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Mission Statement

To provide an independent and authoritative research knowledge base, technology transfer and training services for the sustainable development of agriculture and the food processing industry to enable it to respond profitably to consumer demands and requirements and contribute to a vibrant rural economy and society.

Foreword



Tom O'Dwyer
Chairman

This Statement of Strategy has been prepared against the background of formidable change and challenge for the agri-food industry and rural communities. The priorities outlined for research, advisory and training services are aimed at ensuring that the critical technologies are put in place and the necessary human resources are developed to enable the industry to adapt to the policy and economic changes and successfully meet the challenges.

The strategy reflects the central role which Teagasc must play in developing an innovative, competitive and sustainable agriculture and food industry and in ensuring the continued viability of rural communities.

Many of the initiatives outlined in the strategy will be operated as integrated programmes, involving research, advisory and training services, thereby capitalising on the unique strength of Teagasc and ensuring maximum return from the resources deployed.

The strategy highlights the close collaboration between Teagasc and a wide range of industry and institutional partners at home and abroad. We are committed to working closely with the Department of Agriculture and Food and other Departments, with key research, advisory and training institutes nationally and internationally and with all sectors of the Irish agriculture and food industry in advancing our goals. In this way, I am confident that Teagasc can make a major contribution in the critical years ahead.

1. Introduction



Jim Flanagan
Director

This is the second Statement of Strategy for Teagasc, the Agriculture and Food Development Authority. The first Statement of Strategy, required under the Public Service Management Act, 1997, was published in early 2002. The Act requires each Government Department to publish a new Statement of Strategy at least every three years and within six months of a new Minister taking office. Agencies of Departments in the Non-Commercial State Body category are expected to update their Statements of Strategy in the light of new Statements from their parent Departments. The Department of Agriculture and Food produced a new Statement of Strategy 2003-2005 in mid 2003. This second Statement of Strategy for Teagasc is an update in consequence.

Since the publication of our first Statement the process of implementing the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) in Teagasc has advanced well and we are on target with the many aspects of this initiative. Implementing the SMI has brought about some changes in the way Teagasc operates and will continue to do so. We are now more conscious of the need for good governance, staff involvement through partnership, managing staff performance, and developing our human resources, more formalised business planning, evaluation of programmes, and quality of services provided to our customers.

This revised Statement of Strategy takes account of the changes in the new Statement of Strategy from the Department of Agriculture and Food, it reflects the changes being brought about by the Strategic Management Initiative, and the fast changing nature of the agriculture and food industries. The recently agreed changes in the Common Agriculture Policy and the ongoing negotiations on a World Trade Organisation agreement will have major effects on the agri-food sector which will require major adjustment in the Teagasc services to the sector.

This document centres strongly on Teagasc's vision of the future needs of the agri-food industries for training, advisory and research services and on how these can best be met within the resources available. It has been developed with consultation and input from staff at all levels and recognises the need for flexibility on the part of staff to adjust to the changing needs in response to changes in demand for services.

Teagasc is committed to the delivery of a quality customer service. This is highly dependent on the commitment and response of staff and Teagasc is fortunate in having a highly professional and dedicated staff complement who are willing to deliver such a high quality service to customers.

2. Vision and Mission Statement

2.1 Vision

Our vision is for an agri-food industry that has the technological and human resource capability to

- Contribute to the development of a sustainable rural economy and society.
- Produce, at the farm and processing levels, high quality safe food for consumers on the home and export markets.
- Be continually innovative in meeting consumer demands for variety, quality and safety of food products.
- Change and adapt so as to remain profitable and competitive in the market place.
- Grow and develop in harmony with a biologically diverse environment and countryside.

2.2 Mission Statement

The Teagasc Mission is

To provide an independent and authoritative research knowledge base, technology transfer and training services for the sustainable development of agriculture and the food processing industry to enable it to respond profitably to consumer demands and requirements and contribute to a vibrant rural economy and society.

In pursuing this Mission, we will focus on:

- Developing competitiveness and innovation in sustainable agricultural production and the food processing sector.
- Analysing and projecting the impact of policies for the agri-food sector.
- Developing and maintaining a strong human resource capacity across the agri-food sector.
- Providing a sound scientific basis for decision-makers in protecting the integrity of the foodchain, protecting the rural environment and addressing the concerns of the consumer.
- Developing a capacity in molecular biology and gaining an increased understanding of living organisms with a view to increasing its application in the agri-food industry.
- Ongoing investment in our staff and organisational systems to achieve the highest standards of service delivery, corporate governance and accountability.

3. Context and Working Environment

Research, advisory, education and training services play a pivotal role in building the capability of the agri-food sector to respond to consumer demands and enabling it contribute to a vibrant rural economy and society. As the largest provider of these services Teagasc occupies, through its scientific reputation and impartiality, a leadership position in the development of the agri-food industry.

3.1 Our Mandate

The Agriculture (Research, Training and Advice) Act. 1988 states that the statutory responsibilities of Teagasc are

- "To provide, or procure the provision of educational, training and advisory services in agriculture...."
- "To obtain and make available to the agricultural industry the scientific and practical information in relation to agriculture required by it".
- "To undertake, promote, encourage, assist, co-ordinate, facilitate and review, agricultural research and development (including research and development in relation to food processing and the food processing industry)".

These responsibilities involve meeting the technology needs of the whole food chain, from 'fork to farm' and provide Teagasc with the opportunity to integrate research, advice and training in a single service package, a capacity to which many other countries aspire.

Teagasc is implementing strategic actions which support the Department of Agriculture and Food's Strategic Plan (2003 – 2005) for the sustainable development of the agri-food sector.

3.2 Our Services

The research service provides an independent and authoritative knowledge base for the development and sustainability needs of the agri-food sector. It supports the industry to respond to consumer demands through the generation of new

knowledge and serves as a conduit for knowledge generated by the international scientific community. It is a critical force in leading technological development, informing policy development for the agri-food sector and rural areas and helping the industry to meet the increasingly exacting needs of consumers.

The primary purpose of the advisory service is to develop the unique human capital resource within family farms in order to achieve international competitiveness, optimise income and protect the environment.

