



North Cork
Creameries

Sustaining our **Success**



As a strong and independent farmer-owned dairy processing co-operative, North Cork Creameries is dedicated to securing the long term sustainability and prosperity of our dairy farming families and the rural communities in which we live and operate.



North Cork Creameries' milk suppliers Mairéad & Morty O'Sullivan, Kanturk, with Anna, Ava, Mairéad, James and Niamh, at the launch of ÓR Real Irish Butter, an added-value brand produced using fresh milk provided locally from certified grass-fed herds.



North Cork Creameries

We are achieving strong progress by continuously enhancing our ability to serve a changing global marketplace with the highest quality dairy products. We have the capabilities, technologies and processes required to extract maximum value from the high quality milk we receive from our dairy farmers, offering highly functional dairy ingredients for food industry customers in key markets worldwide and delighting our consumers with wholesome, natural and delicious milk, cream and butter.

Driven by our co-operative ethos, we are meeting our goals with quality, flexibility and reliability across all our operations, underpinned by our milk producers, our highly dedicated workforce, long term trading relationships, a network of strategic partners, excellent logistics capabilities and continuous innovation in everything we do.



ÓR Real Irish Butter, adding value to milk produced on local farms.



Sustaining our Environment

North Cork Creameries operates to the highest standards of best practice in its environmental and operational sustainability.

Our participation in Ireland's national Sustainable Dairy Assurance Scheme places us at the forefront of dairy farming practice. This extends across our processing operations to include energy efficiency and environmental sustainability where our grass-based production also ensures a low carbon footprint. 100% of our milk suppliers are accredited to the Bord Bia Sustainable Dairy Assurance Scheme.



North Cork Creameries milk suppliers' the Barry family, Castlemagner, Cecilstown, Mallow, Co Cork, (Joe, Ann, Emily & Hazel), finalists in the NDC & Kerrygold Milk Quality Awards 2021.

Sustaining our Farming Communities

Our farming families are very proud to be custodians of the land.

They provide an enormous public good by supplying traceable, nutritious and safe food, through the processing of the high-quality milk they supply to North Cork Creameries.

Ireland's low cost, grass-based system delivers the highest animal welfare, environmental and biodiversity standards. Conscious of our continuing environmental commitments, we must continue to protect and strengthen the family farm model of production in Ireland by ensuring that our farming systems are economically, as well as environmentally, sustainable.

Farmers are at the forefront of protecting the environment and nature for the next generation. We work together with our farm families with a range of initiatives in place to support maximum profitability from the most natural and cost-effective production methods. Increasing profitability is the key goal of every dairy farmer. And natural green grass is the cheapest feed we can produce for our livestock.



North Cork Teagasc Farm Profitability Programme



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FARM PROFITABILITY PROGRAMME
Quality, Efficiency, Sustainability



The Farm Profitability Programme was established in 2021. It is aimed at maximising efficiency and profitability for dairy farmers on a sustainable basis for the future.

The programme uses the findings of locally based research that is directly relevant to the needs of our milk suppliers. We disseminate this information through our advisory services and agribusiness teams. This includes technical advice on grassland management, improving milk solids, herd fertility, nutrition, efficiency improvements and sustainable development.

For participating dairy farmers, our Programme is yielding increases in milk solids and overall improvements in milk quality, thereby enhancing their milk price.

Our aim is to provide a clear pathway forward for dairy farmers, to ensure they are achieving their goals, while also reducing their carbon footprint.

Over 40 milk suppliers are currently involved in this programme.

Learnings from our Farm Profitability Programme so far:



→ Milk recorded herds produce **70 kgs of milk solids** more per cow per year.



→ An average Herd size of **70 cows** is producing **70 kgs of milk solids more per cow @ €5 per kg milk solids = €24,500** per year of an increase.



→ A **Nutrient Management Plan** has been completed on each farm resulting in no excess fertiliser being spread – with cost savings in the long run.



→ **Improved soil fertility** by spreading of lime has resulted in increased volumes of grass grown.



Dairy farmers taking part in the North Cork Creameries Teagasc Farm Profitability Programme.



North Cork Creameries milk suppliers' William and Maria Stack with their children Dara and Alan, Moyvane, Listowel, Co. Kerry, finalists in the NDC & Kerrygold Milk Quality Awards 2020.

Signpost Programme

North Cork Creameries participates in the Signpost Programme - a collaborative partnership, led by Teagasc, of farmers, industry and State agencies working together for climate action.

The Signpost programme is a multi-annual campaign to support climate action by all Irish farmers, and achieve early progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from Irish agriculture.

It also promotes improved water quality, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, reducing costs and creating more profitable and sustainable farming enterprises.

Signpost will be a test bed for on-farm carbon sequestration measurements so that this can, in time, be taken into account by the EPA in the national Greenhouse Gas inventory.

