

Contents

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Foreword | 3 |
| 1. Introduction | 4 |
| 2. Mission, Vision and Mandate | 5 |
| 2.1 Mission Statement | 5 |
| 2.2 Vision | 5 |
| 2.3 Mandate | 6 |
| 3. External Content | 7 |
| 3.1 Policy Framework | 7 |
| 3.2 National Framework | 8 |
| 3.3 International Context | 9 |
| 3.4 Confronting the Challenges | 10 |
| 3.5 A New Agenda for Teagasc Research | 11 |
| 3.6 A New Agenda for Teagasc Advisory Service | 12 |
| 3.7 A New Agenda for Teagasc Education and Training | 13 |
| 4. Internal Environment | 15 |
| 4.1 Teagasc Services | 15 |
| 4.2 Physical Infrastructure | 15 |
| 4.3 Staff Resources | 16 |
| 4.4 Management of Teagasc | 16 |
| 4.5 Human Resource Management | 18 |
| 4.6 Financial Management | 18 |
| 4.7 Information and Communication Technology and e-Government | 19 |
| 4.8 Quality Customer Service | 19 |
| 4.9 Performance Evaluation | 19 |
| 4.10 Staff Training and Development | 20 |
| 4.11 Managing Intellectual Property | 20 |
| 4.12 Modernisation Commitments | 21 |
| 5. Goals & Strategies | |
| 5.1 Competitiveness and Innovation in Agriculture | 23 |
| 5.2 Competitiveness, Innovation, Safety and Quality in Food | 29 |
| 5.3 Sustainable Systems of Agriculture | 31 |
| 5.4 Rural Viability | 34 |
| 5.5 Operational Capabilities and Modernisation | 36 |
| 6. Key Linkages | |
| 6.1 Government Departments/Agencies | 40 |
| 6.2 EU | 40 |
| 6.3 Other International Linkages | 40 |
| 6.4 Higher Education Institutions in Ireland | 41 |
| 6.5 Industry Representative Bodies | 41 |
| 6.6 Joint Programmes with Industry | 41 |
| 6.7 Local Development Agencies | 41 |
| 6.8 North-South Linkages | 42 |
| 7. Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting | 43 |
| 8. Appendix 1. | 45 |
| Map of Teagasc Locations | |

Mission Statement

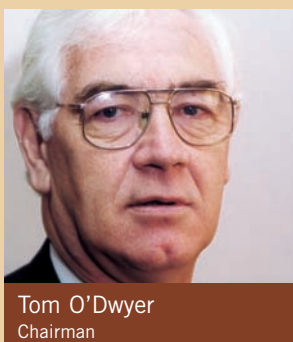
The Teagasc Mission is:

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

Foreword



Tom O'Dwyer
Chairman

I am pleased to present this, the third Statement of Strategy of Teagasc, which sets out our goals, strategies and priority actions for the period 2005 to 2007.

This Strategy Statement is the result not only of detailed discussions and consultation within Teagasc, but also reflects the input of the Department of Agriculture and Food, other state bodies and a range of other stakeholders. In regard to internal consultation, I am pleased to note that the new National Partnership Committee played a major role in the finalisation of the document. I wish to thank all staff members and those external organisations and individuals who contributed.

During the course of the last Statement, Teagasc undertook major internal reorganisation and rationalisation and our Head Office was successfully relocated from Dublin to Carlow. During the course of the current Statement, our focus will be on building on the reforms of the previous period to deliver better quality and more innovative programmes to our customers.

The period covered by this Statement is one in which the agri-food industry will have to confront new challenges and adapt to the freedoms arising from recent reform measures. The overall policy framework requires the development of an internationally competitive multifunctional agriculture, producing market-required food products and environmental goods and services, diversification of the rural economy and protection and management of the rural landscape. The industry will survive and prosper in this new environment by deepening its knowledge-based comparative advantage and continued public support for R&D, education, training and extension will be critical.

This Statement again highlights the close collaboration between Teagasc and a range of national and international partners. We are committed to working closely with our parent Department and other Government departments, with key research, advisory and training institutes nationally and internationally and with all sectors of the Irish agri-food industry. In this way Teagasc will continue to make a major contribution to ensuring that the industry will be in a position to take advantage of the new opportunities now arising.

1 ■ Introduction



Jim Flanagan
Director

This is the third Teagasc Statement of Strategy. It sets out our goals and strategies for the development of agriculture and the food industry over the next three years. The revised statement is required under the Public Service Management Act 1997, as a consequence of an update by the Department of Agriculture and Food of its Statement following the appointment of a new Minister.

Our Statement takes account of changes in the Department's Strategy. It also reflects changes in the consumer food market, the agri-food environment and the increasing emphasis on the role of agriculture in producing the public goods of landscape and heritage features, biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

The agri-food industry is an important component of the Irish economy, and its future competitiveness will depend on its ability to develop as a knowledge-based industry. The Teagasc research, advisory, education and training services are key platforms to securing this competitiveness.

This Statement is based on Teagasc's vision of the knowledge needs of the agri-food industry, its mandate and how its services can best be delivered with the resources available. It has been developed in consultation with and involving input from staff at all levels and recognises the need for flexibility on the part of staff to respond to changes in demand for services.

Teagasc intends to develop the organisation's human and physical resources and operational capabilities so as to meet our Customer Charter commitments to quality service and the Government's public service modernisation targets.

2. Vision and Mission Statement

2.1 Mission Statement

Our Mission is

To generate and apply new knowledge 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.

Increasingly government policy identifies knowledge-based support as the key dimension to maintaining Ireland's competitiveness in all sectors of the economy, including the agriculture and food industries. In line with this, public support will increasingly focus on the provision of support to education, training and research & development as the way of ensuring Ireland's comparative advantage on world markets. The agri-food industry will also survive and prosper by deepening its knowledge-based comparative advantage.

As the largest provider of knowledge-based services to the agri-food sector, Teagasc occupies, through its scientific reputation and impartiality, a leadership position in the industry's development. In line with the national vision for the creation of an innovation driven culture, the organisation will aim to strengthen its own capability and performance, as a basis for raising the technological absorptive capacity of the industry.

2.2 Vision

In line with that of the Agri-Vision 2015 Committee, our vision is for an agri-food industry that is an integral part of the knowledge-based economy and which is:

- Competitive in all aspects and capable of delivering the high quality and safe products demanded by the consumer.
- Continually innovative in meeting consumer demands for variety, quality and safety of food products and in responding to the growing demand for 'foods for health'.
- Increasingly focused on the production of public good outputs, such as rural landscape, cultural and heritage features, biodiversity, carbon sinks and wildlife habitats.
- A key influence on the life and viability of rural areas.

2.3 Mandate

Teagasc, established under the Agriculture (Research, Training and Advice) Act, 1988, is the state agency with responsibility for the provision of research, advisory, education and training services for

- Agriculture, including horticulture and forestry.
- The production and processing of meat and livestock products, milk and dairy products, poultry and egg products, fish and fish products, horticulture and plant products.
- Farm management, agricultural economics, rural development, marketing of agricultural products and any other activities or sciences related to improving the efficiency or scope of agriculture.

This mandate gives Teagasc responsibility for meeting the technology needs of the whole food chain from 'fork to farm' and the scope to integrate research, advisory, training and education services into single service packages for customers.

The Statement of Strategy is the organisation's strategic plan for implementing its mandate. The current Statement takes account of the following major policy documents/reports:

- *Report of the Agri -Vision 2015 Committee*. Department of Agriculture and Food, Dublin, 2004.
- *Building Ireland's Knowledge Economy: The Irish Action Plan for Promoting Investment in R&D to 2010*. Report to the Inter Departmental Committee on Science, Technology, and Innovation. Forfás, Dublin, 2004.
- *Department of Agriculture and Food Statement of Strategy 2005-2007*. Department of Agriculture and Food, Dublin, 2005.
- *Ireland: National Development Plan 2000 – 2006*. The Stationery Office, Dublin, 2001.
- *Sustaining Progress: Social Partnership Agreement 2003 – 2005*. The Stationery Office, Dublin, 2003.
- *An Agreed Programme for Government between Fianna Fáil and the Progressive Democrats*. Department of An Taoiseach, Dublin, 2002.
- *Ahead of the Curve: Ireland's Place in the Global Economy*. Report of the Enterprise Strategy Group. Forfás, Dublin, 2004.