Following the mid-term review of the Common Agricultural Policy and the decoupling of direct payments from production, the advisory services will play a vital role in repositioning family farms and enabling them to combine competitive farming with good farm practice.

The advisory service has a strong development focus and has the capacity and flexibility to guide farmers to deal with ongoing change and adjustment.

The overall objectives of the education and training services are to meet the education and training needs of young entrants to agriculture, horticulture and related enterprises, to meet the upskilling and lifelong learning needs of farm families and to meet the training needs of Irish food companies.

The integration of research, training and advisory services, within the one organisation, confers unique strengths on Teagasc. These strengths will become more critical in future as the emphasis on standards, safety, sustainability and traceability increases.

Teagasc is ensuring that the delivery of services to all its customers is consistent with the modernisation of the public service commitments in "Sustaining Progress", the national social partnership agreement 2003-2005.

3.3 Teagasc Facilities

The Teagasc research services are now consolidated at Athenry, Co. Galway, Grange, Co. Meath, Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford, Kinsealy, Dublin, Moorepark, Co. Cork, the National Food Centre, Co. Dublin and Oakpark, Co. Carlow. By the end of 2003 over €22m will have been invested in these centres in a capital development programme to retool the Teagasc research infrastructure. The investment, funded by the Department of Agriculture & Food, was in staff, equipment and buildings. It will enable Teagasc develop a biotechnology research capability for the agriculture and food industry, expand its research in environmental science and improve its food training programme.

Vocational and third level training for young entrants to the industry is provided at four Teagasc-owned colleges – Ballyhaise, Co. Cavan, Botanic Gardens, Dublin, Clonakilty, Co. Cork and Piltown, Co. Kilkenny. Four privately-owned colleges at Gurteen, Co. Tipperary, Mountbellew, Co. Galway, Pallaskenry, Co. Limerick and Warrenstown, Co. Meath, which are funded by Teagasc, also provide vocational and third level training.

A €24.5m investment programme aimed at upgrading college facilities is currently underway. Highest priority is being given to the colleges collaborating with the institutes of technology. A further capital expenditure of about €10m, will be required in the period 2005 – 2007 to further improve these facilities.

Advisory services are provided from over 90 centres. About two thirds of these have a classroom facility to provide training courses.

Our physical infrastructure and facilities need constant renewal in order to remain relevant to present and future needs. Teagasc will continue to examine its extensive network of facilities and dispose of facilities no longer relevant to programme needs in order to make capital

available for priority new developments, including the further development of client and public websites and technology that will facilitate the delivery of e-services and e-learning to our clients.

3.4 Client Base and Collaboration with Industry

The Teagasc service brand is well recognised and respected among its clients and customers. The organisation enjoys excellent relations with a wide and diverse client base and is highly regarded for its independence and integrity. Our contributions on farm incomes, environment, health and safety and other public good issues carry credibility with all sides in policy debates and discussions on agriculture and food.

About 65,000 farm families are now availing of Teagasc's advisory services, more than half of which receive an intensive advisory service. About 8,000 farmers participate annually in our adult training courses and over 4000 young entrants are enrolled in our third level and vocational training programmes.

The research programme includes about 300 projects, of which about 50% are undertaken in collaboration with Irish and European partners. In about 25% of these projects there is a direct involvement of, or liaison with, the agri-food industry.

As the key provider of technology transfer, training and consultancy services to the food sector, the Dairy Products and National Food Research Centres have a substantial client base.

In the delivery of the Technology and Business Advisory Services, we collaborate closely with the key industry players.

In terms of the future development of the agri-food sector, the major opportunities for Teagasc are in the following areas:

- building, through upskilling and life long learning, the capacity of farm families to adapt to change
- supporting sustainability and cross compliance in farming
- supporting demand-led agricultural production following the introduction of decoupling of payments from production.
- developing innovation in agricultural production and food processing
- promoting the adoption of IT applications in farming

In providing these services, we will take account of an increasingly complex and dynamic environment in which economic, scientific, technological, political and social developments at national, European and international level impact on the implementation of the organisation's strategies and, ultimately, the achievement of its goals.

3.5 The Agri-Food Sector

The agri-food industry continues to make a significant contribution to the Irish economy and to the indigenous sector in particular. The combined agri-food and drink sector has annual exports of €6.7 billion, accounts for 9% of GDP and directly employs 167,000 people. In particular, the industry plays a major role in the indigenous sector with approximately 50% of exports from Irish owned companies deriving from agri-food and drink companies. The linkage of the agri-food sector to the rest of the economy is exceptionally high and, given its low import content, the sector currently contributes in the order of 25% to net foreign earnings from merchandise exports.

In light of the emphasis currently being placed on balanced regional development and a more even spatial distribution of industry, it is important to note that the agri-food industry is already regionally

dispersed and plays a very important role in the rural economy. Farming families account for around one-third of the rural population. While this share is declining in Ireland, as in virtually every other developed country, the agri-food sector continues to play a very important role in our rural communities. The future viability of the industry is therefore an important element of the economic prospects of these areas and their people.

Agriculture is the very basis of the food chain. It also embraces functions which go far beyond the production of agricultural products. The concept of multifunctionality reflects these new important characteristics of European agriculture as well as reflecting society's expectations. Agriculture as an economic sector must be versatile, sustainable, competitive and spread throughout Europe. It must also be capable of maintaining the countryside, conserving nature and making a key contribution to the vitality of rural areas. Innovation, research and development are indispensable components of a dynamic, competitive sector that also meets society's expectations for the provision of a wide range of public goods.

3.6 The Irish Economy

The spectacular growth of the Irish economy in the 1990s impacted on the agri-food sector in a number of ways. Off-farm employment opportunities were created for farmers and their families. There was also increased competition for labour for both farm production and food processing. A wide range of new demands came from the food marketplace and inflationary pressures were exerted on farming costs.

The slowdown over the past 18 months, has impacted on the agri-food sector and highlights the absolute imperative for increased efficiency and cost control at all stages of the food production chain. The viability of the agri-food industry will depend on our ability to compete

successfully in increasingly open and demanding markets. Our competitiveness in these markets will be based both on cost and innovation. The capability to produce new food products that will find consumer acceptance will determine our position in consumer food markets. Underlying this will be our ability to produce basic agricultural products - the raw material of the food industry - at competitive prices. This will create demands on Teagasc to respond with new information and technology.

