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

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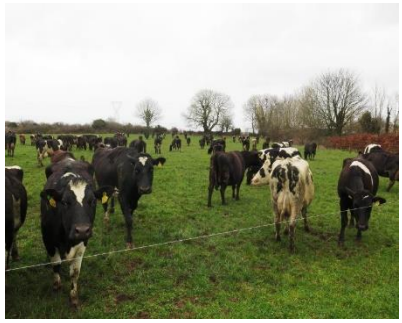
Innovations

Environment / Precision



Farming milestones

- **2007** Started farming
- **2008** Milk Production Partnership with Father
- **2012** Won FBD Young Farmer of the Year
- **2012** Farm Transferred
- **2014** New milking parlour
- **2015** Quota removal Land leased
- **2016** Heifers Contract Reared
- **2019** Purchased additional Farm Land

The herd

- 220 Livestock Units (LU)
- 220 dairy cows
  Breed: Cross Bred Herd
- 50 dairy heifers (Reared off farm)
- 50 dairy heifer calves (Reared off farm)
- Compact spring calving system
- Age at first calving : 24 months
- 2 times a day milking

Agricultural Area

91 ha Farm

- 31 ha Leased
- All in permanent grassland
- Stocking rate: 2.4 LU/ha forage area
- Cows graze from February to December
- Calves & heifers graze from March to November (Off Farm)

Workforces

- Farmer
- 1 full time & 1 student in spring
- 1 relief milker for weekend work
- **Aims: More Family Time**

Areas of interest

- Forage quality
- Sustainability
- Environment
- Animal genetic quality

Main buildings and Equipment

- Two Tractors for light work
- Contractors carry out majority of work
- Automatic Calf Feeder
- 18 point Dairymaster parlour
- Cubicle housing for cows
- Calf and Calving Facilities
- Slatted & concrete slurry stores

Production / Technical results

- Yield – 5900 litres
- Feed – 1000 kg
- Milk from forage: 4,500 litres
- 4.76% butterfat, 3.82% protein
- Milk solids – 535 kg
- Grass based dairying
- Milk sold to Kerry
- €0.34/litre cost of production (Including all labour)

Strengths

- Focus on Soil Fertility
- Extended days at grass
- Innovative:
- Use of Protected Urea
- Improving Clover content
- Knowledge sharing with like minded farmers

Weaknesses

- Prone to light droughts in the summer
- Higher stock replacement rate due to Herd Health Issues

Opportunities

- Knowledge transfer
- Adapting new technologies to improve performance
- Genetics
- increasing use of sexed semen to improve herd resilience

Threats

- Increasing costs
- Time sensitive pressures caused by EU legislation changes.
- Social media mis-conception of farming practices

Farmer's strategy for a "resilient" system

Reseeding and oversowing with high clover swards.

Collaborating with like minded farmers to improve implementation of the new technologies

Using Protected urea to improve fertiliser efficiency

Aspirations / Needs for the future

Focused on improving forage quality while reducing fertiliser N dependency – by incorporating clover in pasture.

Improvement project - objectives

- Maintain a labour efficient work load

ECONOMY & LABOUR

- Optimise dairy gross margin
- Adopting new technologies to reduce fertiliser N use
- Improved genetics to lower carbon footprint over time
- Maintain a high level of animal nutrition with better utilization of forage while reducing dependency on high levels of concentrates

PROJECT

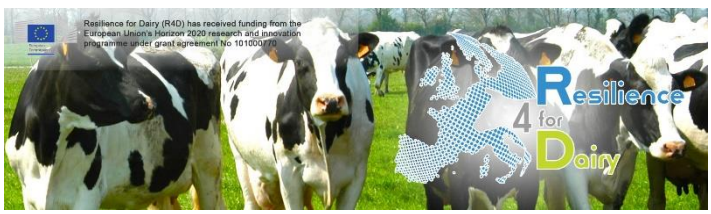
RESOURCE Efficiency

ENVIRONMENT ANIMAL Wellbeing

Partners

Teagasc
Agriculture and Food Development Authority

"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/