Happy new year to you all! Welcome to the January edition of our monthly newsletter. After a positive year for the pig sector in relation to pig price we look forward with renewed enthusiasm to the year ahead. It is an opportune time to take a step back and plan and set targets for the year ahead. Whether it relate to improving performance in targeted areas, reinvestment requirements or infrastructural changes now may be the time to plan how to get there and to seek the assistance or advice from your Specialist Pig Development Officer. Make sure you have your ePM PigSys figure for 2019 completed and sent in so that you can review your 2019 performance and plan for the year ahead. If you’re currently not using ePM PigSys, why not contact your Specialist Pig Development Officer who will be happy to get you familiarised and set up with this simple system.

The European network project, EU PIG, is in its fourth and final year and we are currently in the final stages of submitting this year’s Best Practice submissions for 2020. Thank you to those who have contributed and we hope that we will have another Irish winner this year.

The Teagasc PDD team is also taking this time to plan the year ahead, and it already looks to be a busy and exciting year. We are currently planning our Teagasc Pig Research Open Day which will take place on April 22nd in Teagasc Moorepark and April 24th in Cavan. This will replace the Research Dissemination Day. With this move the presentation style format will be replaced with engaging and interactive stands showcasing our latest research to best communicate our findings and to allow more engagement and feedback from producers and other industry stakeholders. We expect it to be a very enjoyable and productive event for all.

This month the PDD welcomed the latest cohort of students to the Level 5 course. We are delighted to have had so much interest in the course and have a very interesting schedule planned for the months ahead.

In this issue:
- Review and outlook for pig sector
- Loss of profits or business interruption loss
- SSRH seminars
Review of pig sector in 2019 and outlook for 2020

Michael McKeon

In the second half of 2018 the Irish pig industry entered into a period of low profitability. This was primarily due to a cooling of exports to the Chinese market and a European drought reducing harvest yields thereby increasing feed ingredient prices. This low profitability continued into Q1 2019 before a significant recovery began to take place. This recovery would result in a 20 year high in profitability for the sector.

Irish Pig Production Costs 2019

The cost of producing pigmeat in Ireland can be broken into feed cost and non-feed costs. Feed currently constitutes 70% of the total cost of producing a pig, with the non-feed inputs contributing the remaining 30%.

Irish Pig Feed Costs 2019

Feed prices were largely stable from January to April 2019 with a composite pig feed price of €320. The expectation of a good harvest for the main cereals began to reduce feed ingredient prices from May 2019 onwards. The current composite feed price is €301 per tonne (November 2019) and the 2019 annualised composite feed price per tonne is estimated to be €312, as predicted in last year’s Outlook Conference. The €312 composite feed price is a 3 percent increase when compared to 2018 (€303).

When the composite feed price is examined over a longer time period the 2019 price of €312 is marginally higher than the 5 year average of 107c/kg. The highest feed cost in recent years was in 2012 at 132c/kg which was 17 percent higher than in 2019.

Non-feed costs in Irish Pig Production in 2019

There are currently 75,000 sows on the Teagasc ePM database from a national herd of an estimated 148,000 (51 percent of total). The non-feed costs quoted are based on the national 2018 ePM data, which are the most recent analysis of annualised costs available. Non-feed costs (excluding building depreciation and financial costs) are itemised in Table 1.

Table 1: Non-Feed Costs in ePM Recorded Herds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Item</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2014-2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat, Power Light</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manure</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour/Management</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House rental</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Costs</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead Pigs Disposal</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock Depreciation</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>43.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The annualised feed cost of 110 cent per kg dead weight is marginally higher than the five year average of 107c/kg. The highest feed cost in recent years was in 2012 at 132c/kg which was 17 percent higher than in 2019.
Financial Costs in Irish Pig Production in 2019

These costs include interest payments and building depreciation and vary greatly from unit to unit depending on the age of the unit and the level of capital investment undertaken in the business in recent years. Financial costs are itemised in Table 2.

We estimate that the cost of building depreciation and interest is significantly lower than the true level required for a healthy pig industry. This reflects the sector’s reduced capital investment in recent years due to the low profitability of the industry.

