



Teagasc/Arrabawn Tipperary Signpost Farm Walk at Ned Kelly's

A Signpost farm walk took place on Wednesday March 19th hosted by Signpost farmer Ned Kelly. Ned has been a Signpost farmer since 2021 and has made huge progress in reducing emissions, improving water quality and enhancing biodiversity.

Farming just over 120 hectares in Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Ned and his family milk 140 cows with all beef calves sold as stores. The farm has an overall stocking rate of 1.92 LU/Ha and 3.1LU/ha on the milking platform. The herd produced 486 kg/M.S./Cow in 2024, sold to Arrabawn Tipperary co-op. 1.3 tonne of meal was fed, which is a slight increase on previous years driven by drought conditions in 2024. Cows have an average EBI of €222 with 2025 calves €276 and 2024 calves €261.

Considerable effort has been made to reduce emissions on farm with the use of protected urea increasing from 15% in 2021 to 67% in 2024. Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS) has also increased from 50% to 100% in the same time. Chemical nitrogen has reduced by 10% since joining the Signpost programme and soil fertility is improving through the spreading of lime and focusing on applying phosphorous and potassium on low index soils. Total emissions on the farm have reduced by 4.5% and carbon footprint currently stands at 0.95/KG/FPCM.







Signpost Farm Walk

Edwin Thompson
Kilmore, Golden Co. Tipperary
Eircode: E25 P603

Topics to be discussed with:

- Farm Update
- Milk Quality, Sustainability Bonus & Water Quality
- Practical tips using Protected Urea
- Soil Fertility/Clover

 **Tuesday**
29th April, 2025

 **11am**

www.arrabawntipperary.ie

Throughout the day a range of topics were discussed such as managing SCC and milk recording. Soil fertility and clover incorporation, along with water quality in the area and the water EIP. Protected urea and fertiliser calibration were also discussed with a demonstration on fertiliser calibration.

A targeted effort has been made on Ned Kelly's to improve the overall sustainability of the farm, thanks to Ned and his family for hosting the farm walk.

Thanks to all from Teagasc and Arrabawn Tipperary for supporting the farm walk. Speakers on the day included : Liam Quinn (Teagasc Signpost Advisor), John Conroy (Teagasc Nenagh), Claire Clabby (Milk Quality Advisor Arrabawn Tipperary), Kate Tynan (Water EIP), Mark Plunkett (Signpost Training and Development Specialist) and Francis Quigley (Teagasc Farm Machinery Specialist)

*Liam Quinn
Teagasc Signpost Programme*

Making the most of your milk recording this breeding season

Clare Clabby

As we approach the breeding season it is important we maximise the returns from our time and money invested in milk recording. Milk recording is an important tool for identifying your top producing cows in your herd from which to breed your replacement heifers from.

ICBF have numerous reports available based on your milk recording results. These can be found by logging in to your ICBF account, clicking on the 'Reports' button in the blue bar at the top of the screen and then clicking 'MILK MANAGEMENT' (Figure 1).

For the breeding season, a useful report to look at is the 'Milk Recording Lifetime Report', circled in red below (Figure 1). This gives an overall summary of the herd and ranks the cows within your herd from Top 20%, Average and Bottom 20% performing cows.

The screenshot shows the ICBF website's 'Reports' section. On the left, there's a sidebar with categories like CALVING, EBI, EUROSTAR, FERTILITY, GENERAL, HEALTH, MILK MANAGEMENT (which is highlighted with a red box), NATIONAL GENOTYPING PROGRAMME, SLAUGHTER, and WEIGHT. On the right, under 'MILK MANAGEMENT', there's a list of reports: Annual Milk Recording and Lifetime Report, Annual Report, Cell Check Report, Co-Op Performance Report, Dry Off Notification Sheets, Milk Recording Detailed Farm Report, Milk Recording Farm SCC Report, Milk Recording Farm Summary Report, Milk Recording Lifetime Report (which is also highlighted with a red box), and Pregnancy Diagnosis Report.

Figure 1. Step by step guide to access milk management reports in ICBF

The Milk Recording Lifetime Report Explained

The first table 'Production Summary' compares your overall performance herd with the top 20% herds milk recording. This is a useful tool to allow you identify areas in your herd which you may need to focus on improving in terms of milk production (milk volume or milk solids), fertility, or SCC (average SCC for the herd or the percentage of cows over 200,000 SCC). Identifying which of these three areas are performing well or need improvement will be the foundation of your breeding plan.