3 ■ External Context

3.1 Policy Framework

3.1.1 Domestic Policy

Teagasc's strategic actions are relevant to the changing needs of the Irish agri-food industry, are market-led and designed to support Irish agriculture and food within the framework of government and international policies and priorities. In particular, they underpin national objectives for the agri-food sector as set out in the National Development Plan 2000-2006 and specifically in the Productive Sector Operational Programme, including the Food Institutional Research Measure (FIRM).

In addition, our strategic initiatives are supportive of the Department of Agriculture and Food's Statement of Strategy 2005-2007 and fully reflect our response to the agri-food policy objectives and the public service modernisation programme of the Programme for Government.

Our Strategy Statement also reflects the current emphasis in government policy on the role that Research, Technology, Development and Innovation (RTDI) will play in maintaining national competitiveness. Irish government policy prioritises the development of a knowledge-based economy, especially through the provision of funding for R&D. Agriculture remains a significant component of the Irish economy and its future competitiveness will also depend on its ability to develop as a knowledge-based industry. Ongoing public support to agriculture and food through funding of research, training and extension will be key to the future competitiveness of the industry.

3.1.2. European Policy

The Luxembourg Agreement on reform of the CAP constitutes a dramatic change in EU agricultural policy. The decoupling of agricultural direct payments from production will lead to changes in the volume of output, the levels of inputs used in Irish agriculture and the structure of farming in Ireland. The decoupling of direct payments will result in a change to the relative returns to farm labour which is likely to result in an increase in the number of farmers with off-farm employment. Furthermore, the reduction in the intervention prices for dairy products and the decoupling of dairy compensation is likely to result in an acceleration of the pace of structural change in the Irish dairy industry. The Report of the Agri- Vision 2015 Committee accepted the Teagasc analysis, which projects a reduction in the number of farms from 136,000 in 2002 to 105,000 in 2015. The number of economically viable farms is expected to increase from 28% to 38% in the period, but on three-quarters of these farms either the farmer or the spouse will participate in off-farm employment. The Report also highlights the weak competitive position of Irish agriculture and its low rates of productivity growth relative to other EU countries - when full economic costs are considered. Non-EU countries like New Zealand, Australia, Brazil, US and Canada would also appear to have significant advantages, particularly those of scale, for some animal and crop products.

3.2 National Framework

3.2.1 The Irish Economy

The current generally favourable macroeconomic climate in Ireland is expected to continue - in contrast with that of continental EU countries where historically high levels of unemployment and the relatively low levels of national income growth are forecast to continue.

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. Competition for labour for both farm production and food processing also increased. A wide range of new demands came from the food marketplace and inflationary pressures were exerted on farming costs. These trends are likely to continue during the current strategy period.

3.2.2 The Agri-Food Sector

The agri-food industry continues to make a significant contribution to the Irish economy. The combined agri-food and drink sector has annual exports of over €7 billion, accounts for almost 9% of GDP and directly employs 166,000 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 20% to net foreign earnings from merchandise exports.

The decline in full-time farming continues, as does the rise in part-time farming. It is estimated that about 42% of all Irish farmers are now part-time. Servicing this growing number of part-time producers is a particular challenge for Teagasc.

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, as it is 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 and competitive. 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.

3.2.3 The Food Industry

The Irish food industry makes a significant contribution to the economy, with annual output value of approximately €16.8 billion, accounting for almost 20% of all industrial output and employing in the region of 47,000.

The need for our milk and beef industry to innovate and add value has gained new momentum following the Luxembourg Agreement. The Prepared Consumer Foods sector has been buoyant and continues to expand. A major focus on foods for health is being driven by Enterprise Ireland and is likely to impact on a wide range of companies. Overall, the industry faces severe competition on both home and export markets and must develop new skills,

particularly in product innovation and marketing, for competitive success.

3.2.4 Rural Development

Rural Ireland is in a state of rapid change, with increasing population, adoption of urban values, extensive long distance commuting, widespread adoption of part-time farming and a decline in the economic importance of farming. At the same time, there is growing pressure for land to be used to meet environmental and leisure needs. These changes are occurring within a context of changing EU policies for agriculture and rural development.

The focus of rural development policy has changed and must now address the more diverse needs of today's rural dwellers. The majority of these are not involved with agriculture. Rural development policy must be integrated with wider regional planning and development policy. It must also take account of the substantial regional differences in economic development in Ireland.

3.2.5 Provision of Public Goods

Primary agriculture produces agricultural commodities, but it also produces a range of "public goods", such as the preservation of the rural landscape, biodiversity, wildlife conservation, carbon sequestration and others which are reflected in the term multifunctional agriculture. This role will provide an increasingly important rationale for Government support for agriculture.

The provision of public goods by agriculture reinforces its role in sustainable rural development. Since agriculture will continue to account for the greater part of land use, it will be central to the on-going provision of public goods associated with the rural landscape. Irish agriculture will have to develop in an environmentally sustainable manner and respond to environmental policy changes as they arise.

3.2.6 National Science & Technology Policy

The Lisbon Agenda, adopted by the EU in 2000, set the goal of the European Union becoming the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. A strong science and research capacity is essential to encourage competition, innovation and entrepreneurship throughout Europe.

The Report of the Enterprise Strategy Group emphasizes the need for increased investment in research and development, both public and private, to enable Ireland's economy remain competitive in a future dominated by knowledge. Irish Government policy increasingly acknowledges the key roles that education, research and development and innovation have and will play in maintaining competitiveness. Agriculture and the food processing industry will remain important to the national economy over the next decade and the competitive ability of these industries, like that of the rest of the economy, depends on their ability to develop as knowledge-based industries focused on the requirements of the market place. This necessitates continued investment in publicly funded research, as public research bodies are focused on the generation of knowledge.

3.3. International Context

3.3.1 World Trade Organisation

The major policy development on the horizon is a possible conclusion of the Doha Round of the WTO that will probably see further liberalization of agricultural trade and the further restriction of the freedom of WTO members to subsidize their agricultural industries in a trade distorting manner. The Luxembourg Agreement has strengthened the EU's negotiating position with regard to domestic support to agricultural producers. As the majority of direct payments in the EU are now

decoupled from production, they are considered non-trade distorting and therefore are in the so-called “green-box” which is exempt from reductions. However, the Doha Round of the WTO may have serious consequences for Ireland in terms of the reduction or possible elimination of export subsidies and increasing our vulnerability to cheap imports by negotiating on market access. For a small open economy like Ireland that is relatively more reliant on export subsidies than other EU member states, the elimination of subsidies is likely to have a significant negative impact on the prices received by farmers.

3.3.2 Other Trends

The enlargement of the EU and further liberalisation of trade will continue to exert powerful competitive pressures on our agri-food industry. This combined with rising energy prices will require a re-evaluation of non-food land uses, in particular for biofuel production. Public concern with the quality and protection of the environment as well as the welfare of animals has become an increasingly important influence on public policy, particularly in regard to the agri-food sector. Consumer concerns regarding the safety, traceability and health promoting properties of food are growing. These concerns are accompanied by increasing demands for convenience and competitively priced products.

3.4 Confronting the Challenges

3.4.1 Competitiveness and Sustainability

The foregoing trends will intensify over time and bring the need for competitiveness in the industry even more to the fore. Accordingly, it is essential to focus on the ability of the Irish agri-food industry to compete and to confront the changes that are happening in consumer markets and in the external trading environment. As with

other industries, the competitive potential of the agri-food industry depends on its ability to develop as a knowledge-based industry. As stated in the Agri-Vision 2015 Report: “Agriculture remains an important component of the Irish economy and its future competitiveness will also depend on its ability to develop as a knowledge-based industry. Ongoing public support to agriculture through funding of agricultural education and training and of agricultural research, extension and advisory services will be keys to the future competitiveness of the industry.”