Table 2: Financial Costs in ePM recorded herds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Item</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2014-2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Depreciation</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cost of Irish Pig Production in 2019

The estimated annualised cost of production in 2019 (based on 2018 non-feed costs and 2019 feed costs) was 159.1 cent per kilogram dwt. for pigs delivered to the slaughter plant.

Irish Pig Prices in 2019

The estimated average pig price in 2019 was 168 cent per kg dwt., which was significantly higher than the five year average (2015-2019) of 154 cent per kg dwt. respectively.

The annualised 2019 pig price was a substantial 27 cent/kg dwt. (16 percent) higher than in 2018 (141c/kg). The monthly pig price began the year at a low ebb of 140c/kg dwt. but then increased rapidly in Q2 as the scale of the Chinese African Swine Fever (ASF) began to emerge. The pig price continued to increase during the remainder of the year to reach a current price of €1.94 (November 2019).

The EU pig price in 2019 was also good due to the Chinese sow herd reducing by 16 million during the year. Traditionally a positive increase in pig price has signaled an expansion of the EU sow herd with an eventual reduction in pig price as the supply met/exceeded demand. This year that does not appear to be a factor as significant debt, environmental pressure and increased welfare housing requirements have resulted in EU pig producers becoming much more cautious about sow herd expansion.

Table 3: Monthly Irish Pig Price in 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Pig Price (c/kg dwt.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November*</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December*</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irish Pig Production Profitability 2019

The margin over feed cost was 58 c/kg per kg dwt. in 2019, just below the 59c/kg achieved in 2017 and the second highest in 13 years.
Table 4: Average Margin over Feed Costs from Compound Feed from 2010-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pig Price (Net)</th>
<th>Feed Cost</th>
<th>Margin over Feed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019*</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cent per kg dwt.

However the 2019 annualised MOF of 58c/kg does not reveal the severe fluctuations in profitability during 2019. In Q1 the industry experienced its lowest MOF in 20 years, reaching a low of 28c/kg. In April the rising pig price increased the MOF to 40c/kg and this upward trend continued to increase on a monthly basis, to reach a twenty year high in September of 68c/kg. This was a dramatic low-to-high swing in just a 6 month period.

If an estimated required MOF of 50 cent per kg is the requirement to meet all production costs including financial repayments, then the 58 c/kg achieved in 2019 significantly exceeded this target. However the very low MOF in 2018 (33c/kg) and the continued low MOF level in Q1 2019 has resulted in the sector’s financial recovery been slow, despite the current record high MOF of 81c/kg (November 2019).

Table 5: Margin Over Feed in 2019 compared to the 5, 10, 15, and 20 year average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Margin Over Feed (c/kg dwt.)</th>
<th>% Diff.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019*</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Yr average</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Yr average</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Yr average</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Yr average</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Estimate

Figure 1 illustrates the pig price received when compared to the total production cost (feed plus 50 cent) since 1997.

Figure 1: Pig Price compared to estimated Total Production Cost c/kg dwt.

*Total cost = Feed cost + 50c

Irish Pig and Sow numbers in 2019

The estimated number of pigs slaughtered is illustrated in Table 6. The number of Irish pig disposals in 2019 is estimated to be 3.7 million pigs which is marginally lower (3.7%) than in 2018 due to units destocking. The 10 year trend (Table 7) illustrates a 15% increase over this period which reflects the increased efficiencies and output of the sector.