The second table 'Milk Recorded Margin Per Day' compares the cows in your herd against each other in three categories 1) the top 20% in the green churn, 2) the average in the grey churn and 3) the bottom 20% in the red churn. To improve the overall performance of your herd, the goal is to reduce the gap between your top 20% and bottom 20% which results in a more uniform herd. This optimises the profitability of every cow in the herd, not just the top 20%. In the following pages of this report each cow is individually ranked, with the top 20% highlighted green and the bottom 20% highlighted red. Ideally, we should be breeding all replacement stock from the top 20% of cows in the herd. At a minimum, replacement heifers should not be bred from the bottom 20% of cows. These cows should be selected for a beef bull with a high CBV value.

The Milk Recording Lifetime Report – Managing your SCC

The Milk Recording Lifetime Report can be a useful tool to manage SCC in the herd. In the third table on the bottom half of the 'Milk Recording Lifetime Report' page (Figure 2) a summary of cows SCC performance in the herd is given. Cows are categorised into 4 groups depending on their SCC. The top line shows the results for the current milk recording, while the bottom line allows you to compare with the previous milk recording.

1. Persistently infected cows (shown in red) have had two consecutive milk recordings over 200,000. The target is to have 8% or less of your herd in this category. Persistently infected cows should be identified and treated. If there is no significant reduction in the SCC of a persistently infected cow after 2 rounds of treatment, she is considered chronically infected. Chronically infected cows should be removed from the herd as they act as a reservoir for infection for the remaining healthy cows.
2. Recently infected cows (shown in orange) have previously had an SCC below 200,000 and are now over 200,000 in the latest milk recording. The target is to have 7% or less of your herd in this category. Similarly, these cows should be identified and treated.

3. Recently cured cows (shown in blue) have previously had an SCC over 200,000 and are now below 200,000 in the latest milk recording. These cows should be monitored in your next milk recording to ensure re-infection hasn't occurred.
4. Healthy cows (shown in green) are cows that are consistently below 200,000. This should make up the largest percentage of your herd. This can be monitored by comparing against previous milk recording to identify potential outbreaks of infection early.

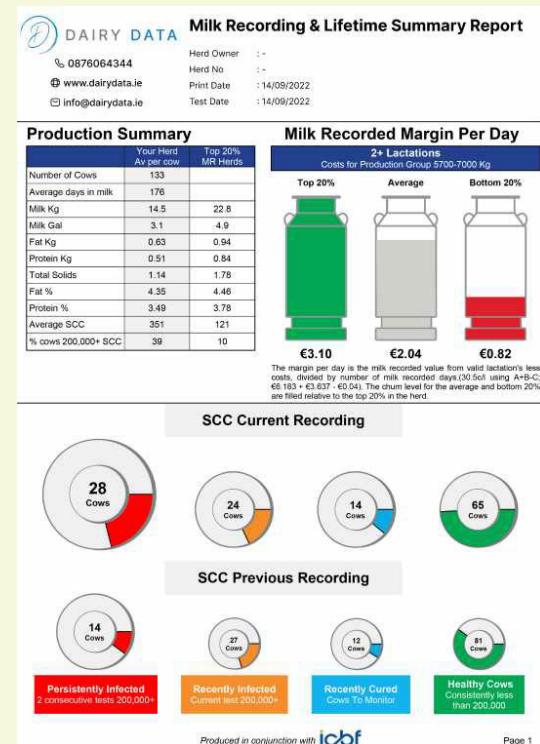


Figure 2. Example of Milk Recording & Lifetime Summary Report. Source: www.dairydata.ie/milkrecording

Contact your local milk recording organisation to find out more and to book your first recording.
 Munster Bovine - 022 43228 • Progressive Genetics - 046 954 0606 • Dairy Data - 087 060 4344
 Please contact your milk advisor for assistance with managing your SCC

