



# ADVISORY UPDATE

May 2015

## GLAS: Important update

### Planning progress

The preparation of GLAS plans is progressing more slowly than anticipated earlier this year due to a number of teething problems as the scheme and the planning system settle in.

Teagasc is working closely with the Farm Relief Services to ensure that as many clients as possible gain access to the scheme before the Tranche 1 closing date (currently May 22). However, due to the high volumes of applications received and the short window for submitting applications, it will not be possible to process all applications before the closing date. We are communicating directly with affected clients about how Teagasc can prioritise their application for the second tranche which the Minister for Agriculture recently announced. Tranche 2 is anticipated to open in early autumn of this year.

### Tier 3

The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine is currently in the process of determining the scoring criteria for applications under Tier 3 of the scheme. If there are insufficient places to accept all Tier 3 applicants, those with the higher scores will be accepted into the scheme.

### Clients with commonage

We would like to remind all clients with greater than 10ha of commonage that they must nominate a commonage adviser for the development of a Commonage Management Plan well in advance of the May 22 deadline. Clients with commonage should speak to their FRS adviser or Teagasc adviser about how to progress this.

## Adviser numbers falling

Earlier this year Teagasc completed a detailed strategic planning exercise across all 12 Regional Units. The process identified that, due to retirements, frontline adviser numbers will continue to fall in the coming months and years. Teagasc has sought approval from the Government to recruit advisers so that service quality to clients is not compromised any further. Decisions are slow in this regard. However, Teagasc is committed to delivering high quality services to our farmer clients and will continue to prioritise clients' needs.



Christy Watson (right), Drystock Adviser with Heinz Eggert, BETTER Beef Farmer, in Co. Kildare.

## Big demand for National Reserve

March 31 was the deadline for young farmers and new entrants to apply for entitlements under the National Reserve. Teagasc advisers provided guidance and responded to queries from approximately 4,000 clients during the run up to this important deadline.

Working closely with tax and legal professionals, our advisers helped farm families maximise their entitlements and provided support in planning their farm business structure for the future. These

are not simple decisions and require good advice and consideration to ensure that the correct steps are taken. While it was established that some clients were not eligible for the schemes, Teagasc advisers initiated and facilitated important discussions with many farm families in relation to putting sustainable management structures in place. We want to thank clients and their families for their patience and understanding during this busy period.

## Basic Payment Scheme

The closing date for the Basic Payments Scheme is May 29. This is another peak demand period for the Teagasc Advisory Services. We would kindly request clients to do everything possible to keep appointments. If you are unable to make your appointment we would ask that you contact us well in advance.

## Dangerous period on farms

We are now approaching a particularly high risk period in the farming calendar. Tight deadlines coupled with often unpredictable weather patterns can result in the temptation to take shortcuts and complete tasks in a hurry. We appeal to all clients to remember the devastating and life changing impact that a farm accident can have.