



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection

Irish Farmers Association (IFA)
Information Webinar



Farm Assist

- *Ray Towey*
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- *Ray.towey@welfare.ie*

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Introduction



- Farm Assist is a means-tested payment for low-income farmers. To qualify for Farm Assist, you must be a farmer, be farming land in the State, be aged between 18 and 66 and satisfy a means test.
- You are considered a farmer if you farm land that you own or lease and that you use for the purpose of *husbandry*. Husbandry means working the land with the aim of taking produce from the land.
- Farm Assist is paid by the Department of Social Protection. The Department has produced [useful information on this scheme](#).

Budget 2023



- From January 2023, the maximum rate of Farm Assist will increase by €12 with proportional increases for people on reduced rates of payment. The weekly rate for a qualified child will increase by €2 from €40 to €42 for children under 12 years of age. It will increase by €2 from €48 to €50 for children aged 12 years and over.
- From January 2023, the income received from agri-environmental schemes disregarded in the means test for Farm Assist will increase from €2,540 to €5,000.

Means



- The means test takes account of virtually every form of income but assesses it in different ways and disregards various amounts. Different rules apply to income from farming and other forms of self-employment, income from certain schemes such as the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS), income from employment and income from property and capital.

Farm income and other income from self-employment



- Farm income and other income from off-farm self-employment is assessed at 70% (down from 100% since March 2017), with additional annual disregards of €254 for each of the first two children and €381 for the third and other children. (The disregards for dependent children are applied first and 70% of the balance is assessed.)
- Your income from farming is assessed as gross income that you, your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant may be expected to receive minus any expenses you incur to earn that income.
- When you apply for Farm Assist, a social welfare inspector will call to see you and ask to see various documents. For example, accounts prepared for tax purposes, creamery returns, cattle registration cards, details of headage payments and area aid.
- They will also want information on the sale of crops, cattle, milk and other produce. The inspector will then assess the costs actually and necessarily incurred in connection with the running of the farm.
- If you or your spouse, cohabitant or civil partner has other income from self-employment, this is also assessed, taking into account the costs incurred in the business. The income from farming and other forms of self-employment is added together and the costs involved are deducted.
- You may be liable to pay [Class S contributions](#) on your income from self-employment.

Income from farm schemes and direct payments



- Payments from certain farm schemes, for example, the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS), the Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS), the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or the [Green Low-Carbon Agri-Environment Scheme \(GLAS\)](#) are treated as follows:
 - The first €2,540 per year of payments is disregarded then
 - 50% of the balance is also disregarded
 - Expenses incurred in complying with these measures are deducted
 - And The balance is assessed as means.

Other Incomes



- **Income from leasing of land**
- **Income from employment**
- **Capital**
- **Your home**
- **Total means**

Farm Assist rates 2022

Maximum weekly personal rate	Increase for an adult dependant	Increase for a child dependant
€208	€138.00	Child under 12 years of age €40.00 (full-rate), €20.00 (half-rate) Child aged 12 and over €48.00 (full-rate), €24 (half-rate)

How & Where to apply



- How to apply
- Where to apply



Thanks You Questions & Answers?