APRIL SPECIALS



12% Dairy Farm
Hypochlorite 25 litre



Darby Tools
Range



FF Group petrol
range



Forcefield Poly Wire
range



Inter sprayers
range



Techno Flex Hoses

| Week ending 6-4-2025 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|-------|-------|-----|-----------|---------|--------------------|--------|----------|----------|
| Farmer | County | Litres/Cow | Fat % | Pro % | SCC | Kg/MS/Cow | Meal Kg | Average Farm Cover | Growth | % Grazed | % Calved |
| Conor Camon | Offaly | 32 | 4.14 | 3.57 | 121 | 2.54 | 6 | 524 | 44 | 95 | 94 |
| Ned Kelly | Tipperary | 29 | 4.45 | 3.47 | 79 | 2.36 | 5 | 934 | 33 | 93 | 90 |
| Edwin Thompson | Tipperary | 29 | 4.14 | 3.32 | 244 | 2.23 | 6 | 731 | 34 | 95 | 97 |
| Conor O'Brien | Galway | 28 | 4.17 | 3.56 | 71 | 2.22 | 4 | 835 | 30 | 95 | 99 |
| Gurteen Ag. College | Tipperary | 30 | 4.88 | 3.37 | 66 | 2.54 | 5 | 800 | 35 | 75 | 98 |
| John, Martina and Cora Lonergan | Tipperary | 31.50 | 4.22 | 3.37 | 142 | 2.46 | 6 | 581 | | 100 | 100 |
| Michael and Odhran Murphy | Tipperary | 33.50 | 4.55 | 3.43 | 89 | 2.75 | 3 | 696 | | 100 | 94 |
| Solohed Research Farm | Tipperary | 27 | 4.55 | 3.46 | 124 | 2.22 | 3 | 861 | | 96 | 98 |
| Average | | 30.00 | 4.39 | 3.44 | 117 | 2.42 | 4.69 | 745 | 22 | 94 | 96 |

Update: Grazing conditions have been excellent over the past number of weeks allowing good utilisation. For the coming week a growth of 36-45 kg/DM/ha is expected which will help grass supply. Target an average farm cover of 650-700 at the start of the second round and there should be a cover of >1100kg/DM/ha on the first 4-5 paddocks of the second round. Focus is now turning to fertilising for 1st cut silage. The recommended nitrogen required to grow 5t/DM/ha is 100 units/acre through a combination of slurry and chemical nitrogen. Phosphorous and potassium application vary dependant on the soil fertility status of the silage fields. Slurry is a valuable source of NPK and compound fertilisers should also be used where required. If unsure of your nitrogen and phosphorous allowance contact your local advisor. **Photo:** Signpost Farm Walk at Ned Kellys 19-3-2025



Water Quality Update 2025

Arrabawn Tipperary has assigned Agricultural Sustainability Support Advisory Programme (ASSAP) advisors to cover Arrabawn Tipperary's supplier catchment area. The aim for the entire ASSAP programme is to improve water quality throughout Ireland. In 2024, 200+ ASSAP visits were completed as part of our ASSAP Programme. This new collaboration between dairy coops and family farms is based on improving local water quality within their area. Some areas are classed as Priority Areas for Action (PAA's) where these catchments have been selected because they are not meeting their water quality targets and are at risk of further decline.

When a Arrabawn Tipperary ASSAP visit is conducted, advice is provided on areas including land management, nutrient management and farmyard management. During an ASSAP visit, pollution impact potential maps (PIP maps) are provided to the farmer to identify key areas of their farm that is more susceptible to loosing valuable nutrients i.e., nitrogen and phosphorus. Frequent water quality testing is conducted by the local authorities water programme (LAWPRO) where they can identify catchments of poorer water quality.

This unique collaboration helps ASSAP advisors visit higher risk catchment areas based on data. LAWPRO conduct chemical testing for Nitrogen, Phosphorous and sediment, as well as a kick sample to determine the biological status of the catchment. This enables the catchment scientist to assess the status of the waterbody, which can range from high to bad. If an agricultural pressure is identified during testing, a written referral is sent out to the local ASSAP advisor. When an ASSAP visit is conducted the correct agricultural mitigation measures are advised to address the issue concerned with the river. The ASSAP programme is a free confidential advisory service, which has 20 Teagasc ASSAP advisors and 42 Dairy Coop advisors. Arrabawn Tipperary recognises the importance of water quality and has committed to having water quality remediation plans in place to all our family farms by 2025 for our suppliers who are part of our Milk Supplier Sustainability Programme.

What is ASSAP?

ASSAP is a collaborative initiative which is led between Teagasc, Dairy Industry Ireland (DII) & LAWPRO. ASSAP stands for Agricultural Sustainability, Support and Advisory Programme. Its aim is to support the implementation of the best agricultural practices at farm level in areas with poor or substandard water quality in Ireland. These areas are also known as PAA's or (Priority Area's of Actions).

