



Kerry Social Farming Newsletter

17th Edition July 2022

Welcome to our Newsletter. It's difficult to believe that we've reached 17 issues since we began in 2020! The sun is shining now and hopefully it will stay for a while and you'll all be able to enjoy a break with your families and friends over the coming weeks. Our great Kerry team won the All Ireland on Sunday, we wish the Kerry Ladies all this best v Meath on July 31st!

Meeting with Minister for Agriculture

We had a meeting with Minister for Agriculture Charlie McConalogue TD on July 5th in Dublin. Noel Spillane, CEO SKDP, Joseph McCrohan (Rural Development Manager, SKDP) and Éamon Horgan (Chair of the KSF Working Group) met with the Minister. In our presentation, we emphasised the need for secure funding for social farming and noted the positive effects of longer-term sustainable engagement which KSF provides. We highlighted the role of the voluntary model and its proven success within Kerry, as well as its potential to operate across other parts of Ireland. It was a positive meeting and we thank Minister Norma Foley and Deputy Michael Healy-Rae, who also attended, for their support.



We are pleased to say that, following submission of our tender early in June, the Department of Agriculture have renewed our funding for another year up to 2023 on the existing contract terms.

Meeting with Michael Moynihan TD

On July 4th, Michael Moynihan TD, Chair of Oireachtas Committee on Disability Matters visited Noel Lynch's host farm in Kilcummin. Michael is engaging in the UCC Practice Support in Social Farming Certificate Course and he was keen to meet with host farmers Kerry to learn more about the voluntary model of social farming. A number of host farmers and participants met with him. Joseph McCrohan and Evelyn O'Connell also attended.

New social farms

Eithne Uí Ríordáin and Sean Riordan

Eithne (host farmer) and Sean (participant) started social farming together in Dromid in May. Eithne has a wonderful garden area built up over her 40 years on the land here and there is much work and maintenance for Sean to help with. Weeding is a job he enjoys doing as well as sweeping the leaves from the paths. Eithne has lots of knowledge and skills to pass into Sean around gardening and Sean also gets to meet lots of different people in Eithne's local community through others visiting and helping in the garden.



Mary Daly Donald and Patrick O'Sullivan

Mary has joined social farming this summer in Aughtatubrid and is very lucky to have an experienced social farming participant, Patrick, to help her settle into the project!

Mary has a variety of farming skills and knowledge to offer social farming; she has a suckler farm, goats, hens amongst other animals, a vegetable garden as well as a great team of children who are as keen to be involved as host farmers too. Here is Patrick holding one of the hens pictured with Michael, Mary's son.

Paul & Annette Garland and James O'Brien

James has started social farming with Paul & Annette at The Kerry Creamery Experience, Listry (thekerrycreameryexperience.ie). James will have lots to do here with a variety of animals; ponies, calves, donkey, goats and hens. James will help with feeding the animals, cleaning out their pens as well as helping with the gardening and flowers around the creamery. James loves meeting new people, he is looking forward to meeting all the visitors to the Creamery Experience.



Joan McEnery and Daniel Cronin

We would like to welcome our new host farmer Joan McEnery from Tubbertureen Farm, Moyvane. Joan's farm is primarily focused on suckler beef. She is also a keen grower and has a number of garden areas and a greenhouse. Her Conemara mare gave birth to two beautiful twin foals this May which is a very rare occurrence. Daniel attends Joan's farm every Tuesday and comes from Listowel Rehabcare Centre. Joan is a great baker so it is a great place to visit on a Tuesday!



Welcome back!

We are delighted to welcome back Owen O'Connor to social farming, Owen has joined the team at Christy and Mary McDonnell's in the last month.

Tracey McCarthy has also re-joined us and is busy helping Karen and Jan Tetteroo in Glenflesk. Tracy fits right in with the Tetteroo's and Mohammed (participant) and lots of laughs and fun are had while they are working in the garden and polytunnel.

Vincent Lache has temporarily resumed social farming with his peers Martin and Janet in Ballymalis with George Kelly.

Pictured here Vincent is watering the potatoes in the tunnel, Vincent likes to be busy and helping out with the jobs around the farm and in the tunnel.



Biodiversity Launch 23rd May

We had a great project launch event for them Kerry Eco-Social Farming Biodiversity EIP (European Innovation Partnership) on the 23rd of May on Thomas and Claire's Farm, the Manna Organic Farm in Camp. Over 60 people were present including Pippa Hackett, Minister of State for Land Use and Biodiversity in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, who was the guest speaker.