A number of recent reports on the food industry stress that it needs to reposition its product range from basic commodities to more differentiated products with higher value-added and to move from a culture of being production-driven to being market and consumer-led. Specific areas of opportunity identified are prepared consumer foods, functional foods and beverages, food ingredients and speciality foods. In addition, paramount importance is attached to food safety throughout the food chain. For Teagasc, the key link with national development strategy is in research, development and training. Here the various reports are unanimous. There must be much greater spending by industry on R&D and greater attention to upskilling the labour force. The Public Research Organisations (PRO's) have an important role to play and must be world class in their capabilities while stronger research linkages must be established between PRO's and industry.

Global warming is an increasing cause for concern. The Kyoto Protocol, signed in 1997, requires signatory countries to limit greenhouse gas emissions by 2010. Ireland is committed to limiting the increase in its greenhouse gas emissions to no more than 13% above the level of 1990. The National Climate Change Strategy proposes measures to control greenhouse gas emissions. Ireland is unusual in that a significant contribution is made by the agricultural sector to national greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, relative to other

EU countries, Ireland has a small proportion of land area under forestry and as forests act as a carbon sink, this is also a source of concern. This is not the only example where environmental concerns have resulted in policy commitments under EU or other treaties. The requirements to comply with the water, nitrates and phosphorus directives of the EU are specific examples.

Environmental legislation is likely to have implications for the competitiveness and sustainability of Irish agriculture. Furthermore, it is likely to present the Teagasc research, training and advisory services with significant challenges in terms of providing farmers with new technologies and information that will allow them to sustain their farm businesses while complying with the environmental standards.

3.4.2 The Consumer

Confidence, trust and integrity in the food chain are major issues for the consumer and Teagasc must play a role in linking science-based knowledge to these issues, which go beyond just safety and embrace such issues as health claims and authenticity.

3.5 A New Agenda for Teagasc Research

The Teagasc agriculture and rural research programme will continue to serve the broad range of farm enterprises, as well as national stakeholders, with an applied research programme. Some elements of the applied programme will need to expand as a result of greater contributions from industry through increased levy funding. Emphasis will continue to be placed on ensuring that the resulting technology is quickly transferred to stakeholders through the extension and education programmes.

The organisation has unique capability in applied research and is centrally placed to implement the recommendation of the Enterprise Strategy Group that applied R&D funding should be increased. Teagasc can be an effective partner in a Strategic Technology Platform for Agri-Food Technologies, as defined in that report. The intensification of its scientific specializations, which is the aim of the new research strategy, will ensure that the more basic areas of knowledge that are essential to support such a platform are in place.

In a submission to the Department of Agriculture and Food (April 2005), Teagasc proposed a new research strategy, the principal aim of which is to invest in centres of excellence that will equip those involved in the business of agriculture and food with the knowledge to improve efficiency, competitiveness and responsiveness to the market and to develop policies that respect the physical environment, promote biodiversity and guarantee the maintenance of a healthy population and health-giving countryside.

The new research strategy will expand the organisation's resources devoted to biotechnology, such that world class competence in selected key areas will be established. In this regard, Teagasc is influenced by the conclusions of the Interdepartmental Group on Modern Biotechnology that biotechnology has the potential to deliver major benefits to individuals and societies in areas such as healthcare and agriculture and environmental remediation and that the development of world class competence is essential, not optional, for Ireland and Europe.

The changing environment for science and the food industry will be reflected in the strategy and programme of the food centres. There is a compelling need for the food centres to align themselves with two major change processes, i.e. (1) national science & technology (S&T) policy which is based *a priori* on the creation of scientific excellence with increasing attention to

linkages with the productive sector and (2) innovation in food companies and, in particular, the drive for science-based innovation, most notably in connection with the development of foods for health. Teagasc will critically examine its food research science base and pursue a strategy to intensify the key scientific disciplines underpinning this programme area.

The recent submission to the Department of Agriculture and Food also identifies the developments that must take place in the organisation's agriculture and rural research programme so that it can position itself to deliver the knowledge required to achieve the Government's vision for agriculture in 2015. The strategy is to develop specific theme areas - animal science, crop science, environment and land use and rural research. The aim is to establish research teams with critical mass that will result in centres of excellence. The achievement of a high level of integration within and between the centres of excellence and with other national and international institutions is an integral part of this proposal.

3.6 A New Agenda for Teagasc Advisory Service

The key role of the Advisory Service is to maximise the income and sustainability of farm families within rural communities

A new advisory strategy and the resulting restructured service will focus the organisation's resources to assist farm families in confronting the challenges arising from the changing policy environment and the decoupling of direct payments

The development needs of commercial farmers will be satisfied through the dissemination of proven new technology and financial planning techniques. A dedicated corps of technology and business advisers will provide farmers with the capacity to improve efficiencies, increase scale and adopt best practices to maximise income.

Continuing structural adjustment and the evaluation of new land use options resulting from changed EU policies have increased the demand for the Planning for the Future Programme. Specially trained advisers will offer a detailed options analysis programme to all farm families. This exercise will help them to assess all the options for integrating the management of the farm business with other income-generating opportunities. A Way Forward Action Plan, outlining the pathways to viability for each family, will be a key output from this Programme.

Current EU policies and the government's vision for agriculture highlight the demand for rural environmental protection and the requirement for best practice by farmers. Central to this is the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS), nutrient management planning and farm waste management. The Advisory Service will continue as the principal REPS planning agency, accounting for over 40 percent of all planning services nationwide. Advisers, supported by research colleagues, will deliver a range of environmental services to ensure that farmers are fully supported in achieving the requirements of best practice and cross-compliance.

The new era in agriculture places a requirement on farmers to equip themselves with new skills. The Advisory Service will provide a wide range of courses, many of which carry the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) accreditation. These courses will range from the Vocational Certificate in Agriculture for adult learners to very specific skills-based courses. A dedicated corps of education officers, supported by agricultural advisers and specialists, will deliver adult training at local level in a flexible manner to ensure maximum participation.

3.7 A New Agenda for Teagasc Education and Training

In a learning society, education and training have a pivotal role to play in raising the skills, knowledge and competencies of school leavers, adult farmers and operatives. The Lisbon Strategy aims to create by 2010 a highly dynamic and competitive knowledge- based economy in Europe that will deliver sustainable growth, generate more and better jobs and create greater social cohesion. The Copenhagen Declaration has raised the profile of vocational education and training in terms of improving the quality of education and training, facilitating access for all and opening up education and training to the wider world.

Teagasc aims to achieve the goals of the Lisbon and Copenhagen declarations by ensuring that its education and training programmes are continually upgraded to the highest international standards. The implementation of the recently completed “Review of Teagasc’s Provision of Education and Training” by the Education and Training Forum will ensure that our programmes will be student centred and based on a platform of innovation, excellence and the need for a competitive agricultural industry.

Training of young entrants will, in the main, continue to be provided at colleges. Following the closure of six colleges in recent years, it is felt that the remaining network of eight colleges will be required to maintain a reasonable geographic spread so as to facilitate countrywide access for young entrants and adult farmers. It is recognised that the role of colleges is changing dramatically. Students are increasingly more inclined to commute from home for their training. The agricultural colleges of the future, while still meeting the needs of young entrants, will also need to integrate more with the provision of training for adults and part-time farmers and also with research.

Colleges and their staff are best equipped to provide skills training, whether at the college or local level, and should be involved in skills training as part of local Vocational Certificate in Agriculture programmes or in skills training modules for adult farmers.

Colleges will also provide the Vocational Certificate in Agriculture for part-time farmers in their own catchment area in conjunction with the Advisory Services. They will also be utilised as regional development centres where, in collaboration with research colleagues, the college farm production systems can be used to assess and demonstrate to students and farmer groups the most recent findings from research. Teagasc will continue to provide third- level training, accredited by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), up to ordinary degree level in conjunction with the institutes of technology. Eleven such programmes are currently available, with the opportunity to progress up to honours degree level.

