



KERRY SOCIAL FARMING

WORKING TOGETHER!

Newsletter No 2. 22nd May 2020

Welcome by Julie Brosnan

Welcome to the second issue of Kerry Social Farming Newsletter. We hope that you're all keeping safe and well. Our new way of life has been with us for a while now and we're missing meeting up with family members, friends and taking part in our usual activities and events. Social Farming is on hold for now and we all miss spending time together.

We think of people providing essential services for our communities at this time. You may have family members and friends who are working in a variety of jobs including nurses, doctors, healthcare assistants, home helps, family carers, social care staff, cleaners, retail workers, Gardaí, paramedics, pharmacists, postmen and postwomen, delivery drivers, farmers, growers, agricultural and fuel suppliers and those cooking and delivering food and other supplies all across the county. We are sure you can think of many more and we thank them for all their efforts.

Remember the Kerry COVID-19 Community Response – Freephone is 1800 807 009- 8am to 8pm each day. You can TEXT 'SUPPORT' and your NAME to 50555 or Email: covidsupport@kerrycoco.ie

This week, Ireland begins Phase One of reopening the country, with some shops and businesses allowed to reopen. We hope that this goes well and that we can move on to the next stage in June.



A very special thanks to Antoinette O Sullivan, Earl Leahy (participants) and Irene Brune (host farmer) for their contributions this month.

Read on for more....

When My World Is On Lockdown Due To Covid 19

by Antoinette O Sullivan

This for me was going to be very challenging time as I am a busy young lady who loves to be on the go and also has a busy social life with work, social farming, shopping and seeing my family, boyfriend and friends.

The clothes shops and restaurants closed their door for the health and safety of their staff and customers.

We were all asked to stay at home and social farming stopped.



What did I do to keep myself busy during these times?

For the month of May I signed myself up to do a 100 mile challenge for a worthy cause. I am running/walking each day for the month as I raise funds for our frontline heroes. My chosen charity is Temple Street Children's Hospital, Dublin.

I have to say I'm really enjoying going out every day running and walking.

I do miss my busy social life. I miss going social framing. Hopefully I'll be back soon as for now I must stay at home and keep myself safe.....

Antoinette busy picking apples with Kerry Social Farming at Barna last year....



Lockdown at Tigh an Oileain by Earl Leahy

Hi Everyone at Social Farming.

We have been very busy here in Tigh an Oileain during lock down. I have been very busy in the garden putting some of the skills I gained through Social farming with Ger O Sullivan to use.

Here are some of the things that I have been up to. Together with my friends we set a garden with spuds, onions and carrots. And made this Scarecrow 'Farmer Joe' to mind our crop.



Inside our polytunnel I helped to plant lettuce, kale and broccoli just to name a few. We got some old Pallets and made a flower bed, and painted our garden gate blue. We are working on making an outdoor woodfire pizza oven, and a new footpath around our garden. Lockdown has been very busy for me, I love being in the garden.



Host Farmer Perspective by Irene Brune

Hi all,

I hope this finds you all well and enjoying Kerry's beauty and nature.

Since I became a host for Kerry Social Farming, I had great help to work my newly established vegetable business.

David Cronin, whom I knew from even before I moved to Cahersiveen, has been my first participant. He is really a hands-on guy.



He was joined by James Moriarty for a while with his very engaged assistance. James has moved to North Kerry by now, and hopefully can join Kerry Social Farming there. I am sure Rena Blake will do all possible for him, as it was delightful to work with him.

Back to David, the two words David probably never forgets when you ask him to refer to my place are 'stones' and 'dung'. Starting with the stones, we collected tons of them to build a low stonewall around a vegetable plot. David don't worry, there will be more of it once you come back. Of course, this vegetable plot needed manure, which was no bother to David and James.

Then I got my request for a tunnel granted, as I lack indoor working space for the rainy days. Again, the trench we dug for the plastic contained more stones!