The slowdown in the economy has impacted on the overall budgetary situation leading to greater prioritisation of public expenditure and increased constraints in agriculture and other areas. Over the period of this plan, Teagasc will have to operate in this more constrained environment and this will necessitate even greater stress on tight financial control, identification of alternative funding sources, more emphasis on prioritisation of programmes and value for money.

3.7. International Context

A number of international drivers will also substantially affect the competitiveness of agriculture and the food industry and the continued viability of rural areas in the immediate years ahead. These include:

- Further reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) agreed in June 2003 leading to widespread de-coupling of subsidies and reduced milk prices. EU enlargement in 2004 will also impact.
- Negotiations under the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which are expected to result in more liberal world trade and greater globalisation of markets.
- Compliance with EU Directives, particularly in the area of environment and food safety (Nitrogen Vulnerable Zones, Water Framework and Strategic Environmental Assessment) and with international agreements (Kyoto Protocol and Gothenburg Protocol).

- On export markets, changing consumer demands will lead to increased product differentiation and increased demand for convenience, novelty, healthier foods, speciality foods, organic/low input foods, local/regional foods and higher levels of quality (taste and freshness) and safety.
- The emergence of "high throughput biology" and the industrialisation of scientific discovery will have implications for our scientific approach to solving technical problems in the future.
- The rapid advances in information technology and techniques for analysing data will allow for new approaches to understanding how complex biological systems interact with economic and environmental parameters.
- There will be a continuing and increasing need to provide policymakers with analysis of the potential impact of new technologies and of new legislative initiatives to protect the environment and improve food safety. The need for research to support policy making will grow with the increasing complexity of society.
- Biotechnology will be increasingly accepted by legislators and in the marketplace.
- There will be increased concentration and internationalisation of the food-processing sector.

Considering the drivers of change described above and trends already evident, the following are the likely directions of change of macro trends in the environment in which Teagasc operates:

- The trend towards more part-time farming will continue, supported by continuing availability of opportunities in the labour market, declining real agricultural prices and changes in the EU subsidy regime.
- Full-time farming will become more specialised and concentrated both in enterprise and regional terms.
- The long-term pressure on enterprise margins in farming will continue and intensify as competition from new member states of the EU and from third countries steps up after the enlargement of the Community and freer trade.

4. Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance comprises the systems and procedures by which the organisation is directed and controlled. A Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies has been published by the Department of Finance and is the basis for governance in Teagasc.

4.1 Management and Organisation Structures

4.1.1 Management System

The Teagasc management system consists of the eleven-member Authority, which determines policy, with the Director as chief officer whose responsibility is to carry on, manage and control the administration and business of Teagasc. The Director is assisted in the formulation of policy by a Management Committee, consisting of the Directors of Operations and Administration and an Administration Committee, consisting of Heads of Functions and Departments at Head Office and other specialist staff as required. The Management Committee has seven sub-committees which have detailed terms of reference. Policy, when approved by the Authority, is executed through an organisation structure with clearly defined

lines of responsibility, authority and accountability. Heads of Research Centres, Chief Agricultural Officers and College Principals meet monthly and ensure that staff are kept informed of all developments affecting Teagasc and also have a forum for discussion on relevant issues.

4.1.2 Staff Resources

The current allocation of the 1637 staff of Teagasc (full time equivalents) to the main services is

Advisory Services	680
Training Services	207
Agricultural Research	515
Food Research	80
Corporate Services and Support Units	55

*A further 74 staff are engaged in delivering training courses at the Private Colleges.

Teagasc staff carry out their functions from more than 100 locations (Appendix 1). During 2003, a rationalisation plan was agreed and is being implemented on a phased basis. An organisational chart is shown in Appendix II.

4.1.3 Leading and Supporting Change

Strategic and business planning has now become an integral part of the work of each operational unit within Teagasc and underpins the crucial link between the Statement of Strategy and performance management and development. A Human Resources Strategy is currently being finalised and will provide a framework to guide the actions in relation to staff, their management, development and welfare. It also asserts Teagasc's commitment to approaching these issues in a strategic way.

Significant progress is being made in the use of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) in the management of the organisation and in the delivery of services to clients. A substantial number of key projects will be implemented over the strategy period. A Customer Service Action Plan 2004 – 2006 will set out our service delivery targets in the medium term and document our commitment to providing an increasing range of quality services to the public.

Improved computerised financial management systems (based on the INTEGRA Finance System) are being rolled out to all locations. Reviews are planned for specific support areas of the research programmes following from the recommendations of the Peer Review Groups. All Business Units will prepare Annual Business Plans linked to the statement of strategy and the staff training and development needs identified in the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) will be addressed in a meaningful way by each Director of Operations.

4.2 Human Resources

Teagasc is a knowledge intensive organisation and its success is determined by the expertise, innovative capacity and drive of its staff. An organisational culture which values staff and develops their potential through continuous learning is essential and is fostered.

4.2.1 Human Resource Strategy

A Human Resources Strategy, which has defined a set of core guiding values and operating principles to influence everyday behaviour in the workplace, is being finalised in 2003. It is being developed by a partnership working group comprising of management and union representatives and involves an extensive process of consultation. Translating these operating principles into actions will require management, staff and their representatives to learn new ways of doing business. This will include the sharing of responsibility for people management between line managers and the Human Resources (HR) Department, developing the competency and performance of line managers, together with the enhancement of the strategic contribution of the HR Department. A Human Resources Information Technology (HRIT) system will be implemented which will make a major contribution to sharing HR responsibilities between the central HR Department and line managers.

4.2.2 Performance Management & Development System

The Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), which identifies training needs of staff that are linked with the required competencies for their existing role, or a specified future potential role, will provide an effective platform to systematically address issues relating to managing and developing staff. The roll-out of PMDS to all staff in the organisation will be completed early in

2004. The co-operation of management and staff in integrating PMDS into the Business Plan of each unit will support its effective implementation. Financial provision will be made in all budgets in order to ensure that the training needs identified in the PMDS process can be met.

