

Animal &  
Grassland  
Research and  
Innovation Centre  
Grange, Co. Meath

# BEEF Forum 2014: My Future in Beef

Grange Animal & Grassland Research and Innovation Centre

BEEF 2014 Open Day

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Venue: Open Day Forum Marquee

located beside Derrypatrick Herd Unit (No 21. On Event map)





# **Beef Forum 2014: My Future in Beef**

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Unit - No. 21 on Event map)**

# Beef Forum 2014

## My Future in Beef

### Speakers:

**Donal Gallery** *Co. Meath*

**Billy Glasheen** *Co. Tipperary*

**David Kinsella** *Co. Wexford*

**Michael Murphy** *Co. Tipperary*

**Tommy Moyles** *Co. Cork*

**Trevor Boland** *Co. Sligo*

### Chairperson:

**Justin McCarthy** *Irish Farmers Journal*



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## Donal Gallery

<b>Address</b>	<p>Cookstown, Kells, Co. Meath.</p> <p>Farm Manager at the 'Skidoo Herd' and home farm in two different locations at Kells, Co. Meath and Kilnaleck, Co. Cavan.</p>
<b>Background</b>	<p>Married to Maura and have three children (4, 6 &amp; 7).</p>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cert. in Farming, Monaghan Agricultural College.</li> <li>• FAB Scheme – Trained as a Farm Manager.</li> </ul>
<b>Farming History</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From a dairy herd background.</li> <li>• Assistant Farm Manager in Oldcastle, Co. Meath for 18 months on the dairy farm of Michael Murphy (Cork farmer).</li> <li>• From 1992 worked for Cookstown Limousin Herd, Kells, Co. Meath before it dispersed in 2009.</li> <li>• From 2010, Farm Manager for Skidoo Herd and Pedigree herd.</li> <li>• Also farms own 40 cow suckler herd, quarter herd pedigree Limousin remainder is commercial. Commercial bulls sold as weanlings, commercial heifers sold as breeding heifers. Uses Maternal sires. Farming on 43ha with a sport horse enterprise on the home farm.</li> </ul>
<b>Brief description of current farming operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skidoo farm is currently farming 480 hectares. 250 suckler cows, 120 pedigree registered Charolais, remainder run as commercials.</li> <li>• Of commercial suckler herd, 40% calved in Autumn, 60% in Spring time.</li> <li>• Calving period is mid Sept to 1<sup>st</sup> Dec and 1<sup>st</sup> week Feb to 20<sup>th</sup> April.</li> </ul>

<b>Farm Details</b>	<p><b>Herd:</b> Pedigree &amp; Commercial suckler herd. Milk being maintained by using Limousin bulls that are 5 star for maternal.</p> <p><b>Stocking Rate:</b> Skidoo 1.9LU/ha and home farm 2.0LU/ha.</p> <p><b>Grass:</b> Silage cut mid May and should be in the mid 70's for DMD. Uses block grazing within the paddocks.</p> <p><b>Discussion Group:</b> In discussion groups prior to BTAP, Grange Grass Group (Ned Heffernan –Teagasc Adviser) and Positive Farmers Group in Meath (Aidan Fleming – Teagasc Adviser).</p>
<b>Lessons</b>	<p><b>Things I got right along the way:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grass – Paddock grazing and quality of silage.</li> <li>• Efficiency – Not on home farm during the day so labour efficiency important.</li> <li>• Breed of animal – right cow type, aiming for a calf per cow per year. Must have a functional cow that works.</li> </ul>



## David Kinsella

<b>Address</b>	New Ross, Co. Wexford.
<b>Education</b>	Attended agricultural College.
<b>Farming History</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David farms 70 cows on 42 hectares.</li> </ul>
<b>Brief description of current farming operations</b>	<p>Calving period; 15<sup>th</sup> January to 1<sup>st</sup> April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses mainly AI – this year 100% AI.</li> <li>• Uses cross bred Charolais / Simmental cows – completely closed herd. 369 day calving interval. All of the cows are now AI bred with a strong emphasis on milk. All heifers are calved at two years of age.</li> <li>• Have been in 18 month bull production but moving away from it.</li> <li>• Average carcass weight was &gt; 450 kg.</li> <li>• Best bull weanlings now castrated and will be finished off grass at 20 months and a carcass weight of over 400 kg.</li> <li>• Heifers are finished at 20 months off grass ( at 370 kg+ (all grading U).</li> </ul>



