



Resilience for Dairy (R4D) has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No 101000770

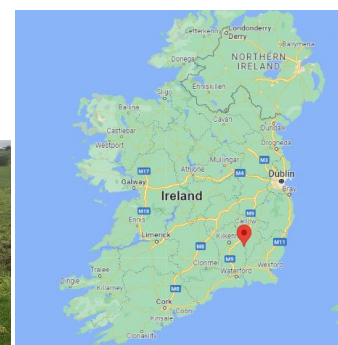
Philip Donohoe Pilot Farm description Goresbridge, Co. Carlow

Ireland

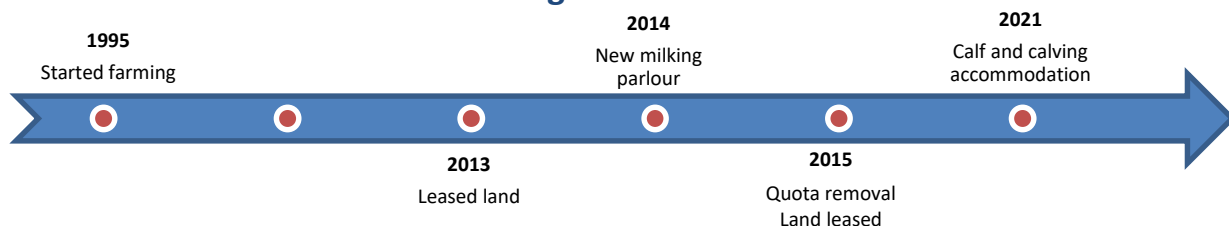


Innovations

Environment / Precision



Farming milestones



The herd

- 220 Livestock Units (LU)
- 180 dairy cows
Breed: Holstein-Friesian
- 40 dairy heifers
- 40 dairy heifer calves
- Compact spring calving system
- Age at first calving : 24 months
- 2 times a day milking

Agricultural Area

85 ha Farm

- 37 ha rented
- All in permanent grassland
- Stocking rate: 2.5 LU/ha forage area
- Cows graze from February to November
- Calves & heifers graze from March to November

Workforces

- Farmer
- 1 full time & 1 student in spring
- 1 relief milker for weekend work
- **Aims: Reduce labour**

Areas of interest

- Forage quality
- Sustainability
- Environment
- Animal genetic quality

Main buildings and Equipment

- Low emission slurry spreading – trailing shoe & dribble bar
- Variable rate fertiliser spreading
- GPS fertiliser application
- 20 point DairyMaster parlour
- Cubicle housing for cows
- Calves winter on mats on slats
- Slatted & concrete slurry stores

Production / Technical results

- Yield – 6,300 liters
- Feed – 850 kg
- Milk from forage: 4,600 liters
- 4.27% butterfat, 3.88% protein
- Milk solids – 530 kg
- Grass based dairying
- Milk sold to Tirlan
- €0.37/litre cost of production (including all labour)



Strengths

- Good quality land
- Herd genetic quality
- Innovative –
 - Breeding - Wagyu calves, sexed semen
 - Pasture - red and white clover reseeding



Weaknesses

- Low rainfall area and light land
- Dependent on leased land



Opportunities

- Trying to reduce Carbon footprint
- Genetics – more tailored use of sexed and beef semen



Threats

- Increasing costs
- Public misconception of farming practices
- Environmental legislation

Farmer's strategy for a "resilient" system

Focussing on breeding a productive, healthy and fertile herd

Reseeding and oversowing with high clover swards.

Making use of precision GPS programming to improve fertiliser efficiency.

Aspirations / Needs for the future

Focused on reducing fertiliser N dependency – by incorporating clover in pasture.

Breeding strategy change to reduce number of dairy bred calves born and increase the value of the beef cross calves born on the farm.

Improvement project - objectives

- Maintain a labour efficient work load



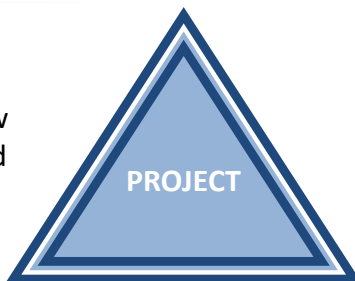
ECONOMY & LABOUR

- Optimize dairy gross margin

- Maintain a low level of concentrate input per cow while increasing milk yield



RESOURCE Efficiency



- Reduce fertiliser N use
- Breed healthy productive cows
- Breed quality surplus calves

ENVIRONMENT ANIMAL Wellbeing



Partners



"Resilience 4 Dairy" is a European project involving 15 European countries and 18 partners. R4D is a thematic network on innovations and aims to support EU dairy farming in these regions where dairy farming is a main economic activity.



R4D pilot farmers are involved in a National Dairy AKIS group where needs, solutions and knowledge are exchanged with other farmers, advisors and scientists on their way to build a resilient system. More information <https://resilience4dairy.eu/>