4.3 Financial Management

Teagasc has implemented a new accounting system and established an Audit Committee with an effective internal audit function. We are committed to further developing our financial management systems, in particular through further development of our accounts system, extension of electronic funds transfer, implementation of electronic requisitioning and stock control and the development of our financial information management and expenditure review processes. We are acutely aware of the importance of meeting increasing standards of customer service while maintaining full transparency and effective controls and complying with the requirements of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997, and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. We have in place policies and procedures to ensure that our use of the public resources entrusted to us is marked not only by legality and propriety but also by economical and effective use of these resources. The Authority has taken steps to ensure that an appropriate control environment is in place by:

- Clearly defining management responsibilities, authority and accountability;
- Establishing formal procedures and monitoring the activities and safeguarding the assets of Teagasc;
- Developing a culture of accountability across all levels of the organisation.

4.4 Risk Management

Starting in 2004, Teagasc will incorporate a risk management programme into its business planning process. This will enable the organisation to assess the key strategic, operational, financial and reputational risks facing Teagasc in achieving its objectives. A connected outcome will be a statement of the risk management controls in place or actions required where control of risks do not exist or are inadequate.

4.5 ICT - Information and Communications Technology

4.5.1 ICT Plan

A comprehensive review of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) within Teagasc was carried out with the aid of external consultants and an outline ICT Strategy and Plan prepared in 2002. In line with the strategy an ICT Committee was established and a Head of ICT was appointed in 2003. During 2003, considerable progress was made in improving the ICT infrastructure and implementing some key systems. Particular emphasis was given to ensuring that all decisions were in line with industry standards, that they took a corporate-wide perspective, had a strong emphasis on both the internal and external customer and delivered business benefits. At the same time we have been converting the strategy into a detailed ICT business plan which will deliver the remainder of the strategy over the next three years.

Teagasc policy is that ICT will be managed and delivered in accordance with the following principles:

- The ICT strategy will be aligned with the business strategy.
- All ICT investments must be business driven, justified by a business case and approved by the ICT Committee.

- Business units will be responsible for delivering the benefits from ICT investments. Business units will take ownership of ICT projects and make adequate preparations prior to the implementation of ICT solutions to ensure that benefits are maximised.
- ICT projects will be managed in line with industry best practice.
- Simplicity and flexibility will underpin all ICT design considerations.
- ICT services will be delivered to the business units in accordance with a centralised shared service model.
- ICT service delivery will operate in an effective and efficient manner. A performance management approach will be adopted by the ICT Department.
- The ICT Department is responsible for the provision of an industry standard infrastructure which will support business applications in a cost effect manner.
- To avoid data redundancy and duplication, data will be centralised within the organisation and made available to relevant business users as required.
- ICT solutions will be developed with a primary focus of delivering better services to the organisation's clients.
- All ICT assets, including applications and data, will be protected in accordance with best industry practice.

4.5.2 e-Government Strategy

Teagasc is committed to progressing its ICT developments in line with the e-Government strategy in order to underpin our customer service objectives and to make our internal processes as efficient as possible. Planned investment in technology will facilitate this and Teagasc is already making full use of the Government VPN facility.

4.6 Quality Customer Service

In 2002, Teagasc commenced a Quality Customer Service Initiative. The actions taken in 2003 include the assignment of a full-time Quality Customer Service Officer, the establishment of a joint staff/management working group and the initiation of a number of pilot projects to decide actions aimed at improving the quality of our research, advisory and training services.

The groundwork undertaken in 2003 will provide us with the basis to include, in our 2004 business plans, actions to improve the quality of services to customers. In 2004, it is intended to publish a Customer Service Charter which will describe the standards of service which our customers can expect, and an accompanying three-year Customer Service Action Plan specifying actions to improve the quality of our services.

4.7 Performance Evaluation

In 2003, Teagasc assigned a staff member as Performance Evaluation Officer and completed a Performance Evaluation Strategy Plan, initiated in 2002. Further foundation work to be undertaken in 2004 includes:

- Completion of a review of Teagasc business planning procedures.
- Assessment of a suitable Balanced Scorecard model for Teagasc.
- Commencement of some short process-type evaluations.

The completion of this foundation process will enable Teagasc to put in place and implement a cyclical evaluation plan.

4.8 Supporting Farmers with Disability

Government, through a range of current and proposed legislation, is in the process of defining the rights of persons with disability and has developed policies to ensure that such people can enjoy equality and full participation in society.

In support of this we will continue to help identify the specific needs of people with disabilities and ensure that, in the delivery of our services, people with disability are accommodated to the fullest possible extent. Teagasc will audit all of its facilities to ensure access by people with disabilities, provide specific information on services that are available and network with the National Disability Authority and other relevant agencies.

4.9 Legal Services

Professional legal advice is provided to all divisions of Teagasc by the Teagasc legal advisors and by the specialist staff concerned in Head Office.

5. Confronting the Challenges

The outcome of the mid-term review of EU policies, combined with further liberalisation of world trade, EU enlargement and continuing change in consumer demand, will create substantial challenges and opportunities for the Irish agri-food sector.

Ireland's capacity to compete will be dependent on the quality of our technology and the capacity of farmers and food processors to apply that technology. As the key provider of research, advisory and training services, Teagasc must play a central role in supporting the agri-food industry to become an innovative, high-productivity, high quality and highly-skilled sector which can successfully compete in the more global market.

5.1 Competitiveness

Competitiveness is not just a matter of reducing costs. It is a multi-dimensional market dictate embracing assured food safety, consistent food quality, environmental sustainability, animal welfare and the ability of the food industry to innovate and increase added value.

The full decoupling of all EU payments from production in 2005 will herald a transformation of the industry. The pace at which the industry can successfully adapt to real market needs will determine the competitiveness of Irish agriculture.

The Teagasc research, advisory and training services will be directed towards the development of enabling scientific, technological and econometric capabilities required to support the international competitiveness of the agriculture and food industries. Services will be particularly focused on the following priorities.

- Further development and more extensive application of sustainable livestock and crop production systems.
- Production and manufacture of food products of assured safety and consistent quality and food ingredients with improved functional attributes.

