



**IFA**

June 2026

# CAP post-2027 priorities



## Strategic importance of CAP 2023-2027

### 1.0 Strategic importance of Agriculture to the Irish economy

- Ireland's oldest & largest indigenous industry
- Over 130,000 farms with 300,000 jobs dependent on the sector (10-14% of employment outside Dublin/Mid-East)
- Contributes 6% to Gross National Income (GNI)
- Continued provision of the highest quality farm produce is the foundation to exponential growth in Irish Agri-Food exports (valued at €21.2bn in 2025)

### 2.0 Strategic importance of current CAP to Irish farmers

Av. 2023/2024	CAP payments as % of Farm Income
Dairy	30
Cattle Rearing	165
Cattle Other	98
Sheep	123
Tillage	111
All Farms	73

(Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey)

### 2.1 Economic Sustainability

- Close on €2bn/yr received by Irish farmers and rural communities
- Over 120,000 beneficiaries across all sectors, sizes, regions
- Most would not be farming but for CAP receipts
- Offers stability as competitiveness eroded (below compares cost of production in 2024 vs. 2016):
  - Dairy costs per litre +64%
  - Suckler costs/ha +22%
  - Cattle Finishing costs/ha +16%
  - Sheep costs/ha +13%
  - Spring barley costs/tonne +62%

### 2.2 Social Sustainability

- LEADER: 5,780 projects delivered in last CAP; 3,800 jobs created (12,000 jobs sustained); 1,700 rural enterprises supported; over 46k received training
- Given age demographic, with only 4% below 35 years of age and 37% over 65 years of age, it's essential targeted supports for young farmers are built upon
- Increased focus on Women in Farming and Knowledge Transfer in current CAP

### 2.3 Environmental Sustainability

- All farmers must meet Statutory Mandatory Requirements and Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions
- Irish farmers have strong track record participating in agri-environmental schemes (2.5 times the EU average)
- C.97% of BISS applicants committed to eco-schemes – most have over 10% of their farm for 'Space for Nature'
- Nearly 54k Irish farmers (40% of total) covering 1.5m hectares are in ACRES (well beyond anticipated)
  - 900km of field margins created (that is Dublin to Milan)
  - 6.2k kilometres of riparian zones (more than twice Irish coastline) - helps to reduce run-off of nutrients and soil into rivers
  - 24,500ha of catch crops planted to reduce nutrient leaching and limit soil erosion
  - 216,000ha of Extensively Grazed Pasture supported
  - 55,000ha managed to provide undisturbed winter foraging areas for geese and swans
  - 7,600ha of Wild Bird Food planted & 14,000 Barn Owl boxes erected
  - 3,800km of Hedges managed (that is from Dublin to Rome (& back!))
  - Over 800,000 native trees planted
  - Over 10,000km of traditional dry-stone walls maintained [Dublin to New York return [& some!]]
- Area of land farmed organically has trebled to 248,000ha (>5% of land area) in recent years
- Soil carbon increased on 67,000ha through Straw Incorporation Measure scheme
- Via TAMS, increased use of Low Emission Slurry Spreading – c.80% on dairy farms; c.40% on cattle farms
- Appropriate farmland management and reduced risk of land abandonment on 118,000 holdings via ANC receipts
- Genetic and Welfare improvements on 16,000 beef farms (430k cows) and 19,000 sheep farms through SCEP & SIS.
- €60m Water EIP aims to improve water quality while also providing benefits for biodiversity and climate change.
- €25m Breeding Waders EIP helps population recovery of one of Ireland's most vulnerable group of birds.
- Farmers own and manage over half the national forest estate, and since 1980 account for over 80% of new planting

## IFA CAP post-2027 key priorities

### I Increased Budget

- The proposed €293.7bn ring-fenced for CAP is a drastic cut in both real and nominal terms to the current CAP 2023-2027 budget (and that's assuming forecast Member State contributions materialises). For Ireland, it's potentially a cut of c.€1.8bn (-24%) in the next CAP. A minimum ring-fenced CAP budget of €500bn is needed to account for inflation and better manage current and future farming challenges. Farmers cannot do more with less. The next MFF / CAP cannot create more unviable farmers/rural areas.

