	<b>281,839</b>	265,527
Group tax charge for the period	<b>56,384</b>	92,654

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

**8. TANGIBLE ASSETS (GROUP)**

	Office Equipment €	Fixtures and Fittings €	Motor Vehicles €	Total €
<b>Cost:</b>				
At 1/04/2015	610,890	733,107	144,388	1,488,385
Additions	108,950	24,471	18,500	151,921
Disposals	(144,514)	(2,802)	-	(147,316)
<b>31/03/2016</b>	<b>575,326</b>	<b>754,776</b>	<b>162,888</b>	<b>1,492,990</b>
<b>Depreciation:</b>				
At 1/04/2015	422,822	571,428	43,682	1,037,932
Charge	84,468	29,856	29,802	144,126
Disposals	(129,793)	(2,802)	-	(132,595)
<b>31/03/2016</b>	<b>377,497</b>	<b>598,482</b>	<b>73,484</b>	<b>1,049,463</b>
<b>Net Book Amount: 31/03/2016</b>	<b>197,829</b>	<b>156,294</b>	<b>89,404</b>	<b>443,527</b>
31/03/2015	188,068	161,679	100,706	450,453

**9. FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS**

	2016 €	2015 €
Quoted investments at market value	<b>13,401,929</b>	17,041,920
Opening balance	<b>17,041,920</b>	18,664,798
Net (Disposals)/Additions during the financial year	<b>(745,575)</b>	881,168
Movement in the fair value of investments	<b>(2,894,416)</b>	(2,504,046)
Closing balance	<b>13,401,929</b>	17,041,920

Quoted investments represent shares held by the Group in publicly quoted companies or other publicly quoted investment funds. The cost of these investments was €9,717,205 (2015: €9,891,171).

**Special Reserve Fund:**

€10,569,662 (2015: €13,759,162) of the above balance relates specifically to the special reserve fund assets.

The Special Reserve Fund was established by the Executive Council in December 1985, to maintain a financial reserve for the organisation that could only be drawn down into the general fund under exceptional circumstances.



**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

<b>10. OTHER INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
<b>Unquoted Investments:</b>		
Irish Farm Centre Limited (i)	<b>1,750,749</b>	1,619,538
Other Investments (ii)	<b>61,092</b>	60,882
	<b>1,811,841</b>	1,680,420

**(i) Irish Farm Centre Limited**

	<b>Holding</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Registered Office</b>
Irish Farm Centre Limited	48.15%	The principal activity of the company is office rental and related services	Irish Farm Centre Bluebell Dublin 12

During the year, the associate undertaking recorded an operating profit of €298,533 (2014: profit of €879,855) before a taxation charge of €26,029 (2014: €7,167). The associate undertaking had combined net assets of €3,636,031 at year end (2014: €3,363,527). The carrying value of the investment in associate undertakings represents investments in associate together with a share of the associates' profit/(loss) to date, being €1,750,749 (2014: €1,619,538).

**(ii) Other Investments**

Other unquoted investments are held at cost less impairment because their value cannot be reliably measured.

<b>11. DEBTORS:</b> (Amounts due within one year)	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
Debtors	<b>1,490,823</b>	1,286,034
Accrued income and other receivables	<b>118,991</b>	123,212
	<b>1,609,814</b>	1,409,246

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

<b>12. CREDITORS</b>	<b>2016</b>	2015
	€	€
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade creditors	<b>970,500</b>	707,423
Pension and staff expense accruals	<b>2,224,100</b>	2,660,593
Professional/ Legal and other accruals	<b>1,389,811</b>	1,022,030
Trade Accruals	<b>1,135,514</b>	1,604,958
PAYE/PRSI	<b>181,440</b>	187,595
	<b>5,901,365</b>	6,182,599

Amounts accrued for litigation and related costs in respect of the departure of the former General Secretary are not disclosed on the grounds that disclosure could, in the opinion of Council, be seriously prejudicial to the outcome of the case.

<b>13. DEFERRED TAX</b>	<b>2016</b>	2015
	€	€
Deferred tax is provided as follows:		
The deferred tax balance is analysed		
Deferred tax arising in relation to quoted investments	<b>(1,426,573)</b>	(1,958,626)
Provision for deferred tax		
Opening balance	<b>1,958,626</b>	2,326,699
Movement for the current financial year (Note 7)	<b>(532,053)</b>	(368,073)
Balance at end of year	<b>1,426,573</b>	1,958,626

<b>14. RECONCILIATION OF OPERATING SURPLUS TO NET CASHFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>2016</b>	2015
	€	€
Operating deficit	<b>(1,325,130)</b>	(1,105,509)
Interest received	<b>(7,799)</b>	(15,783)
Dividends and investment income received	<b>(332,736)</b>	(405,301)
Profit/ (Loss) on disposal of investments	<b>47,127</b>	(347,957)
Loss/ (Profit) on disposal of fixed assets	<b>14,828</b>	(6,308)
Depreciation and amortisation	<b>144,126</b>	136,939
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	<b>(200,568)</b>	358,957
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	<b>(187,347)</b>	423,251
Fair value movements on financial assets	<b>2,763,205</b>	2,684,609
Add back corporation tax credit	<b>(475,669)</b>	(275,419)
Tax paid	<b>(150,170)</b>	(92,654)
Net cash inflow from operating activities	<b>289,867</b>	1,354,825

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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**15. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

The carrying values of the company's financial assets and liabilities are summarised by category below:

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
<b>Financial assets</b>		
<i>Measured at undiscounted amounts receivable</i>		
Trade and other debtors	<b>1,490,823</b>	1,286,034
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Measured at fair value through profit or loss</i>		
Investments in listed equity instruments (note 9)	<b>13,401,929</b>	17,041,920
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Measured at cost less impairment</i>		
Other investments (note 10)	<b>1,811,841</b>	1,680,420
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Financial liabilities</b>		
<i>Measured at undiscounted amounts payable</i>		
Trade and other creditors	<b>970,500</b>	707,423
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The company's income, expense, gains and losses in respect of financial instruments are summarised below:

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>€</b>	€
<b>Financial assets</b>		
On financial assets measured at fair value through profit Or loss	<b>2,894,416</b>	2,504,046
Interest or other income on financial assets measured at amortised cost	<b>51,264</b>	15,783
	<hr/>	<hr/>

## THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016

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#### 16. PENSIONS

In the year end 31 March 2012 the Association closed its defined benefit pension scheme. The Association had operated a defined benefit pension scheme for its employees which exposed the employer to substantial current and future financial liabilities. Following a strategic review and consultations with members, the Association terminated its contributions to the defined benefit scheme and a new defined contribution scheme was implemented for both past and future service benefits.

As a result, the Association has no further liability to the defined benefit scheme as at 31 March 2016 (2015: €Nil) and defined benefit scheme disclosures required by FRS 102 will no longer be required. The scheme is in the process of being wound up by the Trustees.

Prior to the closure of the defined benefit scheme in 2012, the Association agreed to defined benefit scheme termination payments to supplement the value of members' entitlements on transfer out of the scheme. At year end an amount of €Nil (2015: €350,000) remains outstanding.

The Association now operates a defined contribution pension scheme covering certain employees. The net assets of the scheme are held in a separate trustee administered fund. The amount payable to the scheme for the year was €342,187 (2015: €687,550). The amount owed to the scheme at year end is €27,037 (2015: €70,883).

#### 17. SUBSIDIARIES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

The Association holds investments in or has an interest in subsidiary and related undertakings as follows:

Fresh Milk Producers Association;  
B.V.G. Trustee Company Limited;  
Irish Salmon Growers Association Limited;  
Potato Fund;  
ICHA;  
IFA Telecom Limited; and  
Irish Farm Centre Limited  
Buywayz Limited

The Association has provided letters of support to certain subsidiaries indicating that it will provide financial assistance where necessary to ensure the going concern of that entity.

#### 18. COMPARATIVE AMOUNTS

Comparative amounts have been regrouped/restated where necessary on the same basis as those for the current year.

#### 19. EVENTS AFTER REPORTING DATE

There were no significant events since the financial year end.

#### 20. ULTIMATE CONTROL

The group is controlled by its members as a group. In the opinion of the Executive Council there is no ultimate controlling party or parent.

**21. EXPLANATION OF TRANSITION TO FRS 102**

This is the first year the Association has presented its financial statements under Financial Reporting Standards 102 (FRS 102) issued by the Financial Reporting Council. The following disclosures are required in the year of transition. The last financial statements under previous Irish GAAP were for the year ended 31 March 2015 and the date of transition to FRS 102 was therefore 1 April 2014. As a consequence of adopting FRS 102, a number of accounting policies have been changed to comply with that standard. The most material changes have been outlined below.

*Revaluation reserve*

As the fair value movements of the listed investments are now treated as fair value through profit and loss the revaluation reserve is not required under FRS 102 and has been reclassified to accumulated reserves.

*Inclusion of IFA Telecom Limited on consolidation*

Under the previous accounting policies IFA Telecom Limited was excluded from the consolidation on the basis that the inclusion of the IFA Telecom Limited with activities so different from those of other undertakings included in the consolidation that it would impair the true and fair view of the financial statements. In the previous financial statements the results of the telecom entity was accounted for under the equity method. In line with FRS 102 Ch 9.6 IFA Telecom Limited has been consolidated.

*Deferred tax*

A deferred tax liability has been recognised on the potential taxes that would be incurred if the Association was to dispose of its investments. Under previous Irish GAAP this potential liability was disclosed as a contingent liability.

**Reconciliation of Equity**

	<b>31/03/2015</b>	<b>01/04/2014</b>
	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>
<b>Equity reported under previous Irish GAAP</b>	<b>19,076,474</b>	19,371,386
Adjustments to equity on transition to FRS 102		
Recognition of deferred tax (Opening Adjustment)	<b>(2,326,699)</b>	(2,326,699)
Recognition of deferred tax adjustment	<b>368,073</b>	-
<b>Equity Reported under FRS 102</b>	<b>17,117,848</b>	17,044,687

1) *Recognition of deferred tax on investments*

**Reconciliation of profit or loss for 2015**

<b>Profit for the financial year under previous Irish GAAP</b>	<b>1,204,723</b>
Changes in the market value of investments	<b>(2,504,046)</b>
Deferred tax	<b>368,073</b>
Other	<b>6,304</b>
Reclass of associate loss from OCI	<b>(180,563)</b>
<b>Deficit for the financial year under FRS 102</b>	<b>(1,105,509)</b>

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

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(NOT COVERED BY THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT)

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**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

	Notes	IFA 2016 €	IFA Telecom Limited 2016 €	Consolidation adjustment 2016 €	2016 €	IFA 2015 €	IFA Telecom Limited 2015 €	Consolidation adjustment 2015 €	Total 2015 €
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>									
Tangible assets		379,646	63,881	-	443,527	418,952	31,502	-	450,454
Special reserve fund assets		10,569,662	2,832,267	-	13,401,929	13,759,162	3,282,758	-	17,041,920
Financial investments		1,811,841	-	-	1,811,841	1,680,420	-	-	1,680,420
Other financial assets	1	3,807,260	-	(3,807,260)	-	3,219,848	-	(3,219,848)	-
		<b>16,568,409</b>	<b>2,896,148</b>	<b>(3,807,260)</b>	<b>15,657,297</b>	<b>19,078,382</b>	<b>3,314,260</b>	<b>(3,219,848)</b>	<b>19,172,794</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>									
Debtors		1,401,866	207,948	-	1,609,814	867,295	541,950	-	1,409,245
Cash at bank and in hand		2,913,026	2,940,519	-	5,853,540	2,824,458	1,852,576	-	4,677,034
		4,314,892	3,148,467	-	7,463,359	3,691,753	2,394,526	-	6,086,279
		<b>(4,598,467)</b>	<b>(1,302,898)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(5,901,365)</b>	<b>(4,743,973)</b>	<b>(1,438,626)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(6,182,599)</b>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)</b>		<b>(283,575)</b>	<b>1,845,569</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,561,994</b>	<b>(1,052,220)</b>	<b>955,900</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(96,320)</b>
Provision for Liabilities	2	(492,105)	(934,468)	-	(1,426,573)	(908,314)	(1,050,312)	-	(1,958,626)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>15,792,729</b>	<b>3,807,249</b>	<b>(3,807,260)</b>	<b>15,792,718</b>	<b>17,117,848</b>	<b>3,219,848</b>	<b>(3,219,848)</b>	<b>17,117,848</b>
<b>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>									
Capital		-	127	(127)	-	-	127	(127)	-
Accumulated surplus		15,792,718	3,807,133	(3,807,133)	15,792,718	17,117,848	3,219,721	(3,219,721)	17,117,848
		<b>15,792,718</b>	<b>3,807,260</b>	<b>(3,807,260)</b>	<b>15,792,718</b>	<b>17,117,848</b>	<b>3,219,848</b>	<b>(3,219,848)</b>	<b>17,117,848</b>

Notes

- The consolidation adjustment relates to the elimination of the equity accounting shown in the IFA
- The deferred tax adjustments recognised on the change in the accounting policies to FRS 102 have been recognised in this schedule.

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**GENERAL FUND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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	<i>Notes</i>	<b>2016 €</b>	2015 €
Income		<b>11,300,614</b>	12,455,344
Expenditure		<b>(11,327,756)</b>	(12,250,779)
Profit/(loss) on disposal of fixed asset		<b>(14,720)</b>	6,308
Operating result		<b>(41,862)</b>	210,873
Share of operating surplus in other financial assets		-	488,202
		<b>(41,862)</b>	699,075
Taxation		<b>(36,766)</b>	(92,654)
(Deficit)/ Surplus for year		<b>(78,628)</b>	606,421

DRAFT



**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**SPECIAL RESERVE FUND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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	<b>2016</b> €	2015 €
Investment income	<b>253,428</b>	363,834
Expenditure	<b>(70,105)</b>	(60,886)
Gain/Loss on disposal of financial assets	<b>(14,240)</b>	295,354
Surplus for year	<u><b>169,083</b></u>	<u>598,302</u>

DRAFT

**THE IRISH FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**IFA TELECOM INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

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	<b>2016</b> <b>€</b>	2015 €
Revenue	<b>7,376,993</b>	7,386,041
Cost of Sales	<b>(5,021,355)</b>	(5,281,356)
Gross Profit	<b>2,355,638</b>	2,104,685
Administrative Expensive	<b>(1,584,373)</b>	(1,728,692)
Operating profit	<b>771,265</b>	375,993
Investment Income	<b>18,309</b>	103,753
Interest Receivable	<b>45,611</b>	8,353
Amount written off/back on investments	<b>(250,206)</b>	536,469
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	<b>584,979</b>	1,024,568
Taxation	<b>(113,404)</b>	91,186
Profit for year	<b>471,575</b>	933,382

DRAFT



IFA



## **Audit Committee**

### **Report to IFA AGM for the 9-Month Period Ending 31 December 2016**

Audit Committee work carried out during the period:

1. Work was commenced on audits in the following areas:
  - Expenditure
  - Compliance
  - Member Services

It is anticipated that these audits will be completed before end March 2017. Work was also carried out on audits previously completed to ascertain the degree to which control recommendations have been implemented by management.

2. The Audit Committee met with the external auditor, Deloitte, on two occasions. Initially to review their Audit Plan and subsequently to review the key findings arising from the audit.
3. The Audit Committee conducted an evaluation of Deloitte as external auditors and concluded that Deloitte provided an effective audit service. Cognisant that Deloitte has been the association's external auditor for a significant number of years and during this period the audit has not been put out to tender, the Audit Committee concluded that the audit should be put out to tender and that a policy of tendering the audit at regular intervals be adopted. Following this, seven accounting firms were invited to tender in a competitive tender process and the successful firm has been proposed to the President's Committee, who in turn will make the nomination to Executive Council.

*Martin Lenihan, Independent member and Chairman*  
*Jer Bergin*  
*JJ Kavanagh*





IFA







# The Irish Farmers' Association

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*ORGANISATION REPORT*

*FOR 2016*

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**62<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**Irish Farm Centre  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2017**



# Organisation

## Achievements and Work Done

### Membership

- Net membership at year end decreased by 3,682 to leave total voting members of the association at 73,700. Total membership which includes all membership channels (main member, family, associate and countryside) was 76,084
- Membership income represented approximately 60% of operational income and supports a wide range of services for members including the local office support structure, member communications (membership card / pack, newsletters, web, social media), personal accident & legal liability insurance, voluntary officer structure and participation, the member benefits programme, member supports( direct payments, legal, credit, Pieta House) and all major activity on campaigns.

### European Involvement Fund

- The income from EIF decreased by 12% represented by variances in price, volumes and the impact of events in IFA.
- The European Involvement Fund (EIF) income represents approximately 40% of the Association's operational income and significantly contributes towards ensuring all farmer interests are professionally and comprehensively represented at European & International level.

### Member Services & Benefits

The benefits of IFA Membership continue to significantly outweigh the membership subscription cost. The Member Benefits include:

- Personal Accident & Legal Liability Cover with FBD
- €75 off FBD motor, home & farm insurance
- 25% off with Irish Country Hotels
- Up to €1000 discount off finance options with Seat and Skoda
- 12% off health screening with the Mater Private
- 20% off family tickets for Dublin Zoo
- 15% off motorist fares with Stena Line
- Up to €300 off with IFAC
- 10% off global car hire and 15% off van hire with Hertz.
- Up to 50% off commission charges with Goodbody Stockbrokers
- Farm Business Skillnets programme.
- 10% off global car hire and 15% off van hire with hertz.

IFA Member Services continued to act as an important check in with members to thank them for their membership. In addition, member services continued to review and improve the services proposition for members including:

- Exclusive savings with IFA Telecom.
- 10% off and €100 cash back with Bord Gáis Energy.
- Exclusive discounts with Vodafone.

- Launch of fibre broadband to IFAT customers
- Increase of range of mobile handsets and discounts available to members
- Exclusive offers for new mobile customers including free handsets and one month's bill
- New mobile price plans for members
- New TV affinity deal with SKY Ireland
- Exclusive mobile upgrade offers for members
- Continued Bord Gáis Energy deal: 18 months, 10% off + €100 cashback
- Improvements in telecom & broadband fault handling

### **Member Education, Training and Development**

IFA provided training to the following groups:

- Executive Board
- Executive Council – New Members
- New County Chairman Training & Networking with Branch Chairs
- Young Leaders 2016
- Pre AGM Training for Branch Chairs & Secretaries
- Commodity Committees
- Discussion Groups

### **Priorities for 2017**

- Stabilising the membership base and rebuilding the membership categories.
- Rebuilding the income of the Association and seeking the adoption of the levy improvements among collectors.
- Growing the Member Services division and maintaining IFA's commercial partnerships
- Developing the platforms which allow direct communications with members
- Pressing Government and the telecoms industry deliver a high speed fibre broadband service for rural communities
- Continuing to upskill and support the leadership of the Association and the branch network with Leadership, Communications, Negotiation, IT and Finance training.

Finally on behalf of all Regional, Organisation and Member Services staff, we would like to acknowledge and thank all our voluntary officers for their help.

*Jer Bergin*  
Chairman, Member Services

*James Kelly*  
Director of Organisation



IFA





# **The Irish Farmers' Association**

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***ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2016  
OF  
NATIONAL COMMITTEES & COMMODITY SECTIONS***

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## **62<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**Irish Farm Centre  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2017**





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**Annual Report for 2016 of  
National Committees, Commodity Sections & Project Teams**

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**C O N T E N T S**

***Major Commodity Committees***

National Livestock Committee  
National Dairy Committee  
National Liquid Milk Committee  
National Sheep Committee  
National Pigs and Pigmeat Committee  
National Grain Committee

***Other Committees, Sections and Project Teams***

Animal Health Project Team  
Aquaculture  
Communications  
Countryside Project Team  
Direct Payments Project Team  
Economics Section  
National Environment & Rural Affairs Committee  
National Farm Business Committee  
National Farm Family & Social Affairs Committee  
National Farm Forestry Committee  
Flood Project Team  
Fresh Milk Producers  
Hill Farming Committee  
Horse Project Team  
Horticulture Committee  
Inputs Project Team  
Oireachtas Liaison  
National Potato Committee  
National Poultry Committee  
Renewables and Alternative Land Use Project Team  
Retailer, Processor and Consumer Relations Project Team  
National Rules, Privileges and Procedures Committee  
National Rural Development & Less Favoured Areas Committee  
SACs Project Team



# National Livestock Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

### Cattle Prices

- 2016 was a difficult year for cattle farmers with prime finished cattle prices back by 4.2% with R3 steers averaging €3.97/kg and heifer's €4.12/kg. Young bulls fell 2.2% at an average of €3.90/kg and cows were back 8.6% at €3.15/kg.
- Irish cattle price (R3 steers) were on average 3.1% above the average EU (R3 Y Bull) price for 2016, but 10% below UK (R3 steer) prices for the year. Store and weanling prices reflected the lower beef prices with prices back €70 to €140 per head.
- Brexit involving a major shift in the sterling exchange rate, increased supplies at the factories and a significant increase in cull cow slaughtering's at EU level were the main factors impacting on prices.
- Cattle supplies at the meat plants were up 5.3% or 83,000, with the main increase from cull cows and young bulls.
- IFA communicated the latest market and farmer cattle price information twice weekly throughout the year through agri media and text, web and twitter. Available on [www.ifa.ie](http://www.ifa.ie)
- IFA challenged the processors on excessive price cuts following Brexit in May/June and highlighted the unfair price return to farmers at a retail protest in September. IFA again called for a strong price increase from the factories at the Livestock Challenges 2017 conference in December.

### Markets

- Main export markets for Irish beef were the UK, Italy, Holland, France, Germany and Scandinavia. Total exports of 530,000 valued at €2.4bn.
- IFA prioritised market access with the DAFM and several Ministerial mission were undertaken to secure market access. New market access was secured to the US and Canada, and the ban on China was lifted.