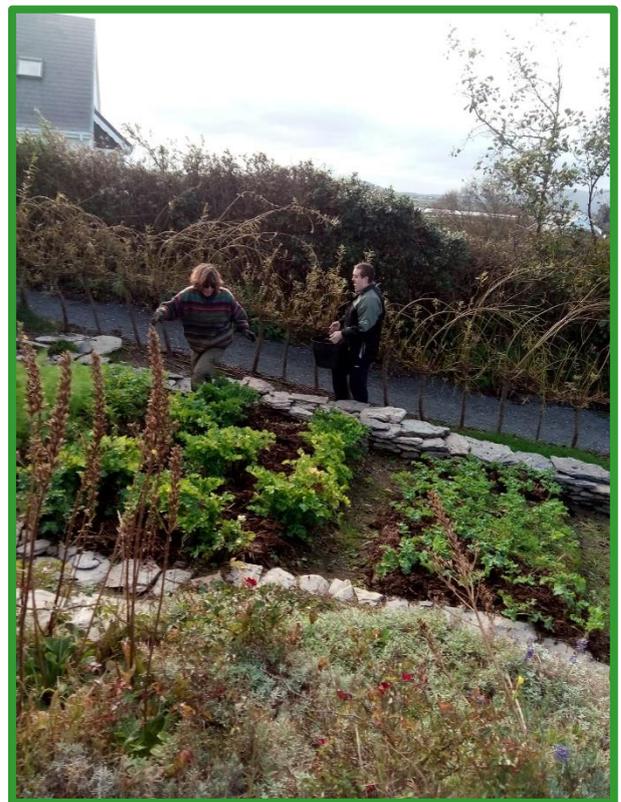


Now Rebecca joined the social farming and guess what, she also got involved to collect stones that came onto the surface, so I could get some topsoil for a raised bed later in the tunnel.

Then finally the tunnel went up! After the rural scheme helped to pack fine gravel onto the ground, I designed a raised bed and a shelf for trays with seedlings which would be also wheelchair accessible.

With David's help it was built and is up and running now. Rebecca helped to raise the seedlings which are placed on metal shelves. She also had filled them with sand which keeps the moisture in the trays. This has been a blessing in the recent dry and sunny weather.

Thanks, and hopefully we can meet soon again. - Irene



Wildflower Meadows by Rena Blake

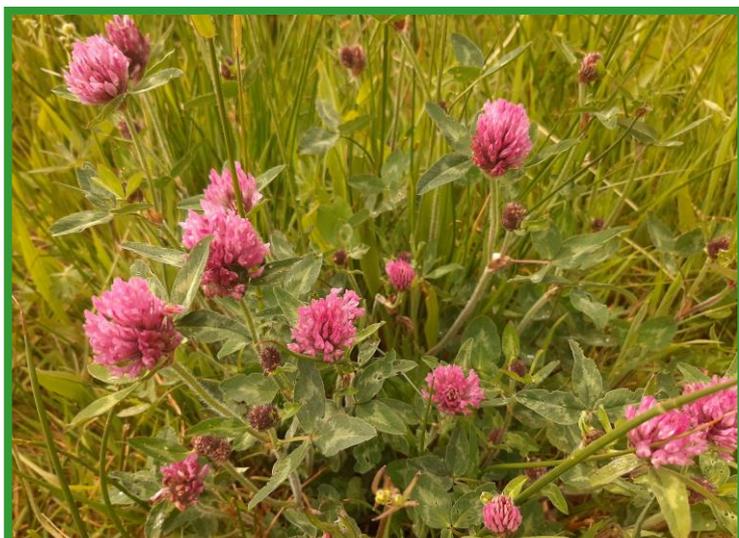


County Kerry is so beautiful at this time of the year. The hawthorn and gorse hedgerows are in full blossom and give us great fragrances. Our native woodlands are filled with a carpet of bluebells, wild leek and garlic. But I feel the hidden gems of our countryside are our **wildflower meadows** so brightly coloured and full of life.

Yesterday I took a stroll through one of our meadows in Barna. It was great to see so many wild orchids, meadow grasses, cuckoo flower, buttercup, meadowsweet and red clover. These traditional hay **meadows** are very good for pollinators, with their perennial flowers and grasses.

Our traditional grassland meadow plays an important role in providing habitats for our native biodiversity. They provide the most amazing habitat for our birds, bees and insects.

SHARE YOUR MEADOW PHOTOS...



We would encourage you all to take a stroll to your own meadows and see what you find. Send us some photos, we can post on our social media.

Here is some link to help you identify different species of grass and flowers. I have found it very helpful. Enjoy.

<https://www.irishwildflowers.ie/this-month/may.html>

<https://species.biodiversityireland.ie/>

The 5 Ways to Well Being by Evelyn O Connell

We all know about our 5 a day.....these are our 5 a day for wellbeing. We all need to look after ourselves as well as looking out for each other. You cannot give from an empty tank.....if we can do one little thing from each of these 5 every day we can “fill up our tank” and be better able to look after ourselves and the people we care about.

The 5 Ways to Wellbeing



This is most important now when we are missing people that are usually in our everyday lives and missing our usual routines. Create your own self-care routine by including these 5 activities everyday.....

We would love to hear from you....

If you have suggestions of what to include in our newsletter or would like to write a piece on a Kerry Social Farming related topic, we would welcome this.

Please send an email to:

Rena (renablake@newkd.ie),

Evelyn (eoconnell@skdp.net) or

Julie (jbrosnan@skdp.net)

We wish you all the best and look forward to seeing you soon.

We will sign off with what has become the new norm.....Stay Safe everyone 😊

Julie, Evelyn and Rena

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