- Evaluation and harnessing of appropriate biotechnology developments in livestock and crop production and in the manufacture of food products.
- Projecting the impact of policy and markets on the agri-food industry and analysing the dynamics of economic and structural changes in rural areas.

5.2 Commercial Farming

The commercial farming sector must be in a position to benefit from increased scale while also adopting the latest cost-reduction technologies and most efficient production systems. New production blueprints developed by research, combined with intensive technical and financial advice and life-long learning, will be essential in supporting this transformation. In the absence of these supports, Irish farmers will fall behind their main competitors.

5.3 Part-time Farming

Servicing the growing number of part-time farmers, who account for a significant proportion of agricultural output, is a particular challenge for Teagasc. One-third of all farmers now have an off-farm job. Farming will continue to be a major source of income on a substantial number of these farms. To ensure that they can successfully adapt to the new policy environment, Teagasc will need to deploy flexible and innovative advisory and training methods in order to meet the particular needs of this group.

Special support will continue to be required for farm families who are under viability pressure. The Teagasc Opportunities for Farm Families Programme will be used to provide expert confidential advice to these families in assessing their current position, examining the options open to them and identifying the best opportunities to boost household income and quality of life.

5.4 Training

An annual intake of a highly trained cohort of young entrants to agriculture, horticulture and related land-based enterprises is a vital component of an innovative and competitive industry. The recent upgrading of Teagasc training to third level and nationally accredited vocationally training programmes, with the opportunity for progression, ensures that the next generation of farmers, horticulturists, and service providers can avail of training which is on a par with the best internationally.

Adequate training is equally important for those who wish to combine a career in farming with an off-farm job. Teagasc will service the training needs of this group with flexible programmes, including e-learning, which suit their work schedules.

The continuing emphasis on environmental, animal welfare and food safety issues is a further challenge. This, together with the need to keep abreast of the latest production and financial management technologies, will require a comprehensive programme of life-long learning for adults involved in farming. Teagasc is committed to an expansion of its life-long learning programme for adult farmers.

5.5 Food

The pace of technological development in food processing will have a crucial impact on the success of the Irish agriculture and food industry in the new policy environment.

Teagasc has acknowledged expertise in food research. This will be used to assist industry in the development of new products and technologies which will be vital in building an internationally competitive food industry.

6. Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Competitiveness and Innovation in Agricultural Production.

To achieve an internationally competitive and innovative agricultural production sector consistent with high standards of sustainability.

Goal 2: Competitiveness and Innovation in Food Processing.

To achieve a market orientated, internationally competitive and innovative food processing sector.

Goal 3: Rural Viability.

To build the capacity of farm households to achieve viability and contribute to a vibrant rural economy and society.

Goal 4: Sustainable Systems of Agriculture.

To achieve systems of agriculture and food production that are sustainable in terms of the environment, animal welfare, occupational safety and the work environment.

Goal 5: Integrity of the Food Chain.

To support the production of Irish food that meets consumers' expectations of quality, safety and wholesomeness.

Goal 6: A More Capable, Efficient and Effective Organisation.

To become a more efficient and effective organisation with the capacity to change and develop so that we can deliver on our mission and goals.

6.1 Goal 1: Competitiveness and Innovation in Agricultural Production.

To achieve an internationally competitive and innovative agricultural production sector consistent with high standards of sustainability.

Objective: *To generate the knowledge and technologies necessary to underpin internationally competitive and innovative agricultural production and inform policy.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.1.1	Conduct research that underpins competitiveness and innovation in the agriculture sector and rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Economic data on costs of production. ■ New blueprints of production.
6.1.2	Develop grassland management systems and nutritional regimes for the efficient production of consistent quality milk, beef, sheep and pigmeat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Improvement in biological efficiency. ■ New blueprints of production.
6.1.3	Develop technologies and systems to underpin the competitiveness of tillage crops and the horticulture sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Improvement in biological efficiency. ■ New blueprints of production.
6.1.4	Exploit developments in the biosciences to drive competitiveness and innovation in the agriculture sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Improvement in biological efficiency. ■ Patents and breeders rights.

6.1.5	Conduct research that will allow the analysis and projection of the effects of actual and proposed changes in markets and policies at the national, sectoral, farm and household levels and develop new policy options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Policy options developed and transferred to policy markers. ■ Briefings to business leaders and policy markers.
6.1.6	Generate physical and financial information on monitor farms to evaluate and develop the blueprints for technology transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of monitor farms. ■ Improvement in technical and financial performance on monitor farms. ■ Reports generated ■ Cost/benefit of technology transfer on monitor farms.

Objective: *To transfer technology and best practice to farms and rural areas*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.1.7	Carry out a pro-active programme of technology transfer from research to the advisory service and to the industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of training courses for advisors. ■ Number of open days, workshops and symposia for industry. ■ Number of popular publications. ■ Number of end of project reports. ■ Number of technical digests.
6.1.8	Develop and deliver advisory programmes that are relevant to industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The extent to which enhanced commodity teams of research, advisory and training personnel are in place.. ■ Improvement in production efficiency at farm level. ■ Number of enterprise programmes addressing cost efficient production. ■ Number of Tech. and Business programme clients. ■ Number of discussion groups. ■ Number of cost control planners/ profit monitors.

6.1.9	Maximise industry involvement in Teagasc programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of joint Teagasc/industry programmes. ■ Funding received from Industry. ■ Representation of industry on programme commodity teams.
6.1.10	Develop and deliver vocational and third level education and training programmes for adults and new entrants to agriculture and horticulture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number participating.
6.1.11	Provide technological, analytical and related services to the agri-food industry and other users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Range of services provided ■ Cost recovery from service users.
6.1.12	Provide financial and farm business planning services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of clients using profit monitors ■ Number of clients using cost control planners.

6.2 Goal 2: Competitiveness and Innovation in Food Processing

To have a market orientated, internationally competitive and innovative food processing sector.

