

**Your Questions Answered**  
**2024 Red Clover Silage Measure**

**Q. What is the Red Clover Silage Measure (RCSM)?**

**A.** The measure aims to incentivise farmers to sow red clover silage mixed swards, which will allow for a more environmentally friendly production system. Red clover is a high yielding legume which converts atmospheric Nitrogen into a plant usable form. Due to its Nitrogen fixing ability red clover silage is higher in protein than conventional silage and combined with its ability to yield over 14t DM/ha should allow farmers to reduce their concentrate feed bills.

**Q. Who can submit an application?**

**A.** A farmer or his/her FAS approved advisor can apply for the measure. From 2024, applications must be made through the BISS online application system before or on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2024.

**Q. What will the payment rate be?**

**A.** The Department will make a financial contribution of up to €300 per hectare for the establishment of Red Clover Silage Swards mix to farmers participating in the measure. This aid will be provided to participating applicants to offset part of the cost that farmers will incur in the establishment of these swards. A reduced payment rate per hectare will apply as appropriate if eligible applications exceed the available budget for the Measure. The maximum area payable under the measure is 20 ha.

**Q. Will the measure be operated similar to the previous years.**

**A.** No, the application and payment has moved to platform for BISS and other area related schemes. Applications will be submitted through the 2024 BISS online system. Red Clover Silage swards sown between the 16<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 and 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2024 are eligible under the measure.

**Q. Will Agri-retailers/Co-ops need to be registered with the Department to participate in this measure?**

**A.** No. However, only seed that meets the Department's red clover silage species mix is eligible for grant aid.

**Q. Can I choose my own species mix and quantities of seed?**

**A.** No, following extensive consultation the Department has a set list of plant species and the quantities of Red Clover that must be included in the red clover mixture.

**Q. Can farmers in the Organic Farmer Scheme participate in the Red Clover Silage Measure**

**A.** Yes. Where there is no availability of the required organic seeds then a derogation application must be made by the applicant to the Organic Control Body for the use of non-organic seed which must be non-chemically treated.

**Q. Can a farmer who did not/will not submit a 2024 Basic Income Support for Sustainability application (BISS) enter the Measure?**

**A.** No, from 2024, to avail of the measure, applications must be made through the 2024 BISS system. Participants will also have to declare the correct crop code for the relevant parcel(s) on their BISS application.

**Q. How will I know if my application was successful?**

**A.** As part of the BISS online application process, applicant will get a summary of the schemes and measures they have applied for through the BISS system including the Red Clover Silage Measure. The summary will give details of the parcels included under the measure.

**Q. Do I need to declare the area I will be sowing under Red Clover Silage at application stage?**

**A.** Yes, as part of the online BISS application system, the applicant or agent must select and tick the option to participate in the measure. In the land details section of the application, the applicant must select the parcel(s) they have /are sowing the Red Clover Silage in and selected the crop type 'Red Clover Silage (RCS Measure)' for the relevant parcel(s).

**Q. How do I submit my claim for payment**

**A.** Payment under the measure will be based on the information captured at application. There is no separate payment claim. However, from August 2024 applicants will receive notification through the BISS online system to upload on to the BISS system copies of receipts and seed labels and if requested Geo-tagged photos of the established crop. Failure to upload requested documentation and information may result in rejection from the measure.

**Q. Are partnerships eligible to apply?**

**A.** Yes, Farmers in a Farm Partnership registered with the Department are eligible to apply. All partners are jointly and severally responsible for adhering to the measure's Terms and Conditions.

**Q. Can partnerships get increased levels of contributions where there are two or more in the partnership.**

**A.** No, each application will be treated as a single entity and be subject to the maximum area of 20ha.

**Q. How long will the application phase be open?**

**A.** The application process will be open in early March 2024 and close on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024 (BISS closing date).

**Q. When can I buy the red clover silage seed mixture?**

**A.** Only seed purchased after the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and before or on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024, the closing date for sowing the seed, can receive aid under this measure.

**Q. How will applicants be selected if the measure is oversubscribed?**

**A.** In the event of eligible applications being received in excess of the available budget for the Measure, a reduced payment rate per hectare will apply.

**Q. Are all land areas eligible to be included in the 2024 Red Clover Silage Measure**

**A.** No. The following areas are excluded from the red clover silage measure -

- Commonage land, Natura 2000 sites, NHA designated land as well as Environmentally Sensitive Permanent Grassland or land within archaeological monument buffer zones.
- Parcels sown under the 2023 or 2022 Red Clover Silage Measure.

**Q. Will cross checks be carried on seed purchased versus area claimed as Red Clover.**

**A.** Yes. The amount of seed purchased must support a minimum seeding rate of 30kgs/ha. e.g., A farmer claiming 2 hectares of red clover silage swards will be required to have purchased a minimum of 60kgs of multi-species seed i.e., 5 \* 12kg bags.