



# SOCIAL FARMING

Our experience

# OUR FARM

## Small Dairy Farm:

- 48 acres
- 37 cows
- Limited scope for expansion
  
- Small agri-contracting service

Alternative Income Streams  
Needed



# SESSIONAL PRESCHOOL SERVICE

- Ecce Scheme
- Nature walks
- Looking after animals
- Vegetable garden
- Daily Outdoor time



# Agri-environment Scheme



**BRIDE Project**  
*Farming with Nature*





Huge interest: the whole crowd who were in attendance at the social farming open day which was held at John Murphy's farm in Kildinan last Thursday. (EA)

# SOCIAL FARMING IN KILDINAN

**FAMILY AHERNE**

John Murphy of Kildinan opened the gates of his farm to a huge crowd last Thursday morning when he hosted a social farming open day.

Social Farming is a newly new initiative in Ireland which provides an opportunity for people with mental health issues, people with disabilities, older people, people at risk, children availing of social rehabilitation and others, among others.

Kieran Barrett from Glanville and Majida Wentzel from Midleton got the opportunity to take part in social farming at John Murphy's farm through Bonington Training Centre (BTC) in Cork City which is a training centre for people who have left school.

Majida and Kieran got the opportunity to work on John's farm every Thursday from 10am until 4pm for eight weeks. Having never been on a farm before, this was a new experience for them both but within a few weeks the farm became their second home.

Kieran's favourite job was looking after the hens and collecting the eggs

every Thursday while Majida was very fond of the newly born calves and loved to relax in the straw and keep them company in the shed.

"They loved having responsibility and feeling like they were needed," Majida's mother Katherine told *The Avondhu*. "She was so happy every evening when she came home. Elated," she added.

Kieran's main Marypat, also saw a great change in her son during his 8 weeks at the farm. "Everyday he'd come home telling me all the things they had learnt that day," she said.

Kieran is going into his final year at BTC and he is hoping he will get another chance to com-

plete the social farming programme in the coming academic year.

Although Majida is finished her time at BTC, she told *The Avondhu* that she has become so interested in farming and she wishes she could do social farming all year round.

"I felt it very deeply," she said.

**LOOKING AT THINGS DIFFERENTLY**  
John Murphy first became interested in social farming when he heard about it while he was living abroad. It is a well-established programme across Europe, especially in the Netherlands. On returning home to his family farm in 2013 with his wife Minna, he read an article about Social Farming Ireland in *AgriLand* and rang the number written in the article for those interested in participating in the initiative and it took off from there.

Having gone through a series of training sessions and completing an online course, John was fully prepared to become a full-time social farmer and was delighted when Majida and Kieran wanted to participate in the programme on his farm last Spring.

"It was fine from the first day really. You do have to structure your day a bit for it and you won't get as much work done as you would on a normal day, but I enjoyed every minute of it. I used to really look forward to them coming. They were the great company for the day," he told *The Avondhu*.

John went on to explain that farming is, by nature, a very solitary occupation and farmers are often working on their own for the majority of the day.

"It's of as much benefit to the farmers as to the people who come. They make you look at things differently too. We always enjoyed chatting over a

cup of tea or lunch. The social element is essential to it," said John.

Stephanie Jager Liston, community and social farming development officer for the South West region of the country, was at the open day last Thursday. She is working hard at the moment to try to get more services applying to the social farming initiative as well as recruiting more farmers in this area.

Stephanie explained that the benefits of social farming for service users are endless and she got the chance to see Majida and Kieran come out of their shells during their 8 weeks on John's farm.

"They are talking so much more. Their confidence and self-esteem have been boosted and you could really see that they have built a fantastic

relationship with John. Social farming promotes reconnection to nature, builds positive relationships and teaches a host of new skills," said Stephanie.

John encouraged anyone interested in being a social farmer to definitely take it on, but explained that the farmer has to learn to slow down and must adapt to the abilities of the person with whom on the farm in order for it to be a successful experience.

Stephanie hopes that in time it will become part of the programme provided by different services in the community and that it would be used as an intervention.

If anyone would like to learn more they can contact Stephanie at sjager@wiz.ie or on 056-62300.



