

# Dairy Sustainability Ireland

ASSAP Review -  
Sectoral Sustainability  
Challenges

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DAIRY SUSTAINABILITY  
IRELAND

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# Dairy Sustainability Ireland



## Companies



## Associations



## Governmental Agencies

# Dairy Sustainability Ireland

Whole of sector  
/Whole of  
government-  
Collaborative  
Agreement of a  
common plan of  
objectives



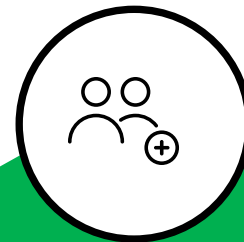
Forum for discussion  
of new ideas and  
issues- Drive Win  
Wins



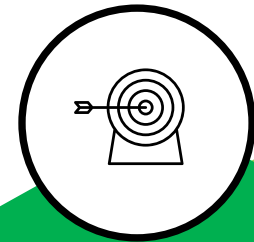
Stakeholder  
consultation



Bringing in outside  
experts to inform DSI  
members of  
developments



Consistent,  
results based  
implementation





## ▶ Value of Dairy on the Island of Ireland in 2021

- ▶ €16 billion in economic value all around the island but focused in Rural areas. (increase of over 50% since 2011)
- ▶ €6.5 billion Euros in exports (for comparison the Irish Drinks industry exports €1.4billion)
- ▶ 95% of produce exported to over 140 international markets with grassfed a key USP.
- ▶ 85,000 jobs.
- ▶ By some distance Ireland's largest & most successful indigenous industry.

# ASSAP Review 2020

- ▶ Noel Meehan has outlined the main issues arising from the 2020 review.
- ▶ At core, **ASSAP has become more firmly established and accepted**, and the **principle of collaborative working** with farmers, and among state agencies and Processing Co-ops (Lawpro, Teagasc and Co-ops) to achieve good sustainability outcomes a good approach
- ▶ **Great credit** due to Processor Co-ops, Teagasc and Lawpro, to **farmers and to funding agencies** DAFM, Dept of Housing, and Processors re this **unique public and industry collaboration**
- ▶ However, **ASSAP is a pilot programme – 30 sustainability advisors - 20 Teagasc, 10 Co-ops** – significant change/improvement is being achieved but it is a small initiative
- ▶ At the same time, **sustainability requirements** from the market, from legislators – EU and national, and from citizens – urban and rural, **have increased exponentially**

# Sustainability – Major Change needed

- ▶ **Agclimatise and Food Wise** – agriculture sustainable to scientific standard for market/international trade reasons as well as for public policy reasons, EU and National.
- ▶ **Agclimatise** proposes mechanisms by which this could happen for a significant **sustainability change management programme**.
- ▶ The **Climate Change** Bill, will set out statutory budget and accountability mechanisms for agri and other sectors, with the **Climate Change Advisory Council** report re budgets to go to Govt, and for Govt to decide on same thereafter – possibly Sept/Oct. **Major changes expected**
- ▶ The **Nitrates Derogation** application process is also underway, with **major changes** expected, against a backdrop of **higher N in waters** as set out by the **EPA** in its annual reports, **trends, Water Framework Directive, Catchments** Plan in prep.

# Sustainability Change Requirements

- ▶ **Ammonia** directive national thresholds have been breached in recent years, with agri as the dominant component and infringement processes initiated. LESS is helping
- ▶ **Bio-diversity** continues to be under threat
- ▶ **Farm incomes** continue to be volatile, with prices surprisingly increased for beef this year, and milk prices good for this year, so that economic sustainability for farmers has improved to some degree this year.



# Potential Strategic Directions - Options and Possibilities – Problem Solving

- ▶ **Co-benefits water, climate change, bio-diversity, ammonia**
- ▶ **Integrated Farm Sustainability Plan – menu of best practice?**
- ▶ **Sustainability support/advice to be mainstreamed** across all Teagasc, DAFM, Private Advisory, Co-ops?
- ▶ **Paying Farmers** - Eco-schemes and Sustainability Bonus systems to align/support sustainability improvement?
- ▶ **Building trust** – independent auditing?

# Potential Strategic Directions - Options and Possibilities – Problem Solving

- ▶ **Cutting Edge Scientific farm carbon developments-** Carbery, Signpost, Devenish – every farm a signpost farm in the medium term?
- ▶ Great Credit due to **Carbery/UCD** for winning national science foundation Ireland award/prize fund of €2m for their zero C farm system. Carbon intensity reduction programmes **Dairygold and Glanbia** – major sustainability change programmes – **more to follow.**
- ▶ Implementation of **climate mitigation on farm strategies** is key, however farms can also deliver **energy savings** Dairymaster etc, **microgeneration**, solar, anaerobic Digestion, as well as **sequestration** even though not within farm climate accounting systems, also part of MACC curve
- ▶ **Agri climate betterment – mitigation, energy and sequestration significant asks for agri and a major win for climate. Deliverable**

# N reduction – Comms and Education– Problem Solving

- ▶ **Additional dedicated ASSAP support** in N Vulnerable Areas?
- ▶ Focus by Co-ops/Teagasc/DAFM/LG/**Farmers**/Farm orgs/Advisors **working together** in these areas?
- ▶ **Best practice slurry management?** Slurry out by mid Summer? Assessment of storage capacity?
- ▶ **Every dairy farm implementing NMP – Lime, P and K?**
- ▶ **Major programme protected urea** – nationally, promotion and supply – major change programme all Co-ops/Merchants?
- ▶ All **Fertilizer sales linked to herd number?**
- ▶ Use of **clover** to hold N in soil – particular focus N excess areas?
- ▶ **Multi species swards** – 70% less N?
- ▶ Use of **LESS?**

# N reduction – Comms and Education – Problem Solving

- ▶ **Water quality plan per farm in N excess areas** – bring forward water element of current integrated sustainability plan in development?
- ▶ Focus on **tillage** as well as dairy
- ▶ Training for **Fertiliser Sales Personnel and Branch Managers** in association with SkillNets & ICOS?
- ▶ **Contractor Education** (Teagasc) plus Manual and other resources?
- ▶ **Student Syllabus, Farmer Training, Adviser Training?**

# Conclusion - Sustainability to Scientific Standards - Problem Solving

- ▶ Climate legislation processes, derogation processes, EU directives require/will require **major and impactful change re sustainability, to scientific standard.**
- ▶ **Forestry planting rates** must also be fixed as a priority re LULUCF/AFOLU.
- ▶ Need to move beyond policy setting to **change management, resourcing and implementation.**
- ▶ Change Management Strategies needed to address and surpass significant agri sustainability challenges re **climate, air quality, bio-diversity and water quality, if economic gains to be protected.**
- ▶ Need for **significant effort, coalition building and collaboration,**
- ▶ **Farmer at centre** - support, focus and engagement

# Conclusion - Success – Sustainability to Scientific Standard

- ▶ Agri can deliver **climate betterment** re mitigation, energy saving and microgeneration, and sequestration, can deliver **water quality, biodiversity and ammonia successes**
- ▶ Agri has a **track record of achieving major success** as Food Harvest and Food Wise have shown.
- ▶ **Sustainable agriculture** as a differentiating market growth strategy to progress Origin Green, and to meet new national and EU requirements in accordance with emerging society and market asks.
- ▶ **Collaborative, Problem Solving, Phased, Resourced, Metrics**
- ▶ **Sustainable Agri - Farmer, Market and Public Policy success is achievable/deliverable to scientific standard if same processes as Food Wise/Food Harvest**