

Teagasc Signpost Programme Newsletter

Issue 12 - July 2022

In this month's newsletter we have a short article on improving nutrient efficiency on tillage farms by Mark Plunkett. We profile two Signpost farmers – pigs farmers Miriam & Mattie Moore, Co. Offaly and organic farmer Bill George, Co. Laois. We have our usual climate actions for the month of July. We have a video explanation of the ASSAP programme. In our research update we present some new data showing that projected urea has no impact on soil microbiome. The news from Signpost is that the first 66 Signpost Farm Sustainability Reports have been issued, setting out the baseline (2021) for these farmers, including social, economic and environmental sustainability indicators. On this month's Environment Edge, Martina Harrington, Manager of the Future Beef Programme, will join Cathal and Deirdre to discuss sustainable beef production.



Reducing the impacts of high input costs on Tillage farms

Over the last 12 months fertiliser prices have reached unprecedented levels never seen before. Indications at present are that fertilisers will remain high for the remainder of 2022 due to high energy costs and the disruption to normal supply lines caused by conflict between Russia and Ukraine. These regions are major suppliers of all major nutrients (N, P, K & S) and especially potassium.

[Read Article in Full Here](#)



Miriam & Mattie Moore

Miriam and Mattie Moore farm a 1600 sow pig unit rearing pigs up to 18 kg liveweight at Cannakill townland Croghan, Rhode in County Offaly. The pigs are then transferred to the finishing farm in Rath East townland in County Wicklow where a feed mill was established to serve the finishing and sow farms in 2009. Around 70% of the pig diets are fed at the farm in County Wicklow and therefore it makes sense to have the feed mill located there. They also farm 95 hectares of tillage crops to help further integrate their



Bill George

Bill is farming organically in Ballickmoyer, Co. Laois. Bill's father in law, Jimmy Mulhall, converted the farm to organic farming in 2001 with Bill joining the farming business in 2006. Crops on the farm include 12Ha of a barley/pea mix (to be combined), 8Ha of barley, pea & grass wholecrop silage and 28Ha of Red Clover silage. Bill is also currently milking 152 cows and is stocked at 2.31LU/Ha on the milking platform. Cows are averaging 20.5litres at 4.15% Fat and 3.15% Protein. SCC is 120. The

farming enterprise. They are progressive and looking to integrate the pig unit further by growing a portion of their feed requirements while using the pig slurry from the sow farm as a fertiliser to replace as much chemical fertiliser as possible.

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Autumn calvers are averaging approximately 15 litres and the spring calvers 25litres. The herd will average approximately 7,000litres for the lactation.

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Climate Actions for July

Each month, we present climate actions that farmers can take to reduce gaseous emissions. These actions will be practical and timely. See below climate actions for the month of July.

The infographic consists of six colored boxes arranged around a central circular logo. The central logo is a circular dial with a landscape scene in the center, labeled 'SIGNPOST' and 'eagasc'. The six action cards are:

- Green box (top-left):** "Use protected urea, it's cheaper than CAN" with an icon of five circles.
- Yellow box (top):** "Time to Lime" with an icon of a tractor spreading lime.
- Orange box (top-right):** "Don't forget Sulphur - little and often" with an icon of a field with a gear.
- Dark blue box (bottom-left):** "Reduce nitrogen on grass clover swards" with a clover icon.
- Dark purple box (bottom):** "Have you booked a milk recording?" with a milk can icon.
- Maroon box (bottom-right):** "Consider weighing calves & yearlings to monitor performance since turnout" with a calendar icon.

[Read the full Climate Actions for July here](#)

Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme



[Watch Video in Full Here](#)



New Teagasc study finds no impact of inhibitors on the soil microbiome

New research from Teagasc environment research centre, Johnstown Castle has demonstrated that there was no impact of urease inhibitor N-(n-butyl) thiophosphoric triamide (NBPT), incorporated into protected urea fertiliser, on the structure and abundance of soil bacterial and fungal communities after 5 years of repeated application to an intensively managed grassland.

[Click Here to Read More](#)

Signpost Programme Update

The 1st of the Sustainability Reports have been printed and posted to 66 Signpost Farmers. This will form the baseline (2021) of their sustainability journey.





With ever increasing pressure on beef farmers, how can we produce a quality product as efficiently as possible to make beef farming more profitable while also making it more environmentally and socially sustainable? Martina Harrington, Manager of the Future Beef Programme joins Deirdre and Cathal on the latest Environment Edge podcast to discuss sustainable beef production.

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