

# Teagasc Report

## Progress and Delivery in 2015

I am the IFA nominee to the Teagasc board and I also sit on the advisory and education committee and the research committee. The purpose of the authority under the chairmanship of Dr. Noel Cawley is to oversee the operation of Teagasc and to guide its policy to the betterment of the agricultural industry. The main activities of Teagasc cover Research, Advisory, Education and Schemes.

## Challenges in 2015

- The main challenge in recent times has been the recruitment embargo. In 2015 there has been a relaxation on this. Acting positions are being made permanent, allowing Teagasc to fill vital posts. This will have a positive impact on all areas of the organisation and will help the organisation in delivering vital programmes for farmers.
- The changing emphasis in the delivery of advice away from one to one consultation to discussion groups continues apace to optimise resources. Teagasc is heavily involved in the new Knowledge Transfer programme.
- Improving beef advice and research was high on my agenda when I joined the Board and this resulted in a very comprehensive open day in Grange research centre was held. A similar open day will be held in 2016 as well as a Suckler event in Athenry.

## Education

There was a huge demand for education courses in 2015 as a result of changes to Young Farmer schemes in CAP reform. This involved priority for 959 students having to be catered for to meet the educational standards. 70 extra teaching staff were appointed to satisfy this need. 650 full time students go through the colleges on an annual basis.

## Advisory

- The GLAS scheme announced as part of the RDP also presented a major challenge to Teagasc as it did not have the staff to service its clients wishing to partake in the scheme. A system where FRS provided contract staff to do plans for up to 11,200 applications for Teagasc clients was implemented in the first 2 phases of GLAS.
- The BDGP 4 hour training for suckler farms was also provided to 26,000 farmers.
- Nitrogen Derogation applications were completed under contract by FRS. This released dairy advisors to do technical work.

## Priorities for 2016

- Continue in a lead role in agricultural and food research in Ireland.
- Continue to deliver the results of that research to its client farmer base and the broader agricultural industry
- Because of the challenging year, technical and financial advice will be prioritised.
- The "Farm Financially Fit Programme" will be rolled out again in 2016 with a strong emphasis on one-to-one contact.
- Provide a high quality education service to young farmers entering the industry.
- Implement through FRS the third phase GLAS scheme for its clients.
- Implementing the new Knowledge Transfer Measures under the RDP for all sectors.

**Tim O'Leary**  
**IFA Representative**