The main aims of the Signpost Programme are:

- ➔ To **lead and support the transition of Irish farming** towards more sustainable farming systems; and to reduce agricultural emissions, specifically:
- ➔ To reduce GHG emissions to the **range 17.5 – 19.0 MtCO₂ eq.** by 2030
- ➔ To reduce ammonia emissions by **5% below 2005 levels**, currently estimated at 107.5 kT NH₃, also by 2030;
- ➔ To **reduce other negative environmental impacts of agriculture** (specifically, to improve water quality and to improve biodiversity)
- ➔ To **reduce costs** and **improve profitability margins** from farming.

Agricultural Sustainability Support & Advisory Programme

In partnership with Teagasc, North Cork Creameries' ASSAP advisory service works to help improve water quality which is very important for overall environmental sustainability and wellbeing. The service provides advice and information. Participation is voluntary and encouraged. It is entirely free of charge and strictly confidential.

Where is ASSAP available?

North Cork Creameries has an ASSAP advisor who is available to all milk suppliers and who has visited many farms throughout our catchment area.

The National River Basin Plan has identified 190 priority areas for action across the country where water quality improvements need to be made. There are also two areas for action in the North Cork catchment. We are working with the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) and Teagasc to improve the water quality in these rivers.

IRD Duhallow Funding

North Cork creameries is participating in the Blue Dot programme co-ordinated by community based rural development company IRD Duhallow.

The aim of the programme is to improve the river quality of the River Allow to the level of Status Blue, indicating high water quality and a positive ecological profile.

12 North Cork Creamery milk suppliers are part of the programme and have implemented a range of measures on their farm to maintain and improve water quality. In total some 80 farmers are engaged in this important initiative. A further, IRD funded Owentaragalin River EIP project will open in January 2022 for milk suppliers in the Cullen area.

IRD Duhallow has incentivised milk suppliers to complete the following:

- ➔ Soil Sampling.
- ➔ Application and buying of lime.
- ➔ Fencing off watercourses.
- ➔ LESS spreading of slurry – and using a contractor.
- ➔ Riparian tree planting
- ➔ Seed for multispecies swards.

The participants meet regularly as part of a discussion group to share insights from different farms across the catchment.

Contact IRD Duhallow: Michael Morrissey
T. 029 60633 E. michael.morrissey@irdduhallow.com

Dairy Sustainability Ireland and *The Big Switch*



Dairy Industry Ireland was established in 2016 to provide industry leadership around sustainable dairy practices.

Dairy Sustainability Ireland is a unique venture involving: Bord Bia, the milk processors, the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, the farm organisations (ICOS, IFA, ICMSA & Macra Na Feirme), along with the National Dairy Council and Teagasc.

North Cork Creameries is part of a working group on dairy economic and environmental sustainability, established within this partnership.

Many milk suppliers of North Cork Creameries are taking part in The Big Switch which forms a key part of these initiatives, designed to support farm sustainability.

Switch 1

Switching from low to High Soil Fertility – Lime - the most productive investment

Over the last few years the pH of land on dairy farms has partially improved – much more improvement is achievable and needed. Not knowing soil fertility status and planning applications on the basis of soil analysis makes absolutely no sense for anyone trying to make a living from dairy farming.

Use **lime** as recommended/increase lime use and where P and K indices are low plan for a build-up in fertility.

Where P and K indices are sub optimal upwards of 15% of applied nitrogen is wasted. Investing in soil fertility is the most productive investment on a dairy farm.

Switch 2

Switching €30/ha from your fertiliser bill to your pocket

A major improvement in nitrogen efficiency will help your pocket, your crop and the environment - particularly water quality.

By improving nitrogen efficiency, the same amount of grass can be grown with a lower input of chemical N.

Taking into consideration the improved efficiency of organic manure and chemical fertiliser, a more cautious and reduced approach to early and late application should allow for a reduction in the amount of chemical N applied - by approximately 30 kg / ha (or more with high clover swards) with consequent savings for your pocket.

Switch 3

A switch from splash plate to Low emissions slurry spreading (LESS)

For derogation farmers this switch is now mandatory, for others it remains an option. While there is an extra cost associated with LESS, most of the extra cost is currently offset by grant assistance in the purchase of the spreader.

For non-derogation farmers options such as the use of contractors or machinery sharing may prove to be an effective way to move to LESS.

It is also important to remember that LESS reduces emissions by reducing the loss of N from slurry, allowing you to reduce the amount of chemical N used.

Switch 4

Switch to Spring application of slurry

The timing of slurry application has a huge impact on the amount of nitrogen which is utilised in producing grass. There are two simple principles:

- If grass is not growing it cannot utilise slurry N.
- Slurry applied in dry bright warm conditions loses more N to ammonia.

Slurry should not be applied until grass is growing which means soil temperature of 6° or greater and a non-waterlogged soil.

Application should start on drier fields and at rates to match grass growth.

Slurry should be applied to silage ground when closing for first cut as this is where the biggest off-take of nutrient occurs.

The use of LESS, particularly trailing shoe, reduces grass contamination on grazing paddocks. All remaining slurry should be utilised after the first cut silage is taken.

