

9th Meeting of Food Vision 2030 High Level Implementation Committee

Wednesday 06 December 2023

Attendance:

Minister Charlie McConalogue.

Minister of States Pippa Hackett, Martin Heydon.

Agencies: Jim O'Toole, Emmet Doyle, Bord Bia; Caroline Bocquel, BIM; Pat Dillon, Teagasc; Pamela Byrne, FSAI; Mark Christal, Deirdre Glenn, EI.

DAFM: Colm Hayes, Assistant Secretary; Sinead McSherry, Assistant Secretary; Jack Nolan, Karl Walsh, Elisa Goode, Fergal Dalton, Gerard Kelly, Mary Callan, John Clarke, Ian Fox; Amii McKeever, Advisor to Minister McConalogue; Barry Cassidy, Advisor to Minister of State Heydon; Jack O'Donnell, Advisor to Minister of State Hackett.

Secretariat: Seán Bell and Finbar Brown, Economics & Planning Division, DAFM.

Apologies: Brendan Gleeson, Secretary General, DAFM; Laura Burke, EPA, Frank O'Mara, Teagasc; Leo Clancy, EI.

1. Introduction by Minister McConalogue

The minutes from the eight meeting on 05 October 2023 were agreed.

The Minister updated the Committee on recent events and of note in terms of Food Vision goals since the last meeting on 05 October:

- The successful conclusion of the EU registration for "Irish Grass Fed Beef" as a Protected Geographical Indication. Irish beef has now achieved special recognition by the European Union and will serve to add value to our unique offering in key international markets.
- The launch of the national opposition procedure for Protected Geographical Indication of "Certified Irish Angus Beef". The geographical area included in this additional beef PGI application is also the island of Ireland.
- The National 'Agriculture and Climate Change: Science in Action' Conference, during Science Week 2023. The conference took stock of the relationship between

agriculture and climate change as the 500 delegates in attendance hear updates on the latest climate policy developments.

The conference had a very strong scientific emphasis with a range of national and international researchers presenting the state of science across areas such as breeding and feed additives to reduce methane, and soil and pasture management to reduce nitrous oxide and increase carbon sequestration. In addition, the audience also heard about a wide range of international collaborative climate research initiatives that Ireland is involved in, while also considering the potential role of a diversified agriculture and land use sector in reducing and offsetting emissions.

- The publication of the first national Bioeconomy Action Plan. The publication of the plan, coincided with Bioeconomy Ireland Week 2023, and signals intent to accelerate sustainable bioeconomy development to support climate action. The National Bioeconomy Action Plan 2023-2025 will have a strong focus on bringing sustainable scientific practices, technologies, and biobased innovation into use on farms and by biobased industries in Ireland. The plan contains 33 actions across seven pillars. The plan will support our farmers, foresters, fishers and agri-food companies to embed themselves in the circular regenerative bioeconomy. The bioeconomy offers a vast range of new opportunities, new business models, new value chains, and is a key element in the diversification of the sector in line with the ambitions set out in Food Vision 2030.
- Launch of the One-Health Symposium at the Royal College of Physicians Ireland. Ireland's One Health symposium - 'One Health - From Policy to Practice' marked the beginning of World Antimicrobial Awareness Week, which runs from November 18th to 24th every year. This event provided an Irish, European and global perspective on One Health through a combination of keynote speakers, case studies and panel discussions.
- The publication of the Annual Review and Outlook 2023, which underlines the critical importance of the agriculture, food and marine sectors to the overall national economy, and especially to our rural and coastal areas. The sector has demonstrated its adaptability and resilience to continue to deliver safe and nutritious food for Irish and international markets. This is evidenced by the rise in value of agri-food exports in 2022, to a record €19 billion, which represents an increase of 76% over the past decade, largely driven by value rather than volume.
- The selection of Joe Healy as the Chair along with 7 ordinary Board Members to the Board of An Rialálaí Agraibhia, the Agri-Food Regulator, with the office to be formally established on the 13th December. The Board Members will bring the necessary experience and knowledge, providing a huge benefit to the new body as they

support the CEO designate Niamh Lenehan in the effective management of the new Regulator.