We also enjoyed a few words from Joseph McCrohan, the Rural Development Manager of South Kerry Development Partnership, Kevin O'Sullivan (Teagasc), who chairs the biodiversity project's Operational

Group, and from a number of our social farming participants! After all the speeches, we were guided by Thomas O'Connor and Luke Myers around the Manna Organic Farm to see the nature-based actions being implemented and took a look at how Manna functions on a day-to-day basis. With mushrooms being produced, chicken coops made from living willow, solitary bee scrapes and bird boxes!

After the walk we were spoiled with great food from the local Junction Bar. We'd like to thank everyone for attending this event with us. We couldn't have done it without you!

BioBlitzs with KESF

On the 9th of July the Kerry Eco-Social Farming EIP ran their 3rd BioBlitz event! A BioBlitz is when a group of people come together in a specific area in order to count and record as many different species of plant, animal, insect, fungi over a specific period of time. We've now completed two of these within the KESF project and have submitted over 220 records of different species to the National Biodiversity Data Centre, who use this information to recommend policy and assist with conservation and protection of different species around Ireland. On the day we had attendance by social farmers, social farming participants, members of the public, students from MTU and members of local wildlife groups.

Our 3rd BioBlitz took place at the Sears farm in Tralee. On the day we found many different moth species including the Elephant Hawk-moth and Poplar Hawk-moth! The caterpillars of the Elephant Hawk-moth feed on Rosebay willowherb and other common plants. The adults love to feed on the Honeysuckle which we can now see on our hedgerows! It's very important that we keep these big moths around in the Irish countryside.

We can all help the moths by:

- Allowing small areas of your garden or farm to grow completely 'wild'
- Planting pollinator friendly flowers and trees where you can
- Keeping areas of scrub or bramble in your garden and farm and not removing them
- Avoiding the use of herbicides or fertilisers within these wild areas
- Moving to an 8 – 6 weeks cutting regime of our lawns, removing the grass clippings after and only beginning the first cut after the 15th of April. This will help the lawn to grow more wildflowers!

We'd like to thank everyone for attending these events, our host farmers and social farming participants, and groups and organisations who have helped us, such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Munster Technical University, the LIVE project and many more.

Poplar Hawk-moth



Elephant Hawk-moth



Social Farming in Leagh Farm, Ballyduff



Patrick, Timmy and Billy Jo at work on Leagh Farm, Ballyduff, while Noodle the dog keeps a watchful eye. They've been busy planting some pumpkins recently and keeping an eye on all the vegetables.



Kerry Social Farming's very own Rose!

Hi my name is Emma Browne. I attend social farming every Wednesday at Blueberry hill farm in Sneem. Yvonne and Sigi are my host farmers. Peter another social farming participant and his support worker Michelle also join us on the farm. We have great fun every week helping out on the farm. We feed all the animals, and get different jobs to do every week.

My favourite job is feeding Ramus the calf his milk in a bucket. I love cuddling the rabbits especially the little baby ones there so soft and fluffy.



The job I am not so keen on is cleaning out from the chicken house as it is kind of smelly, but I get over it. I really enjoy social farming it's so much fun every week, and I love being around with animals and meeting other people having a good auld laugh. You never know what each and every week will bring.

I also got to take part in the radio Kerry training week that social farming participants took part in.

This was an amazing experience I learnt so much from this and I even got interviewed and was on the radio on the Saturday supplement with Joe McGill.

Recently I was a contestant in the Rose of Kerry, I had a brilliant time getting to know everyone and tour the county. I got to go to a night at the greyhound track, kingdom county fair and to Dingle on the rose tour.



Radio Kerry Show May 21st

Many of our participants took part in a week of training at Radio Kerry studios in Tralee beginning on May 16th. They learned about presenting skills for radio, interviewing guests, recording and using the sound desk. With guidance from regular host Joe McGill and Connie Broderick, they compiled, produced and presented the Saturday Supplement on Radio Kerry on Saturday morning 21st of May. Thanks to all involved with this unique opportunity.

Link to the podcast to hear the Saturday Supplement:https://www.radiokerry.ie/podcasts/saturday-supplement/saturday-supplement-may-21st-2022-282872?fbclid=IwAR1yO-bcYR6A5hAezrf0ZZDcljfmIwN7AIRgHkVaSl_4H4ft51XSmz1fkc



Kingdom County Fair 8th May

Thanks to all who visited our stand at the Kingdom County Fair on 8th of May, near Tralee. It's great to be back at shows and events across the county after a break of two years. Here is Minister Norma Foley meeting with Joseph McCrohan (SKDP), Éamon Horgan (Chairman of Working Group) and host farmer Mike O'Shea.