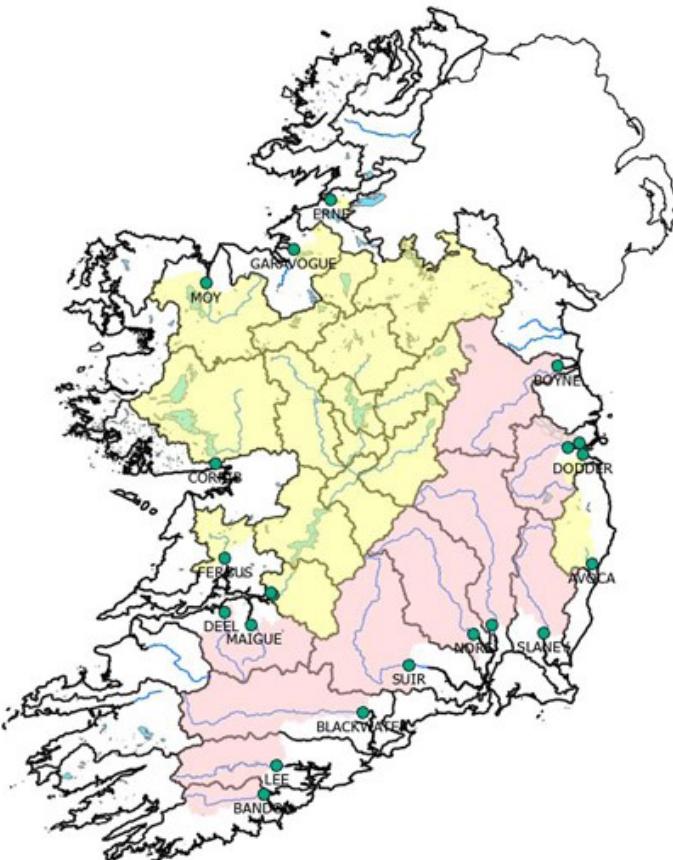


Figure 1. Location of the early insights nitrogen indicator monitoring station and their contributing catchment areas²

NEWS

The role of an ASSAP advisor is to complement the scientific work of LAWPRO by:

- (a) providing farmers with a free, confidential and voluntary advisory service
- (b) providing farm specific assessments and plans to prevent the loss of nutrients, sediment and pesticides from entering waters
- (c) to explain the key water quality messages to the wider agricultural community.

Farming for Water EIP

The €60 million Farming for Water (FFW) project is a new initiative under the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI). The aim of the project is to drive improvements in water quality with co-benefits for climate change and biodiversity. This can be achieved through the adoption of innovative practices in nutrient management, the application of nature-based Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRM) and other measures at farm level following the principles of Integrated Catchment Management. Measures will be designed and implemented, in collaboration with farmers, and will be targeted specifically to address local challenges. It is important to note that losses of phosphate as small as <0.5kg/ha/yr are sufficient to impact on the health of a river system so the task is not easy but with spatially targeted, well-designed mitigation measures the loads of N, P and sediment can be significantly reduced.

The Water EIP is designed to implement specific measures aimed at minimizing the loss of nutrients, sediment, and pesticides from agricultural areas, effectively disrupting their flow & pathways into water bodies. The programme was launched in 2023 and is set to provide funding until 2027. The initiative will concentrate on regions requiring urgent intervention to protect water quality. Maintaining high water quality offers numerous advantages, such as ensuring clean drinking water, supporting livestock, enhancing tourism, recreation, and various industries. It also plays a vital role in preserving wildlife habitats and is essential for fostering local economies and promoting community well-being.

EPA Water Quality Update

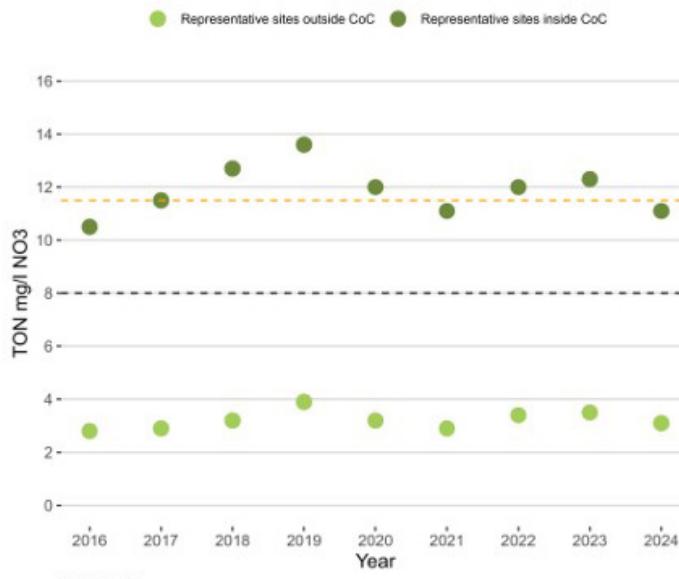
Earlier this month, we saw the EPA providing a positive message to the farming community on early indications of reductions in nitrogen concentrations over the last 12 months showed to be lower than the previous year. Based on data from 20 major rivers, it shows that Nitrogen concentrations have decreased to their lowest levels since 2016. This shows the progress of the adoption of improved farm practices and more conscious environmental actions that are being taken on farm along with the advice from initiatives like ASSAP and the new Farming for Water EIP.