Table 6: Irish born pigs slaughtered: 2016-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slaughter Pigs</td>
<td>million head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016*</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>3.70*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*estimate
Table 7: Slaughter and Live Export to N. Ireland of Irish Born Pigs from 2010-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Licensed Export Plants in Ireland</th>
<th>Exports to Northern Ireland</th>
<th>Exports as % of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2.601</td>
<td>0.558</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2.847</td>
<td>0.610</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2.907</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2.829</td>
<td>0.570</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2.940</td>
<td>0.519</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3.132</td>
<td>0.514</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3.221</td>
<td>0.414</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>3.295</td>
<td>0.433</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>3.337</td>
<td>0.463</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019*</td>
<td>3,273</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*estimate

The decline in exports of Irish born pigs to Northern Ireland has stabilised since 2017, but at a lower level than in previous years. In 2019 the annual number of pigs exported to N. Ireland decreased by an estimated 185,000 pigs compared to the high point in 2012. European pig slaughter disposals decreased in 2016 and 2017, stabilised in 2018 but decreased again during 2019 as illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8: European & N. American Pig Disposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2018*</th>
<th>2019*</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>119.7</td>
<td>117.4</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>103.5</td>
<td>107.8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on 44 weeks of production
Source: MPB 2018

EU Pigmeat Exports in 2019

The outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) in China has reduced their sow herd by 50% and the pig herd by 220 million pigs. Pork constitutes 60% of the total volume of meat consumed in China, therefore their deficit is huge and will have to be filled by imports. The data in Table 9 reports on a moderate increase in EU exports from January-August 2019 (+13%) but the real pigmeat deficit on the Chinese domestic market only began in July 2019 and will not reach its nadir until mid-2020.

Table 9: Pigmeat exports from selected countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2018*</th>
<th>2019*</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>+13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MDP * Jan-Aug

Outlook for the Irish Pig Market in 2020

The outlook for the pig market is a reflection of global pig feed and pig price trends.

Irish Pig Feed Price Outlook in 2020

The estimated composite compound pig feed price in December 2019 is €301 per tonne. The fall in the 2019 harvest cereal prices reflected a recovery from the drought conditions across Europe in 2018. As a result the French (highest in 5 years) and the U.K. harvest yields were substantially higher than 2018. The treat of Brexit tariffs also resulted in higher volumes of U.K. wheat and barley been exported fresh from the combine.

The forecast is for cereal prices to increase marginally in Q3 &Q4 2020. This is based on; a) the area of UK winter cereal sowing is below average due to adverse ground conditions. The conversion to spring cereals will reduce the total
2020 harvest yield b) the likelihood of a bumper French harvest two years in-a-row is low, c) the Australian government has forecast another very low wheat harvest of 16MT, which is a significant reduction on the 2017 harvest of 21 MT. The potential for export, while similar to 2019 (9MT), will be considerably lower than 2017 (16MT).

One bright note is that the stock:use ratio for barley is expected to be its highest for 10 years and the wheat and maize ratios continued to be at high levels, 30 percent and 29 percent respectively. This should prevent significant feed ingredient price escalation provided the harvest 2020 is normal (5 year average).

The South American soyabean planting is currently under-way with planting in Brazil’s largest soyabean producing state Mato Grosso 92% complete, well ahead of the 5 year average (83%). The yield forecast for the Brazilian harvest is 121 MT which would set a new Brazilian record and 5% above last year’s total (115MT). The soyabean price outlook is more complicated than usual due to the trade war between China (largest importer) and the US (largest exporter). China had traditionally sourced the bulk of its soyabean from the US, but due to the trade tariffs—being imposed by both parties, China is now sourcing more from Brazil. The outlook is further complicated by the ASF outbreak reducing the Chinese pig herd by 50%. It is difficult to envisage how China will import the same volume of soyabean as 2019 (86MT) with 220 million less pigs to feed. Even allowing for a high level of substitution to poultry feed, the level of Chinese soyabean imports will have to drop significantly thereby increasing the availability on the global market.

The 2020 pig feed ingredient price forecast is for wheat and barley to increase moderately 3-5% in Q3&Q4 2020 and for soybean prices to reduce by 5% in Q2. The overall effect is for compound feed prices to increase on an annualised basis by a marginal 1-3%.

**Pig Price in 2020**

The outlook for the Irish pig price is going to be driven solely by the demand of the Chinese market. The Chinese sow culling trend during 2019 indicates that it will be mid-2020 before the full extent of the pig herd liquidation is experienced. The Chinese domestic pig price has already increased by 80% in the last 12 months, 60% of this total in the last 4 months. The outlook therefore is for the Chinese demand to further increase in 2020 and for continued high demand into 2021 & 2022. The effect of this on Irish pig exports and pig price is for the pig price to continue to increase in 2020, albeit at a slower rate than the 50% increase we witnessed in 2019 (March-November). The average pig price is expected to exceed the €2/kg barrier during 2020.

