

TAMS II can help improve your animal handling facilities

Good animal handling facilities are not a 'nice-to-have', they are vital for the safe and efficient management of animals, be sure to avail of TAMSII if you need to upgrade

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Good cattle handling facilities protect your health and safety. They are also crucial for efficiency when managing animals for veterinary tests, routine treatments and tasks such as AI. Where slurry tanks are being agitated in slatted cattle houses, especially in early spring, it is important that animals are moved out and held in a suitable place. Animal enclosures can be used to hold animals temporarily during this process. In short, good facilities are a must and as a result they are supported under TAMS II.

New sheds can avail of ancillary concrete for the shed and the unroofed enclosure. If you are not applying for a new shed under TAMS II, then you are limited to availing of just the unroofed enclosure, walls, barriers gates, race and skulling/back gates.

Under TAMS II, the eligible area of an animal enclosure is limited to a maximum of 2m² per bovine on the holding. So, on a farm with 60 animals, TAMS II will grant aid at least 120m² of an enclosure at 40 or 60%.

To qualify for grant aid, you will need planning permission or a declaration of exemption for Unroofed Animal Enclosures from the county council. Grant aid for a stand alone cattle crush/race in existing buildings or the replacement of an existing crush does not require planning permission.



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Planning Permission

Animal enclosures are listed as Class 8 building structures and are in the same class as silage pits, unroofed cubicles, milking parlours and collecting yards. Planning permission is required for these structures.

A building/structure is exempt from planning if the floor area of the structure and ancillary effluent storage does not exceed 200m². The conditions for this exemption require the total floor area of all Class 8 structures within the same farmyard complex or within 100m of that complex to not exceed 300m².

Other conditions state that the proposed structure shall not be situated within 10m of any public road and 100m from any house or public building, save with the consent of the owner or person in charge.

The conversion of an existing clean yard to a cattle handling facility alters the building class of the structure and will therefore require planning permission (unless exempt as outlined above).

Soiled Water/Effluent Control

The minimum specification for cattle crush, race and enclosure is outlined in the DAFM specification S137. In cases where the enclosure and race are not cleaned following each use, drainage channels are necessary to divert effluent and soiled water to a storage facility.

The tank must be at least able to hold the effluent from one day's use from the cattle handling facility. A clean water diversion system must be installed for runoff after the enclosure has been cleaned and not in use.

Unroofed Cattle Enclosure Costs

The provision of a cattle handling facility to a four-bay double tank slatted house would measure 120m² to accommodate 60 finishing cattle. This provides a 2m² allowance for all housed animals. A layout of such a facility is outlined in Figure 2.

The estimated cost not exceeding the DAFM costing of the enclosure is outlined as follows;

Cattle Enclosure, Crush and Race	DAFM Costs	
Concrete floor in enclosure	120sqm	€2,950
Wall	15m	€1,760
Barriers	17m	€1,250
Gate	6m	€400
Race	10m	€900
Skulling and Back gate (one of each)		€450
Total Costs		€7,750

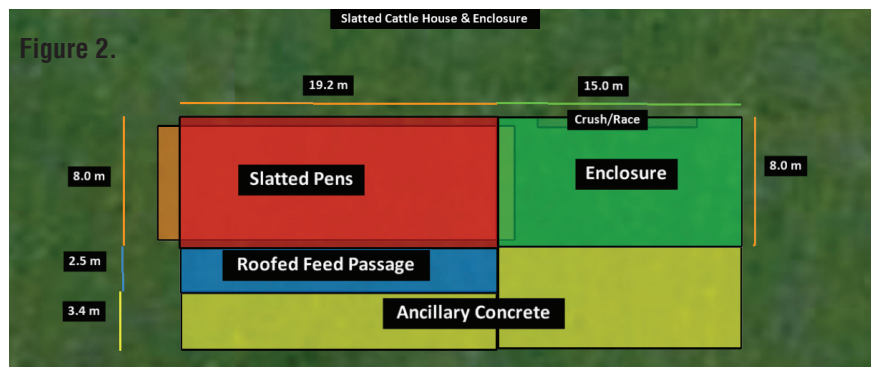
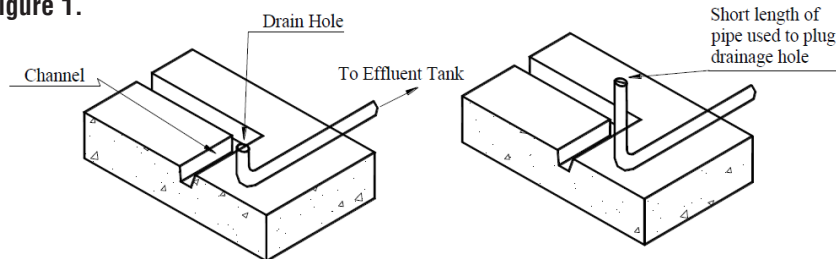
These costs would equate to a TAMS II grant of ca. €3,000 at the 40% rate. The adjacent slurry tanks provide storage for soiled water/effluent.

In this scenario, the cost of the four-bay slatted shed, including slatted tank, roofed feed passage and ancillary concrete is estimated at €63,000. The addition of the handling facilities would be roughly 10% of the total costs of both structures.

Summary

In planning farmyard facilities, the inclusion of an animal enclosure, crush, race and escape routes are important elements that should be considered. The facility can be grant aided under TAMS II Animal Welfare, Safety and Nutrient Storage Scheme. Such a facility will help to improve labour efficiency and health and safety in terms of animal restraint and slurry agitation.

Figure 1.



Farmyard Layout Plan, Slatted Cattle House and Unroofed Enclosure

All farmers can apply for a standalone meal bin under TAMS II

Dairy, beef, sheep, pig and poultry producers can now apply for meal bins. Meal bins are in Class 9 for planning permission purposes. Planning permission is not required if the following conditions are met:

- Installing the meal bin does not put the aggregate buildings in this Class over 900m².
- The bin must be pre-painted.
- The bin, if over 8m in height, cannot be within 10m of a public road and within 100m of a dwelling, school, church etc.
- The method of calculation of the reference cost of a meal bin are available at <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmerschemespayments/tams/>
- The cost of a meal bin on a new base is calculated by its capacity in cubic metres and if a new base is required. The meal bin shall be

completed in accordance with S.110. The new base has to be constructed using 'S.100 (Mix B)' concrete. For example, if the proposed meal bin capacity is 8m³, to get the cost of the meal bin multiply 8 x 68.51 and then add 1,900. This gives a reference cost of €2,448 for the meal bin and if a new base is required, it gives a reference cost of €2,748. The rate includes the meal bin, concrete pad and installation.

- As a rough guide, to calculate the volume for a given tonnage, multiply the tonnage by 1.39 to get the required volume m³. The actual required volume for a given tonnage will depend upon what is being stored in the meal bin. Ensure when getting a quote on meal bins to ask for the m³ capacity of the bin as well as the tonnage figure.

Table 1: The options allowed under TAMSII

Investment	Sub investment	Planning permission	Detailed drawings	Farm yard sketch	Nitrates relevant	Own labour permitted	Card A notice of commencement of pouring concrete	Serial number required
Meal bin								
	Meal bin on new base	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
	Meal bin on existing base	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
	Split meal bin on new base	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
	Split meal bin on existing base	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No