### Live Exports

- IFA worked hard on securing the opening of the live export trade to Turkey in 2016 resulting in 19,000 weanlings/stores being shipped, which proved vitally important for the weanling prices.
- Overall live exports were back 20% at 145,000 head. Calf exports fell 13,000 while finished cattle exports mainly to Northern Ireland fell 25,000.
- Main live markets were Spain, Holland, Northern Ireland, Italy, Turkey, France and GB.
- IFA lobbied hard on live exports in 2016 focusing on market access, ferry access, welfare issues, price competition and market outlets.
- IFA also worked closely with the DAFM, exporters, Bord Bia and others to maximise the export potential for all Irish livestock in 2016 and also the potential of the live export trade in 2017 especially for calves.

### Quality Assurance

- IFA highlighted farmer problems with the QS scheme and has worked closely with Bord Bia on a new set of producer criteria including agreement on a new close out mechanism, which will allow farmers correct non-compliances while remaining in the scheme. In addition, IFA has insisted all specification issues have been removed and the audit time will not increase.
- Close on 50,000 beef farmers are in QA scheme, which will be extended to cover Sustainability in 2017. IFA has secured funding of over €6m from the DAFM to cover farmer inspections costs.

### Beef Forum

- IFA continued to push beef farmers issues and made a detailed presentation to the Beef Forum, with Minister Creed in the chair, highlighting the need for delivery on key issues such as incomes and price, market access for beef and live cattle, specifications which suit Irish production,

increased funding for the suckler herd, the use of DAFM AO's to monitor carcase trim and classification in the meat plants, protecting the beef sector in EU trade deals and other issues.

### **Competition**

- IFA retained a competition economist who produced a detailed report highlighting the competition issues in the beef sector and the implications for producers from the proposed Slaney/ABP JV, which in turn was sent to Government and the EU DG Competition.

### **Trade Deals**

- TTIP and Mercosur – IFA continued to lobby/highlight the implications for the beef sector from any trade deal with the Government and EU levels.
- As a result of IFA pressure in Brussels, the EU Commission did not include a beef TRQ in the Mercosur offer made earlier in the year.
- IFA also pushed for an EU report on the cumulative assessment of potential trade deals, which highlighted the key issues of the level of TRQ access for beef into the EU, the new tariff rates, sensitive product status and EU standards particularly on equivalence on traceability, animal health and veterinary medicines control as well as the environment, SPS measures.
- IFA will continue to maintain a strong campaign on these trade deals to ensure that the Irish and EU agriculture sectors are not sacrificed in any negotiations to secure an overall trade deal.

### **Support for the Suckler Cow Herd/ Beef Genomics**

- IFA secured €52m in the Budget for suckler farmers for the 2017 BDGP scheme.
- In addition, following strong lobbying by IFA, the scheme will be re-opened again in 2017.
- IFA will continue to campaign for increased targeted direct support for the suckler herd of €200 per cow.

### **Farm Schemes**

- Strong IFA campaign in Budget 2017 secured positive funding for farm schemes for the livestock sector including Basic Payment scheme, BDGP, ANCs, GLAS, TAMs and Knowledge Transfer scheme.
- In addition, as a result of IFA work livestock farmers are eligible to qualify for the new €150m loan scheme at interest rates of 2.95% from early 2017.
- IFA secured significant changes on simplification, pre checking, tolerances, yellow card system and reduced penalties on the basic payment and greening scheme in 2016.

### **Priorities for 2017**

- Maximising cattle prices, market returns, market access, live exports and competition.
- Provision of the most up to date and relevant beef price and market information for producers through communication with the agri media, text, web and twitter. [www.ifa.ie](http://www.ifa.ie)
- Strong defence of beef sector in future CAP negotiations and in any EU trade deals.
- Increasing support for the suckler cow herd and direct payments for livestock farmers.
- Securing pay out of all farm schemes on time within Charter deadlines.
- Improving livestock farm incomes through lobbying for increased prices, improved market access and returns, more competition, increased direct payments at National and EU level in CAP and preventing trade deals with damage the beef sector.
- Representing Irish livestock farmers at National and EU level as well as International level, including on several Government bodies and committees (Bord Bia, Teagasc, FAWAC, Food Wise 2025, ICBF, CAP) and EU level (COPA – vice chair of COPA Beef Working Party, Chairman of the EU Commission Beef and Sheep Civil Dialogue Group, Member of the EU Civil Dialogue on Direct Payments) and World Farmers Group.

*Angus Woods*  
Chairman

*Kevin Kinsella*  
Director of Livestock

# National Dairy Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

### Milk Price Campaign

- IFA lobbying during 2015 and 2016 helped minimise milk price cuts in the context of a historically prolonged and extremely severe downturn, and optimised supports by co-ops on prices, merchant credit and other areas.
- IFA was first to signal the turnaround in market trends, and sought milk price increases from summer. By December, the main co-ops had lifted prices by 5 to 7c/l.
- A series of four IFA regional Dairy Farm Income meetings, with presentation from the main local co-ops, were held in September-October to keep the pressure up for price improvements.
- The IFA lobbying effort was supported by regular blogs and monthly newsletters, sent to over 2,500 influential dairy farmers and board members by new email format or by post.

### Risk Management Conference

- This was organised by IFA and held to stress the need for industry and government to provide farmers with risk management tools, and to explore what those tools might be.

### EU Aid Packages

- As well as the EU adjusted aid, Ireland's €11.1m share of which was used to deliver a low cost loan package to support farmers' cash flow (see below), €150m of EU funding was used for an EU-wide voluntary production reduction scheme in the Oct-Dec and Nov-Jan period. The scheme was fully subscribed within two rounds.
- IFA helped ensure, once the scheme was voted at EU level, that Irish dairy farmers had the fullest access to it in spite of very tight deadlines. IFA ensured accurate information was conveyed very rapidly to facilitate farmers' participation in the scheme.

### Dairy Forum and Budget 2017 Achievements

- IFA took an active part in the Dairy Forum which met four times this year, the last two times chaired by Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed. IFA majored in on the volatility of dairy farm incomes and the challenges to cash flow, articulating the need for volatility tools in terms of industry offers, such as the fixed milk price contracts, but also in terms of more flexible taxation and finance.
- IFA also emphasised strongly the need for co-ops, Ornua, Teagasc and banks to co-ordinate their action in order to provide support to farmers in a very difficult year.
- In Budget 2017, IFA lobbying, including by the National Dairy Committee, delivered a 1-year opt out from the 5-year income averaging scheme, which will be immediately available in respect of 2016 income, and will be of particular value to dairy farmers.

### Low Cost Loan Package

- Lobbying by the National Dairy Committee was instrumental in delivering the cash flow loan package, which will benefit dairy farmers and farmers in all other sectors.
- The low 2.95% interest was achieved by de-risking the loan through the leverage of the EU adjusted aid Irish national envelope of €11.1m, matched by a further €14m national funds, as sought by IFA.

### SDAS

- By early December 2016, 92.5% of Ireland's dairy farmers have applied under the scheme, and nearly 75% have been certified, some for the second or even third time.
- IFA has encouraged co-ops to use incentives rather than penalties to coax the last few farmers to participate.

### High Level Meetings with Co-Ops and Ornua

- During 2016, the IFA Dairy Chairman met with all co-ops' and Ornua CEOs and Chairmen at least once and with the main milk purchasers and Ornua a second time with President Joe Healy.

- The meetings were focused on milk prices and farmer support through a difficult income crisis, as well as the need for industry to further develop its ability to provide risk management solutions for farmers into the future.
- They also sought to address the future of the sector, the need to ensure industry investment does not outpace farmers' expansion efforts, which we expect to slow down, and the need to continue with consolidation, cost control and greater co-operation.
- IFA lobbied ICOS to ensure their protocol provide a clear process for farmers wishing to move from one processor to another when their Milk Supply Agreements expire.

#### **Brexit**

- To investigate the possible consequences of Brexit on the Irish dairy sector and on farmers North and South, the Committee met with LacPatrick, Lakeland and the UFU.

#### **IDIA Water Sustainability Initiative**

- IFA agreed to participate in this initiative, which aims to encourage better use of resources on farms to strengthen Ireland's environmental credentials in terms of water quality. This could prove important in the context of the Nitrates derogation review.

### **Priorities for 2017**

- To secure optimum milk prices as markets continue to improve and consolidate. Further price uplifts are fully justified, which will bring farmers back to sustainable price before spring peak.
- To continue providing market analysis and information to influencers and decision makers.
- To encourage more co-ops to offer well priced fixed price contracts to more farmers.
- To advocate for more risk management initiatives from industry, including hedging and futures markets based tools.
- To press banks to respond flexibly to the financial needs of dairy farmers.
- To seek continued refinement of taxation in Budget 2018 to further help farmers cope with volatile incomes, including utilising State Aid rules to allow farmers put away funds in good years and return them to their taxable incomes in more difficult years.
- To engage fully in the Brexit debate within IFA and the dairy sector.
- To secure speediest availability of the low cost cash flow loans, and optimum utilisation by the September 2017 deadline to help make the case for this type of packages into the future as a matter of normal lending practice.
- To help secure participation in the SDAS and certification of 100% of dairy farmers by encouraging co-ops to incentivise rather than penalise, and by having Bord Bia and industry communicate more clearly the benefits of the scheme in terms of gaining access to better prices and more stable markets.
- To participate in the IDIA water sustainability initiative to safeguard farmers' interests.
- To monitor closely the Kerry patronage share taxation test case, and to watch out for potential implications for farmers in other co-ops.
- To continue challenging industry to reduce excess cost and duplication, to consolidate and co-operate in future investment plans.
- To feed into the development of IFA policy on CAP post 2020.

*Sean O'Leary*  
Chairman

*Catherine Lascurettes*  
Executive

# National Liquid Milk Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

### Milk Price Campaign

- IFA has in the last two years, with support from Teagasc and from FDC accountants established the need for an annualised price of at least 40c/l to allow liquid milk producers to cover their costs and pay themselves a modest wage.
- In the context of the prolonged dairy downturn and the very depressed creamery milk prices of 2016, the Committee provocatively identified the winter price levels required to achieve this annualised average at 55c/l.
- An article to this effect was syndicated to national and regional/local press, and got excellent coverage over the summer. It also gave rise to much discussion between dairies and liquid milk suppliers, and was noted by retailers.
- IFA supported all producer groups with detailed information on prices and pricing systems to help in the winter milk payment negotiation process.
- 2016/17 winter prices of between 35.6c/l + VAT and 38.7c/l + VAT (average of monthly pay-outs over the Oct-Mar period) were negotiated by producer groups – representing not insignificant increases on the previous winter.

### Meetings with Retailers and Dairies

- In a series of meetings to introduce the newly elected Chairman, most retailers and all main dairies were met during the year.
- The IFA case for an annualised average of 40c/l and the need to reach 55c/l in winter to achieve this in the context of low base milk prices in 2016 was made to all, to illustrate just how fragile the sustainability of high cost, high commitment liquid milk production is.

### IFA Liquid Milk Rally

- A major rally was organised for October 2016, which was attended by over 300 producers.
- The rally heard that fresh milk was worth in excess of €500m to the Irish economy, and milk and dairy makes a significant contribution to the diet of Irish people of all ages, contributing very important nutrition, including in the context of recovery after exercise.
- Crucially, it also heard from a young dairy farmer who, with his father whom he is succeeding, decided to exit liquid milk in favour of spring creamery milk production. Peter Farrell from Meath gave details of his winter costs and compared them with the additional premium on offer from his milk purchaser. He said clearly this did not justify his continued involvement, and he and his father had acted accordingly.
- The rally heard warnings that farmers needed sustainable remuneration if supplies were to be sustained for consumers, and the Chairman said IFA would meet Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed to present its proposed strategy on this issue.

### Liquid Milk Strategy

- IFA proposes that Minister Creed would gather an assembly of the relevant stakeholders in the fresh milk sector, to bring all parties to face up to the threats on the sector, and to develop a sustainable strategy for its long term future and integrate it into FoodWise 2025.
- The main issues to be dealt with are as follows:
  - At farm level
    - Survey of liquid milk producers to establish age profile, succession plans and intentions.
    - Review of contractual arrangements including pricing systems, favouring multi annual contractual arrangements.
  - At retail level
    - Prohibition of 1-year retail tenders for private label supplies, which have given rise to major supply swings and have proven very disruptive of markets, and cannot be geared for by farmers or dairies.

- Stronger retail regulations, championed by a pro-active Ombudsman, including the prohibition of below-cost selling.
- National Milk Agency
  - Increase its legal power to secure and disseminate data on milk imports.
  - Change the timing of signature of supply contracts by farmers to better match the negotiation cycle between farmers and dairies.
  - Increase enforcement of “adequate compensation” beyond the current insufficient guidelines being used.
  - Bring in better corporate governance practice around the term of office of board members, who are currently not subject to a maximum.

### **Support for Producer Groups**

- IFA supported the consolidation of the four Aurivo liquid milk producer groups to strengthen their hand in negotiation, by securing adequate representation for all on the National Liquid Milk Committee.
- IFA also supported the negotiation process when the consolidation of the four groups did not succeed, and helped bring both sides back around the negotiation table.

### **Priorities for 2017**

- To improve understanding of the payment systems in existence by garnering the information through the IFA Liquid Milk (Management) Committee and trying to establish additional information, including levels of contractualisation, constituents and conditionalities. The Committee hopes to improve the accuracy of its price comparison, also by establishing representative constituent levels where relevant.
- To present the IFA liquid milk strategy to Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed and progress it further through political lobbying.
- To seek the carrying out of a survey of liquid milk producers by the NMA.
- To continue our relationship with dairies.
- To maintain a strong communication with retailers and to highlight the tenuous sustainability of fresh milk in the context of recovering creamery milk prices and greater opportunities for farmers in that sector.
- To help all four Aurivo milk producer groups secure a representation format satisfactory to all allowing them to proceed together with negotiations going forward.
- To help all liquid milk producer groups negotiate the best possible winter 17/18 milk payments.

*John Finn*  
Chairman

*Catherine Lascurettes*  
Executive



# National Sheep Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

### New Direct Payment of €10 per ewe

- IFA secured an increase of €25m in direct supports for the sheep sector in 2016 through the introduction of a new €10 per ewe sheep welfare scheme under the EU RDP scheme.
- Following a strong campaign by the National Sheep Committee leading up to the General Election, IFA secured a commitment on the new scheme as part of the programme for Government.
- Funding was secured by IFA in the October Budget with the scheme launched in December. Requirements under the scheme have been kept simple for farmers with options on foot care, meal feeding, mineral supplementation, scanning and blow fly control.

### Lamb Prices and Market

- Lamb prices averaged €5.07/kg for 2016, exactly on a par with 2015 prices. However, hogget prices were back in the early part of the year but for the main mid-season selling period from mid-June to mid-October lamb prices were ahead of 2015 levels.
- Total slaughtering's at the meat plants reached 2.67m head, up 3% or 74,000 head on 2015 levels. The ewe kill was up 82,000 and the mid-season lamb kill was back about 47,000.
- In a report to Government and the EU, IFA highlighted completion issues as part of the ABP/Slaney Meats JV, where Irish Country Meats, the largest lamb processor in the country changed ownership.
- IFA campaigned actively all year for strong lamb prices outlining the returns from the market place and the top prices being obtained by farmers through effective communication by text, app and agri media including [www.ifa.ie](http://www.ifa.ie)

### Promotion, Quality Assurance and Retail

- IFA worked closely with Bord Bia and retailers in 2016 maximising consumption and returns on the domestic market.
- On export markets IFA worked with Bord Bia on the new Generic Lamb promotional campaign involving Ireland, UK, France, worth €7m.
- IFA strongly promoted Quality Assurance and securing a QA bonus of about 10c/kg at factory level. In addition, IFA negotiated a new QA scheme with Bord Bia involving a close out arrangement and the removal of specifications including EID.
- IFA organised lamb forums with both the French and the UK on prices and markets.

### Live Exports

- IFA strongly supported the live export trade for lamb in 2016. Over 46,500 lambs were exported live providing strong price competition at important times of the year. Key markets included France, Germany, Belgium and Holland.

### Producer Groups

- IFA held a Producer Group forum involving Bord Bia, Teagasc, ICBF and the DAFM, which addressed prices, markets, breeding and other issues.

### Hill Lamb

- IFA organised a Hill Sheep open day in Newport Co Mayo involving DAFM, Teagasc, Bord Bia covering all aspects of hill farming and lamb production.
- The National Sheep Committee worked closely with the Hill Committee on various hill sheep issues including addition direct supports for hill sheep farmers.

### Knowledge Transfer

- IFA secured a new round of funding for Sheep KT groups where producers can benefit by €750 payment and dual enterprise farmers by €1,125.

## **TAMS**

- IFA got sheep fencing reinstated for grant aid under the New TAMS scheme
- Investments in sheep housing and equipment is also eligible for TAMS grant aid.

## **EU Sheep Reflection Group**

- IFA represented Irish sheep farmers and participated in 4 meetings of the EU Sheep Reflection Group set up by Commissioner Hogan in Brussels under the Chairmanship of John Bryan and secretary Kevin Kinsella.
- IFA made increased direct payments and improved promotional funding the key recommendations in the outcome of the Forum, which presented its full report to Commissioner Hogan in October. This report will set the policy agenda for sheep into the next CAP.

## **Sheep Ireland**

- IFA continued to work to develop and implement a strong Sheep Breeding Programme in 2016 including progress with the CPT and Lamb Plus and STAP Programmes. Over 50% of pedigree rams had Eurostar figures at sale this year.

## **Teagasc**

- IFA worked with Teagasc to develop both the Sheep Advisory and Research programmes on sheep. The Sheep research programme in Athenry is now well developed and capable of delivering real research benefits to farmers.

## **Sheep Tagging and EID**

- In a DAFM working group on sheep tagging, IFA has insisted that the derogation on EID tagging direct to slaughter must remain.

## **Dog Control**

- IFA continued with an effective campaign on responsible dog control including widespread media coverage including highlighting sheep kills and compulsory microchipping.

## **Priorities for 2017**

### **Lamb Prices and Incomes**

- IFA will continue to work to ensure the strongest possible lamb prices are returned to producers and improve incomes for sheep farmers in 2016.
- All New market opportunities for both processed lamb and live lamb will be pursued.

### **Promotions**

- IFA will work to maximise the returns from both the domestic and export markets through strong promotion with Bord Bia and working with retailers and processors.

### **Direct Payments and Policy**

- IFA will work to maximise farmer participation in the new €10 per ewe sheep welfare scheme and continue to actively pursue the policy for increase direct payments at national and EU level through DAFM, the Government, the EU Commission and COPA.

### **Hill Sheep**

- IFA will continue to drive the case for hill sheep farmers on both the market and direct payment side especially on hill lamb, commonages, and GLAS.

### **Direct Payments**

- IFA will insist on prompt payments of all Direct Payments to sheep farmers including BPS, DAs, New €10 welfare scheme, GLAS, KT and TAMS in 2017.

*John Lynskey*  
Chairman

*Kevin Kinsella*  
Director of Livestock

## National Pigs and Pigmeat Committee

### Achievements and Work Done

#### Pig Prices Marketing and labelling

- Despite an exceptionally strong export market in 2016, pig prices were very poor in the first 6 months of the year. IFA met with retailers and processors and a price increase was achieved in the market. Thereafter there was a level of recovery in H2 and based on information to date, the average price will be 4c/kg ahead of 2015 but the percentage of the EU average will be lower, 2015 - 103%, 2016 – 101%.
- Some retailers were unable to source meat in 2016, IFA has spoken to the primary and secondary processors in this supply chain and the problem has been solved. This will see Irish pork and bacon reach almost 100% across all own brand retailers in Q1 2017.
- IFA pressed Bord Bia to set up a working party to deal with the threat of negative publicity arising from the WHO report released last October, this (IARC) group has now met and a website is being set up to support a positive message.
- IFA pressure has secured an “all in/all out” basis for brands carrying the Bord Bia logo on pig meat products. A report on the impact is currently being compiled and this will be rolled out in 2017.

#### DNA Scheme

- Professor Pat Wall and former Chairman Tim Cullinan carried out a review of the DAN Scheme and a number of recommendations were made. The Pigs Committee followed up on these recommendations and the following were put in place:
  - 1. Continuous efforts should be made to ensure that the boar database is complete**
    - A. Annual validation completed by all factories – IFA secured co-funding for this from the factories
    - B. All factories testing slaughter boars on the line (Finns, Rosderra Davis)
    - C. A number of items have been written into the Quality Assurance Scheme which will ensure the data base is complete at all times.
  - 2. Deliberate non-compliance, when confirmed, should be exposed**
    - A. Process – (1) Test (2) Meet affected company (3) Test (4) expose
    - B. Anonymous table to be printed in Irish Farmers Journal (Pig League, format agreed with IFJ)
  - 3. For clarity, improved communication is required on how the process, and the sampling regimen, that permits the use of the DNA TraceBack logo operates**
    - A. Newsletter with information explaining the scheme to be printed – ready for printing in New Year.
    - B. IFA website updated
  - 4. The name ‘self-certification’ is incorrect as IFA is the collector of samples and a more appropriate name should be assigned to the DNA TraceBack scheme**
    - A. *DNA Certified*’ used to describe this process as opposed to self-certification
  - 5. Secondary processors, or retailers, who sign up to the system of using DNA TraceBack must reimburse IFA for collection and testing of samples. This needs to be part of a contract with any secondary processor or retailer using the DNA TraceBack system**
    - A. Carty Meats has no issue with who he pays for this.

