

Teagasc Notes for week ended Friday April 26th 2019

Forest Management Walks - See Management in Action!

A key part of the national response to reducing carbon emissions is the planting of trees. As custodians of the landscape, farmers play a vital role in this effort. Trees absorb carbon (known as carbon sequestration) from the atmosphere as they grow and trap it in the timber. Planting can take place as a commercial plantation; in groves or along hedgerows on the farm. Forestry has a significant cost effective contribution to make to the national abatement challenge, with the potential to mitigate 2.1 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent each year from 2021 to 2030.

For example, a hectare of fast growing conifers can sequester 10+ tonnes CO₂ equivalent per year over two crop rotations. Fast growing broadleaves will sequester 6+ tonnes CO₂ equivalent per hectare annually over the same time period.

For many owners, the forestry conversation begins around opportunities for diversifying farm income, grant aid and premia supports and the implications on the whole farm. Teagasc views forestry as a means of complimenting the main enterprise on individual farms, rather than competing with them.

A nationwide series of forest walks will take place from 29 April to 10 May focusing on the management of young forests. These events are organised by Teagasc, in association with the Forest Division of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). This nationwide series of Teagasc forest walks is aimed at landowners who have established a new forest in the last ten years and landowners who are considering planting.

It is essential to realise that the established forest is another crop and will reap both environmental and financial rewards if managed as such. This year's series of forest walks presents an opportunity to see forest management in action. Each walk will allow plenty of informal discussion on various management topics as encountered on owners' own sites. At these events, forestry experts from Teagasc and the DAFM will explain why it is essential to care for young forests.

John Casey, Forestry Advisor with Teagasc said: "It is very important to ensure that a young forest will perform well and that forest owners know what needs to be done each year. The focus of these forest walks is on essential management in young forests. However, medium to long term management will also be outlined along with the various supplementary grant measures now in place to support forest owners in optimising their farm forest resource.

Forest Management Walks

Date	Meeting point	Topics
30 April	Longman Kilfane car park, Thomastown Co. Kilkenny. Eircode: R95 Y239,	Early forest management
1 May	Holy Cross Church, Carrigahilla, Stradbally, Co. Waterford . Eircode: X42	Early forest management, Ash

	RH93	dieback, reforestation
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There is no need to register; all are welcome to just turn up at **7pm** at the meeting point with appropriate clothing/boots for weather and we'll drive to nearby forest.

Eligibility of Forestry for Basic Payment Scheme (BPS)

Eligible land that was declared in a Single Payment Scheme (SPS) application in 2008 and which was afforested in any year since 2009 or which will be planted in 2019 can continue to be eligible for an BPS payment in 2019 provided it satisfies a number of conditions including the following:

- The land to be planted was declared on a 2008 SPS application.
- The declared land was eligible for SPS in 2008.
- The area must have given a right to payment under the 2008 Single Payment Scheme.

NOTE: BPS applicants, who planted part of their holding from 2009 onwards must retain at least 10% of the eligible hectares declared in 2008 (by themselves or their predecessor) in an agricultural activity, subject to a minimum area of 3 hectares, in order to continue to be regarded as an active farmer for the purpose of retaining eligibility for BPS.

Applicants who wish to benefit from the BPS on afforested land must continue to be an active farmer as set out above and also be the person or persons in joint management of receipt of the afforestation premium. This applies to members of the same family. The BPS applicant's name should appear on both the herd number and forestry contract number. Afforested land must continue to meet all requirements of the relevant Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) scheme under which it was afforested.

Farmers should consult with their Teagasc advisor or consultant in relation to the inclusion of Forestry on the 2019 Basic Payment Scheme Application. Further information on the BPS scheme and forestry is available on the website of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.