### R Reward Active farmers

- All active farmers must be supported in the next CAP.
- Agricultural activity must be the decisive criterion not age; means; farm type/size; full/part-time status.
- All measures in the next CAP must increase/strengthen farm incomes and be measured against same.
- The shift towards a flat-rate payment per hectare, with no transition period, unless attracting a favourable basic rate/hectare, risks replicating experiences of past CAP reform and negatively impacting the on-farm competitiveness and viability of already vulnerable family farms and rural areas from the outset (See Figure 1+2). This cannot be repeated, or compounded by mandatory capping and degressivity. Member States still using entitlements-based systems should be allowed to choose to continue using it.
- Payments need some link to on-farm productivity, and flexibility to afford increased allocations toward same are positive.
- Payments for agri-environmental and climate actions should give real incentive, going beyond cost-incurred/income foregone.
- Farm stewardship, protective practices and individual interventions need to be practical and evidence-based, complementary to existing on-farm practices. Leakage of funds needs to be minimized. The focus should be on reducing the climate and environmental footprint of agricultural production not the extensification of livestock production systems or restricting agricultural activity, especially those on designated sites or peatlands/wetlands.
- Support for on-farm investments (esp. nutrient storage) should be ring-fenced, with higher rates for strategic cohorts.

### I Independent and coherent CAP Regulation under the control of Agricultural Ministries

- Those most familiar with Agriculture, both at EU and National level (i.e. DAFM), must be given the lead in the design and control of National Plans and CAP Strategic Plans to ensure the interests of farmers are prioritised.
- CAP and the farmers' voice cannot be diminished further.
- All regulations relating to agriculture, farmers and rural development, currently within the National Regional and Partnership (NRP) Regulation, must be transferred into the CAP Regulation. Key definitions surrounding 'active farmer' and 'eligible hectare' within the current CAP must be retained.
- A full toolbox of Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 type supports is required.
- CAP cannot be the funding/control mechanism for Environmental ambition.

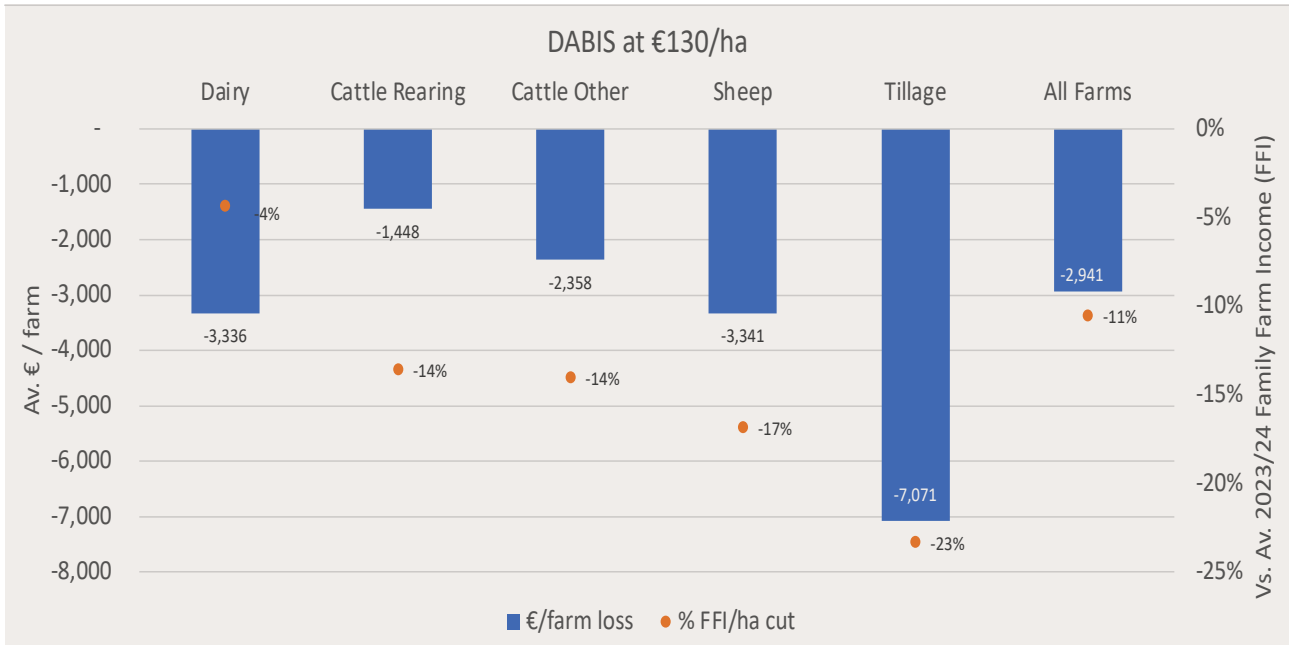
### S Simplification evident at farm level