To meet the education and training needs of the growing number of part-time farmers, the Vocational Certificate in Agriculture will be provided at local level at night and weekends in all management units.

The Advanced Certificate in Farming (replacing the 100 hour and 80 hour training courses) will continue to be provided each year across advisory management units and colleges to facilitate part-time farmers with non-agricultural training who wish to avail of state aids and incentives. Recent legislation requires that these courses are required to be accredited by FETAC.

Following the completion of a pilot 180 hour e-learning programme, an e-college has been established, and it is planned to expand the range and scope of e-learning programmes.

The increasing emphasis on environmental, animal welfare and food safety issues is a further challenge. This, together with the

Teagasc Statement of Strategy 2005-2007

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, which currently provides training to over 8,000 adult farmers each year.

Adult training will be delivered on a modular basis with standardised syllabi and assessment procedures, thereby facilitating the ongoing accumulation of credits. The adult farmer training programme will be one of the key delivery mechanisms for the other advisory programmes, including the “Options Analysis Programme”, the “Good Farm Practice Programme” and the “Technology and Business Programme”.

The forestry, horticulture and pig services are being restructured into three new development units, integrating advice and research in single management structures. This will provide an integrated research and advisory service to improve competitiveness and viability and ensure sustainable production systems in these sectors.

4. Internal Environment

4.1 Teagasc Services

The Teagasc service brand is well recognised and respected throughout the agri-food industry and the organisation enjoys excellent relations with a wide and diverse client base. The organisation's contributions on, for example, farm incomes, environment, health and safety and other public good issues carry credibility in policy debates.

About 65,000 farm families are availing of the advisory services, more than half of whom receive an intensive service. About 8,000 farmers participate annually in adult training courses and over 4,000 young people are undertaking the third- level and vocational training courses.

The customers for the research services include farmers, the agri-food processing and service sectors, advisers, government departments, other agri-food development/service agencies/organisations, the universities, other research organisations, and the EU.

The current research programme includes some 300 projects, about half of which are undertaken in collaboration with Irish and European partners. In about 25% of cases, there is a direct involvement of, or liaison with, the agri-food processing or service sector.

Our Customer Charter states our commitment to provide professional, high quality services to customers and the Customer Service Action Plan 2004-2006 includes some 40 action steps to further improve our customer services.

4.2 Physical Infrastructure

In 2004, Teagasc relocated its headquarters from Dublin to Carlow as part of its rationalisation programme. Part of this rationalisation programme includes the disposal of a number of advisory offices and research centres and the relocation of staff and the services they provide to larger more viable centres in more appropriate locations. Approval has been given to use much of the proceeds of this rationalisation programme to fund developments at some of the organisation's remaining centres. This investment has been additional to the ongoing maintenance and development of facilities provided for in the Capital Grant allocation.

The research services are now consolidated at Athenry, Grange, Johnstown Castle, Kinsealy, Moorepark, Oakpark and the food centres at Ashtown, Dublin and Moorepark, Cork. In the last few years there has been considerable investment in developing a biotechnology research capability, expanding research in environmental science and improving the food training programme.

Vocational and third- level training for young entrants to the industry is provided at four Teagasc-owned colleges (Ballyhaise, Co Cavan; College of Amenity Horticulture – Botanic Gardens, Dublin; Clonakilty, Co Cork; Kildalton, Co Kilkenny) and four privately - owned colleges (Gurteen, Co Tipperary; Mountbellew, Co Galway; Pallaskenry Co Limerick; Warrenstown Co Meath). A €24.5m five year investment programme (2000 to 2005) to upgrade the facilities at these colleges is nearing completion.

Local offices for advisory staff are provided at about 80 locations around the country. About two-thirds of these have a classroom facility to provide training courses.

Appendix 1 shows a map of all current Teagasc locations.

adopted a programme management structure. The key function of the Programme Manager/Leader is to develop a national business plan for each programme area and to lead and monitor the implementation of this across the various business units.

4.3 Staff Resources

The current allocation of the 1,599 staff (full-time equivalents) to the main services is as follows:

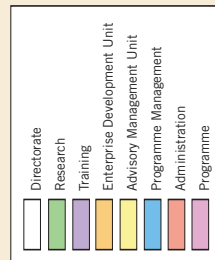
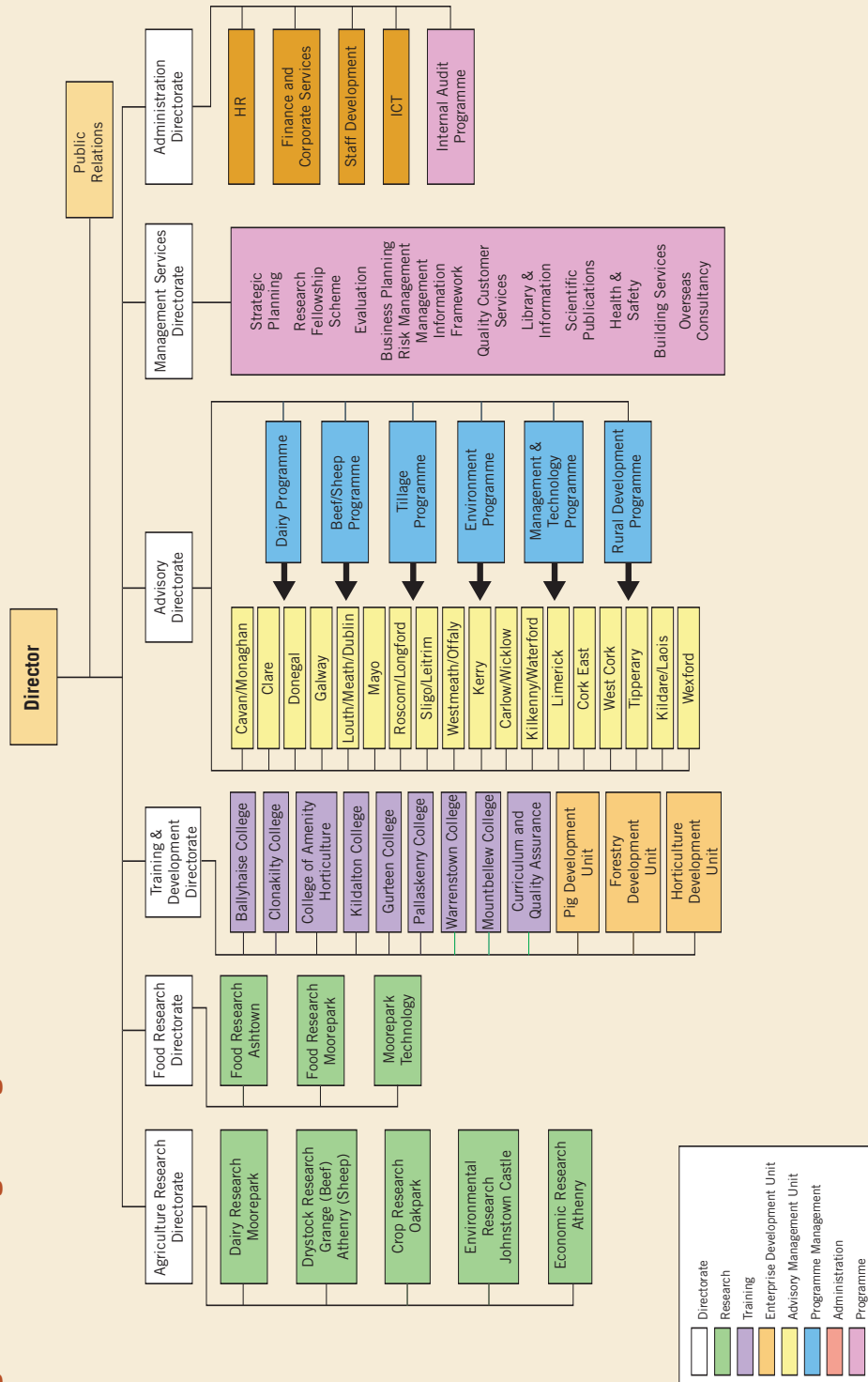
| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Advisory Services | 702 |
| Training Services | 196 |
| Agriculture Research | 456 |
| Food Research | 165 |
| Corporate Services and Support Units | 80 |