Objective: *To generate the knowledge and technologies necessary for competitiveness and innovation in the Irish food processing industry.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.2.1	Conduct research that underpins product quality and innovation in the Irish food industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports.
6.2.2	Exploit developments in the biosciences to drive innovation in the food industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of patents. ■ Number of applications trials/pilot plant validations successfully completed.
6.2.3	Provide an understanding of consumer demands and customer requirements to guide innovation and competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Competitive funding obtained. ■ Level of industry funding.

Objective: *To transfer technology to food companies and to increase the skills in the food sector*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.2.4	Carry out a pro-active programme of technology transfer and advice to Irish food companies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of product/process innovations tendered to industry. ■ Amount of industry-commissioned research invoiced. ■ Number of open days, workshops and symposia for industry. ■ Uptake of research as measured by follow-on commercial activity. ■ Number of products in market test by industry. ■ Number of SME food customers assisted.
6.2.5	Develop and provide nationally accredited education and training courses to the food sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of training courses nationally accredited. ■ Number of courses run. ■ Number of attendees at courses. ■ Feedback from customers.

6.3 Goal 3: Rural Viability

To build the capacity of farm households to achieve viability and contribute to a vibrant rural economy and society.

Objective: *To generate the technologies and knowledge required.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.3.1	Conduct research that will provide the strategic knowledge base to support the continued viability of rural areas and support the establishment of supplementary enterprises and employment opportunities in rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Competitive funding obtained. ■ Extent of knowledge transfer to industry. ■ Policy options developed and transferred to policy makers.

Objective: *To develop the human resource capacity of farm families*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.3.2	Deliver an options analysis and farm planning programme to farm families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of participants. ■ Number of farmers taking up training for supplementary enterprises with income earning potential. ■ Number of farmers improving their viability status.
6.3.3	Promote and support diversification opportunities for farmers including farm forestry, organic farming and other supplementary enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number attending training courses or mentored ■ Uptake of supplementary enterprises.
6.3.4	Deliver a flexible education and training programme to facilitate part-time farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of courses. ■ Number participating.
6.3.5	Promote agricultural education and training and provide appropriate career planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number attending careers events. ■ Number successfully completing courses and career planning modules
6.3.	Assist farm families to avail of entitlements under the various support and development schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of farmers assisted ■ Number of applications processed

6.4 Goal 4: Sustainable Systems of Agriculture

To achieve systems of agriculture and food production that are sustainable in terms of the environment, animal welfare, occupational safety and the work environment.

Objective: *To generate knowledge and technology to underpin the sustainability of Irish agriculture.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.4.1	Conduct research to provide the environmental strategies and technologies required for sustainable farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Policy options developed and transferred to policy makers.
6.4.2	Develop the scientific basis for improved nutrient and carbon efficiency to enhance and conserve biodiversity in Irish agriculture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Policy options developed and transferred to policy makers.
6.4.3	Develop strategies to plan and manage landscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. ■ Policy options developed and transferred to policy makers.

Objective: *To transfer technology and best practice to farms*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.4.4.	Carry out a pro-active programme of technology transfer from research to the advisory service and to the industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of training courses for advisors. ■ Number of open days, workshops and symposia for industry. ■ Feedback from industry. ■ Number of popular publications. ■ Number of end of project reports. ■ Number of technical digests

6.4.5	Develop and deliver advisory programmes which enhance the agri-environment and enable farmers meet the standards as determined by the Department of Agriculture and Food and other regulatory authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of Teagasc clients participating in the REPS programme. ■ Number of farm waste management plans, commonage framework and nutrient management plans. ■ Improvement in water quality due to improved farm practice. ■ Collaborations with public bodies and other agencies. ■ Number of public good activities aimed at increasing awareness and enhancing the agri-environment especially in relation to the EU environmental directives.
6.4.6	Promote sustainable farming practices through education and training programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improvement in water quality. ■ Level of compliance with good farm practice. ■ Number participating on courses
6.4.7	Develop and deliver advisory and training programmes which incorporate statutory requirements and best practice in relation to occupational safety and disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of farm accidents. ■ Number of awareness creating activities held. ■ Number of participants in health & safety courses.
6.4.8	Develop and deliver advisory and training programmes which incorporate statutory requirements and best practice in relation to animal welfare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of people participating in courses. ■ Number of awareness creating activities held.
6.4.9	Provide technological and analytical services related to sustainable farming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Range of services provided. ■ Cost recovery from service users.
6.4.10	Provide environmental advisory services, including REPS planning and support, nutrient management planning and farm waste management planning, to underpin sustainable farming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of REPS clients ■ Number of nutrient management plans ■ Number of Farm Waste Management and Dairy Hygiene schemes processed.

6.5 Goal 5: Integrity of the Food Chain

To produce Irish food that meets consumers' expectations of quality, safety and wholesomeness.

Objective: *To generate the knowledge and technologies necessary to underpin food safety, quality and wholesomeness.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.5.1	Conduct research on the microbiological and chemical safety of Irish food products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications. ■ Number of patents. ■ Number of applications trials/pilot plant validations successfully completed.
6.5.2	Provide an understanding of consumer needs and customer requirements in relation to food safety, to guide competitiveness and technical innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Competitive funding obtained. ■ Level of industry funding.

Objective: *To transfer food safety technologies and skills to the food sector and farmers*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.5.3	Carry out a pro-active programme of technology transfer and advice to food companies and regulatory bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of product/process innovations tendered to industry. ■ Amount of industry-commissioned research invoiced. ■ Number of open days, workshops and symposia for industry. ■ Take-up of research as measured by follow-on commercial activity. ■ Number of SME food companies assisted.
6.5.4	Develop and provide nationally accredited education and training courses to food companies and regulatory personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Feedback from customers. ■ Number of training courses nationally accredited. ■ Number of courses run. ■ Number of attendees at courses.

6.5.5	Provide specialist analytical and consultancy services to underpin food safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of companies assisted. ■ Number of industry guidance documents published. ■ Number of analytical reports issued. ■ Level of fee income.
6.5.6	Provide information and advice to farmers on the food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity standards necessary for EU scheme cross compliance, regulatory requirements and market quality assurance needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Usage of Teagasc food assurance online database. ■ Teagasc food assurance publications and activities. ■ Teagasc National Farm Survey five-yearly survey of producer awareness/attitudes.
6.5.7	Provide accredited training programmes to young farmers and adult farmers to enhance food assurance competencies and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of students completing accredited food assurance modules. ■ Number of adult farmers completing food assurance type courses.