**Profitability in 2020**

The highest MOF on an annualised basis (since the Teagasc monthly price records began was in 1992) was 72c/kg (1996). The current MOF is estimated at 81c/kg (November 2019), which is expected to be at least maintained in 2020 as any increase in feed prices will be equalised by an increase in pig price. On this basis, allowing for 50c/kg for non-feed costs, the average profit margin of 31c/kg dwt., €28/pig and €784/sow is expected to be, at a minimum, maintained during 2020. This is provided Ireland maintains its ASF free status in the years ahead.
Conclusion

The Irish pig sector experienced its lowest profit margin in 20 years in early 2019 but it has since recovered, on a monthly basis, to its highest profitability since 1996. If Ireland can remain ASF free, the sector is expected during 2020 to experience one of its highest level of profitability in 40 years

Loss of profits or business interruption Loss

Gerard McCutcheon

The cost of profit loss or business interruption loss (or consequential loss) is usually defined as the gross profit that is lost to a business as a consequence of some tragic event (such as a fire) occurring. This may be insured against and is a very important form of insurance particularly when the business is profitable. Essentially this insures the cost associated with the production process that would have to be paid if the production process was stopped/interrupted as a result of some unforeseen tragic event. Not having business interruption cover could easily result in a business not surviving an unforeseen disruption, because, the costs such as labour and loan repayments might not be met if the sales output of the business was reduced or eliminated for a long period of time.

Be careful when using such “average” figures. The average margin over feed (i.e. sale price minus the feed cost) for the two years of 2018 and 2019 was 44 cent/kg carcase weight. In 2019 the margin over feed in the first quarter was 28 cent/kg DW and 83 cent/kg DW in the final quarter – with an average for the year of 59 cent/kg DW. The average for the past 22 years (1998 to 2019) was 46 cent/kg DW.

The hope in 2020 is that pig prices will stay strong in Europe and therefore the margin over feed will be well above three year average figures (49 cent/kg DW). The projected gross profit in 2020 will be much higher than the three year average – and it is important that you make sure that your insurance cover for 2020 or any year reflects your expectations.

You should read your insurance policy and ask your insurance company for an explanation of how the cover is defined and what that cover means. As pig prices and feed prices fluctuate the gross profit will vary from year to year. The gross profit is something your accountant can tell you very quickly and a three year average may be a reasonable figure to use if the margin over feed is reasonably stable over this period and the expectation is for the figures to remain similar in the forthcoming year.

The next decision is what length of business interruption cover your business requires. If you have a fire on your farm and need to depopulate the herd, the time that you are out of production could be well over a year, and if you run into planning issues or other problems this could even be longer. It is important to know when the consequential loss is triggered. It is usually the date of the incident. The period of cover needs
to be considered – a year may suffice but if there is a fire it could take longer than a year to be fully operational again. Again this is much more critical at a time when the business is more profitable – so make sure you discuss the merits of perhaps 18 or 24 month cover with your insurance broker when you renew/review your insurance cover.

Good farm insurance can take a lot of pressure off if an unfortunate event occurs on your farm. Unfortunately a lot of people say that “it will never happen to their farm” and perhaps do not give this the time and attention that it deserves.

**It could happen to you,** and you need good farm insurance cover if your business is to survive.

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**Could you make savings on your heat power and light costs in the future? Are you aware of the Support Scheme for Renewable Heat (SSRH)?**

**Barry Caslin**

The SSRH was approved by the Government in December 2017. The SSRH has been developed to increase the use of renewable energy in the heat sector by circa three percentage points. Phase two of the scheme was officially launched on June 4th 2019 by Minister Richard Bruton TD. This important incentive scheme is now available to you.