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

4.4. Management of Teagasc

The management system comprises an eleven- member authority which determines policy, and the Director, whose responsibility is to manage and control the organisation and ensure that the policies determined by the Authority are implemented. The Director is assisted by the Management Committee, comprising the Heads of the Directorate for Administration, Management Services, Agriculture Research, Food Research, Advisory Services, and Training and Development. Policy approved by the Authority is executed through an organisation structure comprising the business units outlined in Figure 4.1. Many of these business units have responsibility for the implementation of a number of national programmes. The Advisory, Agriculture Research and Training and Development Directorates have recently

Figure 4.1 - Teagasc Organisation Chart



4.5 Human Resource Management

The success of the organisation in delivering on its mission will be determined by the efforts, calibre and management of staff. The organisation has recently reviewed its human resource management capability. A restructured Human Resource (HR) Department has been provided with additional resources and given clear direction through the development of a HR strategy.

The HR Department is now structured in two discrete teams: HR Services, focussing on the provision of HR services (including recruitment, personnel administration and pensions), and HR Operations, supporting people management through employee relations, policy development and partnership support.

An organisational strategy designed to attain excellence through people is in place. This sets out ongoing actions for people management, competency frameworks, participation, investment in people and responsible behaviour and accountability.

The implementation of this strategy and the implementation of the HR Department Business Plan will ensure that the management of human resources contributes to the achievement of the goals of the Statement of Strategy.

A National Partnership Committee, consisting of staff, trade unions and management, chaired by the Director, is currently in place. A Partnership Officer has been appointed to support and manage the implementation of partnership. The role of the National Partnership Committee is to actively promote and lead the management of change through a partnership approach. The Committee endeavours to advance the common interests of staff and management through improved internal communications and the promotion of meaningful consultation.

4.6 Financial Management

Teagasc seeks to develop the full capabilities of its accounting system. The use of electronic funds transfer has been expanded, electronic requisitioning and stock control are now in place and an integrated Client Information Management System (CIMS) has been developed and is now being implemented. The organisation has endeavoured to meet increasing standards of customer service, while complying with legislative requirements and meeting the standards set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

The organisation has taken steps to develop an appropriate control environment by:

- Clearly defining management responsibility, authority and accountability.
- Establishing formal procedures and monitoring activities to safeguard its assets.
- Developing a culture of accountability across all levels supported by an ongoing internal audit programme.

The process of development and improvement will continue. The flow of management information will be improved by expanding and enhancing our accounts IT system – Integra- so as to contribute to the development of a Management Information Framework (MIF). The MIF will be aimed at ensuring a more efficient processing of financial transactions and accounts, tracking the ongoing progress in achieving organisational business targets, enabling better decision-making about the allocation of resources and ensuring better management and accountability of resources.

4.7 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and e-Government

In late 2002, Teagasc prepared a comprehensive ICT strategy. This strategy called for the creation of a centralised ICT Department, the complete upgrade of the existing ICT infrastructure and implementation of a number of ICT projects to enhance the operational and management efficiency of the organisation and facilitate the provision of quality services to customers in a cost efficient manner. The new ICT Department is in place and progress is being made towards delivering the systems, infrastructure and services set out in the ICT strategy.

The implementation of this strategy will improve the organisational efficiency and broaden the range of services it has to offer. Over the next three years, this will require significant capital expenditure to improve the ICT infrastructure, systems and services. The planned projects include:

- Design and implementation of a new ICT infrastructure. This project will be completed by the end of 2006.
- Implementation and upgrading of key organisational software, including a new human resources and payroll system, a laboratory information management system, a document management system, a redevelopment of the IT systems which support the National Farm Survey, a new REPS planning system and a redevelopment of the research management information system (RMIS)
- Review of all Teagasc websites based on the implementation of a Content Management System.
- Restructuring and improving the internal ICT support services.

4.8 Quality Customer Service

The delivery of a quality service to customers and the public in general is a priority for Teagasc. Recently, an initiative has been undertaken to review, enhance and measure the kind of service provided and written commitments have been given regarding the quality of service for the future. To this end, a Customer Charter and a Customer Service Action Plan 2004-2006 have been published.

The Charter details commitments regarding the standard of service to be provided. The Action Plan outlines measures to be adopted to ensure that the commitments in the Charter are met. The actions include the participation of staff at customer service awareness workshops. Best practice processes currently being developed include the establishment of customer panels and a formal complaints procedure, the integration of quality customer service actions into all internal business plans and a good practice guide for communications. Action steps are also planned to improve the standards of the facilities at our centres for the benefit of both customer and staff.

Feedback from our customers is encouraged and the organisation is committed to developing formal procedures, including regular customer surveys, to ensure that it receives information on the services customers require.

4.9 Performance Evaluation

A performance evaluation process, guided by a steering group, is in place to plan and review on a cyclical basis the main research, advisory and training programmes and develop an evaluation culture throughout the organisation. The evaluation projects recently completed include a review of the business planning arrangements in the organisation and an assessment of dairy monitor farm performance (2001 to 2003). Projects underway include an evaluation of the

€32m research retooling programme 2000-2004.

Over the next three years, it is planned to undertake 2-3 major evaluations and 4-6 smaller studies related to particular strategies from the Statement of Strategy. These studies will focus on large areas of expenditure.

Performance indicators specified at the various business unit levels as part of the business planning process will provide the basis for ongoing monitoring and review of organisational performance. This process will be reinforced through the development of a series of management reports leading to the implementation of a Management Information Framework (MIF).

4.10 Staff Training & Development

As a knowledge organisation, Teagasc fully recognises the importance of continuously developing its staff to meet the changing needs of its clients. A Staff Training & Development Unit was established in 2005. The Unit is responsible for monitoring and supporting the operation of the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), as well as leading and supporting staff training and development.

PMDS is now a fully operational platform for systematically addressing staff development issues. In 2005, particular emphasis is being put on achieving a definitive linkage between the key objectives of individual staff members and the business plan objectives of management units. The Staff Training & Development Unit measures initiated in 2005 will ensure the programming process for staff training is better geared to meet the development needs identified through the PMDS.

Under the new HR Strategy, staff training and development will be devolved, with technical training and staff development

activities planned and delivered at directorate level. In the Advisory and Training and Development directorates, the specialists will play a key role in providing training and technical support for front line staff. The Unit is responsible for overall co-ordination of the technical training and for the delivery of non-technical training. It has plans to develop a Management Development Programme for the organisation, to revamp the induction programme for new staff and to develop the mentoring/coaching capability within the organisation, particularly in relation to IT support. The Unit is committed to employing competency profiling that will facilitate a planned approach to staff learning and development.

4.11 Managing Intellectual Property

“The commercialisation of research and knowledge for Ireland’s economic benefit through effective intellectual property management and technology transfer, needs to be a priority for all higher education and public research institutes and it is essential that institutes establish strong capabilities in this regard”. (*Building Ireland’s knowledge Economy. The Irish Action Plan for Promoting Investment in R&D to 2010*. Report to the Inter Departmental Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation, 2004).

Whilst Teagasc has well established means of technology transfer in place, the organisation is developing its intellectual property management and commercialisation expertise. In this regard, it has adopted the ICSTI National Code of Practice for Managing Intellectual Property from Publicly Funded Research (Forfas, 2004). The full implementation of the Code of Practice requires the putting in place of appropriate structures and resources for commercialisation of research and the development of appropriate policies for sharing of rewards.