6.6 Goal 6: A More Capable, Efficient and Effective Organisation

Our organisation must continue to change and develop so that we can deliver on our mission and goals. An ongoing programme of organisational change, closer integration and an investment in the development of our people and systems is designed to ensure that we have the capacity and the ability to meet the challenges set out in this statement.

Objective: *To attain greater integration of research and technology transfer within the organisation; better collaboration and integration of the research programme across research areas.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.6.1	Further develop commodity teams, to include advisory, research and training staff, that will plan Teagasc programmes on an integrated basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enhanced commodity teams established and fully operational in time to develop programmes in 2004.
6.6.2	Develop and implement a management structure to ensure a fully integrated approach to the management of programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrated structure for the delivery of horticulture, forestry and pig programmes in place by end of 2004. ■ Matrix management structure for the agriculture and food research centres in place by mid-2004.

Objective: *To ensure that the staff resources of Teagasc are managed, developed and supported so that they can fully contribute to the achievement of the objectives set out in their Business Plans.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.6.3	Complete the development of the HR Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ HR Strategy completed by the end of 2003. ■ Working groups established in 2004 and report at the end of 2004. ■ HR IT System in place early in 2005. ■ Fully implement PMDS for all staff in 2004
6.6.4	Ensure that gender equality is achieved in the recruitment of staff and in promotional procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All recruitment and promotional boards will be gender balanced. ■ Establish female participation targets by June 2004. ■ Monitoring of the position in relation to promotion and recruitment.
6.6.5	Ensure that people with disabilities are accommodated to the fullest extent in Teagasc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Audit of all Teagasc facilities to ensure access by people with disabilities to be completed by 2005. ■ Increased awareness programme amongst staff of the specific needs and issues of people with disabilities.

Objective: *To ensure the highest standards of financial management, accountability and corporate governance.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.6..6	Ensure that the corporate governance standards are maintained in accordance with the guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fully implement the selected modules of the Teagasc finance system. Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of accounting and management information systems by integrating the advisory client management system to the billing and other modules of the main finance system.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New Client Information Management system fully tested by the end of 2003, implemented in all counties by mid-2004. ■ Electronic diary in use in the advisory services by mid 2004 and in the remainder of the organisation by mid 2005. ■ Percentage of suppliers and staff paid electronically. ■ Electronic requisitioning and stock control system in place in all major centres by the end of 2004. ■ Satisfactory review on a quarterly basis by the Audit Committee of the Authority. ■ Implementation of programme of internal audits agreed annually.
6.6.7	Incorporate a risk management programme into the business planning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carry out four one-day risk management workshops by the end of 2003. ■ Development of list of risks to which Teagasc is exposed and generate action plans by the end of 2004.
6.6.8	Full implementation of the Ethics in Public Office Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Returns received from Authority members and relevant staff by the due dates.
6.6.9	5-year Rolling Business Plan developed and submitted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Revised 5-year Rolling Business Plan produced each year on time.
6.6.10	Deal effectively with all requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meet all deadlines for answering FOI requests: regular reports from the FOI Officer.
6.6.11	Preparation and delivery of Business Plans by all units in Teagasc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Well developed Business Plans, involving staff in their preparation, in place in all units during 2004.

Objective: *To apply Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to meet the business and service needs of the organisation.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.6.12	Develop and implement a robust and secure infrastructure, using industry standard components and ISO standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All projects managed to the best project management standards. ■ Projects completed on time. ■ Completion of VPN connections for voice and data by the end of 2003. ■ Security policy in place, together with clear technical controls, early 2004. ■ Implementation of performance management standards and measurement into all aspects of ICT services as they are rolled out. ■ Help Desk in place by the end of 2003. ■ Full training plan to accompany each roll out.
6.6.13	Progress ICT developments in line with e-Government Strategy in order to underpin our e-services to clients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Web based e-Profit monitor in spring 2004. ■ e-learning modules tested by mid-2004. Available to clients from late 2004. ■ Delivery of soil analysis results through the web from mid 2004.

Objective: *To apply Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to meet the business and service needs of the organisation.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.6.14	Consult with staff and customers on the level of satisfaction with Teagasc services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Initial surveys completed by end 2003. ■ Identify quality standards for the delivery of customer services and implement actions to achieve these.

6.6.15	Ensure a comprehensive Customer Quality Service is in place in Teagasc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Completion in 2003 of pilot projects to identify standards. ■ Inclusion of actions to improve quality customer services in all Business Plans in 2004. ■ Publish Customer Service Charter and Customer Service Action Plan (CSAP) in 2004. ■ Extent of implementation of the CSAP in 2005.
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Objective: *To evaluate the programme targets/economic benefits of Teagasc services to its customers, identify improvements in the design and delivery of these services and the achievement of improved organisational governance.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.6.16	Develop a performance evaluation capability in 2003 and 2004.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Completion in 2003 of a Performance Evaluation Strategy and Plan. ■ Establishment of an Evaluation Unit in 2003 and the development of its capability in 2003/2004. ■ Recommendations to align business planning procedures in Teagasc with performance evaluation. ■ Development of a balanced scorecard evaluation model for Teagasc.
6.6.17	Commence in 2004/2005 the implementation of a cyclical plan for evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Development of cyclical Evaluation Plan. ■ Number of evaluation projects in hand or completed.

Objective: *To improve organisational efficiency.*

No.	Strategy	Performance Indicators
6.6.18	Complete the implementation of the rationalisation plan initiated in 2003.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extent of the plan implemented
6.6.19	Continue to improve efficiency of delivery of services through rationalising county management units to achieve more critical mass and more uniformity in size of units and services provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number and size of management business units.

7. Key Linkages

Teagasc is committed to working in partnership with all sectors of the agriculture and food industry at home and abroad in the delivery of its research, advisory and training services. This partnership approach ensures that the organisation's resources are used to best effect. Linkages continue to be fostered and enhanced with the following organisations and agencies:

7.1 Department of Agriculture and Food

Teagasc will work closely with its parent Department to ensure that its programme of activities meets the needs of the sector, that it is consistent with government policy and particularly with the policy of the Department of Agriculture and Food as laid down in its Statement of Strategy.