- B. However a complete review of the 'DNA Certified' element of the programme will take place in 2017
- 6. One contact person to be identified in IFA to liaise with IDentiGEN on the sharing of results and how these results are to be handled**
  - A. Currently the Executive of the IFA National Pigs and Pig meat Committee
- 7. There should be no changes to the scheme without consultation and approval by the full IFA pig committee**
  - A. Agreed
- 8. As a start to increasing the market share of Irish pig meat on retail sale, IFA needs to enter discussions with Musgraves to move them to a position of using 100% Irish pig meat and the phasing out of the Meadowfield brand that carried the country of origin Denmark**
  - A. IFA have secured agreement on an all In / All out programme which will force retailers to make a decision on how meat will be sourced for these brands and how they will be labelled.

#### **PISG**

- IFA secured a position for the Chairman of the IFA National Pigs and Pigmeat Committee on the Pig Implementation Strategy Group (Dr. Sean Brady Group).

#### **EU Aid Package:**

- As a result of continuous lobbying and protests by IFA at National and European level to introduce measures to re-establish the sustainability of the Irish pig industry, The EU Commission introduced a package of which Irish pig farmers were allocated €1m.

#### **Environment**

- Discussions continue with the EPA in relation to a number of outstanding issues such as Tank & Pipeline assessments. The IFA Pigs Committee has requested that a technical working group with the EPA to be set up.
- Nitrates: IFA has lobbied to secure an extension to the Transitional Arrangements for users of Pig manure. The DAFM have indicated that for a number of reasons they are unwilling to seek an extension. The Pigs committee is working with the Environment Committee to progress this issue.

#### **Priorities for 2017**

- Increased returns for farmers achieved through our various IFA initiatives (DNA programme, herd health plan, communications policy). Forge closer relationships with the factories while maintaining autonomy to report pig prices through all media channels.
- Lobbying priorities – Nitrates Regulations, Animal Welfare issues – potential payment for the sector under Rural Development programme.
- Push for the roll out of herd health initiatives through Pig Implementation Strategy Group – carcass inspections, AMR stakeholder group, salmonella programme review.
- Increased DNA testing particularly at food service level.
- Communications - Regional meetings, media, increased communications with members i.e. uptake of the newsletter by members via e-mail, more app hits.
- Full levy participation with more farmers signing up on direct debit.
- Active participation in Brussels (feed additives CU, ZnO, in feed medication, welfare)
- Driving the research and advisory agenda with Teagasc through the joint programme.

*Pat O'Flaherty*  
Chairman

*Amii McKeever*  
Executive

# National Grain Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

- The IFA campaign to secure an aid package for growers who suffered significant crop losses has put enormous pressure on Minister Creed to deliver. Successful lobbying of the Dail's Joint Committee on Agriculture landed their support for the initiative. A comprehensive IFA survey of the number of growers and the severity of crop losses has been presented to Minister Creed.
- Despite burgeoning world grain stocks and collapsing prices, IFA secured a significant premium for green grain over spot market prices for grain delivered off the combine this harvest.
- Protests at the ports of Foynes and Drogheda drew attention to the dire financial straits facing many grain farmers after 4 years of falling prices. In addition, it highlighted the inferior quality of some imported samples and the need for a certification scheme to stop the importation of damaging weed seeds and sub-standard quality grain.
- Pressure from IFA saw Minister Creed establish a National Grain Forum.
- Intense lobbying of Ireland's MEPs ensured that authorisation was given for the relicensing of glyphosate.
- Prolonged negotiations between IFA's Farm Business and Grain committees and the Department and SBCI ensured that tillage farmers will now be able to access low cost EU finance.
- The 2016 growing season and subsequent harvest proved to be very difficult for malting barley growers and malsters. Unusually high grain skinning levels, coupled with high proteins saw a significant increase in rejections. The issuing of an advisory text to growers to adjust combine settings, at IFA's insistence, ensured that a significant number of samples passed for malting. In addition, IFA secured a derogation both on skinning and protein levels from Boortmalt with the cut offs raised:
  - from 4% to 6% for skinning
  - from 8.8% to 9.3% for distilling
  - and to 11% for brewing.
- In addition, €155 was secured for surplus malting barley with the default price for contract landing at €154.47. Growers who partook in the fixed price offers and hedging opportunities achieved up to €166/t.
- Significant additions have been made to the TAMS programme for tillage farmers. Sustained political pressure has been put on the Minister to announce the package before Christmas.
- The promotion of farm-to-farm pre-harvest allied with the distribution of over 85,000 technical feed leaflets boosted the ever expanding farm-to-farm trade providing much needed competition.

## Priorities for 2017

### Grain prices

- The outlook for new crop prices remains poor following from a record breaking world harvest. Unusually high stocks to use ratios particularly for wheat in excess of 30% and 20% plus for maize are mitigating against price recovery in the medium term. The Committee has met with senior members of Hogan's cabinet outlining the deepening income crisis on tillage farms and the need for action. In addition, ongoing meetings are

being held with key Irish buyers to develop a scheme that will give greater visibility and support to compound feed mills purchasing and using high levels of native grain.

#### **Grain certification scheme**

- The Committee will be working with key players in the grain industry to develop a grain certification scheme to promote and verify the maximum inclusion of Irish grain in compound feed rations.

#### **Grain promotion**

- The Committee will continue its high-profile grain promotion scheme running nutrition seminars to promote increased use of native grain in livestock rations. This has been very successful over recent years in displacing inferior imported feed ingredients.

#### **Greening**

- The Committee is continuing to lobby for greening requirements for tillage farmers to be simplified:
  - Grassy banks in coastal areas to be included in the calculation of EFA's.
  - Farmers in coastal areas to be exempted from the crop diversification rule because of the increased risk of crop loss due to sea scald.

#### **Retention of key actives**

- The Committee is working with other EU farming organisations and the European Crop Protection Association to ensure that the majority of key active ingredients used in the manufacture of plant protection products remain available to farmers.

#### **Forward selling key to price risk management**

- The Committee will continue to promote forward selling as it remains a key price risk management tool.

#### **Nitrates**

- Phosphorous availability is a serious issue on high PH soils and needs to be addressed. In addition P placement should be allowed on winter crops sown after the current cut-off date. The current accounting system under the nitrates directive effectively prohibits growers from taking in and storing organic manures ahead of the growing season. The Committee are looking for this rule to be changed as this will allow for the increased use of organics.

#### **IFA funded Teagasc break crop research programme**

- IFA is continuing its investment in crop research with Teagasc and UCD.

*Liam Dunne*  
Chairman

*Fintan Conway*  
Executive



# Animal Health Project Team

## Achievements and Work Done

### TB

IFA secured the first fundamental changes to the TB compensation schemes in over 20 years following a prolonged campaign and their implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016. These changes represent a significant first step in reducing the enormous financial loss associated with TB breakdowns. These included:

#### Income Supplement

- The rate of income supplement for dairy cows increased from €25.39/cow/month to €55/cow/month
- The 10% threshold for the **Income Supplement** will be retained as a general rule but extend it to include herds which lose at least 10% of their dairy cows
- The 100-animal ceiling in the income supplement scheme will be abolished.

#### Depopulation Grant

- The rate of the Depopulation grant for dairy cows is fixed at the same rate as that for the Income Supplement.
- The Depopulation grant rate for suckler cows will be increased from €31.74 to bring it into line with the Income Supplement rate of €38.09.

#### Hardship Grant

- The Hardship grant scheme will be extended to dairy farmers even when producing milk.

#### Live Valuations

- The ceilings on payments under the On Farm Valuation scheme have increased from €2,800 for a bovine to €3,000 and from €3,500 to €4,000 for a stock bull and €5,000 for a pedigree bull.
- Separate categories will be introduced for served heifers and maiden heifers
- Separate categories have been introduced for heifers with breeding potential
- The EBI top-up co-efficient for dairy cows was reduced to 50c/€ EBI, but following the reduction in the baseline EBI figures increased from 11<sup>th</sup> September to €1.05/€ EBI.

#### Purchase in prohibition

- The Department committed to alleviate the problems arising from the prohibition in EU legislation on buying in to restricted herds by adopting as flexible an approach to feedlots as possible.
- DAFM is also willing to allocate herd numbers to farmers where they have parcels of land where there are no cattle currently and will permit them to buy in cattle onto these land parcels.

#### Medication of Animals following notification to test

- A more practical approach to the medication of animals following notification to test has been achieved, focusing on the withdrawal period as opposed to the administration date

#### TB Test, farmer pay liability

- The liability to pay for TB tests has been clearly established in the TB SI, reflecting the one test per year and 10 month rule between farmer pay tests

#### Deer Management Programme

- The establishment of a pilot Deer Management Programme surrounding TB outbreaks has been progressed.

### BVD

- Stronger support payments will be provided in the BVD programme for 2017.

- DAFM has committed to a more proactive role in supporting the programme through more effective implementation of controls.
- IFA has highlighted the inequity in the Departments failure to include a retrospective element in the higher support payments for farmers who supported fully the programme from the outset and disposed of PI calves in a timely manner for significantly less or no support payment.
- IFA secured a continuation of the higher level ex-gratia payments for farmers losing a disproportionate number of calves as PI's in 2015 and 2016.
- IFA has secured a commitment from DAFM that the unacceptable delays associated with BVD payments will be resolved.
- Prevalence of BVD in the National herd has been reduced significantly.
- 34,376 PI's have been removed since 2013, only 327 identified PI animals are still alive in 117 herds based on the latest AHI data
- The number of PI's identified annually has reduced from 13,875 in 2013 to 2,461 to-date in 2016
- The number of herds with PI's has reduced from 9,484 in 2013 to 2,461 to-date in 2016
- 64,574 herds have now attained Negative Herd Status

#### **Johnes**

- Following completion of the cost benefit analysis of johnes control, a more equitable cost distribution model is currently being developed by AHI.

#### **Fallen Animals**

- IFA has sought significant changes to the current fallen animal collection system in order to provide a more effective and competitive collection system for farmers

#### **EU Animal Health law and Veterinary medicines proposals**

- IFA has met with Irish MEP's and senior DAFM officials to highlight the key areas of concern for farmers in the new animal health law and veterinary medicine proposals

#### **Tags**

- In the new Bovine Identification Tag supply system implemented by DAFM, IFA ensured the costly and impractical approach of compelling all farmers to purchase dual purpose tissue sampling tags was averted.

### **Priorities 2017**

- Re-establish local level engagement with the Department of Agriculture on animal health issues with the new Animal Health Committee members.
- Maintain the progress in reducing the incidence of TB and reducing the cost burden of controls on farmers.
- Establish a Deer Management Programme surrounding TB outbreaks
- Maintain the progress in eradicating BVD and reducing the cost impact on farmers
- Finalise a more equitable cost distribution model and control programme for johnes
- Continue to seek improvements to Fallen Animal disposal system
- Ensure the pursuit towards a resolution to the AMR issue does not disproportionately and unnecessarily impact on farmers access to veterinary medicines
- Greater access for farmers to veterinary medicines and more transparency in pricing structures
- Protection of the live export trade and the removal of unnecessary controls under EU Official control proposals from disease eradication schemes

*Bert Stewart*  
Chairman

*Tomas Bourke*  
Executive Secretary



## Aquaculture Section

### Achievements and Work Done

- **Licence Review:** IFA's campaign for an independent review of the licence processing system for aquaculture resulted in the announcement in December by Minister Creed of a full review
- IFA's unique report on **Recirculation Aquaculture Systems for salmon farming** formed the basis for an international study on the same subject launched by the International Salmon Farmers Association.
- **EMFF Grant programmes – IFA members who had received licences following renewal applications were eligible from January for 40% capital aid** under a €34m scheme to invest in upgrading technology, improve environmental monitoring and control and reduce costs through more efficient methods.
- IFA secured the chairmanship of the **Aquaculture Advisory Committee** of the European Union – an industry and stakeholder forum for bringing forward policies and legislative proposals funded by its members and the European Commission

### Priorities for 2017

- To ensure the best outcome of the **independent licence review** which will improve transparency, outline clear process deadlines and work for the benefit of the industry, based in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.
- To continue to work for members on individual and bay **licence renewals** and application to achieve balance between the rights of farmers and the expensive and often unnecessary demands made of applicants by the State and agencies such as NPWS.
- To launch the new **Aquabusiness H.Dip.** in Carlow IT (Wexford campus)
- To pursue recognition for IFA Aquaculture as a **Producer Organisation** under new Common Market organisation for Fisheries rules
- IFA will monitor the **EMFF programme** through the official monitoring committee and bilaterally with the Department and BIM to ensure it delivers a more efficient and economically sustainable industry

*Michael Mulloy*  
*ISA Chairman*

*Damien O'Keeffe*  
*ISGA Chairman*

*Richie Flynn*  
*Executive*



# Communications

## Achievements and Work Done

### National and Regional Media

Our priority is to secure the maximum coverage of IFA issues across all media platforms, with a particular focus on the *Farmers Journal*. We are also working to promote our policies and campaigns in all national and regional print, broadcast and online media. The IFA page in the *Farmers Journal* provides a weekly opportunity to highlight IFA activities and events.

The development of digital continues to put pressure on the print media and has altered the way we portray our message (see below the details on the growth of our online communications).

### Developments in Media Personnel and Coverage

Catriona Murphy has been appointed Deputy News Editor of the *Farmers Journal*.

We have maintained our presence in TV news coverage in the last 12 months.

FarmIreland has been established as an online news service by INM. It is led by Margaret Donnelly, formerly the Editor of Agriland. Her replacement has yet to be announced.

### IFA Website

- IFA's main online platform - [www.ifa.ie](http://www.ifa.ie) – is updated daily with news on IFA campaigns and policies, and with information and updates relevant to agriculture, farming and IFA member interests.
- Content was updated and refreshed in all section of the website during 2016. In addition, new sections on Farm Finance and the IFA Election were developed.
- More than 220,000 users accessed the IFA website during 2016 – 50% of these were new users. In total, the website was accessed more than 350,000 times during 2016. The most popular content on the website during 2016 included: market reports, latest news, schemes and payments, sector pages, and member benefits. About half of the website users access the website on mobile or tablet devices.

### Social Media

- IFA has continued to develop its presence and impact on social media, increasing to nearly 10,000 Twitter followers. An average of 14,800 people see IFA tweets each day. IFA Member Services also maintains a Facebook account.

### iFarm

- The IFA app, iFarm, is undergoing a redevelopment to ensure it is more responsive to users' needs. iFarm continues to be updated weekly with price updates for each sector and users receive notifications to their phone when new content is published.

## **Email**

- During 2016, IFA expanded our member email programme, including issuing a number of member updates and a Budget report to general membership. In addition, a monthly Dairy Newsletter is issued via email to dairy membership. We have initiated a similar grain update and continue to expand to other sectors. We will continue to develop frequent communication to a wider audience during 2017.

## **Internal Communications**

- IFA communicates with members via online and offline communications including via email, text messaging, newsletters and advertising.
- In 2016, IFA produced member newsletters in spring, summer, and autumn to update members on IFA work across all sectors. IFA also produced an information newsletter sent to all members ahead of Branch AGMs. In addition, IFA campaign and delivery updates were published periodically during the year.

## **Priorities for 2017**

- Building on the profile of the President as the lead representative of farmers, which was firmly established following his election in April, 2016
- Placing ourselves at the centre of the Brexit debate given the ramifications for farming and food
- Increased coverage for all other issues affecting farm families and our campaigns
- Expansion of our digital communications, both internal and external.

*Niall Madigan*  
*National Press Officer*

*Brigid Fitzgerald*  
*Press & Digital Media Officer*

## Countryside Project Team

### What it Takes to Sustain a Viable Rural Community

During 2017 the Association addressed the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs on the topic of *What it takes to sustain a viable rural community*. In addition, meetings have taken place with elected representatives including Ministers Heather Humphreys and Michael Ring and state agencies on this important issue.

IFA has identified the following policy priorities, which we are pursuing to sustain rural communities:

- A high quality **rural fibre broadband network** across the countryside, to support farm business, job creation, investment and rural development.
- A three-year exemption from **local authority rates** for new business start-ups, to support local enterprise development in rural areas.
- Measures, such as **tax-credits**, to encourage employers to take on **apprentices** and create long term employment.
- **Tax incentives for businesses** to locate in villages and town centres, which have been decimated during the recession.
- Increased and measurable targets for **policing hours and presence of mobile units in rural areas** by An Garda Síochána, to reduce crime and create a greater sense of security in the countryside.
- An increased and ring-fenced **annual rural roads** budget from the Department of Transport each year, allocated to local authorities as part of a planned repair and maintenance programme.
- The re-establishment of a separate **local improvement scheme fund** in each local authority.
- An increase in the number of voluntary **rural walk schemes** to support economic development and tourism in rural areas.
- A package of measures to facilitate the development of proposed **Greenway projects**, which works in co-operation with landowners impacted and protects their rights.
- A review of the **hedge cutting dates**, to reduce the closed period, in line with the nesting season.
- Increased fines and greater enforcement by local authorities to **tackle the scourge of littering** by passing motorists and users of the countryside.

During 2017, IFA will seek to deliver and make progress on many of these policy priorities. This will build on the progress made, in getting legislation put in place to allow home owners to use reasonable force when tackled by intruders in their own homes. Also, the increased Garda numbers announced in the recent budget, while welcomed, must lead to clear and measurable policing hours in rural Ireland.

*Richard Kennedy*  
*Deputy President*  
*& Countryside Project Team Chair*

*Thomas Cooney*  
*Chairman*  
*Environment & Rural Affairs Committee*

*Thomas Ryan*  
*Executive*



## Direct Payments Project Team

### Achievements and Work Done

#### Direct Payments

- In total €1.6bn was paid out to farmers in Direct Payments in 2016.
- IFA secured a 70% BPS advance payment from October 17<sup>th</sup> resulting in a €700m cash flow boost in a very difficult year on farm incomes.
- By year end, IFA pressure had secured Basic payments in excess of €1.18bn to 124,000 farmers out of total applicants of 126,000.
- Outstanding cases were held up due to technical issues, outstanding entitlement problems, inheritance cases etc.
- ANC payments commenced in the third week of September and IFA secured delivery of €205m to 95,000 farmers by year-end.
- On the Beef Data and Genomics Scheme, IFA secured payments of €29m to 16,000 farmers in Dec 2015 and a further €14.5m during 2016. For the 2016 scheme payments of €36m to 19,500 are in process from mid-Dec 2016 into 2017 as data is received.
- 8,500 young farmers received €35.5m under the National Reserve Young Farmer top-up.
- 85% of AEOS/GLAS paid in first instalment to around 40,000 farmers, worth €160m.
- GLAS payments worth €124m commenced at the end of December.

#### Land Eligibility Issues

- IFA campaigned against land eligibility penalties at farm level and worked with the DAFM in resolving many cases as well as national penalties at EU level.

#### CAP Implementation and Simplification

- Strong lobbying by IFA at EU and National level secured significant simplification changes which were introduced in 2016 including a pre-checking arrangement for basic payment, a new yellow card system, increased tolerances and reduced penalties for land eligibility issues.
- IFA met with EU Commission officials on a number of times throughout 2016 to discuss direct payments and farm schemes including on Greening.
- IFA participates on the EU Civil Dialogue Committee on direct payments along with COPA in Brussels.

#### Charter of Rights Monitoring Committee

- The Charter of Rights Monitoring Committee met on 3 occasions in 2016, under the Chairman Sean Brady.
- The Department of Agriculture reported to each meeting on progress on payments, inspections, and administration of various schemes ensuring that and commitments laid out in the Charter are met.

#### Appeals

- At both local and national level, IFA assisted many farmers with difficult appeal cases throughout 2016.
- A meeting with the New Director of the Appeals Office Angela Robinson took place in early October.

### **Direct Payment Problems**

- IFA assisted thousands of farmers with individual direct payment problems across all of the schemes at both national and local level throughout 2016. Critical to this is the structure and process which IFA has set up at national level to deal with these cases through direct contact with the relevant people in the Department of Agriculture.

### **Priorities for 2017**

#### **Payments**

- IFA will insist on prompt payment across all schemes in 2017, in line with the payment deadlines set down in the Charter of Rights.

#### **CAP Simplification**

- IFA will continue to campaign for further CAP simplification and improvements in direct payments.
- IFA will represent farmers on the various Monitoring Committees covering all CAP related measures, the EU Civil Dialogue Group and the National Reserve and Young Farmers.

#### **Charter of Rights**

- IFA will insist that the Charter of Rights is fully implemented across all aspects of farm schemes focusing on payment delivery, notice, tolerances, and reduced levels of inspections and penalties.

#### **Assisting Farmers**

- IFA will continue to assist farmers with individual problem cases at both local and national level working closely with the DAFM officials.

*Richard Kennedy*

*Angus Woods*

*Joe Brady*

*Kevin Kinsella*

*Gerry Gunning*



## **Economics Section**

### **Achievements and Work Done**

#### **Value of agriculture to the Irish economy – county level**

- Updated the county-level information on the value of agriculture to the wider economy, in terms of output, employment and exports.
- This information is provided to Oireachtas members and is used by IFA officers in their lobbying on local and national issues.

#### **Brexit**

- Prepared the IFA position on the potential impact of Brexit, which IFA publicly launched, in advance of the referendum vote.
- Continue to provide and update information, briefing notes and speeches for IFA elected officers on the IFA Brexit position

#### **CAP Reform 2014-2020**

- Coordinated the IFA response to the September publication of the 'Omnibus Regulations' – modifications to the existing CAP regulations – including the development of a briefing note and consultation with Department of Agriculture officials

#### **Trade negotiations - CETA**

- Coordinated the IFA development of a short briefing paper for elected representatives on the implications for Irish agriculture of the EU-Canada trade deal

#### **Cost-Benefit Analysis work – Flooding**

- Met with the OPW to progress the development of an appropriate CBA measure and valuation of farm land affected by flooding. The IFA proposal will identify published data on margins and output value that we believe should inform the development of a new methodology.

#### **Budget 2017**

- Preparation of the pre-Budget Submission
- Coordination of pre-Budget lobbying
- Analysis of the Budget outcomes and the Finance Bill, in association with the Farm Business Committee.