- Despite two rounds of Simplification, its impact at farm level has been negligible. Reduced, rather than rebranded Conditionality requirements are required.
- Interventions within CAP Plans must be based on the needs of the agricultural sector, not because of Commission recommendations, which must be non-binding.
- The 'do no significant harm' principle risks further legal complexity and uncertainty at farm level and should be removed.
- Increased proportionality in the control and penalty systems is of utmost importance. Generally, focus on guidance and correction, with a close out period, rather than non-compliance and penalties.

### H Have transitional arrangements agreed

- Given the legislative timeframe, level of structural change proposed and complexity of negotiations we need to have transitional arrangements in place (spanning 1-2yrs), even if we never actually use them, to preserve existing farm schemes and payments and allow Member States sufficient time to adapt administrative systems.

**Figure 1: Estimated Impact of €130/ha Degressive Area-Based Income Support (DABIS) flat rate/ha by farm sector**



[Source: Adapted from Teagasc National Farm Survey 2024-2025]

**Note:** Figures are relative to average 2023/2024 receipts. It is proposed DABIS would replace BISS, CRISS and CIS-YF. While the Member State average DABIS flat rate payment must fall within €130 to €240/ha range, there is significant concern in Ireland that, on current CAP ring-fenced budget allocations (€8.16bn), unless considerably increased, to satisfy all existing mandatory interventions at current CAP allocations would yield a DABIS rate closer to the €130/ha than the €240/ha desired. This would have serious consequences and impact the economic viability of farms across all sectors. It should also be noted that figures presented are done on an aggregate basis. There are farmers who in 2026 will hold entitlements valued at €285/ha. Such holdings will experience declines far exceeding those presented.

Glossary of Terms	
ACRES	Agri Climate Rural Environment Scheme
ANC	Areas of Natural Constraint
BISS	Basic Income Support for Sustainability
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CIS-YF	Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers
Cpl	Cent per litre
CRISS	Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability
DABIS	Degressive Area-Based Income Support (new proposal - replaces BISS; CRISS; CIS-YF)
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine
EIP	European Innovation Partnerships
FFI	Family Farm Income
GNI	Gross National Income
Ha	Hectare
MFF	Multi-Annual Financial Framework
NRP	National and Regional Partnership Regulation (new proposal)
SCEP	Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme
SIS	Sheep Improvement Scheme
TAMS	Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme
UAA	Utilisable Agricultural Area

**Figure 2: Estimated Impact of €130/ha Degressive Area-Based Income Support (DABIS) flat rate to farm receipts and broader economic activity by county**