Host farmer meetings

We had two host farmer meetings in late April, one at the Muller farm in Sneem and the other in Rena Blake and Lisa Fingleton's farm near Ballybunion. These were great opportunities for farmers to get together and share stories about their farms and experiences and also to hear from our facilitators. Thanks to our host farms and to all who came along.

FarmElder

Kerry Social Farming, through SKDP, is part of the FarmElder project which will run for the next 2 years. A National Report on social farming in Ireland has been completed by our project colleague, Dermot Carroll (TUS/LIT Limerick). KSF are busy working on a number of case studies on various types of social farming at the moment. Thanks to host farmer Breeda O'Sullivan (Glencar) for taking part and her story will feature in the case studies, alongside those of:

- Kenmare community garden used by older people.
- An Tobar, Social farm, Silverbridge, Co. Armagh.
- Camphill Centre, Grangemockler.

For more information, you can visit their Facebook page [Farm Elder - Home | Facebook](#) . The project website will also be up and running soon.

Social Farming in Lisbawn, Filemore



Christy and Mary McDonnell joined Kerry social farming in 2017. Ellen O Donoghue has been social farming with Mary since 2018, Cathal Moriarty joined with Christy in November 2021 and Owen O Connor is the newest addition to the social farming team in May 2022.

As you can see for the photos above, there is a variety of opportunities in social farming here. Cathal loves getting stuck into work and getting his hands dirty and always wants to know from Christy and Mary “what are we doing next week, lad?” Ellen loves to help with jobs around the house, she keeps Mary on her toes and together they get much housework done as well as sometimes weeding in the tunnel and the garden though this is not Ellen’s most favourite job!! Owen is settling in well with the team here, he has helped with feeding the pet lambs, filling wood into shed and he has a keen interest in farm machinery.

Christy and Mary report “it would do your heart good to hear the banter and laughing between the three of the social farming participants”, they see all three becoming more and more confident and chatty with each other and enjoying each other’s company while doing a bit of work of course at the same time 😊.

Annual Meeting March 25th



Minister Foley with KSF participants and social farming team Evelyn O'Connell, Rena Blake and Joseph McCrohan, along with Luke Myers (Eco-Social Farming), Noel Spillane CEO SKDP and Eamonn O'Reilly CEO NEWKD.

We had our Annual Meeting at the Brehon Hotel, Killarney on Friday night March 25th. We were delighted to get back to an in-person event, although many people also chose to watch online. Thanks to Niall Foley for setting up the live stream and for recording the event and to Don MacMonagle for the wonderful photos. You can still watch the event here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIsad98caHg>



Earl Leahy, Breeda O'Sullivan, Breda O'Sullivan, Brenda McNamara (St John of God) and Stephen Faley.

Thanks to host farmers, social farming participants and their families and service agencies and other interested parties who came along on the night.

Chairman of KSF Working Group Éamon Horgan, emphasised the need for secure and consistent funding for the project, which has expanded from 4 farms in 2013 to over 30 farms currently, with weekly social farming opportunities now being provided to more than 50 people across Kerry.

Facilitators, Evelyn O'Connell and Rena Blake provided an update on social farming activity over the past year, while Luke Myers introduced us to the world of biodiversity with this work on Kerry Eco-Social Farming.



Shauna Dinneen (Resilience Care) with Cian Begley tell us about social farming with Peter Curran in Ardfert.



Mary Fleming (Kilcummin) shares her social farming story with Pat O'Connor and her son, John Fleming.

Education Minister Norma Foley TD was guest speaker and commended what she described as a 'life enriching' project. She noted the various disciplines whose skills and generosity contributed to the

success of Kerry Social Farming and reaffirmed the current government's commitment to social farming.

Deputy Michael Healy-Rae also attended and voiced his strong support for the initiative. There was plenty of time for photographs and chat. We had great co-operation in planning and running the event from all at the Brehon Hotel, Killarney.

Puck Fair 2022,

August 10 - 12th

We'll be having our stand in the Square in Killorglin during the 3 days of Puck Fair so please come along and say hello!



That's all for this edition. We welcome your input into each newsletter, if you'd like to write or share a photo please get in touch with us; Rena, renablake@newkd.ie Evelyn, eoconnell@skdp.net and Julie jbrosnan@skdp.net.

If you've changed your contact details recently, for example, your email or postal address, please let us know so we can make sure the Newsletter gets to you each month. If you know of someone else who'd like to get a copy by post or email, just let us know the details. We also have a full range of back issues, so if you want to have a particular issue, just let us and know and we'll send it on to you.

Don't forget to follow us on social media, Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/KerrySocialFarming> or Twitter @KerrySocialfarm.

Also check our website www.kerrysocialfarming.ie, where you can link to our You Tube channel, featuring lots of social farming videos.



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