#### **Review of Farm Incomes 2016**

- Preparation of annual report on agricultural output and income, together with analysis of various aspects of farm income and other relevant economic and statistical data
- The 2016 edition contained, for the first time, a comprehensive survey of farmer sentiment heading into 2017, and the identification of the key issues of concern to those farmers.

### **External representation of IFA**

- Represented IFA as a panel member for the European Commission Annual Outlook Conference, focusing on the challenges of price and income volatility for farming and the dairy sector in particular, and the challenges of sustainable expansion
- Peer review member for the external review of the Teagasc Rural Economy and Development Programme

### **Priorities for 2017**

- To coordinate and lead the IFA information campaign on the potential implications for Irish agriculture and the economy of the planned exit of the UK from the EU (BREXIT). This will include briefing notes for elected officers and a planned formal IFA policy document, to be published in early Spring 2017.
- To coordinate the IFA campaign on the future development of the CAP Post 2020 – this will include providing a response to the Commission consultation that will be launched in early 2017, to liaise with other EU farming organisations and liaise with Government and EU officials on the development of the policy.
- To continue to coordinate the IFA position on international trade negotiations
- To produce and update the annual IFA Farm Income Review, in order to ensure that it continues to be a relevant and timely information source on farm incomes, structures, investment and demographics
- To continue to support IFA commodity sectors on relevant economic issues as they arise,

*Rowena Dwyer*  
*IFA Chief Economist*

## National Environment & Rural Affairs Committee

### Achievements and Work Done

#### **New National Roads Agreement delivers €9m goodwill payment**

- Duration 2016 – 2020.
- Restoration of an additional payment on-top of all other compensation of €3,000/ac, which will be worth approximately €9m to the landowners on the 75 schemes impacted.
- €3,000/ac fixed payment will be made retrospective for all eligible projects that did not receive any fixed payment.
- Buildings' replacement costs will be at current day replacement cost, regardless of age of building.
- Land under CPO will be valued as an individual parcel, based on its size quality and location.

#### **Farmers will not have to reduce stock to comply with EU climate obligations**

- IFA President Joe Healy and Environment Chairman Thomas Cooney led a strong and successful campaign, which has ensured Ireland's 2030 climate targets generally being no more onerous than the current 2020 targets, if all measures available are taken up. This will safeguard the national herd.
- The 2030 outcome was achieved because of the unique combination of high level lobbying of Government and the European Commission by IFA.

#### **Smart Farming cost saving programme delivers average savings of €5,000 per farm**

- Smart Farming continues to identify real cost savings inside the farm gate in areas that include feed, grassland management, soil fertility and energy management. Find out about some of the savings identified in 2016 at [www.smartfarming.ie](http://www.smartfarming.ie).
- You can also register your interest in participating on the website.

#### **Delivery of the extension of accelerated capital allowances for energy efficient equipment to farmers can save up to €3m**

- Government's decision to accept IFA's proposal to extend the accelerated capital allowances (ACA) for energy equipment to farmers will encourage on-farm investment in energy saving technologies.
- The scheme, which is administered by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), allows farmers to write off 100% of the purchase value of qualifying energy efficient equipment against their profit in the year of the purchase. The full list of eligible equipment is listed on the SEAI website.

#### **Quarterly fuel survey continues to show excessive charges for farmers in counties including Kerry, Leitrim, Sligo and Roscommon**

- Four times each year IFA completes a quarterly fuel survey, which records agricultural diesel, home heating oil and car diesel prices, with the most recent highlighting a 20% increase in fuel prices.
- The survey results, which are available on IFA's iFarm app or at [www.ifarm.ie](http://www.ifarm.ie), are used by many farmers to negotiate keener fuel prices with suppliers, as several counties continue to be charged above the national average.

#### **Former Committee Chairman appointed to EPA Advisory Committee**

- Following a nomination from IFA, former Committee Chairman Harold Kingston was appointed to the EPA Advisory Committee.

- Harold will focus on *logic proofing* environmental measures proposed and will seek acknowledgement of the significant efforts and investment made by farmers in improving the agri-environment.

#### **Proposed waste tyre charge for agriculture sector parked**

- Environment Minister Denis Naughten has agreed to defer the introduction of a recycling charge for tractor tyres when they are bought, following significant representations made by IFA.
- He has agreed to fully engage with IFA to ensure excessive recycling charges are not introduced.

#### **Need for delivery of economic returns for farmers**

- IFA President Joe Healy addressed the MacGill Summer School this year and told the packed gathering that addressing the climate challenge must include delivering economic and social sustainability for the farming and wider rural communities.
- He also emphasised the need for greater support for community led renewable energy projects and the important role of farm scale renewables, in addressing the climate challenge.

#### **Priorities for 2017**

- To secure delivery from Heritage Minister Heather Humphreys of the concessions for hedge cutting and gorse burning, which shorten the closed period when such activities are prohibited.
- To secure a realistic renewable electricity tariff from Energy Minister Denis Naughten, which maximises community participation in renewable projects.
- To tackle state agencies including the Departments of Agriculture and Environment, Teagasc and the EPA to work more pro-actively with farmers to reduce the millions of euro of fines imposed during cross compliance inspections.
- To ensure that Environment Minister Denis Naughten's proposal to introduce a new waste tyre management scheme does not add extra costs to farm families.
- To encourage more farmers to take the €5,000 on-farm cost saving challenge by joining the Smart Farming programme.
- To maximise flexibility in the rigid nitrates regulations.
- To safeguard farmers and their farm businesses who may be impacted by proposed Greenway projects.
- To seeks the swift publication by Rural Affairs Minister Heather Humphreys of the Action Plan for Rural Ireland, to address the many challenges endured by farm families and rural businesses, such as rural infrastructure, planning, roads and littering.
- To support farmers impacted by infrastructure developments and ensure that the €9m goodwill payment for farmers impacted by roads is fully drawn down.

*Thomas Cooney*  
Chairman

*Thomas Ryan*  
Executive

# National Farm Business Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

### Budget 2017

- The Farm Business Committee is responsible for developing and coordinating IFA's taxation policy.
- This includes the development of formal proposals annually, in consultation with other sectors, and responding to short-term taxation issues that arise.
- The following taxation measures were delivered as part of Budget 2016, following meetings and consultation with the Departments of Agriculture and Finance:
  - *Income Averaging*: Farmers on income averaging will now be allowed, in a poor income year, to pay only the tax due on the current year. The deferred tax liability will be payable in equal instalments over 4 years.
  - *CGT Relief for Farm Restructuring*: Extended to end 31st December 2019.
  - *Accelerated Capital Allowances for Energy Efficient Investment*: This measure has been extended to sole traders and provides full capital allowance in the first year.
  - *Earned Income Tax credit*: increased by a further €400 to €950.
  - *CAT*: The Group A (parent to child) CAT threshold is being increased from €280,000 to €310,000, Group B from €30,150 to €32,500, Group C from €15,075 to €16,250.

### Other Budgetary Issues – Agri-cashflow loan

- IFA campaigned throughout 2016 for lower cost lending to farmers to deal with short-term working capital pressures, in particular.
- In Budget 2017, the Agri-cashflow loan was announced, providing a total loan fund of €150m, through a partnership between Department of Agriculture and SBCI.
- The fund uses €11m of EU funding (Adjustment aid for livestock farmers, Sept 2016) and €14m national funding as credit guarantee for loan fund.
- The fund will support flexible loans for up to six years, for amounts up to €150,000, at an interest rate of 2.95%, with potential for interest-only payments at start of loan period (first 3 years).
- The main purpose of the loans is to support working capital requirements, such as merchant credit conversion, overdraft conversion, buying of inputs.
- The loans should be available early in the New Year – IFA has continued to push for their earliest possible availability.

### Financial Information meetings

- The IFA Farm Business Committee, supported by their County Executives, held a series of Financial Information meetings over the course of the Autumn.
- Each county held its own meeting, and speakers included IFA representatives, bank representatives, taxation and accountancy service providers, and other financial advisors. T
- The purpose of the meetings was to provide information to farm families on some aspect of their farm finances –whether ensuring tax efficient practices, making a loan application, dealing with a credit difficulty, information on Farm Assist or ensuring access to the contributory pension.
- In total 27 meetings were held, with approximately 1,250 IFA members attending.

### **Access to Credit and Farm Credit Problems**

- IFA has continued to assist farmers across the country with credit problems, through the IFA helpline and through the local offices, with the professional support of Mr Brendan Stafford, Financial Advisor. IFA's role in this area has expanded to include the asset management companies that are now managing loans that have been sold on
- In addition, IFA continues to engage with the banks on issues arising for the farming sector on the costs and availability of credit. IFA has also met with the SBCI to further encourage the development of lower cost loan products for farmers (see Agri-cashflow loan)

### **Department of Enterprise Advisory Group on Small Business**

- IFA was represented on the Advisory Group on Small Business by Martin Stapleton, IFA Farm Business Chairman.
- This forum inputs into policy development on issues of common concern in relation to SMEs and farm businesses, including taxation, access to credit and other business costs.
- As part of this forum, the IFA submission on insurance costs was discussed, with proposals to soon be published by the Expert Group chaired by Minister of State, Eoghan Murphy.

### **Higher Education Funding**

- The IFA Farm Business chairman made a written submission to the Oireachtas Committee on education who are currently examining the future funding of higher education
- IFA deputy President Richard Kennedy made a presentation to this committee highlighting IFA's opposition to any change to the maintenance grant system that would include the introduction of productive assets as part of the means test.

### **Priorities for 2017**

#### **Access to Credit and other banking costs**

- IFA will meet with the three main retail banks in early 2017 to discuss issues of relevance to different farm enterprises
- IFA will continue liaise with the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland to identify and develop new funding options for farm financing.
- IFA will continue to support farmers with credit difficulties
- IFA will prioritise the identification of potential options relating to the costs of registering a legal charge.

#### **Further Taxation and Other Policy**

- IFA Farm Business Committee will develop further farm taxation policy proposals for 2017.
- This will include a renewed examination of the taxation system to determine whether additional volatility measures are required, or existing measures can be improved upon, and the tax treatment of land under renewable energy infrastructure.
- The Farm Business Committee will also identify emerging issues for farm businesses, such as labour supply and education costs, for work on during 2017.

*Martin Stapleton*  
Chairman

*Rowena Dwyer*  
Executive

## National Farm Family & Social Affairs Committee

### Achievements and Work Done

#### Farm Health & Safety

- There have been 19 farm fatalities as of 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016, compared with 18 deaths in 2015.
- The Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee (FSPAC) published the **Farm Safety Action Plan 2016 – 2018**, which sets out six goals to improve workplace safety and health performance.
- The third **National Farm Safety Awareness Day** was hosted on 21<sup>st</sup> July, which encourages and supports farmers to review their safety on their farm by assisting them through the production and circulation of 80,000 farm safety risk assessment planner.
- IFA was the lead organisation in Ireland for the **UK and Ireland Farm Safety Week**, which offered five days of themed practical farm safety advice and guidance for farmers. The campaign was selected as a finalist in the Farming Partnership of the Year category in the British Farming Awards.
- IFA, in partnership with the **Irish Heart Foundation (IHF)**, rolled out a national awareness campaign to encourage farmers to take better care of their heart health. The IFA funded campaign was initiated as a result of research showing that farmers are disproportionately affected by lifestyle heart diseases, and comprised of a visit to each County Executive partaking and a free heart health check for over 300 members.
- IFA and Pieta House developed a media campaign to re-promote the **Mind Our Farm Families** phone line (1890 130 022) and counselling service for farmers and farm families that are feeling suicidal.
- Let's Walk and Talks events were organised in Cork, Donegal, Galway and Monaghan as part of national **Green Ribbon campaign** to reduce stigma and encourage people to talk about mental health.
- IFA is one of 30 partner organisations in the HSE led **Understanding Together** campaign, a public support, awareness and information campaign on dementia, which was launched in October 2016.

#### Fair Deal scheme

- There was further recognition of the ongoing work of the Committee in the programme for a new partnership Government, which gave a commitment to introduce changes to remove discrimination against family farms as soon as possible. This commitment was reiterated at meeting with Minister of Health and Minister of Older People.
- IFA presented to the Interdepartmental Working Group charged with overseeing the implementation of recommendations contained in the 2015 Review. IFA is seeking (i) a reduction in the charge on the farm assets, similar to Agricultural Relief, (ii) assets transferred 3 years or more to be excluded from financial assessment and (iii) a broadened interpretation of 'sudden illness or disability'.
- IFA provides advice and information to farm families, as well as representation to farmers on application for the Fair Deal scheme.

#### COPA Women Committee

- Margaret Farrelly, MD, Clonarn Clover represented the IFA at the 2016 European Innovation for Women Farmers Awards and was selected overall winner. The theme of this year's competition was women drivers of innovation and green growth in the European Union.
- The Committee published a strategic vision to foster the status of women farmers in Europe. The vision recognises that women are key players, working to ensure the economic sustainability of the family farm, be it through their work on or off the farm. It rightly recognises that many women farmers have transformed the traditional role by developing a wide range of rural businesses.

- The strategy wants to empower more women living in rural areas to unlock their potential. It wants EU policy measures to support women farmers to create new opportunities, to encourage entrepreneurial skills and to support projects that will lead to new and innovative farming and farm businesses.

#### **State pension advisory service**

- An information leaflet on State Pensions (Contributory and Non-Contributory) was produced to increase understanding of the eligibility criteria of the State pension.
- IFA provided an advisory and information service, as well as representation to farmers that are enquiring about qualifying criteria or entitlements, or have issues in relation to their personal rate.
- IFA provides information and advice on Farm Spouse pensions, the application procedure and the qualifying criteria under the scheme.

#### **Priorities for 2017**

- To continue to change the farm health & safety culture through the SAVE LIVES campaign, the focus for 2017 will be on the themes outlined in the Staying Fit for Farming publication
- To secure the adoption of proposed changes to Fair Deal scheme to remove inequity for farm families.
- To continue to work with the Department of Health and other agencies to improve health and mental wellbeing of farm families through a range of initiatives.
- To continue to address anomalies in Social Protection that impact older farmers and their eligibility for State Pension.
- To ensure that EU policy supports and empower more women living in rural areas to develop new and innovative farming and businesses.

*Maura Canning*  
*Chairwoman*

*Geraldine O'Sullivan*  
*Executive*



# National Farm Forestry Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

### 2016 Forestry Programme

The latest figures from the Forest Service (October 2016) show that:

- 5,695 hectares of new forests have been established, an increase of 4% on this date last year.
- €70,502,282 has been issued on forest premiums.
- 48,127 linear metres of new forest road have been constructed, an increase of 1% on this time last year.
- 1,152 General Felling Licences have been issued to the private sector, to clearfell 1,300 hectares and thin 14,695 hectares.

### Forest Road Scheme

- IFA secured a re-structuring of the grant to a single payment of grant following construction of forest road.
- IFA also secured an additional payment for farmers where a new entrance to the public road is being created or modified. There is an additional bellmouth grant allowance of 20 metres at a grant rate of €40 per linear metres. The grant is subject of costs incurred to a maximum of €800 per plantation.
- A new Technical Standards for the Design of Forest Road Entrances from Public Roads has been drafted.

### Windblow Reconstitution Scheme

- IFA secured a Reconstitution Scheme for farmers affected by Storm Darwin over winter 2013/2014.
- The scheme will provide grant aid to cover the cost of replanting up to a maximum of €1,700/ha for both conifer and broadleaf forests. The total eligible area is 10 hectares per contract number up to a maximum payment of €17,000. The scheme is open to all forests established after 1<sup>st</sup> December 1989.
- Forests that were not insured will be eligible to apply for full costs associated with reconstitution, whereas forests that were insured can apply for funding up to the excess limit imposed by policy.

### Land Types for Afforestation

- A Land Types for Afforestation was launched in March 2016, the working document sets out the potential eligibility of land for support under the Afforestation Scheme, based on the capability of that land to produce a sustainable commercial crop of timber. The document assesses land based on ground vegetation to determine suitability of land by scoring the land.
- The benefit of the new scoring system is that some land that was previously classed as a GPC1, which has a premium rate of €185 per hectare has been re-categorised to GPC2, which has a premium rate of €440 per hectare.

### Environmental requirement for Afforestation

- In a submission to the Forest Service, substantial concerns were raised in relation to increased management requirements and the associated costs were highlighted. IFA concurred that the requirements were too prescriptive and would act as disincentive to afforestation.
- At a meeting with Minister Doyle, IFA reiterated concerns that requirements were too prescriptive and do not provide scope to agree an operational and management plan appropriate to the site that satisfies both environmental and economic objectives of farmers.
- A number of changes were secured, but IFA have major concerns of the implications of the recommendations on productive area.

### **Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan**

- The HHTRP Consultative Committee met only once in 2016, so progress of the development of the plan has been thwarted.
- IFA has continued to work with the industry and Government to highlight other management options available that would permit afforestation in the SPAs. This includes practices adopted by the Northern Ireland Forest Service that manages the Slieve Beagh SPA, which has 70% forest cover by ensuring a mosaic of different forest age classes, so the hen harrier has sufficient favoured habitat.

### **Bi-monthly timber market reports**

- IFA undertakes surveys of timber buyers and forest owners every two months to get both standing and roadside prices for softwoods. The Timber Price Survey is emailed to members and is available on IFA.ie and on the ifarm app.

### **Priorities for 2017**

- To remove 20% restriction on Unenclosed Land.
- To increase Forest Premium rates and Forest Roads grant as part of Mid-Term Review of the Forestry Programme 2014 – 2020, as well as reinstate differential on forest premium for farmer and non-farmer.
- To reinstate afforestation quota in Hen Harrier SPA under Threat Response Plan.
- To amend protocol for the determination of the acid sensitivity and enable appropriate afforestation in these areas.
- To develop support to mobilise small-scale forestry economically to generate income for farm families.
- To finalise Timber Sales contract to ensure that farmers' interests are protected.
- To remove planning permission requirement when constructing new forest road entrances.
- To improve members' services and information available to farmers with forestry.

*Pat Collins*  
*Chairman*

*Geraldine O'Sullivan*  
*Executive*

## Flood Project Team

### Achievements and Work Done

- Following the severe flooding in December-January of 2015/16, IFA has had several meetings with the Minister for the Office of Public Works Sean Canney, to get a commitment for greater resources to be put in place to alleviate flooding problems around the country.
- Funding and work commenced for the Dunkellan area of south Galway the lowering of Lough Rynn in County Leitrim and flood alleviation works in south Leitrim.
- A task force has been set up to deal with the Shannon, which IFA has insisted must not be a “talking shop”.
- Commitments were secured to fund maintenance work on the River Shannon. This will also be extended to other areas.
- IFA ensured that screening can take place rather than outright planning where rock has to be removed.
- A relocation scheme has also been announced with details to emerge in 2017.
- On the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAMS), IFA has had ongoing discussions with Jacobs Consultants who are carrying out the initial study on the River Shannon.
- It is a requirement under the EU Floods Directive that such management plans are in place and that they will be implemented from 2016 onwards. Already discussions have commenced in other areas such as the South Galway area, the Dublin area and surrounds, the south-east, the north-east, Neagh Bann area and the Cork area.
- IFA is particularly concerned that the CFRAMS will not come up with action plans that are necessary to deal with the ongoing problem of flooding.
- A protest took place in August in Athlone to highlight farmers concerns at the CFRAMS Public Consultation.
- Several meetings were held with local authorities who were told to prioritise the protection of coastal areas, banks on rivers, as well as remedial work to alleviate flooding.
- Ongoing meetings are taking place with ESB in relation to flood levels on the Shannon. Weekly reports are being made available. On a pilot basis, lake levels in Lough Allen were reduced by up to 2m. this will add capacity when heavy rain occurs.
- IFA also ensured that an examination of Turloughs be undertaken following severe flooding problem in Lough Funshinagh in Roscommon and areas of Co Longford.

### Priorities for 2017

- That the CFRAMS delivers real results for farmers in avoiding flooding of farmland.
- That farmland is not sacrificed in order to avoid flooding in urban areas.
- That all efforts are made by all the state agencies including OPW, ESB, Waterways Ireland and local authorities to make every effort to either avoid or mitigate flooding.
- A single authority must be put in place to deal with the ongoing flooding issues on the Shannon with farmer representation.
- That the commitment is given in 2017 in relation to resources being provided by maintenance, remedial, structural repair and flood alleviation works is fully honoured.
- That sufficient finance is put in place for flood defence projects.
- That a new cost benefit analysis for the small works programme is agreed.

*Padraig Joyce*  
Chairman

*Gerry Gunning*  
Rural Development Executive



## **Fresh Milk Producers**

### **Achievements and Work Done**

#### **Negotiations with Consumer Foods Ireland (Glanbia)**

- Additional 1c per litre on liquid milk for January, February and March 2016, (approx. value to FMP members €520,000)
- Inclusion of Ornuia payment on liquid milk
- Additional 10M litres in optional liquid fixed price scheme 2016.
- Glanbia Co-op payment on liquid milk.
- Agreement with CFI to extend current liquid milk premium until Dec 2017
- FMP resisted any movement in liquid milk payment away from the current constituent's payment.
- Represented all 1050 liquid suppliers to Glanbia in regular meetings and communications with Glanbia on milk quality issues.
- Ongoing collaboration with Teagasc on best practice for liquid milk suppliers

### **Priorities for 2017**

- FMP negotiation team will represent all FMP members (850 active suppliers) in negotiations on a sustainable liquid milk premium during the year.
- The FMP Joint Quality committee will continue to meet on a regular basis with Glanbia representatives on all milk quality issues.
- Support the National Dairy Council (NDC) in their efforts to promote Irish farmed, locally produced NDC labelled milk.
- Engagement with the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture on retail trade issue and the continued supply of a sustainable source of local fresh milk in Republic of Ireland
- Ensure that all liquid milk is sourced from NMA (National Milk Agency) approved contracted suppliers.