Arrabawn Tipperary Milk Supplier Sustainability Programme 2025

Arrabawn Tipperary has committed to assist our dairy suppliers in reducing the carbon footprint, enhancing water quality and improving air quality and soil health of farms. Having a ASSAP water quality remediation plan on farm is one of the list of measures that must be taken to qualify for the full Sustainability Payment.



Early insight annual nitrogen concentrations for representative sites inside and outside the Catchments of Concern



FARMING for WATER
Water European Innovation Partnership - AGRI

A €60M FARMER AND ADVISORY LED PROJECT TO PROTECT AND RESTORE WATER QUALITY

FIVE YEAR PROGRAMME FROM 2023-2027



THE FARMING FOR WATER EIP IS AN AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME DESIGNED TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

The EIP is open to farmers with land in priority catchments where targeted water quality improvements are needed. Farmers located in these priority catchments are **potentially** eligible for EIP funding and the catchments are identified in the map below.

You can view national water quality maps at www.gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/agriculture



BreederMax

Next Generation Dairy Fertility Feed

Triple Action Fertility Benefit:

- **Highly Glucogenic formulation to reduce Dairy Cow Body Condition Loss.**
- **Unrivalled formulation in the marketplace**
- **Includes De Odorase to help reduce the negative impact that high nitrogen spring grasses has on fertility.**
- **Contains a unique combination of solutions proven to increase immune status – Sel-Plex, BioPlex Zinc & Copper, Biotin & increased levels of Vitamin E.**

**For more info contact:
Ballysimon Road, Limerick,
061-414988**



Arrabawn Tipperary Co Op Milk Supplier Sustainability Programme for 2025

The Arrabawn Tipperary Milk Supplier Sustainability Programme for 2025 is updated to include two new measures from the 2024 sustainability programme edition. The payment for completing all measures in 2025 will be **0.75 CPL** per month. However, one of the new measures is now a **mandatory** requirement to be part of the programme. Each member of the programme must allow a water quality farm assessment to take place on their farm in 2025. Suppliers who opt into this programme in 2025, have the potential to receive a bonus payment of 0.75 cent per litre (CPL) on a monthly payment in exchange for meeting four of the five sustainability criteria below with the water quality action being mandatory:

1. Water Quality
2. Protected Fertiliser
3. EBI Improvement
4. Milk recording
5. Ag Nav & Training

Example payment for an average Arrabawn Tipperary supplier supplying 500,000L completing four of the five measures in 2025 is €3750.

Actions Required in 2025 for the Arrabawn Tipperary Milk Supplier Sustainability Programme

You must complete any four out of five measures, with water quality being MANDATORY.

1. Water Quality
 - Agree to Water Quality Farm Visit and development of a Water Quality Plan
 - **Mandatory Action**
2. Protected Urea
 - Purchase 2T of Protected Fertiliser per 100,000L of milk supplied in 2024.
 - All fertilisers **must** have a protected N source.
 - All fertilisers (min 2T per 100,000L) **must** be purchased through Arrabawn Tipperary Co Op.
3. Milk Recording
 - Participate in Milk Recording in 2025
 - A min. of 4 milk recordings is required in 2025.
4. EBI Improvement
 - a) Herd in top 50% within Arrabawn Tipperary catchment for EBI qualify automatically,

- b) Herd in the top 50% within Arrabawn Tipperary catchment for EBI gain annually qualify automatically,
- c) If less than 25% of your cows have an EBI or if you fail to meet part (a) or part (b) above, you can genotype 25% of your dairy female stock and this will be a qualifying criterion (max 2 years)

Ag Nav & Training

Participate in 1:1 Ag Nav training with the local Teagasc Signpost Advisor and develop your GHG Emissions farm plan. Obtain your nitrogen surplus number. You do not have to be a Teagasc client to partake.



Stay connected with us!! Check out our website for weekly farming updates. Find us at www.arrabawn.ie Connect with us on social media on Twitter @arrabawncoop and @milk4profit for regular farming updates and promotional offers. We are also on Facebook at Arrabawn Co Op.

and @milk4profit for regular farming updates and promotional offers. We are also on Facebook. For further information or advice on any subjects or products mentioned in this newsletter,

For further information or advice on any subjects or products mentioned in this newsletter
Please ring 087 0963869 • Email: farmsupport@arrabawn.ie • Check out our Website: www.arrabawn.ie