4.12 Modernisation Commitments

In 2004, a Business Planning Development Officer was appointed to implement initiatives arising from the Modernisation Programme for the Irish Public Service. The Modernisation Programme has its roots in the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI), which was launched in 1994. The objectives are to ensure that, on an ongoing basis, public service organisations will

- make a greater contribution to national development;
- be a provider of excellent services to the public;
- make effective use of resources.

Teagasc is committed to modernising its structures, facilities and business processes. The modernisation themes set out in Sustaining Progress and the verification requirements of the agreement provide the impetus for achieving real and meaningful change. In addition to the rationalisation of a number of centres, Teagasc has also made progress in organisational management; in the provision of services; in the introduction of a customer service action plan; in increased efficiency of the farm operations; in new staff technician/technologist grading structures; in a new partnership structure with staff; and in the implementation of business planning processes that will support a culture of participation. A risk management programme has also been initiated to assess, identify, quantify, mitigate and monitor risks.

The following additional significant developments are planned over the next three years:

- The further development of the business planning process to support the efficient delivery of services that are focused on the needs of our clients.
- The development and implementation of a risk management policy and procedures to make effective risk management a central part in the day-to-day management processes in a way that can deliver improved performance and other benefits
- The development of a Management Information Framework (MIF) incorporating data from a variety of management information systems and the financial system to deliver management information to managers at all levels to enable them to monitor the delivery of business plan commitments.
- The use of the "Guidelines for the Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals in the Public Sector" to ensure best use of capital funds.

5. Goals & Strategies

Goal 1

Competitiveness and Innovation in Agriculture

To underpin the development of a competitive, innovative and consumer focused agriculture sector.

Goal 2

Competitiveness, Innovation, Safety and Quality in Food

To support the development of a market oriented, competitive and innovative food sector, particularly in the growing 'foods for health sector', which meets the highest standards of quality and safety.

Goal 3

Sustainable Systems of Agriculture

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

Goal 4

Rural Viability

To promote the development of a vibrant rural economy through building the human resource capacity of farm families and through the development of a sound scientific knowledge base to agri-food policy development.

Goal 5

Operational Capabilities and Modernisation

To develop the organisation's human and physical resources and operational capabilities to ensure the delivery of quality services to our customers, while implementing Government policy on public service modernisation.

Goal 1: Competitiveness and Innovation in Agriculture

To underpin the development of a competitive, innovative and consumer focused agriculture sector.

Teagasc will implement research, advisory, education and training strategies for the development of primary agriculture, including horticulture and forestry.

The research strategies will focus on generating scientific information and technologies for a range of farm enterprises to achieve improved productivity, reduced costs of production and increased value of output.

The advisory strategies will focus on transferring the latest cost-reduction technologies and production blueprints from research and modern farm management practices to the commercial farming sector.

Third- level and vocational level training courses will be provided to equip young entrants to agriculture and horticulture with best practice skills for modern farming.

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Advisory | | |
| 1.1 | Assign up to 110 advisory staff to an enterprise specific business and technology programme (T/B) servicing approx. 10,000 farmers. | Number of advisors in T/B service. |
| 1.2 | Mainstream joint industry programmes, discussion groups and monitor farms together with enhanced advisory contact on best farm practices in all Area Management Units (AMUs) and advisory programme areas. | Number of joint programmes, monitor farms, discussion groups. |
| 1.3 | Use of management information system, including the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation (ICBF) management system, e-profit monitor and cost control planner by up to 10,000 farmers. | Number of clients completing e-profit monitors and number registered for Teagasc/ICBF management information site. |

Teagasc Statement of Strategy 2005-2007

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|--|---|--|
| 1.4 | Promote the objectives of Advisory Service Business Plan to clients and the wider community through a series of 100 events/activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of public events and publications. |
| 1.5 | Develop the competencies of 5,000 farmers to implement best practice in animal welfare, food hygiene and biosecurity necessary for EU cross- compliance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of awareness events and numbers of farmers attending. Number of training courses held. Number of clients using Teagasc Food Assurance website. |
| Adult Farmer Training | | |
| 1.6 | Develop and deliver a range of accredited food training courses to primary producers and to the food industry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of courses developed and delivered Number of participants Number receiving awards Level of cross compliance relating to food assurance |
| Forestry/Horticulture/Pig Development | | |
| 1.7 | Forestry Research: Conduct research that will result in the development of thinning, harvesting and marketing technologies that will help to underpin farm forestry practices that are environmentally sustainable, economically viable and socially desirable. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. Competitive funding obtained. Cost/benefit of research as determined by formal evaluation of projects and programmes. |

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|------|---|---|
| 1.8 | Forestry Advice/Training: Promote and support the development of farm forestry as a viable and sustainable farm enterprise. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of attendees at farm forest walks, training courses and forestry information evenings. ■ Improvement in the quality of farm forests. ■ Number and hectares of new farm forest established annually. ■ Level of integration between Teagasc forestry, REPS and other programmes. |
| 1.9 | To carry out a pig research programme that will enhance competitiveness and efficiency at farm level, improve product quality and value while minimizing any adverse effect on the environment, and protect the welfare of pigs in intensive systems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of research outputs (refereed scientific papers, conference presentations, other reports). ■ Blueprints developed for best practice in the management of pig production units. ■ Production cost data analysed from pig units to allow internal and international benchmarking. |
| 1.10 | Carry out research on vegetables, mushrooms, fruit and nursery stock using minimal inputs, I.C.M.S. (Integrated Crop Management System) and propagation techniques to produce healthy plants and quality produce. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of blueprint reports produced. ■ Level of uptake by industry. ■ Number of growers using I.C.M.S. ■ Number of research tasks completed. |
| 1.11 | Restructure the forestry, pig and horticultural services into three new development units, integrating advice, research and training in single management structures by the end of 2005. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of commodity teams established. ■ Number of contracted clients. |

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Education & Training | | |
| 1.12 | Develop and deliver a range of quality assured further and higher education and training courses for 800 school leavers each year. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Range of courses developed and delivered ■ Numbers of participants ■ Numbers achieving awards |
| 1.13 | Promote agricultural education and training and provide appropriate career guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Numbers participating ■ Number of career events ■ Number attending career events ■ Level of compliance with NQAI policy on access, transfer and progression. |
| 1.14 | Implement the 40 recommendations of the Forum Review of Teagasc Education and Training Provision by the end of 2006. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of Forum Review recommendations implemented. |
| Agriculture Research | | |
| 1.15 | Initiate and deliver on 55 research projects (25 scientist years) so as to establish new knowledge and develop technologies and systems to underpin the competitiveness of the livestock sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Number of scientific publications and reports. ■ Number of production blueprints. |
| 1.16 | Initiate and deliver on 20 research projects (10 scientists years) so as to establish new knowledge and develop technologies and systems to underpin the competitiveness of tillage crops for food and energy uses. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ Number of scientific publications and reports. |

Teagasc Statement of Strategy 2005-2007

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|------|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of patents and breeders rights. ■ Number of production blueprints. |
| 1.17 | Initiate and deliver on 11 research projects (7 scientist years) so as to 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. ■ Number of scientific publications and reports |
| 1.18 | Generate new knowledge (19 projects using 6 scientist years) 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 provide research- based advice to policy makers on the development of new policy options. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ No of scientific publications and reports. ■ No of briefings to business leaders and policy makers. |
| 1.19 | Conduct annual survey of farms in Ireland (3 scientist years) so as to be able to compare enterprise analysis within Ireland and to compare Irish farms with other EU member states | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Survey reports ■ The extent of utilisation by Teagasc and others of the survey data for economic analyses of the comparative performance of farms and farm enterprises ■ No of briefings to farmers, business leaders and policy makers on Irish agriculture. |

Teagasc Statement of Strategy 2005-2007

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|------|---|---|
| 1.20 | Carry out a proactive programme of technology transfer from research to the Advisory Service and to the industry (5 scientist years). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">No. of training courses for advisors.No of open days, workshops and symposia for industry.No of popular publications.No of end of project reports.No. technical digests |

Goal 2: Competitiveness, Innovation, Safety and Quality in Food

To support the development of a market oriented, competitive and innovative food sector, particularly in the growing 'foods for health sector', which meets the highest standards of quality and safety.