*Robert Malone*

*FMP Executive Secretary*



# Hill Farming Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

### GLAS & Commonages

- The Committee had several meetings with the Department of Agriculture to ensure that flexible arrangements were put in place for commonage farmers under the new stocking arrangements required.
- Over 10,000 commonage farmers have now joined the GLAS scheme.
- Where there are difficulties with GLAS on commonages, these are being referred to the Commonage Implementation Committee.
- The Minister for Agriculture recently appointed Pdraig Gibbons as the new Chairman of the Commonage Implementation Committee to replace IFA President, Joe Healy.
- Commonage plans have to be completed by March 2017 and IFA has got guarantees that the min/max stocking levels set out can be reviewed by the Planner.
- IFA ensured that Planners are not asked to determine the eligible area.

### Heritage Bill 2016

- The Heritage Bill was presented to the Senate in early 2016 and again in late 2016.
- The Bill proposes to allow burning of gorse in the month of March.
- IFA put significant pressure on the Minister to ensure that this is pursued.

### Walks Scheme

- The Hill Committee were successful in getting a commitment in the Programme for Government for an additional €2m to the Walks Scheme.
- Discussions took place with the Minister of State Michael Ring to pursue this matter.
- Over 40 walks are now established in the scheme, which IFA negotiated in 2008. Around 1,900 farmers are availing of the scheme, which is worth €1.9m annually.

### TAMS Sheep Fencing Scheme

- The Committee put a lot of pressure on to ensure that the Sheep Fencing Scheme was included in TAMS. Applications were accepted from June 2016.

### 10 Point Plan for Hill Farmers

- A 10-point plan was put forward by the Hill Committee at a major meeting in Ballycroy, Co. Mayo in June 2016.
- The main points included:
  - New sheep scheme
  - ANCs
  - Knowledge Transfer
  - Targeted output scheme
  - Compensation for designated land
  - Improvement to the Farm Assist.

## **Priorities for 2017**

The Committee will be pursuing:

1. The funding allocated RDP 2014-2020 is fully utilised for farm schemes which help support low income farmers.
2. Payments under GLAS are increased and the €5,000 cap is removed from the general scheme as well as the €7,000 limit for GLAS+.
3. In the ANC review, hill areas must be fully protected.
4. That an additional €50m is put into the ANC scheme to reverse cuts and to increase payments up to a maximum of €6,000 in hill areas.
5. That a special Hill Sheep Knowledge Transfer measure is put in place with a payment of €1,000 per participant.
6. A special upland environmental scheme under the locally led scheme should be put in place to reward farmers for collectively managing their farms.
7. The 2016 Heritage Bill is passed through all stages of the Oireachtas and implemented at the earliest possible date.
8. Recent flexibilities on eligible land must allow farmers to claim land where they are not allowed to improve such as Natura land.
9. The recent inclusion of Sheep Fencing under TAMS must be followed by increase in costing in hill areas where planning approval and other Natura restrictions apply.
10. Teagasc should give priority for online courses and more flexible arrangements for farmers in hill areas.
11. Where restrictions are imposed on farming in designated land, compensation must be paid through the NPWS Farm Plan Scheme.
12. The number of walks covered under the Walks Scheme must be increased. This will support the development of recreational tourism in hill areas.

*Pat Dunne*  
*Chairman*

*Gerry Gunning*  
*Executive*



## Horse Project Team

### Achievements and Work Done

- As agreed with IFA, the 2017 foal levy bands will continue as were for 2016. IFA sits on the Horse Racing Ireland (HRI) Thoroughbred Foal Levy Committee. 2016 foal levy fund amounted to €1.753m (€1.683m in 2015) and allocated as follows: Equine Centre €870,000, ITBA €425,000, ITM €425,000.
- Meeting with Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) for discussions on the industry.
- Meeting with HRI Chairman and CEO on the following issues: Equine Discussion Groups' funding and the need to include thoroughbred horse breeders in the scheme, breeders' prizes, fillies programme, equine centre funding and sales based levy.
- Monitored the passage of the Horse Racing Ireland Act 2016 through the Houses of the Oireachtas.
- IFA 2016 General Election Manifesto – looked for the foal levy to be collected on the actual stallion fee by the breeder and the State contribution towards the Irish Equine Centre would continue.
- IFA wrote to Ministers Creed and Doyle on issues surrounding the mechanism of how the foal levy is collected.
- IFA continues to address the Horse Passports/Unwanted Horse - Horse registration issue both with the Department of Agriculture and with COPA in Brussels.
- IFA sits on the Equine Liaison Group, coordinated by the Department of Agriculture, where issues being addressed include: unwanted horses, registration, equine health and welfare.
- COPA-COGECA Horse Vice-Chairman James Murphy continued to represent Irish horse breeders in Brussels where animal welfare, unregistered horses and transport of equidae are high on the agenda.
- J Murphy made presentation to the European Parliament on the challenges in the Irish equine sector, covering topics as follows: lack of profitability in the sector, knowledge transfer/discussion groups, purchasing groups, impact of regulation and bureaucracy on the sector and horse welfare and transport.
- J Murphy made a presentation to the European Parliament on Responsible Horse Ownership.
- IFA met with the Traditional Irish Horse Association (TIHA) on issues relating to retaining the identity of the traditional Irish horse. TIHA believe more needs to be done to promote the indigenous breed.

### Priorities for 2017

- Continue to represent farmer horse breeders on issues that arise in the sector.
- IFA is campaigning for changes to how the foal levy is calculated, particularly on the actual stallion fee and will be pursuing this through the HRI Foal Levy Committee and the Department of Agriculture/Minister for Agriculture.
- Continue to lobby the European Commission to change the requirements for horses to enter the food chain.

*James Murphy*  
Chairman – Horse Project Team

*Elaine Farrell*  
Executive



## Horticulture Committee

### Achievements and Work Done

Field Vegetables and Protected crops, Soft Fruit and Nursery Stock:

- IFA's robust campaign throughout the year prevented any repeat irresponsible promotion campaigns by retailers.
- IFA's campaign against Aldi's tendering process was successful, outcomes of the discussions with the retailer continue to be implemented and meetings are continuing to ensure progress.
- IFA's Fresh Produce growers made presentation to Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture on Below Cost Selling by retailers.
- IFA continues to ensure Irish produce gets retailer priority over cheaper imports, especially with discounters Aldi and Lidl.
- Brexit - mushroom growers made a presentation to the Oireachtas Agriculture Committee outlining the turmoil that their industry has been thrown into, demonstrating that growers are in continuous and unsustainable loss-making territory, resulting from the sudden and significant weakening of sterling.
- IFA's constant communication with retail buyers has ensured growers' concerns are foremost on the retailers' agenda.
- Met with Minister for Horticulture Andrew Doyle on a range of issues affecting the sector
- IFA continues to push for recognition of growers' costs of production by retailers as deflation in retail prices continues due to intense competition in the marketplace, exerting downward pressure on the farm gate price.
- IFA is working directly with growers so that the market balanced in supply of Brassicas.
- IFA has successfully minimised the importation of fruit / vegetable produce, continually monitoring the amounts of produce and through liaison with retailers. Work also involves monitoring of mislabelling etc.
- IFA involvement in *National Strawberry Week* contributed to the domestic market benefiting from the continuous rise in consumption, up 5% year on year.
- IFA, with Bord Bia, coordinated the inaugural *National Summer Salads' Week*, calling on retailers to support Ireland's 75 salad growers, with crops at farm gate value of 45m.
- IFA representation to the DAFM and at EC level assisted CMP in their PO bid for 2015.
- IFA has raised issues with Bord Bia on the new Horticulture Quality Assurance Scheme.
- IFA/IHNSA, together with Bord Bia organised two plant/trolley fairs in 2016 for nursery stock producers aimed at reducing the importation of nursery stock produce.
- 19 nursery growers also signed up to a garden centre initiative 'GroMor', coordinated by Retail Excellence Ireland; with the support of Bord Bia in an effort to get people back gardening.
- Packers and merchants continued to collect the IFA Horticulture Levy, whereby growers pay 0.25% of the farm gate price of their produce.
- IFA continues to provide regular and up-to-date market information to veg and fruit growers.
- Fresh produce growers have met with the Competition and Consumer Protection (CCPC) on the enforcement and compliance of the Grocery Goods Regulations 2016.
- IFA lobbied the DAFM for the inclusion of orchards (apple trees) in GLAS Tier 1.
- Lobbying of local councils in midlands to reduce development levies on horticultural buildings.

- Liaison with DAFM on introducing replacement Plant Protection Products for the industry.
- Lobbied for compensation for vegetable growers who suffered crop losses last Winter.

## **Priorities for 2017**

- Predatory pricing by retailers - this is the single biggest threat to the vegetable and fruit industry. Retailers continue to abuse their dominant market power.
- IFA will continue its campaign on below cost selling; growers cannot survive in the current environment.
- IFA will push Minister Doyle to establish the Horticulture Stakeholders Forum, committed to last summer and look for increased funding for horticulture via the existing grant scheme.
- IFA will continue liaising with all retailers to ensure that Irish produce is stocked in preference to imported produce.
- IFA will be lobbying for stronger retail legislation and will actively be engaging with the CCPC to effect change, through the new Regulations, for improvement in doing business in the sector.
- To work with Bord Bia on the further promotion of all crops.
- To continue liaising with merchants and packers in the interests of growers.
- To make further representation, when necessary, to the European Commission to ensure existing POs can comply and benefit from the EU Scheme and to ensure that barriers that prevent maximum potential drawdown of EU funding (4.1% of turnover) are removed. Ensure that other growers in the sector are given the opportunities to enter the PO structure.

*Gerry Reilly*  
*Chairman*

*Elaine Farrell*  
*Executive*

*Patrick Farrell*  
*Potatoes & Fresh Produce*  
*Development Officer*

## Inputs Project Team

### Achievements and Work Done

- The Project Team stepped up its lobbying campaign to force the EU Commission to eliminate import tariffs and anti-dumping duties on non-EU fertiliser imports.
- High level meetings were held with various Commission DGs including Agriculture, Trade, Competition and Grow.
- Letters outlining the justification for the elimination of duties and tariffs and requesting Member State support were sent to the 28 relevant Ministries in their native language.
- Similarly, all of the EU main fertiliser manufacturers were written to outlining the IFA position on the need for tariffs and duties to be eliminated.
- Meetings were held between IFA and key Ministry personnel in a number of Member States as well as a number of major EU and non-EU fertiliser manufacturers.
- IFA met with the Board of Fertilizer Europe as part of its campaign.
- In addition, IFA lodged a 43-page technical/legal submission to DG Trade for the abolition of anti-dumping duties. This was co-signed by a number of major EU farming organisations and co-operatives.
- The Project Team's advice to farmers is to continually shop around for all products before purchasing which delivers real dividends. Farmers who check out prices and/or negotiate favourable credit terms can achieve considerable savings.
- Information is king. The publication of IFA price surveys and price information bulletins throughout 2016 highlighted the significant price differences between cash and credit quotes.
- The publication of fertiliser prices on-line and in the farming press during the peak buying season saw fertiliser prices fall by a third
- The promotion of farm-to-farm trade for grain, through the publication and distribution of 100,000 technical feed bulletins, empowers livestock farmers to cut their feed costs by pressurising compound feed mills to cut their margins.
- The publication of feed ingredient prices brings greater transparency to compound feed pricing, enabling farmers to benchmark prices while forcing compounders to reduce margins.

### Priorities for 2017

#### **Compound feed ration composition and price survey**

The Committee will be conducting a detailed ration composition and price survey in the New Year. The current requirements for feed labelling are totally inadequate and as a result the true feed value of compound feed rations is unclear to many livestock producers. IFA will be spearheading a campaign for meaningful changes to the nutritional information made available with purchased compound feed.

#### **Low cost finance access a game changer**

IFA's successful campaign for access to low cost finance will be a significant game changer for many farmers. The ability to purchase for cash or on near cash terms coupled with up to date price information strengthens farmers' bargaining power, reduces market segmentation and ultimately leads to greater price competition between suppliers.

**Price risk management tools**

Price risk management tools are key to reducing price and the resulting margin volatility. The Grain Committee and Inputs Project Team will continue to promote the use of hedging and forward purchasing/selling mechanisms as a means of managing price risk. The launch of a fertilisers futures in Europe will in time be a significant game changer provided key manufacturers buy into the process.

**Group purchasing delivering discounts for farmers**

The growing number of farmer purchasing groups has successfully changed the dynamic of how business can be done between suppliers, co-ops and merchants. Substantial cost savings are being achieved through group/volume purchasing and the co-ordinated deliveries of inputs and/or services. Ongoing talks between IFA and manufacturers/suppliers is increasing direct sales to purchasing groups.

**Expansion of farm-to-farm trade critical**

The Project Team, in conjunction with the Grain Committee, will continue to vigorously promote and develop farm-to-farm trade as a means of boosting grain growers' incomes while reducing livestock farmers feed costs for the 2017 season.

*John Coughlan*  
*Munster Chairman*  
*Project Team Chairman*

*Fintan Conway*  
*Executive*

## Oireachtas Liaison

### Achievements and Work Done

- Lobbying - IFA seeks to advance the position of farmers by communicating the members' case to Oireachtas members/relevant Government Departments through:
  - Building relationships with key relevant Government Ministers/TDs
  - Devising/executing IFA's political operation at national / constituency / county
  - Briefing/lobbying front bench spokespersons in the Opposition parties
  - Organisation/preparation of IFA presentations to Oireachtas Committees. Developed a good working relationship with Committee Chairmen/Clerks to Committees
  - Co-ordination/organisation of presentations to County Councils (where relevant)
  - Ensuring Government backbenchers and all-party Oireachtas Committees are aware of IFA's position on relevant issues
  - On-going liaison with Political Parties' Press Offices and Senior Government Advisors.
- The Regulation of Lobbying Act commenced on 1 Sept 2015. In total, IFA has made 267 entries over three return periods, on a very broad range of issues covering all sectors, which saw IFA at the very top of the lobbying register in terms of activity.
- IFA made a submission to the DPER on the Public Consultation on the Regulation of Lobbying Act included the following comments/recommendations:
  - that the new legislation has placed a heavy administrative and costly burden on the Association.
  - short-comings in the web register/programme are making it very difficult for organisations like IFA to file a concise accurate return, without duplications.
  - that the review of the legislation must take into account the difference between an organisation of the size of IFA, carrying out legitimate lobbying, and other lobbyists, to reflect the magnitude of the lobbying being carried out. IFA is seeking simplification and a reduction of the compliance burden for registered lobby representatives.
  - that SIPO must actively follow up on public bodies that do not keep their DPOs listings updated.
  - that the review of the legislation must not result in any extension of the DPOs to Principal Officers and others and that this matter can be reviewed again in 2019
  - that, in the interests of fairness to all lobbyists, that sectoral groups with no official status and no employees, would be covered by the legislation and be responsible for reporting their lobbying.
- IFA sits on a Regulation of Lobbying Advisory Group, made up of relevant experts/key stakeholders, to provide information and guidance to assist in the implementation of legislation. Elaine Farrell represents IFA on this Group.
- IFA met with Minister Paschal Donohoe on the Regulation of Lobbying Act and raised issues of concern with him
- IFA made presentations in 2016 to the following Joint Oireachtas Committees: Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (Rural Ireland), Justice (Rural Crime) and Education and Skills (Educational Grants).
- IFA 2016 General Election campaign – IFA lobbied extensively both at county and national level on issues identified in the Manifesto

## Priorities for 2017

- IFA policy priorities for lobbying include:
  - Brexit
  - ANC review
  - Farm incomes
  - Retailer regulation and a fair price for Farmers - Independent Ombudsman
  - CAP – full defence of CAP budget and strengthening of EU supports in future negotiations
  - Climate change
  - Funding support for RDP and Farm Schemes
  - Trade
  - Inputs costs
  - Taxation
  - Supporting vulnerable farm families and developing rural infrastructure.
- IFA will monitor the Government's priority legislation, including the Heritage Bill 2016 and Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015
- Attending Ard Fheiseanna and Political Conferences.
- Continue with relationship building of backbenchers; Oireachtas Committee Chairmen.
- Continue to brief Opposition Spokespersons
- Legislation Monitoring - IFA will continuously monitor legislation coming before the Dáil and Seanad, and will keep regular contact with the Chief Whip's Office where legislation being brought before the Dáil and Seanad is decided on.
- Oireachtas Committees - IFA will continue to meet with and make presentations to the Chairman and members of the Agriculture Oireachtas Committee and other relevant Committees.
- IFA Lobby Days - IFA will continue to organise lobby days on specific issues as they arise. One to one contact between IFA officers and their local representatives is critical to the success of these days.

*Elaine Farrell*  
*Oireachtas Executive*



## National Potato Committee

### Achievements and Work Done

- Robust campaign throughout the year resulted in increased farm gate prices over 2015.
- Liaison with retail buyers and potato merchants/packers ensures growers' concerns are foremost on their agendas.
- IFA continues to ensure Irish produce gets retailer priority over cheaper imports, especially with discounters Aldi and Lidl.
- Planting survey of 173 growers was published in the autumn. The survey represented an area of 17,804ac, 81% of total area planted. Main findings were:
  - increase of 1095ac (5%) from 2015
  - tonnage reduction of 1%
  - early varieties increased by 5% over 2015.
- IFA led campaign on sustainable prices to growers with the main retailers, documenting producer costs of bringing crop to market.
- IFA has worked tirelessly with Bord Bia and the Potato Council (UK) on the EU funded Potato Promotion Campaign – “Potatoes – More Than A Bit on the Side” of €1m over the next three years in ROI aimed at putting potatoes back on the plate of Irish consumers. Irish growers will contribute €250,000 over this period. The campaign strategy is to grow the retail potato market by 28,000t, increase the frequency of potato purchase by 6% and increase the health perceptions of potatoes by 8% with consumers over the three years of the campaign.
- IFA is actively involved in monitoring the use of grower registration numbers on potatoes for sale in Ireland.
- Market Price Reporting - price information is collected weekly and sent to growers via text message and published on *ifarm.ie*. This information is also published in the Irish Farmers' Journal along with information in relation to stocks and market trends.
- National Potato Day (NPD) 2016 – IFA was actively involved and participated in NPD which was co-ordinated by Bord Bia.
- Potato Forum established between IFA, growers and merchants and packers to progress issues and improve structure of the industry, with a priority to get an agreement on tare.
- Continue to work with Bord Bia on the Quality Assurance Scheme for potato growers.
- IFA, in conjunction with Teagasc and Bord Bia hosted the Potato Conference in February.
- Working with Bord Bia and Teagasc on a Salad Potato research programme, which includes growers trialling some varieties.
- IFA organised a field study trip to Donegal to promote our indigenous seed industry
- IFA is part of a working group along with other stakeholders seeking to improve the seed industry in Ireland.

### Priorities for 2017

IFA will continue to work with Bord Bia and the IPF on the roll-out of the Potato Promotion Campaign, which will include grower involvement.

- IFA will continue to watch and target supermarkets' use of potatoes as a loss leader and expose producer exploitation.
- IFA is continuously working towards better market co-ordination from growers, right through to consumer. Main focus is to ensure growers are in best possible trading position.
- IFA will continue meeting with growers to discuss problems in the market place. More efficient and accurate communications between the industry and growers is essential.
- Target imports for chipping, currently importing 50,000 tonnes per year. Seeking meetings with chippers to address this issue.
- Addressing the importing of over 15,000 tonnes of salad/baby potatoes will continue and more growers will be targeted to pilot the salad varieties available, which is now in year two of a three-year project.
- Requirement by growers to have a workable producer Horticulture Quality Assurance Scheme for potato growers.
- Lobbying of Government and MEPs to retain Glyphosate as a herbicide and Diquat as a desiccant which are critical for field crop production.
- Targeted grant scheme for salad potato growers in Budget 2017.
- IFA will continue to work with the IPF to get a resolution on the tare issue

*Eddie Doyle*  
*Chairman*

*Elaine Farrell*  
*Executive*

*Pat Farrell*  
*Development Officer*

# National Poultry Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

- Agreement by EPA on the reduction in cost of transfer IPCC.
- Clarification on specification for TAMS II in the poultry sector.
- Approval by DAFM for Poultry Knowledge Transfer Groups in 2016.
- IFA contributed and liaised with all stakeholders in the Campylobacter Forum.
- Country of Origin labelling for poultry products.
- Avian Influenza (AI). IFA initiated all information meetings for stakeholders in the poultry sector with DAFM, at the outset of the outbreak of AI across mainland Europe.
- Successful agreement with DAFM in relation to the packaging and labelling required for imported whole turkeys in Ireland in 2016.
- Full implementation of negotiated price increases across main broiler groups.

## Priorities for 2017

- Broiler Grower Terms and Conditions.  
IFA will assist broiler grower groups to negotiate an agreed code of practice to deal with housekeeping and quality parameters on a standardised basis in order to endure fairness and equality through the poultry production chain for farmers.
- Broiler Groups.  
IFA will assist in the remaining groups of broiler growers to ensure an increase in payment terms and conditions.
- Free Range Egg sector.  
Full engagement with all main packers on marketing issues, and farmer supplier terms and conditions.
- Retailer Sector  
The Committee will meet all retailers in early 2017 and ensure that ROI poultry products are stocked, correctly labelled and that a sustainable price is passed back through the procurement chain.
- Rural Development Plan 2014-2020  
The Chairman and the Committee will continue to interact with DAFM on issues relating to the prompt approval of TAMSII funding for farmers and the inclusion of new technologies in the scheme.
- To assist with poultry producers in the delivery of effective discussion groups for both broiler and egg producers under the Knowledge Transfer Scheme.