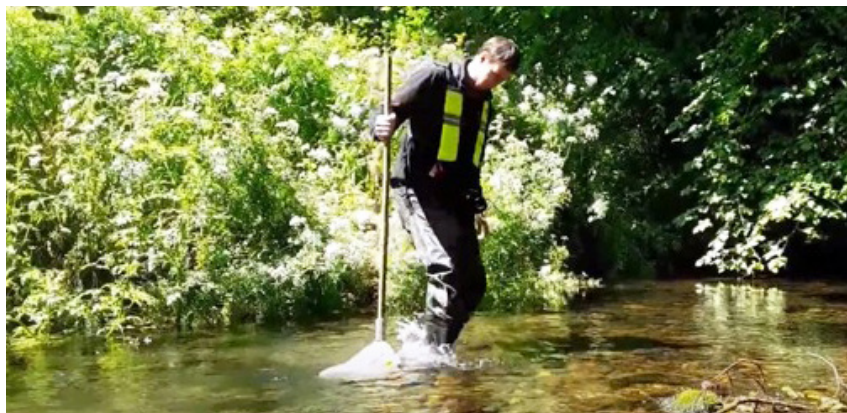
Switch 5

Switch from Grass to Grass Clover

Derogation rules now require the inclusion of clover seed in grass seed mixes.

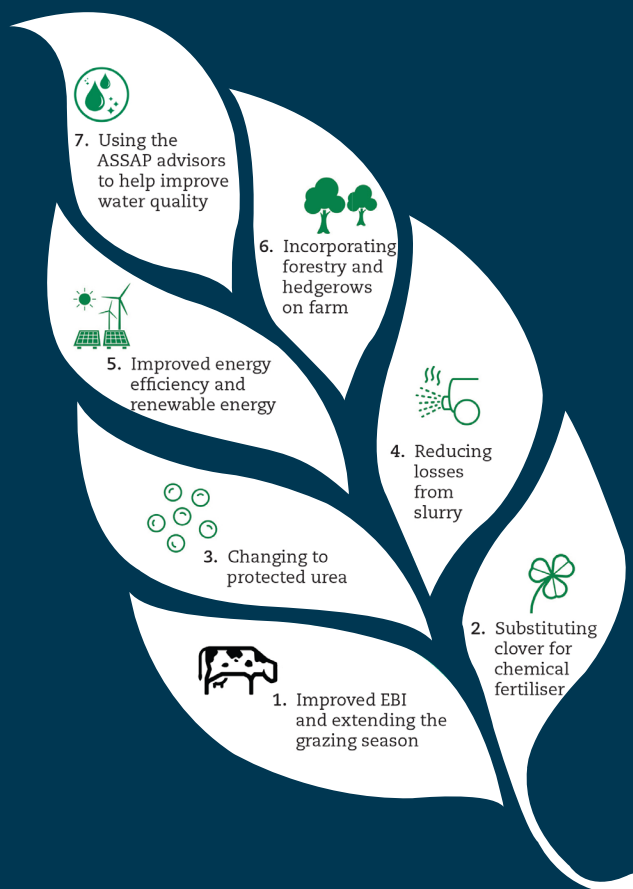
Swards with high levels of clover can deliver huge benefits in terms of increased output and lower N input and increased profitability.

A reduction in chemical nitrogen of 100 Kg/ha can be achieved with high clover levels in swards. However, delivering these outcomes requires good fertility and good grassland management skills.



A catchment scientist from the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO), taking a kick sample which acts as an indicator of water quality in local rivers, supporting ASSAP in priority areas.

Seven Steps to Improving Farm Sustainability



Dairy Potential to 2030

GHG's

- 1 Week Extra Grass 1%
- Summer Quality Grass 1%
- 100kg Meal/cow less 1%
- EBI +€10/year 9%
- 25% less chemical N 5%
- 100% protected Urea 7%
- LESS Slurry Spreading 2%
- 20% Energy Reduction 1%

Total Reduction in GHG emissions

23 - 27%

Did you know?

Subsidised Programmes

North Cork Creameries provides subsidies for Milk Recording, On-farm AI and Soil Sampling:

Milk Recording – a key contributor to milk quality, better breeding decisions, enhanced herd performance, higher profitability and record keeping for selective dry cow therapy.

AI on-farm – provides access to the best genetics, promotes animal health and herd fertility and performance,

Soil Sampling - provides farmers with an accurate picture of nutrient levels and chemical balances in soil. Correct soil pH levels contribute to the overall productivity and sustainability of the farm for the long term.

Energy Efficiency & Sustainability

All North Cork Creameries stores use **LED lighting** to save electricity.

North Cork Creameries is part of the **Repak Recycling Programme**.

Sustainable hot water heating systems are available in all stores.



North Cork Creameries

We welcome hearing from you

We're committed to a bright and sustainable future for our farm families and the customers we serve worldwide. Check out our monthly newsletters online. Our agribusiness and advisory teams are always delighted to hear from milk suppliers and happy to help with any advice or information needed.

Call:

Darren Deasy Milk / ASSAP Advisor: 085 8595399

Jamie Curtin Agri Manager: 085 8588706

Padraig O Driscoll Agri Sales: 085 8001517

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