The current level of queries on the SSRH shows that there is a knowledge gap around what practical applications allowable under this scheme. Teagasc and SEAI have organised two “hands on” seminar’s on the practical application of the SSRH to biomass boilers. Two seminars will be held in March 2020 at **1.30pm** at the following locations.

- Teagasc Ballyhaise, Tuesday 10th March
- Teagasc Moorepark Wednesday 11th March

The seminars will cover the principles of biomass heating systems. Aspects considered will include:

- Interpretation of eligibility rules for biomass boilers
- Biomass resources and sustainability criteria

- System quality and performance
- How the reduction in the farm’s carbon footprint could be of advantage in the market place
- Consideration of payback on the investment

To find out more details and book a place phone (057) 8682175 or e mail: vanessa.keane@teagasc.ie. Alternatively you can register at; [https://www.opt-in.ie/register-conference/?id=5e26ef3b198180da7dbe6349](https://www.opt-in.ie/register-conference/?id=5e26ef3b198180da7dbe6349)

**Seminar speakers include:**

- Ray Langton - SSRH Program Manager at the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).
- Fergus Moore - Senior Inspector, Forest Service Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Barry Caslin – Energy and Rural Development Specialist, Teagasc
- Conor Casey – Towards Zero Carbon
- Tom Houlihan, Teagasc Forestry Specialist
- Pat Smith – Local Power
- Robert Goss - Solar Electric Ireland
Pig Production Level 5 Course has started
The Teagasc PDD QQI Level 5 component award in Agriculture in Pigs commenced on the 31st of January. This course is aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of farm operatives. We were delighted to welcome our new cohort of students and look forward to getting to know them over the coming months. It is always an enjoyable experience for all.

Congratulations Orla
The PDD would like to congratulate Orla Kinane on recently submitting her MRes thesis “Investigating the Effects of Free Lactation Pens on Sow and Piglet Welfare”, to UCC. Orla’s work comprises the first scientific study in Ireland on the effects of providing more freedom and space to sows and their piglets, and she demonstrated that not only were there improvements to welfare indicators, but that there were significant performance improvements in piglets from the free lactation pens. Her work will be presented at the upcoming Pig Health Society meeting, in April this year.

Teagasc Pig Awards
Former student Kaitlynn Glover has been announced as executive director of the Public Lands Council (PLC), a national trade association representing 22,000 ranchers who raise cattle and sheep on federal land. In this role, she will serve as the chief lobbyist for the organisation, representing cattle and sheep producers in western states on resource issues affecting their operations.

Kaitlynn worked alongside the PDD advisory team in 2013 to 2015 while completing her Master in Agricultural Innovation Support and many of you would have gotten to know her through her research. Her work looked at “Record Keeping in Irish Pig Production: Factors Affecting Enrolment in the Teagasc PigSys/e-PM Recording Programme”. The PDD would like to congratulate Kaitlynn on this impressive appointment and wish her the very best in the future.

Welcome Darren
The PDD would like to welcome Darren Sherlock who has joined the PDD to carry out his masters in Agricultural Innovation Support with Teagasc and UCD. He is Supervised by Amy Quinn (Teagasc) and Aoife Byrne (UCD). Darren started this programme in September and had been completing course work in UCD until he joined us in the PDD in early January. His project will look at “the effectiveness of digital applications for information dissemination and as a decision support tool for the Irish pig industry”. As part of this programme Darren will also assist us in the Knowledge Transfer programme during his time here. This project is sure to interest all farmers and its output will be extremely valuable for all producers and Specialised Development Officers.

Dates for your Diary
- Support Scheme for Renewable Heat (SSRH) Information Seminar
  - Teagasc Ballyhaise, Tuesday 10th March 1.30 pm
  - Teagasc Moorepark Wednesday 11th March 1.30 pm
- Irish Pig Health Society Annual Symposium (IPHS), April 7th, Midlands Park Hotel Portlaoise.
- Teagasc Pig Research Open Day. April 22nd (Teagasc Moorpark) and April 24th (Cavan). Further details to follow.

For more information: Please visit our webpage at: https://www.teagasc.ie/animals/pigs/
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