Minna and John Murphy, who were the first owners in Cork to open their doors and take part in the Social Farming programme. (EA)



Majida Wentzel and Kieran Barrett who were lucky enough to take part in the Social Farming programme at John Murphy's farm in the spring.

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## PUBLIC NOTICES

**CORK COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COMHAIRE CONTAE CHORCAL

### PUBLIC NOTICE

**NOTICE TO OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS OF LAND ROADS ACT 1993**  
**DITCHES AND HEDGES**

Take notice that under the terms of the Roads Act 1993, landowners and occupiers of land are obliged to take all reasonable care to ensure that the trees, ditches, hedges and other vegetation growing on their land are not or could not become a danger to people using or working on a public road.

Liability for damage or injury resulting from such hazards will rest with the landowner/occupier.

Examples of hazards might be dead or dying trees, ditches or hedges interfering with traffic, blocking footpaths, obscuring road signs or obscuring a view of the road ahead.

You are required to fell, cut, log, trim and remove such trees, ditches and hedges.

Adequate signposting should be provided and the Council and Gardaí notified before works commence.

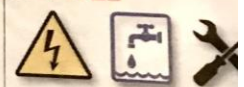
Section 40 of the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000 prohibits the cutting, grubbing, burning etc. of any vegetation on uncultivated land between 1st March and 31st August.

If you require any further advice please contact your local County Council Municipal District Office.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Óifig Fiontair Áitiúil  
Local Enterprise Office  
**CORK COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ELECTRICIANS, PLUMBERS & CONTRACTORS WANTED**



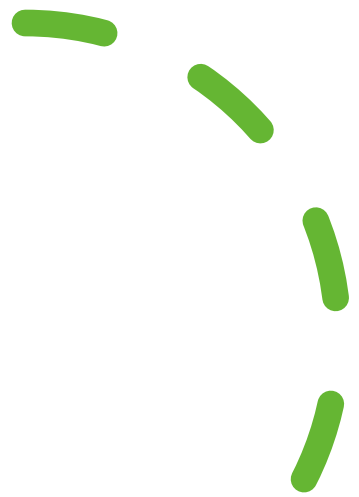
Cork County Council has published advertise on eTenders (www.etenders.gov.ie) to establish following Frameworks to procure the relevant from January 2019:

- Electrical Works Framework
- Plumbing Works Framework
- Response Maintenance and Refurbishment Framework
- Building and Major Refurbishment Works Framework

Closing date is 4pm on the 29th of September 2018  
Tenders received after the closing date will not

# Social Farming

- Cope Foundation
- Cork Autism Association
- St. Catherines





# Getting Started

- Training
- Health and Safety Review
- Insurance
- Dining facilities
- Toilet
- Planning Activities

# Benefits for the Farmer



# Benefits for Service Users



Fed the heifers seaweed and ration. Fed the cows silage.

Cleaned out the hen house. We got 5 eggs. We put in fresh straw and water and checked their food.

Cleaned out the shed for calving. We put the old straw on the tractor and brought it to the field.

We learned that cows have 4 stomachs. When cows burp and fart they release gas. This gas is bad for the environment.

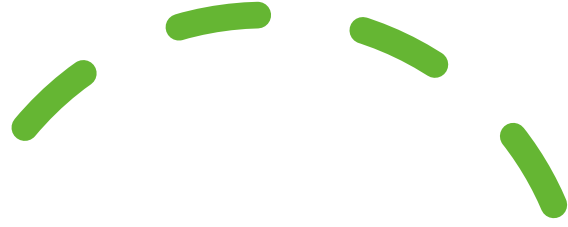
There is a Research place in Fermoy where the cows wear backpacks. Scientists are watching their gas output.

From the 12<sup>th</sup> of January farmers in Cork can spread slurry. It is later in Limerick and Donegal.





# Challenges



# Conclusion

- It's not for everyone
- You won't become a millionaire
- Enormous sense of satisfaction
- Hugely beneficial to Service Users and their families

THANK YOU

To find out more about Social Farming,

Please ring [086 7905596](tel:0867905596)

Or

Email [coordinator@socialfarmingireland.ie](mailto:coordinator@socialfarmingireland.ie)