Teagasc will implement research strategies, spanning a range of science and technology areas for the food industry, particularly in meat, dairy and food ingredients and food safety.

Provide a technology transfer service and training courses for the food industry as an integral element of the research strategies.

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Food Research | | |
| 2.1 | Initiate and deliver research projects to underpin product quality and innovation in the Irish food industry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of designated research projects successfully completed. ■ Quality and quantity of scientific publications and reports. |
| 2.2 | Initiate and deliver research projects to exploit developments in technology and the biosciences to drive innovation in functional foods . | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of patents. ■ Number of applications trials/pilot plant validations successfully completed. |
| 2.3 | Initiate and deliver research projects to provide an understanding of consumer demands and customer requirements to guide innovation and competitiveness. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of products/processes tendered to industry. ■ Amount of competitive funding obtained. ■ No of scientific and technical publications and reports. |
| 2.4 | Initiate and deliver research projects on the microbiological and chemical safety of Irish food products. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amount of industry funding obtained. ■ No of scientific and technical publications and reports. |

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| 2.5 | Carry out a proactive programme of technology transfer and advice to Irish food companies and regulatory bodies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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 food SMEs assisted. ■ No of dissemination documents. ■ Number of training courses nationally accredited. ■ Proportion of designated courses run. ■ Number of attendees at courses. ■ Feedback from customers. ■ Amount of services invoiced. |
| Food Training and Consultancy | | |
| 2.6 | Develop and provide nationally accredited education and training courses to the food sector and regulatory bodies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of training courses nationally accredited. ■ Number of courses run. ■ Number of attendees at courses. ■ Feedback from customers. |
| 2.7 | Provide specialist analytical and consultancy services to underpin food safety, competitiveness and innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amount of services invoiced. |

Goal 3: Sustainable Systems of Agriculture

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

Research strategies will generate and transfer new scientific information and technologies to the agriculture sector, enabling farmers to farm in an environmentally sustainable manner, promote the preservation of the rural landscape, improve the welfare of farm animals and contribute to the development of a safe and healthy working environment.

Advisory strategies will be undertaken to support the development of sustainable farming through the provision of a REPS planning and support service, nutrient management planning and farm waste management planning services, and the transfer of technologies from research.

Best practice in relation to occupational safety, animal welfare and environmentally sustainable farming practices will be included in all Teagasc training courses.

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Advisory | | |
| 3.1 | Provide a REPS planning service to 20,000 farmers. | Number of Teagasc clients participating in the REPS programme. |
| 3.2 | Deliver nutrient management planning and farm waste planning services to underpin sustainable farming and cross - compliance to 500 farmers. | Number of nutrient management and farm waste management plans completed. |
| 3.3 | Increase the awareness of requirements and best practice in relation to farm safety to 6,000 REPS participants, 1,200 commercial farmers and 3,000 other farmers. | Number of participants in health and safety courses and number of awareness-creating activities held. |
| Education & Training | | |
| 3.4 | Ensure that a range of accredited modules on cross-compliance including the environment, animal welfare and occupational health and safety are delivered to young entrants and to adult farmers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of programmes delivered Number of participants |

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Numbers achieving awards ■ Level of cross-compliance relating to the environment, animal welfare and occupational health and safety. |
| Agriculture Research | | |
| <p>3.5</p> | <p>Establish new knowledge that will help to underpin sustainable agriculture production practices and protect the rural environment (18 research projects using 13 scientist years).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ No. of scientific publications and reports. ■ Uptake of research as measured by improvement in environment. ■ New blueprints of production. ■ Proportion of projects funded competitively. ■ No. of policy papers developed and transferred to policy makers. |
| <p>3.6</p> | <p>Conduct research that will help to underpin improved animal welfare (5 research projects using 2 scientist years).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ No. of scientific publications and reports. ■ Uptake of research as animal welfare improvements ■ Proportion of research projects funded competitively. ■ Policy papers developed and transferred to policy makers. |

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|-----|---|--|
| 3.7 | Develop strategies that will help to improve labour productivity and improve working conditions on farms (2 projects using 1 scientist year). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ No. of scientific publications and reports. ■ No. of production blueprints. |
| 3.8 | Carry out a proactive programme of technology transfer from research to the Advisory Service and to the industry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No. of training courses for advisors. ■ No of open days, workshops and symposia for industry. ■ Feedback from industry. ■ No of popular publications. ■ No of end of project reports. ■ No. technical digests |
| 3.9 | Provide technological and analytical services to the agri-food industry and other users. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Range of services provided. ■ Cost recovery from service users |

Goal 4: Rural Viability

To promote the development of a vibrant rural economy and society and provide a sound scientific knowledge base to agri-food policy development.

The research strategies will focus on analysing the trends and changes in rural areas, the impact of rural development policies and the contribution of the agri-food sector to the rural economy.

The advisory strategies will include an options analysis service to assist farmers adjust to changes affecting them and support them to identify options and pathways for viability, including the adoption of other diversified enterprises.

Adult training service will be provided to support all aspects of the advisory service to farmers.

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Advisory | | |
| 4.1 | Develop the capability of 15,000 farm families to adjust to change. | ■ Number of participants in Options Analysis Programme. |
| 4.2 | Equip 500 farm families with the competencies to avail of diversification opportunities and other supplementary enterprises. | ■ Number of farmers attending training on supplementary enterprises with income earning potential. |
| 4.3 | Provide easy access for upwards of 1,000 part-time farmers to Advisory Service's group events. | ■ Number of events/courses provided outside normal working hours. |
| Adult Farmer Training | | |
| 4.4 | Develop and deliver training courses to meet the needs of part-time farmers and operatives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Range of courses developed and delivered. ■ Number of participants on e-learning courses ■ Numbers achieving awards |
| 4.5 | Promote and support diversification opportunities for farmers, including sport horses, organic farming and other supplementary enterprises. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Numbers attending training courses or mentored ■ Uptake of supplementary enterprises. |

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|-----|--|--|
| 4.6 | Promote and facilitate lifelong learning opportunities for farm families and rural dwellers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Range of training courses developed and delivered. ■ Number of participants. ■ Numbers recorded on the AMS and achieving awards. |

Rural Development Research

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 4.7 | Conduct research (9 projects using 4 scientist years) that will provide the strategic knowledge base to support the continued viability of rural areas and support the establishment of alternative enterprises and employment opportunities in rural areas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proportion of research projects successfully completed. ■ No of scientific publications and reports. ■ Amount of competitive funding obtained. ■ No of policy options developed and transferred to policy makers. |
|-----|--|--|

Goal 5: Operational Capabilities and Modernisation

To develop the organisation's human and physical resources and operational capabilities to ensure the delivery of quality services to our customers while implementing Government policy on public service modernisation and corporate governance.

This will involve the further development of the organisation's staff and physical resources, its systems of financial management, ICT systems and a range of other internal organisational management support and information services.

In working to achieve this goal, Teagasc is committed to implementing strategies related to the public service modernisation agenda of better organisational management underpinning the delivery of quality services to customers. Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies at all levels in the organisation will be assessed and any necessary action taken.