7.2 Other Government Departments

The mandate of Teagasc extends across areas covered by several Government

Departments. It will maintain liaison and contact with these Departments to ensure consistency and efficiency in approach and avoidance of overlap in areas of common interest. Departments concerned include Education and Science, Rural, Community and Gaeltacht Affairs, Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Environment and Local Government.

7.3 Government Agencies

Various other agencies of Government have mandates that touch on the work of Teagasc. These include An Bord Glas, Bord

Bia, FAS, the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC), The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and the Environmental Protection Agency. Teagasc will maintain liaison with these bodies and work co-operatively and jointly with them as is necessary or desirable.

7.4 EU Initiatives

Teagasc involvement in EU initiatives will be maintained and, where possible, strengthened. In particular, we will endeavour to compete strongly for research contracts under the various EU Framework and other programmes for research and development. EU research policy increasingly aims to step up the co-operation and co-ordination of research activities carried out at national or regional level in the Member States. The Community is committed to making a reality of the concept of a "European Research Area" (ERA) by improving the coherence and co-ordination across Europe of the national research programmes. The Sixth Framework Programme has a basic objective to contribute to the creation of the ERA. Member States are currently being asked to develop action plans designed to ensure that a target of 3% of GDP for RTD expenditure is achieved. Teagasc will fully participate in these endeavours.

7.5 Other International Linkages

Active collaboration with international scientific institutes is a necessary condition for knowledge development. As a small organisation, Teagasc has always realised the value of building and maintaining a portfolio of strong international contacts and networks. We have signed a number of bilateral agreements with institutes around the world and we have sought to be active participants in the wider world of scientific

and developmental endeavour. These contacts have been important in ensuring early access for Ireland to relevant developments in science and technology abroad. We will strengthen our existing bilateral research agreements and seek to develop new linkages which will benefit our work and the industry we serve.

7.6 Higher Education Institutions

Teagasc has developed an extensive network of formal and informal collaboration with its university and institute of technology counterparts. The Walsh Fellowship Scheme plays an important role in fostering such collaboration. The two Food Centres work closely with UCC and UCD and other institutions in implementing food research programmes managed by the Department of Agriculture and Food.

Teagasc colleges and the Teagasc-funded private colleges are currently involved with seven institutes of technology in the joint provision of eleven third level programmes up to National Diploma level. These linkages facilitate the best use of the core competencies of each of the partner institutions and provide students with the opportunity to progress up to degree level.

Teagasc will continue to build partnerships with the higher education institutes to help achieve critical mass in important areas, leading to improved efficiency in the delivery of services. We will maintain the Walsh Fellowship Scheme at about its existing size but broaden the scope to include more non-traditional agricultural science disciplines and develop further linkages with international fellowship schemes as has been recently done with the Fulbright Fellowship programme. Teagasc will enter discussions with Irish universities with a view to forming more formal co-operative networks in jointly delivering research, education/training, and developmental services.

7.7 Industry Representative Bodies

Teagasc will maintain ongoing liaison with the various bodies representative of our stakeholders in the agri-food sector. We will develop and strengthen the various commodity working groups which are representative of stakeholders and Teagasc staff and involve them in developing and monitoring overall programmes of research, education/training and technology transfer for their commodity areas.

7.8 Joint Programmes with Industry

Teagasc is working with all the major agri-businesses in implementing joint development programmes. These programmes focus on improving production efficiency and product quality, consistent with market requirements. The joint programme partnership arrangements ensure an effective deployment of staff resources and provide funding to deploy additional staff. Teagasc will continue to seek opportunities to extend its partnership with industry.

7.9 Local Development Agencies

Teagasc co-operates with and supports regional and local development agencies in the implementation of new developments in rural areas. Many of these relate to the agri-food sector and complement the role of Teagasc. The expertise of our staff is a key support to these agencies. The close working relationship provides Teagasc with opportunities to stimulate development initiatives to support our role and increase the demand for our advisory and training services.

7.10 North-South Linkages

Teagasc will develop and advance co-operation with the agri-food development agencies in Northern Ireland on matters of mutual interest. In particular, areas for co-operation identified by the North-South Ministerial Council in Agriculture will be pursued. We will continue current discussions with the Agricultural Research Institute of Northern Ireland towards developing an agreement on co-operation in research. Ongoing contacts will be maintained with the other agri-food, research and development and training bodies and any opportunities for co-operation that would yield mutual benefit will be explored.

8. Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

The Statement of Strategy sets out the overall mission, mandate and high level goals and objectives of Teagasc and outlines the broad strategies to be implemented. In preparing this statement the views and suggestions of staff have been taken into account so as to achieve shared ownership and ensure that the broad strategies can be translated into more detailed actions and activities in the business plans of the various management units of Teagasc.

Business Plans, prepared at divisional level and by the associated management units, will include a concrete annual programme of actions to achieve our goals. In turn, these Business Plans roll out into individual work programmes of staff members for the Performance Management Development System (PMDS). The objectives and actions specified in the Business Plans will be set to meet specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and targeted (SMART) standards of assessment. The annual business plans will therefore enable Teagasc to see strategy and planning as an ongoing exercise.

The Statement of Strategy will be kept under constant review by management.

Annual progress reports from each division will be presented to the Authority. The Annual Report to the Minister for Agriculture and Food will follow the format of the Statement of Strategy. In future, the report will show the progress made in achieving our goals.

Each division and associated management units will generate, on an ongoing basis, data on its business activities and the achievement of its business objectives. The ICT implementation plan, which is currently being prepared, will provide management with the required data collection and analysis services.

The inclusion of Risk Management and Quality Customer Service actions/targets in our business plans will support the successful implementation of goals and strategies. The implementation of a cyclical evaluation plan will provide key information on the achievement of programme targets and the benefits which our customers gain from our services. Additionally, this will assist us to identify improvements in the design and delivery of these services and the achievement of improved organisational governance.

APPENDIX

2

Teagasc Organisational Chart

J. Flanagan
Director