<b>Farm Details</b>	<p><b>Herd:</b>  March calves are weaned in September. Fed 3.5 kg of meal and silage until Christmas and are then stepped down to turn out. Normally turned out in mid – Feb but turned out 10<sup>th</sup> March this year.</p> <p><b>Stocking Rate:</b>  2.3 LU/ha in 2013 and will be higher in 2014.</p> <p><b>Grass:</b>  Uses rotational grazing.</p> <p><b>Discussion Group:</b>  In local discussion group (Martina Harrington – Teagasc Adviser).</p>
<b>Lessons</b>	<p><b>Things I got right along the way:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grassland Management, measuring grass for a number of years. Now on PastureBase Ireland.</li> <li>• Uses older AI bulls as they have higher reliability figures.</li> <li>• Uses ICBF all the time.</li> </ul>
<b>My farming outlook for 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No big changes planned.</li> </ul>
<b>Farming philosophy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep it simple.</li> </ul>



## Billy Glasheen

<b>Address</b>	Barristown, Passage East, Co. Waterford - 39 hectares. Mullinahone, Co. Tipperary – 43 hectares.
<b>Education</b>	Retired accountant.
<b>Farming History</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store to beef system and currently in the Teagasc / Irish Farmers Journal BETTER Beef Programme on the Tipperary farm.</li> </ul>
<b>Brief description of current farming operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieving premium price with Angus &amp; Hereford crosses in Producer groups.</li> <li>• Last year killed 300 cattle, this year on target to kill 400 between two farms. Aims to kill 235 on each farm in 2015.</li> <li>• In the past fed adlib meal to finish cattle indoors, now makes high DMD silage, and feeds 5 kg of meal with it to finish cattle.</li> <li>• Buying and killing cattle all year round.</li> <li>• Invested in new cattle housing last year.</li> <li>• Placing a big focus now on soil fertility.</li> <li>• Aims to kill most of the grass finished cattle before peak supplies in autumn.</li> </ul>

<b>Farm Details</b>	<p>Cattle bought are Angus &amp; Hereford crosses.</p> <p>100% of stock are getting a bonus of some sort.</p> <p>Selects cattle in marts that will meet the criteria for the quality bonus is key.</p> <p><b>Stocking Rate:</b></p> <p>1.95 LU/ha.</p> <p>Growing more grass due to soil fertility and paddock grazing.</p> <p><b>Discussion Group:</b></p> <p>In BTAP Group with Teagasc (Joe Hand – Teagasc Adviser).</p>
<b>Lessons</b>	<p><b>Things I got right along the way:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paddock grazing and high quality silage.</li> <li>• Soil Fertility.</li> <li>• Increased Output.</li> <li>• Good working relationships with factories.</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I would do differently:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To always ensure that a contract is in place for finishing cattle.</li> </ul>
<b>My farming outlook for 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good despite the risks in the beef finishing.</li> </ul>
<b>Farming philosophy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make a profit and see my investment grow.</li> </ul>
<b>Influence/mentor in your farming career to-date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Teagasc adviser Joe Hand &amp; Better Farm Adviser Alan Dillon.</li> <li>• Other farmers in the Better Farm Programme.</li> </ul>



## Trevor Boland

<b>Address</b>	Bunnafedia, Dromard, Co. Sligo. 39 hectares
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diploma in Business Studies. (Accountancy)</li> <li>• Advanced Certificate in Agriculture.</li> </ul>
<b>Farming History</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suckler farmer who farms 35 Limousin cross Simmental cows selling most of the bull and heifer calves as weanlings and some of the heifers finished at 20 -22 months.</li> </ul>
<b>Brief description of current farming operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trevor farms with his father Joseph.</li> <li>• 35 cows calving from mid-August to end October (85% cows) and remainder from January to March.</li> <li>• Has been 100% AI but now has a Saler bull to clean up at the end of the breeding season.</li> </ul>
<b>Farm Details</b>	<p><b>Herd:</b> Uses Belgian Blue and Limousin AI Sires.</p> <p><b>Stocking Rate:</b> Need to increase from 1.5 to 1.8 LU/ha. Planning to buy in Angus store cattle for finishing off grass to increase stock numbers.</p> <p><b>Grass:</b> Introduced water troughs and grazing paddocks to improve grassland management.</p> <p><b>Discussion Group:</b> In BTAP Group (Tom Coll – Teagasc Adviser). Also measuring grass for the last two years and now records data on PastureBase Ireland.</p>