*Nigel Renaghan*  
Chairman

*Robert Malone*  
Executive



# Renewables & Alternative Land Use Project Team

## Solar Energy

### **Government Inaction has Fuelled Questionable Solar Energy Rush**

Speculative prospecting by solar energy development companies across Ireland continues. It has reached a new milestone in recent weeks, with more than 25,000 acres of land now under some form of a solar energy contract.

The march of the solar developers continues, with conditional promises of significant annual sums being offered if farmers sign exclusivity agreements, which include a right to apply for grid connection. And they will keep going. That is, until the Government comes forward with long-awaited policy clarity, answering key questions.

### **Government Must Give Clarity**

We need to know how many megawatts of solar energy will receive financial support; what tariff premium will be provided where communities are involved in the renewable projects; will all those who have signed contracts get access to the new solar tariff and if not, what is going to happen to the thousands of farmers who have signed contracts with legitimate expectation?

It is wrong of Government to allow this flux to continue. They must immediately clarify many of these basic questions, in particular the financial support - or REFIT tariff as it is called - must be announced as a matter of urgency.

### **Consider Carefully Before you Sign**

At this stage, any farmer who has been approached by a solar development company and has not yet signed an exclusivity agreement or other paperwork needs to think carefully. These farmers are at the back of a long queue.

It's important that farmers understand that exclusivity agreements are unnecessary and only buy time for the development company. Instead, a full suite of option and lease contracts should be sought, and the term of the option should be no longer than 3-5 years - if a project has not progressed by then it is unlikely to happen. The contract must also include a clause stating that if the project is not developed on the lands, the associated grid reverts back to the landowner.

Above everything else it is vital that farmers get good independent legal advice before signing anything. Remember, you are making decisions not just for you but also for the next generation.

*James Murphy*  
*Leinster Regional Chairman*  
*& Renewables Project Team Chairman*

*Thomas Ryan*  
*Environment Executive*



## Retailer, Processor and Consumer Relations Project Team

### Achievements and Work Done

- President met with CEO/senior management of the major retailers.
- On-going engagement and meetings with retail product buyers in all retailers.
- Grocery Goods Regulations (Statutory Instruments) signed into law and published in February - the effectiveness of the regulations will depend on robust monitoring and oversight by the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC).
- The Regulations contain important safeguards for suppliers, including the prohibition on a requirement to pay for promotion; contracts in writing; and payment within 30 days.
- The absence of a ban on below-cost selling is a serious weakness in the Regulations.
- IFA General Election 2016 Manifesto – key demand was the appointment of an Independent Ombudsman to oversee the implementation of the regulations.
- IFA met with the CCPC twice, including with some fresh produce growers to outline to the CCPC the circumstances under which they supply retailers and wholesalers.
- Met with Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on the Grocery Goods Regulations and overseeing of their enforcement.
- Raised issue of Below Cost Selling by retailers with Ministers Creed and Doyle.
- Attended GSCOP (Grocery Supply Code of Practice) Conference in UK and met with Christine Tacon UK Adjudicator.
- IFA President Joe Healy chaired three COPA/COGECA Working Party on the Food Chain meetings, one of which was attended by UK GCA Christine Tacon.
- President met with DG Agri and DG Grow on Unfair Trading Practices and EU legislation and with Food and Drinks Europe on the Supply Chain Initiative (SCI).
- President participated in European Parliament event on Unfair Trading Practices.
- IFA made a submission and welcomed the Commission's proposals to increase transparency rules for multinationals on taxation, turnover and profit and urged the Irish government and MEPs to support their passage through the European Council and the European Parliament.
- IFA organised a conference in November *Regulating the Retail Landscape for Suppliers – Tackling Unfair Trading Practices*, which was addressed by UK Groceries Code Adjudicator Christine Tacon and CCPC Director of Regulation John Shine.
- IFA staged a campaign in the run up to Christmas, warning retailers against discounting fresh produce, where growers are used as pawns in a vicious battle over market share.
- IFA welcomed the Agricultural Markets Task Force (AMTF) Report which contains important recommendations on increased price transparency and independent enforcement of legislation to strengthen farmers' position in the food chain.
- Presentation to European People's Party (EPP) in Brussels on Unfair Trading Practices and the AMTF Report.
- Discussions with Fianna Fail on draft Food Ombudsman Bill.

## **Priorities for 2017**

- Campaign against retailers on below cost-selling and intensify campaign on Government to ban this practice.
- Introduction of an Independent Ombudsman to oversee and regulate the behaviour of retailers.
- Push for legislation required to provide for the disclosure of profits in the Irish market by large retail multiples, to improve transparency and re-balance bargaining power in the food supply chain.
- Ensure the CCPC takes on board the importance of its role in monitoring the compliance of retailers and wholesalers within the legislation, including all the requirements for retailers/wholesalers in staff training, annual compliance reporting and maintaining of records.
- Ensure greater certainty to producers on their terms and conditions, as the statutory legislation provides for written contracts between retailers or wholesaler and suppliers.
- Grocery regulations must lead to change by retailers and wholesalers when it comes to paying their suppliers promptly, and provide for payment within 30 days as a standard provision.
- Continue to monitor Irish supermarkets on their commitment to Irish produce.
- Continue to campaign as a supermarket watchdog to tackle and expose mislabelling.
- Continue to increase percentage of Irish produce on-shelf.
- Country of Origin labelling for all fresh produce.
- More transparency in labelling between ROI/NI especially in pigmeat, poultry, fresh produce.
- Address excessive discounting of food products at farmers' expense.

### **Priorities at EU level**

- That the AMTF report is prioritised and implemented by the European Commission and that the recommendations are introduced and enforced without delay.
- Progress EU legislation through COPA–COGECA Working Party on Food Chain.
- Work with DG Agri and other DGs to ensure the AMTF report recommendations are put in place.
- Effective statutory legislation is needed at European level to address the imbalance in the food supply chain. The Voluntary Supply Chain Initiative (SCI), undertaken by the Commission, is not working for primary producers.
- Continue to lobby EU Agriculture Commissioner Phil Hogan and his Cabinet to achieve fairness in the food supply chain.

*Elaine Farrell*  
*Retail Executive*



## National Rules, Privileges and Procedures Committee

The National Rules Committee deals with internal organisational matters concerning the Association. Under the IFA Rules, the **Committee's function** is "to advise Council for Council to decide" on all matters concerning the Constitution and Rules of the Association and on all matters of voluntary organisational procedure and discipline at all levels within IFA.

The National Treasurer/Returning Officer is designated under the Rules as Chairman of the Rules Committee and is also given direct **responsibility for all elections** and election procedures within the Association.

Mr Jer Bergin was re-elected as National Treasurer/Returning Officer at the IFA AGM in April 2017.

### Achievements and Work Done

Following the resignation of the President in late November 2015, the National Treasurer /Returning Officer, the Committee and the Secretary ensured that Council was properly advised and the IFA rules were fully respected in organising National Elections and making necessary/appropriate rule changes.

The above matters were covered in the last annual report and this report deals with work done since the April 2016 AGM.

- Resolved the Connacht Chairman nomination impasse.
- Conduct of Connacht Chairman election.
- Commenced review of Presidential and Regional Chairmen elections.
- Issued procedures for elections by County Executives to National Committees in autumn 2016 for the new Committees' term running from January 2017 to December 2018.
- Supported the National Pigs Committee and the Boortmalt Sub-Committee of the National Grain Committee on rules and procedures.
- Advised and supported officers, County Executives and staff on rules and procedures, elections and the resolution of differences/disputes.

### Priorities for 2017

- Complete the review of Presidential and Regional Chairmen elections and bring any recommendations to Council in early 2017 in preparation for elections in late 2017.
- Advise Council on the necessary changes in IFA rules and procedures following the adoption by Council of the recommendations of the Lucey Implementation Committee.
- Conduct National Committee elections in spring 2017 for Committee Vice Chairmen and Management Committees.
- Conduct National Committee elections in late 2017 for Committee Chairmen where such elections fall due.

The National Returning Officer and the Committee will continue to uphold and apply the Rules of IFA, while at all times respecting the rights of individual members and the authority of the Council as the governing body of the Association.

*Jer Bergin*  
*Chairman &*  
*National Treasurer/Returning Officer*

*Bryan Barry*  
*Secretary /*  
*Acting General Secretary*

# National Rural Development & Less Favoured Areas Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

### GLAS

- The third phase of GLAS opened in November 2016.
- The total number of farmers in the scheme from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 will be in excess of 50,000.
- IFA ensured that flexibility was given so that farmers could maximise their payments either for the GLAS+ of €7,000 or the basic scheme of €5,000.
- In total around €47m of GLAS payments was paid out in 2016.
- Detailed discussion took place with the Department on many of the technicalities in the scheme to ensure farmers maximised their payments.
- From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016, 38,000 farmers are in GLAS.
- The Committee secured a €22m pay-out for first phase payment of 3 months in 2015.
- IFA negotiated reduced charges for GLAS plans with Teagasc.

### TAMS II

- Over 9,000 farmers had applied for TAMS by end of 2016 with around 6,000 having secured approval.
- The Rural Development Committee put significant pressure on the Department to ensure payments were made through the online system.
- The payments system was up and running from August and despite many difficulties being highlighted by IFA, farmers are now being paid.
- In the course of 2016, the Sheep Fencing Scheme was added before the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> Tranche.
- A grain storage and tillage equipment scheme is being introduced in early 2017.

### Knowledge Transfer

- IFA secured important changes to the Knowledge Transfer measure these included: two payments where a farmer has two enterprises, double payment for partnerships and a practical payment system for farmers.
- The KT groups involve Beef, Sheep, Dairying, Poultry, Grain and Equine.
- So far 1,190 groups have been set-up involving 20,000 farmers (10,000 beef farmers, 4,500 sheep farmers, 4,500 dairy farmers with the remainder in poultry and equine).

### ANCs

- The payment of ANCs increased to over €205m in 2016.
- Discussions have commenced with the Department in relation to the review of the ANC which must be completed by 2018.
- IFA launched an ANC Review campaign in Carrick-on-Shannon on December 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2016 which will be maintained throughout 2017.

### Budget 2017

- IFA successfully lobbied for increased funding for Rural Development measure in Budget 2017.
- Increased allocations will apply for GLAS, TAMS and Knowledge Transfer.

- A major success in the Budget was the full restoration of the income and child disregards on the assessment of Farm Assist.
- An additional 500 places were secured in the Rural Social Scheme.

### **Charter of Rights**

- The Charter of Rights commitments have been pressed strongly with the Department and while there may have been slippage on some schemes, on major schemes such as BPS and ANCs payments were broadly delivered on time.

### **Leader Programme**

- IFA is involved in the new Leader structure through the LCDCs at local level.
- Most contracts have now been signed.

### **Locally Led Agri-environment schemes**

- The tendering process to operate the Locally Led Agri-environment schemes in the Hen Harrier and the Freshwater Pearl Mussel areas has commenced. This will be extended out to other areas in the course of 2017.

### **CAP**

- The Committee took up many issues under all schemes under Pillar I and Pillar II and addressed many technical issues in the course of the year.

### **Priorities for 2017**

- The Committee will be lobbying for the protection of the ANCs in 2017. The Review will involve the publication of maps which eventually must be sent to Brussels in the course of 2017 for implementation in 2018.
- The Committee will continue to seek changes to ensure that the full allocation of €4bn to the programme is utilised.
- Further amendments will be sought through the RDP Monitoring Committee.
- Ensuring that all farmers in GLAS receive their payments in time and that a fourth phase of GLAS is opened for some farmers who were not in a position to get into the scheme in 2016.
- That the allocation to ANCs is increased to €250m so as to restore the losses arising out of cuts in Budget 2008.
- Full implementation of the new assessment for Farm Assist.
- Ensuring the Charter of Rights for payments of TAMS, GLAS, KT and all other schemes are made on time.
- That the €70m Locally Led Agri-environment scheme operates effectively.

*Joe Brady*  
Chairman

*Gerry Gunning*  
Executive

## SACs Project Team

### Achievements and Work Done

- The SAC Project Team dealt with most of the issues resulting in the designations of land under the EU Habitats and Birds Directive.
- Several meetings were held with the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys where IFA called for the honouring of all compensation agreements where designations are imposed.
- The main issues were in relation to the SAC 1997 and 2004 Agreements and pressing that the deal is honoured.
- IFA is represented on the Designated Areas Appeals Board by Pat Dunne which deals with appeals to the designation of land.
- In relation to flooding, IFA raised the restrictions in relation to dredging and river maintenance on designated rivers.
- As part of the ongoing campaign on designations and related matters on restrictions, IFA launched a poster campaign entitled “National Parks and Wildlife and Bird Watch – Keep off our land, no designation without compensation”. This was launched in Shannon Harbour.
- This campaign was extended to highlight the lack of proper compensation for designations.
- The Hen Harrier threat response group has met on several occasions and IFA has criticised the delay in getting a farm scheme up and running as well as allowing forestry to continue in these areas. IFA got clarification on Natura SAC/SPA sites with regards to eligibility. Under the Basic Payment Scheme terms and Conditions Article 32 (2)(b)(i) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 in the case of Natura sites where similar lands that are not designated may be deemed ineligible for payment. Article 32 declares that the Natura land is eligible for payment under the Basic Payment Scheme, provided it:
  - (i) was claimed under the 2008 Single Payment Scheme;
  - (ii) was eligible for payment under the 2008 Single Payment Scheme;
  - (iii) has since become ineligible as a result of the management requirements or ecological objectives of the Natura site.
- At a Charter of Rights meeting the Department confirmed that there were 110 potential Article 23 cases following ground inspections and 336 following remote sensing.
- 30 cases required further examination and 244 have gone for processing. It is still unclear as to the amount of extra hectares that were included.

### Priorities for 2017

- The Project Team will be reconstituted. It will involve representation from various habitat areas who will form a panel. This panel will be called on from time to time as issues develop in these specific areas.
- Ensuring that farmers are fully compensated for designations and that there is a revamped NPWS farm scheme put in place.
- That there are no turf-cutting restrictions on blanket bogs.
- That there are no further designations of SACs / SPAs.
- That a more effective scheme is put in place in Natura areas in the new GLAS scheme.

*Padraic Joyce*  
Chairman

*Gerry Gunning*  
Executive





IFA







# **The Irish Farmers' Association**

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***REPORTS FOR 2016  
FROM  
REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES***

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## **62<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**Irish Farm Centre  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2017**



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**Reports for 2016  
from Representatives on Outside Bodies**

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***C O N T E N T S***

Agri Aware  
An Bord Bia  
CAP Rural Development Monitoring Committee  
COFORD  
Comhairle na Tuaithe  
Designated Areas Appeals Advisory Board  
Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council  
Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee  
Fertiliser Association of Ireland  
Gorta – Self Help Africa  
IFAC  
Irish Cattle Breeding Federation  
Irish Farm Films Producer Group Ltd  
National Dairy Council  
National Economic and Social Council  
National Milk Agency  
National Peatlands Council  
National Statistics Board  
Ornua  
Sheep Ireland  
Teagasc



## Agri Aware

Agri Aware would like to thank the IFA most sincerely for their continued support in 2016.

**CAP Communication Campaign Entitled ‘Farm to Fork – CAPtured for over 50 years’.** Agri Aware’s nationwide CAP communication campaign began in May 2016 and will run until the end of April 2017. The aim of this campaign is to communicate the many benefits of CAP to the general public from both rural and urban areas, and farmers, across Ireland.. This major campaign, co-financed by the European Commission, was awarded to Agri Aware following a competitive bidding process. A key element of the campaign was the return of Agri Aware’s ‘Meet the Farmer in the City’ initiative at Family Farm, developed by Agri Aware and Dublin Zoo. Agri Aware selected four resident farmers who were present at weekends in Family Farm in June, July and August. These farmers represented a number of different sectors within the farming community (beef, dairy, sheep, tillage and pigs). Agri Aware also recruited two ‘Young Farmers’ who worked in Family Farm during peak summer months (June, July and August) and weekends in September. The campaign also included exhibits at major agricultural events and in early 2017 Agri Aware will also deliver an innovative CAP advertisement on national television stations and across Irish cinemas. Agri Aware would like to most sincerely thank the IFA for supporting this very important CAP communication campaign.

### **Family Farm, Developed by Agri Aware and Dublin Zoo**

With over 1.1 million visitors to Dublin Zoo in 2016, Family Farm is a key attraction to communicate the importance of our agri-food industry to the Irish general public of all ages from both rural and urban areas as well as to visitors from overseas. A number of interactive educational themed events were delivered at Family Farm in 2016, in conjunction with Agri Aware’s patron. In May 2016, Agri Aware hosted National Dairy Week to educate students and the general public about the importance of the Irish dairy industry and the quality, versatility and nutritious benefits of dairy within our lives, as part of a balanced diet. June saw the launch of the return of Agri Aware’s ‘Meet the Farmer in the City’ initiative. In July, Agri Aware hosted ‘Farm to Fork – CAPtured’ day at Family Farm to celebrate Irish farmers, agriculture and food. This event allowed visitors to learn more about where their food comes from and allowed them to sample various Irish foods. Agri Aware hosted a series of events throughout weekends in Summer 2016 for visitors giving them the opportunity to witness first-hand the artful skill of sheep shearing and try their hand at spinning, weaving and knitting with thanks to the Irish Guild of Weavers Spinners and Dyers. In addition, visitors got to experience beekeeping in the Family Farm garden and spend time learning about healthy eating using the ‘Eat Well’ plate. In August 2016, Agri Aware hosted a week of educational activities for National Heritage Week, with over 60,000 visitors to Family Farm. These activities included, butter churning, sheep shearing, spinning, weaving and knitting, hay rope making, blacksmithing, hurley making, basket making, threshing demonstrations and farm antique displays. In September Agri Aware hosted a Harvest Festival and in October Agri Aware celebrated World Food Day on the Family Farm. Throughout 2016 Agri Aware’s Education and Development Executive Dr. Elizabeth Finnegan delivered curriculum-linked agri-food educational programmes for pre-school, primary and second level students.

### **Farm and Countryside Safety**

In April, 2016, Agri Aware hosted Farm and Countryside Safety Week, to educate students and the general public and make them aware of the potential dangers when working on or visiting a farm. This event saw hundreds of visitors to Family Farm taking part in “Spot the Dangers” farm safety trail. Agri Aware subsequently launched “Once upon a Farm...” a Farm and Countryside Safety awareness DVD for primary level students. Launched by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Simon Coveney in April the innovative DVD was posted to all 3,300 primary schools during Farm Safety Fortnight (April 2016) allowing Agri Aware to gain maximum promotion for this important project. Agri Aware also hosted a National Farm Safety Awareness Day in Family Farm, Dublin Zoo conjunction with the IFA national day.

### **Agri Aware’s ‘Mobile Farm’**

Agri Aware’s ‘Mobile Farm’ travelled to a number of schools, shows and public events across Ireland in 2016, including Tullamore Show, Taste of Cavan, the Virginia Show, Dowth Hall P2P, the Galway Racing Festival and Waterford Harvest Festival.

### **Bloom, the National Ploughing Championships and Tullamore Show**

Agri Aware delivered large interactive exhibits at Bloom in the Phoenix Park in conjunction with Bord Bia, and engaging exhibits at the National Ploughing Championships and Tullamore Show.

### **Incredible Edibles Healthy Eating Initiatives for Primary Level Students**

A total of 1,219 primary schools across Ireland participated in Agri Aware’s 2016 Incredible Edibles project to grow fruit, vegetables and potatoes in school, with a view to increasing consumption of Irish fruit, vegetables and potatoes. As part of the initiative Agri Aware hosted several key events in Family Farm, Dublin Zoo including: Healthy Eating Week, National Strawberry Week, Salad Week and the “Big Dig” where visitors got to help harvest Family Farm’s potato crops. This key project was supported by IFA, Bord Bia and the fruit and vegetable industry.

### **‘Dig In!’ Learning About Life on the Farm and in the Countryside**

Agri Aware’s curriculum-linked primary level educational resource, entitled ‘Dig In’, was made available to primary level teachers and students across Ireland throughout 2016. The resource was also given to primary school teachers who attended Teacher’s In-service Days at Family Farm, Dublin Zoo in July 2016. A new edition of this resource will be issued to all primary schools across Ireland in early 2017.

### **‘Farm Walk and Talk’ 2016 for Second Level Students**

Over 2,500 students from 80 secondary schools across 23 counties participated in Agri Aware’s ‘Farm Walk and Talk’ 2016, which was delivered in eight agricultural colleges and research centres and featured a number of Agri Aware’s patrons.

### **Agricultural Science Study Guides**

Agri Aware, in conjunction with IASTA and the Irish Farmers’ Journal, delivered the Agricultural Science Study Guides in the Irish Farmers’ Journal, for 28 weeks of the academic year, along with several key resources, including: Pastures New (an Agricultural Science textbook for Leaving Certificate students), Dictionary of Agricultural Science Terms, Book of Agricultural Science Experiments, Guide to the Agricultural Science Practical Assessment and Agricultural Science Revision Aid, a ‘Plant Identification Aid’ and new “Poster Pack” of educational posters for Agricultural Science students.

### **Updating the Agricultural Science specification for Leaving Certificate Students**

Agri Aware continues to play a pivotal role in shaping a modern and relevant specification for students, in conjunction with the NCCA and its patrons. Agri Aware holds two seats on the Development Group.

### **Newspaper Advertisements and Christmas Radio Advertisements**

Agri Aware produced a Christmas radio advertisement for national and regional radio stations, with the key messages being to support Irish farmers and food producers this Christmas and to remind the public about the importance of the CAP in delivering sustainable and traceable food to consumers. To coincide with this Agri Aware placed a full page Christmas CAP advertisement in "Irish Country Magazine".

### **Media Output - January 2016 to December 2016**

264 articles from Agri Aware were published in the national and regional press, while 8 radio interviews and 2 x Irish television features were broadcast.

Agri Aware also promotes all its initiatives through posting engaging content regularly on its social media channels – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This enables Agri Aware to engage with members of the general public of all ages, in both urban and rural areas, further highlighting our important agri-food communication projects.