Province	County	Av. Farm Size (UAA) <sup>1</sup>	Flat DABIS Rate/ha	Estimated DABIS (€/farm)	Difference vs. Av. 2025 BISS/CRISS/YF receipts/farm <sup>2</sup>	% change in DABIS vs. BISS/CRISS/YF receipts	Economic Impact at farm level per county	Broader additional Economic Impact per county <sup>3</sup>	Potential impact to rural employment <sup>3</sup>
		Ha	€	€	€	%	€	€	Jobs
Connacht	GALWAY	29.9	130	3,887	- 1,860	-32%	- 20,889,908	- 30,081,467	- 228
	LEITRIM	26.9	130	3,497	- 1,835	-34%	- 6,027,192	- 8,679,156	- 66
	MAYO	29.7	130	3,861	- 1,763	-31%	- 18,726,579	- 26,966,274	- 204
	ROSCOMMON	24	130	3,120	- 2,431	-44%	- 13,001,330	- 18,721,916	- 142
	SLIGO	27.7	130	3,601	- 1,927	-35%	- 7,143,975	- 10,287,324	- 78
Leinster	CARLOW	38.9	130	5,057	- 3,767	-43%	- 5,747,831	- 8,276,877	- 63
	DUBLIN	46.8	130	6,084	- 3,985	-40%	- 2,179,689	- 3,138,753	- 24
	KILDARE	43.2	130	5,616	- 3,756	-40%	- 7,204,649	- 10,374,694	- 79
	KILKENNY	44.8	130	5,824	- 4,015	-41%	- 12,379,384	- 17,826,313	- 135
	LAOIS	37.3	130	4,849	- 3,620	-43%	- 9,611,606	- 13,840,712	- 105
	LONGFORD	23.1	130	3,003	- 2,941	-49%	- 6,658,680	- 9,588,499	- 73
	LOUTH	37.3	130	4,849	- 3,241	-40%	- 4,466,539	- 6,431,816	- 49
	MEATH	41.4	130	5,382	- 3,514	-40%	- 12,323,155	- 17,745,343	- 135
	OFFALY	35.3	130	4,589	- 3,383	-42%	- 9,137,104	- 13,157,429	- 100
	WESTMEATH	35	130	4,550	- 3,066	-40%	- 8,795,897	- 12,666,091	- 96
	WEXFORD	41.3	130	5,369	- 3,775	-41%	- 13,894,897	- 20,008,652	- 152
WICKLOW	51.5	130	6,695	- 2,693	-29%	- 5,401,613	- 7,778,323	- 59	
Munster	CLARE	31.5	130	4,095	- 2,178	-35%	- 12,614,068	- 18,164,258	- 138
	CORK	39.6	130	5,148	- 3,291	-39%	- 39,024,949	- 56,195,927	- 426
	KERRY	41.7	130	5,421	- 1,964	-27%	- 14,005,874	- 20,168,459	- 153
	LIMERICK	35.8	130	4,654	- 2,644	-36%	- 12,332,342	- 17,758,572	- 135
	TIPPERARY	42.8	130	5,564	- 3,662	-40%	- 22,881,767	- 32,949,744	- 250
	WATERFORD	49.6	130	6,448	- 3,996	-38%	- 8,499,887	- 12,239,837	- 93
Ulster	CAVAN	25.3	130	3,289	- 2,294	-41%	- 10,383,861	- 14,952,759	- 113
	DONEGAL	32.1	130	4,173	- 1,675	-29%	- 13,820,545	- 19,901,585	- 151
	MONAGHAN	22.4	130	2,912	- 2,078	-42%	- 7,799,005	- 11,230,567	- 85
	State						- 304,952,323	- 439,131,345	- 3,330

1 Source: Central Statistics Office, (2024). 2023 Farm Structure Survey

2 Source: IFA estimate based on Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine statement issued [December 1st 2025](#), and [December 29th 2025](#).

3 Source: IFA estimate using multiplier effect per Hennessy et al. (2018). 'The Economic and Societal Importance of the Irish Suckler Beef Sector'. Available at: <https://www.ifa.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2018-The-Economic-and-Societal-Importance-of-the-Irish-Suckler-Beef-Sector-Aug-2018.pdf>



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