

# FORESTRY

February 2021

## A new forest – getting started

Connect with your local forestry advisor to learn about starting a new forest by registering for three informal workshops to build your knowledge.

Registration is required – see [www.teagasc.ie/forestryworkshops](http://www.teagasc.ie/forestryworkshops).

The Teagasc Forestry Development Department is organising local online workshops to enable landowners to gain an understanding of what a new forest can offer, learn what's involved and how to get started in the planting process.

During February and March, landowners can log into three one-hour online workshops. We would encourage you to attend all three sessions as different areas will be covered.

Edited by  
**Frances McHugh**  
Forestry Development  
Officer

### Session 1 – Benefits of forestry

In this session, landowners can hear about the potential benefits for forests and set their own objectives when considering their potential forest site and future plans.

### Session 2 – Working through a case study

In this session, the presenter will bring the attendees through the process of deciding what forest type might suit a particular site specific to the geographical area, through a practical exercise.

### Session 3 – How to get started

The practical steps involved in getting organised to plant is the subject of the third session, including:  
grant eligibility; grant structures and rates; interaction with other farm



*New beech planted.*

schemes; and, engaging a forester. These sessions will be held through Zoom. Following registration, you will be sent a link to access the workshop sessions. This link will be sent a few days prior to the first session. This will allow you to attend each session, which will consist of a presentation by a local forestry development

officer and will also allow you take part in an informal discussion. See **Table 1** for details of dates for these local events. It is recommended that you attend your 'local' event, as discussions will be more relevant to the location of your forest site. Register at [www.teagasc.ie/forestryworkshops](http://www.teagasc.ie/forestryworkshops) for all events.

**Table 1: Online forestry workshops.**

Location	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Time
Cork, Waterford	Monday February 15	Monday February 22	Monday March 1	7.00pm
Kildare, Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath	Thursday February 18	Thursday February 25	Thursday March 4	7.00pm
Galway, Mayo, Roscommon	Wednesday February 24	Wednesday March 3	Wednesday March 10	7.00pm
Carlow, Dublin, Wexford, Wicklow	Tuesday February 16	Tuesday February 23	Tuesday March 2	7.00pm
Donegal	Monday February 15	Monday February 22	Monday March 1	7.00pm
Cavan, Leitrim, Louth, Meath, Monaghan, Sligo	Monday February 15	Monday February 22	Monday March 1	7.00pm
Clare, Kilkenny, Tipperary	Tuesday February 16	Tuesday February 23	Tuesday March 2	7.00pm
Kerry, Limerick	Wednesday February 24	Wednesday March 3	Wednesday March 10	7.00pm

## Online Forest Carbon Tool

Teagasc, in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and Forest Environmental Research and Services (FERS) Limited, have developed an indicative online Forest Carbon Tool. The tool was launched by Minister of State in the DAFM with responsibility for forestry, Senator Pippa Hackett.

Forests play an important role in the capture and removal of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the atmosphere in a process called sequestration. The Forest Carbon Tool is a user-friendly way to get an indication of how much carbon can potentially be removed in various forest scenarios and through important pathways to help address climate change. These include net carbon removals at forest level, removals through harvested wood products and emission avoidance through the substitution of fossil fuel energy. The tool can also factor in selected livestock use on farms in agroforestry systems. The Forest Carbon Tool uses the best information currently available and the same modelling framework used for national forest inventory reporting. The model indicates that mean annual sequestration rates can range from 1-9 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per hectare per annum and is influenced by the species, age and soil types. It also highlights that all types of forestry can have a key role to play in mitigating climate change. Conifer species can return high sequestration rates, especially when harvested wood products are taken into account. Broadleaved forests also cumulatively remove large amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> over their lifetime. The forest carbon tool takes user-defined information on the forest and combines it with



existing growth models to estimate carbon storage. Landowners, farmers and foresters who are thinking of, or who are already involved in, planting land can use the tool to estimate the potential volume of carbon that future forests might sequester. It can be varied if they wish to model with different species types or afforestation scenarios. It is important to note that carbon sequestration is one of a range of important services being provided by sustainably managed forests. Others include timber production, water quality protection, and landscape and biodiversity enhancement. Factors such as the landowner's objectives, species choices and forest management approaches are central to determining the specific mix of services that farm forests can provide.

The objective of this first iteration of the Forest Carbon Tool is to provide indicative information on the capacity of forests to sequester carbon and particularly some insights for users on the comparative merits of different forest options. It is not intended to provide definitive or absolute data on any particular forest or for processes within carbon trading. The tool incorporated a range of assumptions and system boundaries for the data provided which are described in a methodology document. There is an ongoing need to further develop our knowledge on the impact of a range of factors such as forest types, species choices, rotation lengths and management approaches on sequestration potential. It is anticipated that updates and enhancements can be incorporated into future iterations as new data and research becomes available.

The Forest Carbon Tool can be accessed on the forestry section of the Teagasc website at [www.teagasc.ie/forestcarbontool](http://www.teagasc.ie/forestcarbontool).

## Winter/spring management tips

Now is the time to walk your plantations and to examine the progress of the crop. Less vegetation at this time of the year should make access easier, and will allow you to assess the quality of the trees, especially the broadleaves.

### Shaping broadleaves

Without their leaves, this time of the year is ideal for the formative shaping of most broadleaf tree species. Similarly, now is the time to mark for retention the potential final crop trees, as their form and vigour are most visible.

### Check stocking

Ensure that all young plantations are adequately and evenly stocked throughout. Remember at year four, stocking should be at least 90% of the original. All replacements should be carried out as early as possible to ensure an even and uniform crop. While most bare-rooted conifer species can be planted until mid to late April, it is recommended that all broadleaves species should be planted as soon as possible to minimise potential losses.

### Check fences and drains

Ensure that all fences are stock proof, both to



*Candidate for shaping.*

avoid damage to the plantation and danger to animals. This is especially important now as livestock begin to appear on the land after being wintered indoors. All young broadleaf sites should be closely watched as rabbit and hare damage can be particularly prevalent at this time of year. Ensure that all drains and silt traps are in good working order.

### Tree health

The nutrient status of the crop should be checked regularly. The appropriate time to take foliage samples is December/January for conifers and August for broadleaves and larch. Fertiliser (if required) should only be applied between the months of April and August.

### Fire risk

March and April are the high-risk months for fire. In high-risk areas, it may be necessary to clean up firebreaks so as to keep them effective and to remove all potential fire hazards. Ensure that at-risk forests are insured against fire damage.

Teagasc has a vast range of leaflets available on all forest management issues at [www.teagasc.ie/forestry](http://www.teagasc.ie/forestry). Alternatively, contact your local Teagasc forestry officer for free and independent advice.