<b>Lessons</b>	<p><b>Things I got right along the way:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grassland Management (by introducing water troughs &amp; rotational grazing).</li> <li>• Silage Quality – has improved significantly and will improve further.</li> <li>• Uses ICBF Herdplus for cow/bull selection, recording birth data, weights, etc.</li> <li>• Purchased weighing scales, all cattle weighed regularly during the year and all cattle weighed before going to the factory.</li> <li>• Profit Monitors &amp; Budgets completed early in the year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I would do differently:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of paddocks to reduce paddock sizes.</li> </ul>
<b>My farming outlook for 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to produce milkier cows.</li> <li>• Better use of fertilisers to increase soil fertility.</li> </ul>



## Tommy Moyles

<b>Address</b>	Ardfield, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIT in Agriculture –Level 7.</li> <li>• Vice President of Macra na Feirme until 2013. Currently on the Irish Grassland Association Council.</li> <li>• Awarded Nuffield Farming Scholarship which has seen Tommy travel various parts of the world for three months to visiting different agricultural businesses &amp; beef farms.</li> </ul>
<b>Farming History</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tommy farms alongside his parents in West Cork.</li> </ul>
<b>Brief description of current farming operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 55 – 65 Suckler cow herd made up of Simmental cows. No females bought in since the late 1990’s.</li> <li>• Pig unit also on the farm.</li> <li>• Farms 46 hectares across three different farm blocks.</li> <li>• Calving 1<sup>st</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> week of April.</li> <li>• Finishing bulls at 14 months, average carcass 342kg. Heifers that are not in calf are finished.</li> </ul>

<b>Farm Details</b>	<p><b>Herd:</b> 7 year average of 371 day calving Interval. Annual reseeded Calving at 24 months of age.</p> <p><b>Stocking Rate:</b> 1.92 LU/ha</p> <p><b>Grass:</b> Uses rotational grazing and silage is 74 DMD.</p> <p><b>Discussion Group:</b> In a BTAP discussion group (John Crowley – Teagasc Adviser).</p>
<b>Lessons</b>	<p><b>Things I got right along the way:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grassland Management.</li> <li>• Soil fertility.</li> <li>• Labour reducing infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I would do differently:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to finish my own stock years ago.</li> </ul>
<b>My farming outlook for 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be in a position to adapt to any opportunity that arises.</li> </ul>
<b>Farming philosophy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control what you can control.</li> </ul>
<b>Influence/mentor in your farming career to-date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Father, William Morris, John Buckley.</li> </ul>



## Michael Murphy

<b>Address</b>	<p>Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. 800 feet above sea level. Farming on two blocks of land that are 12 miles apart. 90 Hectares</p>
<b>Education</b>	<p>Won a Bord Bia sustainability award in 2013.</p>
<b>Farming History</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previously a dairy farmer with a 90 cow herd.</li> </ul>
<b>Brief description of current farming operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now has a Calf to Steer beef system.</li> <li>• Was in Irish Farmers Journal / Kepak dairy bull beef Programme killing Friesian bulls under 16 months of age.</li> <li>• Buys in 125 Friesian calves each year. Also buys 125 Angus and Hereford heifer calves.</li> <li>• Friesian steers killed at 22 months at 325 kg carcass weight, heifers killed at 18 months at 270 -280 kg carcass weight. Targeting 1 kg LW gain per day from purchase to slaughter.</li> </ul>
<b>Farm Details</b>	<p><b>Herd:</b> 16 month Friesian Bulls ceased in February 2013. Steers / heifers finishing system 2014.</p> <p><b>Stocking Rate:</b> 2.3 LU/ha in 2014.</p> <p><b>Grass:</b> Uses rotational grazing.</p> <p><b>Discussion Group:</b> In local BTAP discussion Group (Michael Daly – Teagasc Adviser).</p>



<b>Lessons</b>	<p><b>Things I got right along the way:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm roadways &amp; paddock systems. 12 grazing groups on the farm.</li> <li>• Purchased a weighing scales.</li> <li>• Good quality silage.</li> <li>• Animal health very important (290 calves bought in during 2013, only two died).</li> <li>• Planned husbandry practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I would do differently:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be more careful with the types of calves being bought. Some very poor quality beef cross bred calves out of Jersey cross bred dairy cows now being offered for sale.</li> </ul>
<b>My farming outlook for 2020</b>	<p>Maintain and further develop current calf to steer system. Adaptable to future change.</p>
<b>Farming philosophy</b>	<p>Enjoy what you do !!</p>
<b>Influence/mentor in your farming career to-date</b>	<p>My parents &amp; family for their encouragement and trust to farm the land.</p>

# Notes



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