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|-----|--|---|
| 5.1 | Continue the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Publication of the Staff Handbook by mid-2005 ■ Development of competency profiles for all major areas of employment by mid-2006 ■ All interview boards sitting after January 2006 will be fully trained in competency assessment. ■ Employee assistance programme in place by end of 2005 ■ Quarterly monitoring and reporting on key equality data in place by late 2005. |
| 5.2 | Establish a partnership approach to reach staff/management consensus on organisational issues. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The continued satisfactory operation of an active National Partnership Committee. |
| 5.3 | Undertake a HR business process improvement programme and develop a HRIT system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Completion of the analysis of key business processes and identification of detailed business requirements leading to the preparation of an invitation to tender by end of 2005. |

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|-----|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Success in integrating the improved business processes with the HRIT system as the phases are being implemented during 2006 and 2007. |
| 5.4 | Progress the modernisation agenda through the agreement on Action Plans under Sustaining Progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implementation of plans, completion of reports and satisfactory verification by due dates. ■ Regular meeting of the group of unions and briefing of managers |
| 5.5 | Upgrade the Integra finance system and make greater use of the system in the management of the organisation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Accounting system upgraded to Integra 3 by the end of 2007. ■ Payroll system modernised in association with new HRIT system by end 2006. |
| 5.6 | Implement Corporate Governance regulations and directions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Satisfactory reports from the C&AG on the degree of compliance. ■ Returns made under Ethics in Public Office on time each year ■ The extent to which a programme of internal audit is implemented in accordance with the agreed annual Internal Audit Plan. ■ Biannual report to the Authority on the extent of implementation of a risk management programme. |

Teagasc Statement of Strategy 2005-2007

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|------|--|--|
| 5.7 | Allocate an annual budget for implementation of an organisation-wide staff training and development programme based on training needs identified in PMDS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation-wide staff training plans developed and implemented each year. The percentage utilisation of the annual staff training budget. |
| 5.8 | Develop and implement a robust and secure ICT infrastructure using industry standard components. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocation of servers to third-party data centre by mid-2005 Complete wide area network upgrade by end- 2005 Complete infrastructure project by end of 2006. |
| 5.9 | Ensure adequate ICT support for staff using current and future applications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful outsourcing of user support in line with the roll out of new infrastructure in 2005 and 2006. |
| 5.10 | Continue the development of our ICT systems in line with eGovernment Strategy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of critical applications as set out in the ICT Plan. |
| 5.11 | Continue the development of the business planning process and Management Information Framework (MIF) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of business plans delivered on schedule. The development and implementation of a Management Information Framework by end- 2006. |
| 5.12 | Continue to implement a programme of internal evaluation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of evaluation plan on time. |

| No. | Strategic Action | Performance Indicator |
|------|---|--|
| 5.13 | Continue to implement a Quality Customer Service Initiative. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Delivery of the action steps in the Customer Service Action Plan on time. ■ Compliance with Teagasc Customer Charter commitments as indicated by surveys of customers. |
| 5.14 | Provision of internal research management support services and the development of an intellectual property management system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Updating the Research Management Information system by end of 2006 ■ Implement an organisation-wide policy on intellectual property in accordance with ICSTI Code of Practice by end of 2006. |
| 5.15 | Provision of a comprehensive Public Relations and Customer Communications programme of services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public website upgraded by mid-2006. ■ Number of press releases/publications issued and the extent of media coverage resulting. ■ Number of new publications produced annually. |
| 5.16 | Implementation of an internal audit programme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The scale and extent of the programme implemented relative to the plan. |
| 5.17 | Implementation of a library services programme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full text online access to journals, available to staff as per programme. |
| 5.18 | Implementation of an annual building programme in accordance with the budget provided. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Planned annual programme completed on time and to budget. |

6. Key Linkages

6.1 Government Departments/ Agencies

6.1.1 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 generally, and particularly with the policy of the Department of Agriculture and Food as laid down in its Statement of Strategy.

6.1.2 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; Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs; Enterprise; Trade and Employment; Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

6.1.3 Government Agencies

Various other agencies of Government have mandates that touch on our work. These include Bord Bia, FAS, HETAC, FETAC, The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, Food Safety Authority, the Health and Safety Authority, Enterprise Ireland and the Environmental Protection Agency. We will maintain liaison with these bodies and work co-operatively with them as is necessary or desirable.

6.2 EU

Our involvement in EU initiatives will be maintained and, where possible, strengthened. In particular, we will continue to compete strongly for research contracts under the 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. Under the Sixth and proposed Seventh Framework Programmes, the Commission is committed to pursuing the agreed target for Europe of investing 3% of GDP on R&D by 2010. In July 2004, Ireland published its Action Plan for reaching this target. Teagasc is fully committed to playing its part in ensuring that the Irish target is reached.

6.3 Other International Linkages

Active participation in international scientific communities is a necessary condition for the development of know-how. As a small organisation, Teagasc is aware of 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.

6.4 Higher Education Institutions in Ireland

We have developed an extensive network of formal and informal collaboration with our 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 ordinary degree 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 honours degree level.

We will continue to build partnerships with the Higher Education Institutes to help achieve critical mass in important areas, efficiency in operation and better 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. With the approval of the Department of Agriculture and Food, we will initiate in the near future a Post Doctoral Scheme for up to ten fellows. We 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.

6.5 Industry Representative Bodies

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

6.6 Joint Programmes with Industry

We are 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 ensures an effective deployment of staff resources and provides funding to deploy additional staff. We will continue to seek opportunities to extend partnership with industry.

6.7 Local Development Agencies

We co-operate with and support 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 us with opportunities to stimulate development initiatives to support our role and increase the demand for our advisory and training services.

6.8 North-South Linkages

We 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 contact 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.

7 ■ Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

Reporting to the Director, the management of Teagasc is collectively undertaken in six directorates, i.e. Advisory Services, Training and Development, Agriculture Research, Food Research, Administration and Management Services. Responsibility for implementation of the Statement of Strategy is shared through this management structure. Each directorate in turn shares its responsibilities among its business units.

The preparation and monitoring of business plans is the organisational mechanism used to achieve Statement of Strategy implementation. The business plan for each directorate is prepared in consultation with staff and then agreed with the Director. The plans for the business units are similarly prepared by the line managers and their staff and agreed with the directorate head.

The business planning process, which started in 2002, is being continuously refined and improved. A staff member was assigned in 2004 to lead and facilitate its further development.

The purpose of the business planning process, in addition to ensuring the organisational share out of Statement of Strategy implementation, is to ensure that business objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART). Business plan rolls out into work profiles for staff members through the Performance Management Development System (PMDS). This directly links the work of each staff member to the implementation of organisational strategy.

The National Partnership Committee will play a key role in supporting the

implementation of the strategy through developing good relationships between management, unions and staff. It will foster partnership in the day-to-day work of all staff and develop initiatives to contribute to improved employee relations.

Implementation of the Statement of Strategy will be monitored and kept under constant review. Teagasc operates a number of key systems to provide the necessary management information. The organisation's finance system (Integra) has been updated to facilitate the monitoring of progress towards the achievement of performance indicators. The Client Information Management System (CIMS) has been developed as a fully integrated add-on to Integra and is fully operational across the Advisory Service. The Adult Education Management System (AMS) and the Education Management system (EMS) have been updated to support service delivery as well as management reporting. The Research Management Information System (RMIS) is being reviewed so as to develop a solution with improved capability to manage research projects and monitor the achievement of performance indicators, while strengthening its alignment with Integra. The HR system will also play a key role in relation to the allocation of resources to the various programmes undertaken.

Over the next two to three years, Teagasc will work towards the achievement of the targets set for the Civil Service in the "Management Information Framework Project Plan 2004 – 2006". The core features of this framework are:

Teagasc Statement of Strategy 2005-2007

- Financial System Installation: Integra is an MIF-compliant finance system.
- Performance Indicators: The business planning process establishes the performance indicators. A review process is ongoing to ensure that these are SMART.
- Costing Framework: Significant effort will be needed to establish a costing framework which will allow for cost allocation on a programme, project and cost centre basis and facilitate performance review.
- Management Reporting: A full review of management reporting will be required to utilise the investments in financial systems and the performance indicator framework to enable managers to monitor and improve the management of resources and decision making.

The research, advisory, education and training programmes, which will be submitted annually to the Department of Agriculture & Food, will reflect the goals and strategies from this Statement of Strategy. The Annual Report to the Minister for Agriculture and Food is a review of the progress achieved in the implementation of these strategies and goals.

APPENDIX

1

Teagasc Centres

- Head Office
- Development Centre
- Food Research Centre
- Agricultural Research Centre
- Local Advisory Office
- Research Station
- Teagasc College
- Private College



NOTES

Lined area for notes with 20 horizontal lines.

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