*Richard Moeran*  
Chairman

*James Kelly*  
Secretary





## Bord Bia

In addition to the ongoing Bord Bia meat programmes, including market development, market intelligence, trade fair participation and promotions, the main activities in 2016 included:

### Beef promotion 2016

The market situation for beef in 2016 has been influenced by increased supplies in Ireland and around Europe, as well as economic uncertainty.

During the year, Irish beef exports to the UK declined slightly. As a result, higher exports were recorded to Continental Europe such as the Netherlands, Germany and Spain, along with a dramatic increase in exports to Hong Kong, the Philippines and the USA. Irish beef is stocked by more than 85 European retailer chains.

- Bord Bia has invested additional resources in **the UK market** to build relationships, drive image and awareness and secure sales volumes with higher value customers. In Britain, our strategic focus lies in securing Ireland's position as the beef of choice for leading retail and foodservice accounts based on reputation, Quality Assurance, Sustainability and consumer acceptance.
- **In Germany**, Bord Bia promotions focused on the superior taste of Irish beef and our sustainable production system.
- Promotions in the **Netherlands** highlighted the integrity of Irish beef production, focusing on eating quality, sustainability and animal welfare.
- Irish beef is carving out a premium niche with some of **Italy's** leading retail and foodservice customers and our promotions emphasised the purity and natural quality of Irish beef.

### Pigmeat Promotion

The main focus of the 2016 Bord Bia Quality Assured pigmeat promotions on the domestic market was to encourage consumers to switch to ham and bacon with the Quality Mark when shopping and to promote increased frequency of purchasing pork.

There were three main time periods of activity on ham and bacon across March, May and September during 2016. PR activities in March encouraged consumers to celebrate St Patrick's Day with quality assured ham and bacon. In response to some easing in pork demand, Bord Bia promoted the category during January and September to increase the frequency of purchasing for pork and highlight the benefits associated with buying pork with the Quality Mark.

### Sheepmeat promotion

The aim of Bord Bia's lamb promotion in the Irish market was to drive frequency of purchasing and household penetration among the core consumer target group (i.e. female lamb-enthusiasts over 45 years old) during peak lamb season.

Promotional activities included six weeks of TV advertising during June and August/September combined with PR and online activities. In 2016, 24% of those who saw the Lamb TV ad claimed to buy lamb on at least one occasion where they wouldn't have previously.

### EU generic lamb campaign

The EU co-funded campaign "Lamb – Tasty, Easy, Fun" is a joint initiative between Bord Bia, Interbev (France) and AHDB (UK). Targeting consumers within the 25-45 year group across six European markets the promotion has focused on highlighting the importance of European lamb production and its versatility as an everyday meat EU. The 2016 campaign featured instore

promotion activity in 304 hypermarkets and supermarkets across France, an outdoor advertising campaign in Belgium which included 240 lamb billboards and a two week national radio campaign in Ireland.

### **EU promotion for beef and lamb in Asia**

In mid-November Bord Bia had its bid accepted to secure EU funding towards a €3.75 million promotional campaign for European beef and lamb across Asia. Over the course of the three-year campaign (from 2017 until 2019), Bord Bia will undertake a major promotional drive in the key target markets of China, Hong Kong and Japan.

### **Livestock promotion**

Live cattle exports fell by approximately 20% in 2016, reaching 140,000 head. This followed a 55% decline in cattle movements to Northern Ireland, as well as fewer exports to the Netherlands (-38%) and Italy (-24%). More positively, exports to Turkey began in September, and these reached almost 20,000 by year-end. Exports to Spain increased by 26%, to 36,700 head.

Bord Bia actively supports the development of the live export trade, through its Livestock Sector Manager in Dublin, in conjunction with the relevant market offices, principally Madrid, Milan, Amsterdam and Moscow. Bord Bia's Market Managers for Africa and the Middle-East also have a strong focus on livestock.

Specific Bord Bia activities to support the live export sector in 2016 included the following: providing up-to-date information on the major markets, organising an annual seminar for the live export sector, arranging networking events and itineraries, advertising of Irish livestock in key markets, trade fairs (in Italy and Moscow) and acting as an important point of contact for existing buyers, while continually seeking to identify new potential customers.

### **Generic Quality Assurance promotion in the Irish market**

The overall strategy was to build consumer understanding of the Quality Mark by outlining the quality standards, auditing processes and traceability behind the Mark. This was achieved by integrating these rational messages throughout all generic activities on the Quality Mark and across the marketing programmes for lamb, ham and bacon and eggs.

Generic Quality Mark activities included sponsoring the RTE 1 television programme 'Home Chef' with Neven Maguire which featured him cooking quality assured ingredients for everyday family meals in various locations. Meat with the Quality Mark was also promoted at the dedicated Quality Mark marquee at Bloom. In addition, the proportion of products instore carrying the Quality Mark continued to be monitored through quarterly audits across retailers.

### **Just Ask**

Just Ask, a public awareness campaign that encourages consumers to look for information on where the food (particularly meat) on their plate comes from, continued to build awareness through PR and online activities.

### **Egg Promotion**

The aim of the egg marketing campaign was to increase the frequency of consuming quality assured eggs for weekday dinner occasions among 25 – 44 year old female shoppers. Retail sales of eggs increased by over 5% during 2016.

## **Market Access Highlights**

### **USA**

Ireland was granted approval to export manufacturing beef (mince) to the US. The technical requirements to supply this market segment are more demanding than for whole-muscle cuts. The USDA requires additional microbial testing for the presence of certain pathogenic bacteria, known as STEC.

### **Turkey**

In May 2016, Bord Bia welcomed Turkish veterinary inspectors to Ireland, along with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. In June, the Turkish Ministry for Agriculture has approved a veterinary protocol which will enable Irish exports to commence. The Government-owned Meat and Milk Board (ESK) then took over the issuing of tenders for importation of live cattle to the market. Irish exports to Turkey commenced in September and by year-end reached almost 20,000 head.

### **China**

Irish beef exporters are optimistic that the opening of this market will deliver significant opportunities, as it has done for the Irish dairy and pigmeat sectors. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is working closely with the Chinese authorities to finalise the remaining technical steps to allow this trade to commence.

### **Africa**

In November 2016, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Michael Creed T.D., led a successful trade mission to North Africa which helped to highlight Ireland as a source for top-quality livestock. The delegation visited feedlots and met with key importers in Morocco and Algeria.

### **Iran**

In October, Irish sheep meat was approved for export to Iran following bilateral talks between Iranian and Irish officials during the Bord Bia Trade Mission in April 2016.

### **United Arab Emirates**

Bord Bia together with the Irish ambassador to the UAE were involved in high level discussions with government ministries, certification bodies and the EU-GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) Halal Round Table with regards to restoring market access. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Charlie Flanagan T.D., met with UAE Foreign Minister H.H. Sheikh Abdullah on November 14th as part of bilateral talks and at this meeting the new Halal accreditation issue was discussed. Full market access was restored for Irish red meat and poultry exporters on 21st November.

### **Horticultural Trade & Consumer Events**

Bord Bia provided sponsorship and support for a number of key trade events in the Horticulture calendar during the year including the GLAS tradeshow and the National Plant Fairs.

The Bord Bia garden festival, **Bloom 2016**, took place in the Phoenix Park over the June bank holiday weekend, which attracted almost 115,000 visitors to Ireland's biggest horticulture consumer event of the year.

*Joe Healy, President*

*Angus Woods, National Livestock Chairman*

*John Lynskey, National Sheep Chairman*

*Pat O'Flaherty, National Pigmeat Chairman (outgoing)*

*Nigel Renaghan, National Poultry Chairman*

*Catherine Lascurettes, Executive Secretary, National Dairy Committee*

*Gerry Reilly, National Horticultural Chairman*

*Eddie Doyle, National Potato Chairman*



# CAP Rural Development Monitoring Committee

## Achievements and Work Done

- The Monitoring Committee which is made up of various organisations is part of the European legislative requirement in the implementation of the €4bn RDP for Ireland.
- The Committee has to be consulted on all aspects of the RDP
- The Committee met on one occasion in 2016 but approvals for amendments are being done by written procedure.
- The Committee agreed a number of changes to the RDP for 2016 which included: inclusion of Sheep fencing in TAMS, minor changes to GLAS, the Locally Led Agri-environment Scheme and the new Sheep Welfare scheme.
- In early 2016 the Rural Development Network was awarded to a consortium whose role is to ensure the RDP get sufficient publicity and to highlight where money is being spent.
- The Committee is also required to move around funding if necessary from underspent areas to areas where there is high demand. This is particularly relevant to IFA to ensure that the vast majority of the Rural Development fund is spent on farm schemes.
- Competing demands are put forward at the Monitoring Committee but the importance of IFA's continuing dialogue with the Department of Agriculture ensures that 93% of the RDP funding goes to farmers and farm related schemes.

## Priorities for 2017

- With one amendment to the RDP being made every year, IFA will be ensuring that it is made in sufficient time that the changes are relevant to schemes as quickly as possible.
- The priority for IFA will be to ensure that all EU funding allocated in the RDP is fully used up. The €580m per annum of EU/National funding allocated is fully utilised on farmer programmes over the next 7 years.
- In the review of ANC, IFA will be ensuring the allocation is increased, areas are protected and the payments reflect the new natural handicap criteria.
- Additional items will be lobbied for inclusion in TAMS.

*Joe Brady*  
*Chairman*  
*Rural Development Committee*

*Gerry Gunning*  
*Executive*  
*Rural Development Committee*



## **COFORD Council (Programme of Competitive Forestry Research for Development)**

- The Coford council is a representative body of the forestry sector, appointed by the Minister of State for Forestry to decide research and development policy and priorities, oversee annual budgets and spending, and provide direction to the executive. The members of the COFORD Executive are appointed to implement and administer the programme on behalf of the Council. IFA is a member of the COFORD Council.
- The Council work programme 2015 - 2018 focussed on six Working Groups:
  - Forestry and the Bioeconomy - the task is to elaborate on what the Bioeconomy might mean for forestry and how to convey this in the public domain.
  - Forest policy review - the work involves tracking implementation of the recommendations and monitoring progress on Strategic Actions outlined in the forest policy review Forests, products and people.
  - Forest genetic resources - the work is a review of FGR policy and strategy at the national level. There would be actions around improving strategic species. Both state and private sector stakeholders, including the nursery sector, were involved.
  - Mixtures - there are over 100,000 ha of mixtures in the national forest estate, and the Group is looking at how to manage them.
  - Promotion of afforestation - this follows on from the Land Availability Group and work had advanced to discussion on action points to encourage greater participation in afforestation, including promotional issues. There has been strong stakeholder involvement.
  - Wood Mobilisation and forecasting - there are a number of challenges related to wood mobilisation, which the COFORD report had highlighted. The work involved tracking the recommendations in the report; the Group was also covering the national roundwood forecasting system.
  - Update on Long Term Forest Research issues - the work is looking at long term research structures and delivery. There was a lack of dedicated forest researchers at the national level.

*Pat Collins*  
*Farm Forestry Chairman*





## Comhairle na Tuaithe

### Achievements and Work Done

- Comhairle na Tuaithe (CnaT) was established in 2004 to develop a national strategy for leisure use of land and waterways, dealing with conflicts where it exists and bring about a satisfactory resolution and to agree a countryside code between recreational users and landowners.
- The representation is broad including tourism bodies, recreational users, relevant departments and farm organisations. The Department of Arts, Heritage, the Gaeltacht and Rural Affairs is the lead Department.
- It is vital that IFA participates in this group given the varied representation and to ensure that there is no change to existing land laws governing access in Ireland.
- Comhairle na Tuaithe met on three occasions in 2016 and issues discussed were Mountain Access Scheme, the Blueways (Water Routes), National Indemnity Scheme, issues with the Department of Agriculture on land eligibility on Walkways, integration of countrywide recreational strategy in tourism plans.
- On the National Indemnity Scheme, the Department planned to have the State Claims Agency cover all users of land. A Government decision is awaited on this.
- On the Walks Scheme, 1,912 participants on 39 trails are covered by this scheme worth €1.8m.
- IFA is pursuing an extension of the number of walks as promised in the Programme for Government.
- In relation to the eligibility of lands which are on trails for farm schemes, the Department of Agriculture has informed CnaT that they have got favourable feedback from Brussels on this issue so farmers will not lose out on payments.
- The Rural Social Scheme continues to play a key role in the creation of walks and it is estimated that 400 farmers support the walks under the RSS.
- The Land Access Bill which was being pursued by the Labour Party in the last Government, has failed to get any backing with the new administration.
- IFA is monitoring the Wicklow land access case where a court awarded damages to a walker when an accident occurred. The appeal has been heard and a judgement will be given on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

### Priorities for 2017

- Seeking additional funding for the development of new walks in line with the Programme for Government commitment.
- New walks to increase from 39 to 80.
- Promoting the development of walks through various tourism organisations and that they are part of development plans in each Leader area.
- Resisting any attempts to change legislation in land access.
- Monitoring very closely the increased emphasis on greenways. This will be done in conjunction with the IFA Environment Committee.

*Pat Dunne*  
*IFA Representative*

*Gerry Gunning*  
*IFA Representative*



## Designated Areas Appeals Advisory Board

### Achievements and Work Done

- The Designated Areas Appeals Advisory Board was set up following the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive in 1997. Its purpose is to hear appeals by landowners of lands designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs). Landowners have 3 months to appeal once notification of designation is issued by the National Parks & Wildlife Service.
- There are two appeals Boards. One chaired by Sean Duignan dealing with SACs and the other one chaired by Ciana Campbell which deals with SPAs. The Board is made of farm organisations, IBEC where relevant and environmental organisations. The cost of each appeal is about €5,000 which covers the cost of the Board as well as the grant to the environmental consultant to make the case for the appellant. Sean Duignan resigned his position during the year.
- As a result of objections by IFA in relation to the undue influence of the independent advisor to the board at the Appeals Board meeting, it was felt that the advisor was favouring the environmental NGOs and therefore IFA sought equality at a technical level in the final discussions.
- Due to the unsatisfactory nature of dealing with appeals in the Donegal area, IFA objected to the continuation of these appeals until such time as a proper mechanism was put in place to ensure fair treatment of landowners. These appeals have since been heard.
- There are 280 appeals outstanding, mainly related to recent SPA designations. The main bulk of these are 160 sites in the Connemara bog complex.
- IFA continues to resist the 3-month time period imposed by the last Government by which an appeal must be made following a notification of designation.

### Priorities for 2017

- To ensure that any farmer who has had land designation imposed on his land is given ample opportunity to appeal the designation and that areas are taken out.
- That the number of appeals dealt with in 2016 is increased.
- That the grant of €1,350 to appellants is increased to fully reflect the cost of doing a scientific report.
- That the farmer representation on the Board is fully maintained.
- That the influence of the Environmental NGOs is strongly challenged.
- That there are no new designated areas.

*Pat Dunne*  
*IFA Representative*



## **Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council**

The FAWAC held 4 meetings throughout 2016 under the Chairmanship of Professor Patrick Fottrell. Key issues dealt with during 2016 included the following:

### **General**

- The On Farm Euthanasia of Pigs booklet is progressing and final publication is awaiting final comments.
- Others will join the regional group of the Early Warning System in 2017.
- Dogs worrying sheep continues to be an issue in 2016.
- Cash flow issues and increasing dairy herd size are placing farmers under pressure
- All Garda EWS contacts will be updated and circulated.

### **Equine Welfare**

- Urban/traveller projects are being progressed by DAFM in conjunction with a number of Local Authorities.
- Pavee Point has commenced its research on Traveller Horse Ownership
- The number of horse seizures is down significantly in comparison to 2015.

### **Dairy Cow Welfare**

- DAFM has distributed posters to Teagasc re prohibition on tail docking and displayed posters at the 2016 Ploughing Championships.
- The development of a dairy cow welfare education committee was approved for the purposes of producing guidelines addressing the many issues facing the industry as a result of the expanding dairy herd population. Teagasc dairy calf welfare report being examined.

### **Presentations During 2016**

- Presentation on Overview of RSPCA Assured Welfare Labelling Schemes by Sian Phillips (RSPCA)
- Presentation on "On Farm Emergency Slaughter" by Paul McDermott Mayo Co Co.
- Presentation on "Use of the On Farm Emergency Slaughter provision in Northern Ireland" by John McConnell DAFRA.
- Presentation on Passive Immune Status of Irish Dairy and Suckler Beef Calves by Bernadette Early Teagasc.

### **Other Issues Discussed at FAWAC**

- Live Exports
- On farm emergency slaughter
- 4 Regional Early Warning System Meetings and 2 Steering committee meetings held during 2016. IFA continue its valuable input and work at county level with the Early Warning System in respect of welfare issues and problem cases at county level.

*Sean O Leary  
Henry Burns  
Kevin Kinsella*



## **Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee**

- The FSPAC is an advisory committee to the board of the Health and Safety Authority. It has made considerable progress raising awareness of farm safety.
- The FSPAC introduced a new Farm Safety Action Plan 2016 – 2018. The overall objective of the plan is to reduce the level of fatal accidents, ill health and serious injuries in the agricultural sector.
- The FSPAC has set six goals to achieve these objectives:
  - To achieve cultural behavioural change in health and safety of persons working in the agricultural sector through research, education and training.
  - To develop programmes which will foster innovative approaches and deliver engineering solutions to reduce the risks to persons working in agriculture.
  - To reduce the level of death and injury arising from tractor and machinery use.
  - To establish initiatives to reduce the level of death and injuries arising from working with Livestock.
  - To ensure high standards of health and safety are adopted in forestry and timber work on farms.
  - To implement programmes for the protection of health and wellbeing of persons, including vulnerable groups, working in agriculture.
- The IFA is leading with UCD in the working group to implement programmes for the protection of health and wellbeing of persons, including vulnerable groups, working in agriculture.
- A campaign has been developed that will focus on the themes of the Staying Fit for Farming publication and will address some of the main issues negatively impacting farmers health.

*Maura Canning*  
*Farm Family & Social Affairs Chairwoman*





## Fertilizer Association of Ireland

The Fertilizer Association of Ireland comprises of members from the farming and the agri-business industry, with an interest in research, use and retail of fertilizers. The Association was established to promote the efficient use of fertilizer through technical meetings, field visits, conferences and the publication of technical papers.

### **Spring Scientific meeting**

The Spring Scientific meeting took place in February. Four papers were presented at the seminar:

- *Soil Fertility Trends – Latest Update* by Mark Plunkett; Teagasc.
- *Managing Sulphur to Optimise Grass Production* by John Bailey; AFBI.
- *Fertilising for Profit on Grassland Farms* by Christy Watson; Teagasc.
- *Soil and Fertiliser for Tillage Yield Improvement* by Andy Doyle, Irish Farmers Journal.

### **Summer tour**

- A summer tour took place to Northern Ireland this year. The visit to the Greenmount Campus included a tour of the new dairy facilities and an overview of the dairy herd system.
- A site visit also took place of the OYMA lime processing facility at Glenarm in Co. Antrim and a beef and sheep farm in Co. Down.

### **Technical bulletin highlighting the importance of soil pH and lime.**

- During 2016 a bulletin titled “Soil pH & Lime” was issued, which sets the important role that lime can play in addressing soil pH and supporting crop growth.

*Thomas Cooney*  
*IFA Representative*

*Thomas Ryan*  
*Executive Secretary*  
*Environment & Rural Affairs Committee*



## **Gorta-Self Help Africa**

Gorta-Self Help Africa is a leading international development charity with an expertise in small-scale farming and growing family-farm businesses.

Rowena Dwyer was formally elected to the board of Gorta Self-Help Africa in July 2016. As part of her role, she will be focusing on supporting the work that is being undertaken by the charity in developing agri-businesses in developing countries.

During October, IFA, with the support of FBD, the Agricultural Trust, and IFAC, held a fundraising event on behalf of Gorta-Self Help Africa (Dine 'Al Desko').

*Rowena Dwyer*



## IFAC Accountants

2016 was a successful trading year for IFAC with turnover increasing over 7.5%. IFAC's main focus is to continue with its core competency of providing a book-keeping, accounts and taxation service to a predominantly farmer client base.

- **New Service.** In 2016 IFAC established IFAC Investment Services LTD t/a IFAC Financial Solutions to provide advice to members on pensions, investments and life cover. This is a new venture for IFAC. We believe our members require sound advice from a multi-agency provider to ensure they are in a position to prudently maximize investment return, plan for their retirement and retain minimum required life cover. IFAC Investment Services LTD t/a IFAC Financial Solutions is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.
- **New Service.** In 2016 IFAC established IFAC Audit Services LTD t/a IFAC Audit Services to provide statutory audit & compliance services (*not Revenue / Tax audits which are completed by IFAC Branches*) to entities requiring audit – farm companies (*where required only*), agri-business companies, Co-Ops, farm organisations etc. Previously IFAC outsourced statutory audits, in order to meet growing demand and capitalise on the significant opportunity in this area, the decision was made to establish an “in-house” service. We believe farmers and agri-business require access to a statutory audit service provider who understands farming, agri-business and farm organisations, IFAC Audit Services will provide this access.
- **TaxBright.** This business is based in Lucan Co. Dublin with satellite offices in Bluebell and Dublin City Centre. TaxBright traded in excess of budget expectations for 2016, and at the time of writing, continues to expand, attracting a diverse range of clients in the SME sector in the Dublin area and beyond.
- **Growth.** IFAC's growth strategy continues to yield positive results. The appointment of a dedicated marketing person in 2015, continued refinement of our marketing strategy, and focused media advertising have all contributed to IFAC's client base expansion in the year. In 2016, 771 new clients signed up for IFAC services.
- **Retirement.** Brendan Casserly (IFAC Enniscorthy Branch Manager) retired in 2016.
- **New Appointments.** Martin Glennon was appointed Head of Operations – IFAC Financial Solutions and Shane Delaney was appointed Audit Manager – IFAC Audit Services, both Martin and Shane are highly qualified professional people who understand our ethos, we expect both to be successful in their respective roles.