- In relation to Organics, the announcement of a €1 million nationwide marketing campaign for Irish organics. Bord Bia have now commenced the largest ever national campaign for Irish organics. The first ever organic promotion campaign to be co funded by EU and Bord Bia was also noted. The campaign will begin in Spring 2024 and will see funding of €2.2m from the EU and €0.5m from Bord Bia to give a record spend of €2.7m on marketing organic product in the next three years. This co-funding will raise the understanding of Irish pasture fed organic beef and lamb through a targeted Bord Bia promotion campaign. Such promotion is important to ensure that organic farming returns an income from the market, thereby safeguarding organics as a viable option for the Irish farmers that choose to pursue it. The 3 year campaign will promote organic beef and lamb in Austria, Belgium, Germany and Sweden, countries that have been identified as key export markets for Irish organic products.
- The first Whole of Government Trade Mission to Korea, which included a focus on beef access and promotion of the Irish equine sector, in addition to a Ministerial trade mission to Malaysia and Philippines.
- The visit of French Agriculture Minister Fesneau to Ireland, where there was a declaration of intent signed, focussed on strengthening cooperation in the field of agricultural education between Teagasc and the French Directorate for Education and Research.
- Ministerial attendance at a number of events and important meetings at the World Food Forum 2023 at the headquarters of the U.N Food and Agriculture Organisation in Rome. Youth engagement was one such focus area for DAFM at the event, funding 91 youth delegates from 46 developing countries to attend this year's World Food Forum, including seven young Irish people from the Irish agri-food sector.
- The National Conference on 'Cultivating Mental Wellbeing in Rural Ireland'. DAFM co-hosted this important National conference to mark International Men's Day with the support of the Department of Health and the Health Service Executive.
- Publication of the new 'National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development (NSPSA) 2030'. The NSPSA, the successor to the 2014-2020 Plan, will be rolled out over a ten-year period to 2030. The new plan sets the strategic vision and framework for the Irish Aquaculture sector so that it is resilient, competitive and is a global standard in sustainability and quality. The plan contains 4 high level missions with 58 associated actions.
- The announcement of a €25.6 million support package for the Irish pelagic fisheries sector. The Pelagic Fisheries Support Scheme, funded under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve Fund, will compensate owners of Refrigerated Sea Water (RSW) pelagic vessels and polyvalent Tier 1 and Tier 2 vessels that have suffered losses of mackerel

quota over the period 2021-2023 as a result of the quota transfers to the EU under Brexit.

- The securing of State Aid approval for an €8 million liquidity aid scheme for the Irish Seafood Sector. The Brexit Fish Processor Transition Scheme receives €7 million, whilst the Brexit Fisheries Cooperative Transition Scheme receives €1 million. In addition, the successful securing of State Aid approval for liquidity aid, worth €560,000 for the Irish scallop fleet segment of 22-28m that targets scallop in the Irish Sea, Celtic Sea, and the English Channel.
- The opening of 2024 Scheme of Investment Aid for the Development of the Commercial Horticulture Sector, with a budget of €10 million.

Mission 4: Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Agri-Food Sector, Driven by Technology and Talent

2. Research & Innovation

Karl Walsh, Research & Codex Division, DAFM, provided an update, including

- Public research funding of agriculture in Ireland
- Broad R&I activities
- DAFM activities
- Development of R&I strategy

Mark Christal and Deirdre Glenn, Enterprise Ireland, provided an update, including

- EI Food Sector overview
- Key Research, Development and Innovation priorities
- Increasing enterprise engagement and R, D & I
- Horizon Europe food related research and innovation opportunities in 2024
- Regional food enterprise development
- EI driving innovation in the Irish food sector

Pat Dillon, Director of Research, Teagasc, provided an update, including

- Teagasc Climate Action Strategy 2022-2030
- Virtual Teagasc Centre for Climate
- Teagasc MACC 3
- Teagasc Lead Initiatives

- National Research Centres
- National Food Biosecurity Centre

A discussion followed.

Mission 2: Viable and Resilient Primary Producers, with Enhanced Wellbeing

3. Organic Farming & Food

Jack Nolan, Organics and Market Supports Division, DAFM, gave an overview, including

- Draft National Organic Strategy up to 2030
- Green public procurement
- Brexit adjustment reserve
- Ongoing developments

Emmet Doyle, Organics Sector, Bord Bia, gave an over of activities, including

- Irish Organic Market Activities
 - o Organic stakeholder collaboration
 - o Irish organic consumer research
 - o Seven week national consumer campaign
- Export Organic Market Activities
 - o 2023 Trade shows
 - o Retailer Organic promotions
 - o 2024: In-depth Organic export research
 - o 2023: A year of momentum for Bord Bia and Organics

A discussion followed.

4. Women in Agriculture Report & Action Plan

Elisa Goode, Economics & Planning Division, DAFM, gave an overview, including

- The National Dialogue Conference in February 2023
- Workshop Reports
- Working Group
- Action Plan going forward

A discussion followed.

Mission 1: A Climate Smart, Environmentally Sustainable Agri-Food Sector

5. Food Vision Environmental Working Sub-Group & Environmental Update

Fergal Dalton, Bioenergy Policy Division, DAFM, advised that the Annual Report from the EWSG is nearing completion. A further update will be provided at the next HLIC in early 2024.

6. AOB and Date of next Meeting

The meeting dates for the HLIC in 2024 will be provided early in the new year.