Ashling Kavanagh was appointed Branch Manager of our Enniscorthy Branch, Ashling is member of the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland, she is experienced in IFAC's services and has built a sound reputation for client service since joining IFAC in 2012. In addition IFAC appointed a number of staff at various levels across the country, creating 24 net new positions in 2016.

- **IFA.** IFAC continues to provide intellectual and monetary capital to IFA. In addition IFAC participated in a highly successful round of farm finance meetings with IFA in 2016. We expect further collaboration in the years ahead. Our relationship is important for both organisations and we hope to continue its development in 2017.
- **Macra Na Feirme.** IFAC continues to provide support by way of sponsorship to Macra to aid their participation in CEJA. IFAC and Macra collaborated in a variety of ways in 2016 and we expect this collaboration to continue in 2017.
- **Property.** In 2016 IFAC continued with its policy of upgrading current offices as required, move to new rental accommodation as required and the purchase of new premises where deemed appropriate. In 2016, new premises were purchased in Donegal and Cavan, and sites for new office buildings were purchased in Trim and Carlow. Office renovations were completed in Monaghan, Limerick, Tullamore and Blarney, and new premises leased in Mallow (Co. Cork).
- **Awards.** IFAC was finalist in the Large Practice of the Year category in the Irish Accountancy Awards 2016 and finalist in the Excellence in the Provision of Professional Services category in the Irish Agri-Business Awards 2016. Peadar Murphy CEO IFAC 1978 – 2004 received the 2016 Plunkett Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Co-Operative Movement.
- **2016.** New office buildings will be constructed with the support of bank finance in Trim and Carlow. Farm business environment, commodity price movement, IT development and increasing recruitment costs as the wider economy continues to improve will present significant challenges for IFAC in 2017. IFAC's client base requires ever increasing levels of service and expertise to meet the challenges of a changing farm, taxation and business landscape. IFAC remains as committed as ever to delivering the best service available in the market place to members and clients in 2017.

*Tim O'Leary*  
*James Kane*  
*James Kelly*

# Irish Cattle Breeding Federation

## A Review of 2016

The progress in Irish breeding programmes achieved through the power of collaboration across AI companies, Teagasc, DAFM, farmers, and ICBF was really demonstrated in 2016, with improved breeding delivering 3 cents per litre over the base price relative to where we were when ICBF was set up. That progress is on-going and sets the dairy industry up very well to take advantage of improved prices in 2017.

On the beef side, the Beef Data and Genomics Scheme (BDGP) continued to operate very well. Genomic Evaluations for beef cattle went live in August, and in general, they have been well received by farmers. The evaluations are now appearing on mart screens in over 40 marts around the country. Over 23,000 have been trained this year as part of the BDGP scheme by Teagasc/FRS farmers joined the scheme. There has been a huge increase in the awareness of Eurostar indexes and how they can be a tool to help beef farmer profitability, and this awareness and knowledge will continue to grow.

Adoption of dairy genomics at farm level continues to operate at very high levels. In 2016, 60% of some 650,000 recorded dairy inseminations were from genomically selected bulls. The results from both the Next Generation Herd in Moorepark, and the 'Daughter Proven' results continue to show that the genomic predictions are holding up well across the teams of genomic bulls. The AI companies continue to invest very significantly in genotyping, ensuring that the best possible selection of young bulls are going into the Gene Ireland programme for progeny testing. This is key to the on-going validation of the genomic indexes, and to maintaining the on-going rates of genetic gain.

Our genetic evaluation activities continue to be at the very heart of ICBF's role in dairy and beef. While the genotyping efforts of farmers will have a major impact on the reliabilites of our evaluations, they continue, however, to be at the mercy of good quality data for real progress to continue. The on-going roll-out of the Beef Data and Genomics Programme will play a key role in improving progress here.

The GENE IRELAND® dairy progeny test program continued in 2016, with additional emphasis on getting cross-breds and pure black and white bulls tested in the same herds in order to try and get better data to help decision making. The implementation of a GENE IRELAND® beef programme continued in 2016, and it continues to get good support from commercial farmers. The Tully Performance Test station has continued to operate very successfully. The installation of further elements of the new feeding system early in 2016 (using support from DAFM) has allowed us to continue the expansion of the testing of steers. Tully is also continuing to provide a rich stream of data in the area of meat eating quality, and the results emerging have great potential in continuing to position Ireland as producers of top quality beef.

HerdPlus® membership has exceeded 22,000 dairy and beef herds. These herds have access to a wide range of valuable breeding information which farmers can use to breed more profitable cattle. On the service income side, Milk Recording had a challenging 2016 given the low milk price, but we expect a good rebound in 2017. AI uptake has continued to grow, thanks to excellent work by the service providers. Our Bull Search facility (on [www.icbf.com](http://www.icbf.com)) continues to be the facility on our website that farmers and breeders find most useful with, again, over 2,500,000 searches in the last twelve months.

We continue to do significant development work in conjunction with Animal Health Ireland (AHI) in the area of IT infrastructure for management of the BVD, Beef Health Check, CellCheck and Johnes programmes. ICBF's ability to generate genetic evaluations for animals in relation to disease resistance is becoming an increasingly important area, and initial results are showing significant potential for genetics to assist with national animal health programmes. As such, our relationship with AHI will continue to be extremely important.

Irish farming benefits greatly from the unique partnership that exists between Government, Farmers and Service Providers. That model is currently under some pressure given the changes around the Tag Ordering process and a drop off in Tag Contributions to ICBF. We strongly believe that farmers need to maintain control over their data and resultant breeding programmes, and will be working to ensure a sustainable financial model that sustains the partnership between all parties.

### **Summary**

2016 has been another very exciting year in the cattle breeding community. There are many challenges ahead, but also lots of opportunity. The key to ICBF's success remains the same as ever - the application of good science, a focus on the needs of farmers, working closely with our stakeholders and a 100% commitment to delivering by a talented and dedicated team. We are most fortunate to operate in an environment where ICBF's vision is shared by our Board, our members, DAFM, Teagasc, and, most importantly, Irish Farmers.

*Michael Doran  
Sean O'Leary  
Henry Burns  
Kevin Kinsella*



## **Irish Farm Films Producer Group Ltd. (Farm Plastic Recycling Scheme)**

During 2016 the Irish Farm Films Producer Group Ltd. (IFFPG) continued its successful recycling service, once again collecting and recycling over 25,000 tonnes of film plastic. The majority of this was collected at the bring centres located in every county across the country.

Farmers and IFFPG continue to exceed the annual farm plastic recycling target set by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

### **Reducing the Cost of Recycling for Farmers**

- During 2016, a campaign took place to support farmers to reduce the cost of recycling by better storage of waste plastic on farms.
- Strong messaging and communication efforts took place at bring centres and at the National Ploughing Championships. Given that farmers are charged on a *pay by weight basis*, storage in dry and clean areas will reduce the cost of recycling.

### **Non-Payment of VAT and Levy on Film Plastic**

- The Revenue Commissioners, local authorities and the Department of Social Protection were active throughout 2016, regarding the non-payment of VAT and levy. Similar to other years, a number of farms, merchants and contractors were reported as receiving visits.

### **Membership and Collections**

- The EPC charge will remain unchanged, at €110 per tonne (excl. VAT), with the farmer fee at bring centres of €15 per half tonne (with label code).
- Over 230 bring centres are operated nationwide.

### **Support of Cancer Research**

- During 2016, IFFPG made a €10,000 contribution to the Irish Cancer Society, to support the important work the society does in cancer research and supporting families impacted cancer.

### **Farm Plastic Recycling**

- IFFPG's partnership with Farm Plastic Recycling Ltd. continues to operate well, expanding the recycling service provided to farmers. Farm Plastic Recycling Ltd. collects and recycles meal and fertilizer bags and chemical containers at the IFFPG bring centres.
- Triple rinsing of chemical containers is essential before presenting chemical containers at bring centres.

*Aidan Larkin  
IFA Representative  
& Board Member of IFFPG Ltd*

*Thomas Ryan  
Environment Executive  
& Board Member of  
IFFPG Ltd*



## National Dairy Council

Through 2015 and into 2016, the NDC has been refocusing its strategy for sustainable growth and development of the dairy category, building on plans to deliver stronger awareness of milk and dairy nutrition benefits for healthy, active living from childhood to old age. This is particularly important in light of the aging global population, the new discoveries to improve performance in sports, and the growth and innovation in the Irish dairy sector.

Recognising the power of partnership, the NDC plan is rooted in collaboration, scientific expertise, marketing excellence and working with its member co-ops to play a greater role in shaping the dairy industry's agenda in terms of applied research, innovation, reputation, policy and consumer understanding.

The NDC mark campaign continues to be promoted on television, radio and print media and attracts considerable interest from retailers and consumers alike. It is focused on ROI provenance and processing, and the importance for consumers to choose NDC marked milk to support Irish jobs and the economy.

In the face of myths and misconception around dairy consumption increasingly spread through social media and self-styled celebrity nutrition "experts" The NDC also deals actively with misinformation on matters relating to nutrition and health.

The NDC's promotional activity includes nutritional education to schools through the medium of competitions and advertising campaign awards, and is very active on social media. It also targets the medical profession with specifically developed regular nutrition bulletins.

The NDC is hosting every year, in co-operation with local dairy co-ops, Health and Wellbeing Evenings around the country. Those have been well received, attracting large numbers of mostly women attendees to inform them on issues around health, nutrition and lifestyle, and the place of dairy products in their diet.

The NDC is involved in the national School Milk Scheme, in which 1000 new fridges were disseminated to schools.

The NDC for the fifth year co-operated with Ornuia in a joint Quality Milk Awards. The 2016 winner was Tom Power, supplier to Glanbia in Waterford.

IFA representatives for 2016 on the National Dairy Council are Sean O'Leary and John Finn, with Denis Fagan representing the National Milk Agency.

*Sean O'Leary*  
*Chairman*  
*National Dairy Committee*

*John Finn*  
*Chairman*  
*National Liq Milk Committee*

*Catherine Lascurettes*  
*Executive Secretary*  
*13<sup>th</sup> December 2016*



## **National Economic and Social Council**

### **Achievements and Work Done**

NESC is the consultative body to Government and is responsible for strategic analysis of major economic and social policy issues. The membership includes the five Social Partner Pillars, senior representatives of a number of Government Departments, and a number of independent members nominated by Government.

During 2016, the term of the current NESC finished. IFA was part of a joint submission to the Department of the Taoiseach supporting the formation of a new Council. Rowena Dwyer, as IFA's NESC representative on the outgoing Council also attended a roundtable discussion on the possible future work programme and structure of NESC. We await the outcome of these discussions, and a formal invitation from the Department of the Taoiseach to nominate a representative on a new Council.

*Rowena Dwyer*



## National Milk Agency

Established 23 years ago by the Milk (Regulation of Supply) Act (1994), the National Milk Agency's (NMA) role is to ensure an adequate year – round supply of milk for the liquid consumer trade. It does this by ensuring that liquid milk producers are duly contracted to their dairies, that dairies' liquid milk sales match up to the volumes contracted from farmers, and that farmers are adequately compensated for the additional cost of year round/winter production.

The Agency has 6 staff. Three inspectors audit all processors nationally each month to see that liquid milk is used and a liquid price is paid. The NMA's 3 inspectors carried out numerous inspections aiming at ensuring that liquid milk is being paid for at liquid milk prices, and that manufacturing milk is not used in lieu of liquid milk. Prosecutions have been used where necessary to ensure compliance.

Three administrative staff deal with around 1,800 contracts each year and work with other organisations including IFA, Department of Agriculture, National Dairy Council and the Consumers Association of Ireland. They also maintain a Register of Producers, a Register of Processors and a Register of Contracts.

During 2016 the NMA has advocated on behalf of the specialist liquid milk producers, because of the threat their problematic economic sustainability poses to the year-round supply of fresh milk for Irish consumers.

Further to the IFA Liquid Milk Rally in October 2016, IFA produced a strategy document for presentation to the Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed, which includes recommendations for improvements in the workings of the NMA, especially with regards to statistical data collection on milk imports, timing of farmer contract signatures, enforcement of "adequate compensation" of farmers by dairies, and time limits on the term of office of NMA board members.

IFA has also requested the NMA to carry out a survey of liquid milk producers to establish their age profile, their succession arrangements and intentions for the future.

The NMA reduced the 0.145 c/l total levy by 25% from April 2013. Most dairies collect half of the levy from farmers, and pay the balance centrally.

Representatives of the processing industry on the NMA board include Frank Tobin from Glanbia, Eoghan Sweeney from Aurivo, and the Chairman and Secretary of the NDA, Tony O'Driscoll from Clona Dairies and George Kearns.

The current five farmer board members are Pdraig Mulligan, Aidan Casey, Teddy Cashman, Denis Fagan and Willie Lennon.

*Teddy Cashman*  
*Chairman*  
*National Liquid Milk Committee*

*Catherine Lascurettes*  
*Executive Secretary*





# National Peatlands Council

## Achievements and Work Done

- The remit of the council is to come forward with a strategy for Ireland's peatlands and to oversee the implementation of the SAC Habitats Directive on 55 raised bogs and 75 NHA bogs.
- The work of the Committee to date, has been mainly dealing with the turf-cutting restrictions on the raised SAC bogs where turf-cutting was forced to cease early from 2012.
- The Council members include IFA, Environmental NGOs, Irish Rural Link and Bord na Mona as well as the National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- The IFA representation on the Board is vital as the environmental NGOs want to restrict cutting of turf not just on SAC bogs but on all bogs including blanket bogs throughout the country.
- In the Peatlands Strategy document, IFA ensured that turf-cutting will continue to operate on bogs in Ireland. The Strategy was presented and approved by the Government.
- The blanket bogs issue has not yet been addressed but IFA will be insisting that turf-cutting is allowed to continue in these areas. There are 50 SACs and 75 NMAs involved.
- One of the key areas addressed at the Council was the Compensation Scheme for farmers which offered €1,500 p.a. for 15 years with a €500 top up the first year. Over 3,000 farmers are availing of this package worth €4.5m p.a.
- A further 229 farmers have had turf delivered to them annually and 720 farmers have applied for relocation.
- The relocation to alternative bogs is a slow process with only around 3 bogs, Clara and the Mountbellew area having been successfully concluded.
- IFA has dealt with a number of appeal cases in order to secure compensation.
- On NHAs where turf restrictions applied in 2016, IFA has been assured that the number is small and possibly no greater than 140. 250 farmers have applied for compensation with 100 accepted so far.
- At the Council, IFA has strongly argued that where flooding results from blocking of drains to preserve the bog that farmers' lands must be protected.

## Priorities for 2017

- In 2017, IFA will be insisting that the compensation scheme continues to be paid and improvements made.
- IFA will be insisting that all outstanding claims are dealt with.
- The Government strategy on bogs clearly recognised the rights of turf-cutters.
- Any proposals on blanket bogs must allow continued turf-cutting for domestic users.
- Compensation must be offered where restrictions are imposed

*Joe Parlon*

*Gerry Gunning  
Rural Development Executive*



## **National Statistics Board**

### **Achievements and Work Done**

The National Statistics Board was set up as a non-statutory body in 1986 and established on a statutory basis in November 1994 under the Statistics Act 1993. The role of the Board defined by the Statistics Act is to guide the broad strategic direction of the Central Statistics Office and, in particular, to establish priorities for the development of official statistics in Ireland. In March 2014, Rowena Dwyer was among the Taoiseach's nominees to the Board.

The main work of the Board in 2016 was to progress the strategic priorities set out for public data in its report, *A World Class Statistical System for Ireland Strategic Priorities for Official Statistics 2015 – 2020*. In particular, the NSB organised a series of workshops with senior public servants to progress the development of a National Data Infrastructure – that is for the public service to engage in high quality data collection and dissemination, and to gain greater awareness of the importance of data to inform public policy decision making.

### **Priorities for 2017**

The term of the current National Statistics Board finished at end December 2016. Rowena Dwyer has therefore finished her term of membership of the Board.

*Rowena Dwyer*



## Ornua

2016 saw a continuation of the prolonged milk price slump which started in mid-2014, and until the middle of the year a continuation of global production growth. However, negative profitability on farms globally led to major increases in cow culls (+7.6% in EU for January to September), and this resulted in a slowdown in output growth, and even in a fall back in many countries, including La Nina struck New Zealand, but not the US, where production growth continued to match good domestic consumption growth. While the Russian ban on EU imports remained, demand held well globally, with strong demand growth for butter and cheese in particular in developed countries, and for powdered products in emerging countries.

Dairy prices started to improve from May, and milk prices from July.

The PPI index, which reflects the returns from Ornua's entire product mix, including over 40% of cheddar cheese, finally stabilized in May/June at 81 points, and started creeping up from there, to reach 99.4 points, equivalent to 29.2c/l incl VAT by November.

The outlook for 2017 is considerably better than for 2016, with global output volume unlikely to start increasing again in response to stronger milk prices within the next 12 months or so.

Dairy products representing around 60% of the milk produced in Ireland are traded by Ornua each year and exported to 110 countries. This includes around 80% of butter and cheese, and around 70 % of powders. Ornua has subsidiaries in the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands and the US and other routes to markets in other countries, providing valuable distribution channels for Irish products.

In support of farmers' stressed incomes and cash flow, Ornua suspended its farmer levy.

In early 2016, Ornua purchased Ambrosia, a Shanghai based dairy manufacturer, providing Ornua with access to high end retail and food services outlets.

Ornua have opened the Kerrygold Park Centre of Excellence and butter production and packing facility in Mitchelstown, which started production in the Summer.

Ornua is continuing the extensive strategic work it started with milk processors before the end of quotas to identify products and markets which can be profitably tackled with growth milk. Ornua provides significant support to allow co-ops offer farmers fixed milk price contracts.

Mr Tom Power, supplier to Glanbia in Waterford, was overall winner of the 2016 NDC and Kerrygold Quality Milk Awards.

To further promote Ireland's marketing edge on the global scene, Ornua are also engaging closely with Bord Bia's Origin Green sustainability campaign, and are strongly supporting the SDAS scheme.

*Sean O'Leary*  
*Chairman*  
*National Dairy Committee*

*Catherine Lascurettes*  
*Executive Secretary*  
*National Dairy Committee*



## Sheep Ireland

### A Review of 2016

Sheep Ireland ([www.sheep.ie](http://www.sheep.ie)) continued to make excellent progress in 2016, with strong leadership from its Chairman, James Murphy, and a strong development team operating under the stewardship of Eamon Wall. Commercial and pedigree farmers continue to become much more aware of the existence of the EuroStar indexes, and how they can play a significant role in removing the risk around ram purchases, and help the industry to ensure that it does not lose ground to other countries in terms of gains through genetic progress.

The commercial farms that make up the CPT programme have again put in a huge amount of work this year, and data coming from these farms is hugely valuable in generating accurate genetic evaluations for Sheep.

LambPlus has again expanded in 2016, and numbers are continuing to rise. This means that over 50% of the rams sold this year would have EuroStar figures available. We expect this number to rise again in 2017, and current indications are that this is achievable.

In spite of not having the STAP scheme in place in 2016, farmers continue to use Euro-Stars as a tool in their purchasing decisions on rams. The fact the Eurostar concept is similar to that in cattle also helps in this regard. It is critical for the success of Sheep Ireland that (a) farmers use the indexes in their purchasing decisions and (b) that the performance of the sheep correlate with the indexes – i.e. high index sheep perform more profitably than low index sheep.

The output from the OVIGEN project is creating some very exciting opportunities for Sheep in the area of genomics, and we look forward to further reaping the rewards of this research in 2017 as we look to implement genomic evaluations for sheep.

Irish Sheep farming is benefitting from the unique partnership that exists between Government and the sheep industry. The ability of Sheep Ireland to put DAFM funding to good use is widely acknowledged and in 2016 was particularly evident again through the LambPlus. Without DAFM support it would be impossible for Sheep Ireland to deliver to the industry and wider community. We are most fortunate to operate in an environment where Sheep Ireland vision is shared by our Board, DAFM, Teagasc, and, most importantly, Irish Sheep Farmers.

*James Murphy, Chairman Sheep Ireland*

*Kevin Kinsella, IFA Director of Livestock*





## Teagasc

### Achievements and Work Done

- As the Irish Farmers Association representative on the Teagasc board (since July 2016), I strive to ensure that the views of our members are at the forefront of Teagasc policy.
- Along with product price, all enterprises on Irish farms depend on independent research, advice, education and knowledge-transfer provided by Teagasc to remain viable.
- The research that Teagasc is involved in and all of the advice that they provide must lead to the best possible economic outcome in a sustainable way to Farm families.
- A review of young farmer education is in progress at present and a report is expected in March 2017.
- IFA made a detailed submission and met with Teagasc on this matter in October.
- A major challenge for Teagasc is to address the backlog of 3,500 applicants to complete their educational requirements for the young farmer scheme and other grants. A proposal to deal with this problem has been passed by the Board recently.
- Another challenge is to retain good people in the organisation due to competition from the private economy.
- The GLAS FRS arrangement continues with around 30% of overall GLAS participants under contract.
- Challenges have emerged in the administration of the KT groups.
- The issue of charges was discussed for 2017 and I ensured that there were no increases.
- I am a member of two sub-committees of the board, one is education and advisory committee, the other is the research committee, and I will have a strong input into both on behalf of farm families.

### Priorities for 2017

The key goals of Teagasc which will be to the forefront in the year ahead.;

- To improve the competitiveness of agriculture and food
- support sustainable farming and the environment
- encourage diversification of the rural economy and enhance the quality of life in rural areas
- enhance organisational capability and deliver value for money

*Richard Kennedy*  
*IFA Deputy President*









