



Overview of Walsh Scholarship Funded
Masters Programmes in Agricultural Innovation and Extension
–Teagasc / UCD

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SCAR SWG AKIS 5th Mandate – 5th Meeting
20th January 2021



In today's presentation, I will talk about...

1. Teagasc and the Walsh Scholarship Programme
2. Teagasc / University College Dublin (UCD) partnership on Masters Programme
3. Masters in Agricultural Innovation
4. Masters in Agricultural Extension
5. Review and Summary.

Teagasc and the Walsh Scholarship Programme



- Teagasc - National responsibility for the development of agriculture and food



Research



Advisory



Education

- Walsh Scholarship funding - collaborative
 - 60 PhD intake each year - mainly research in agriculture, food and economics
 - Building connections with research partners
 - 15-20 Masters intake each year - mainly exploring how to improve the effectiveness of KT methodology
 - Connecting with more partners across the AKIS.

Teagasc and UCD Masters Programme



Collaboration on this programme since 2010 / 2015



UCD lead on academic supervision + KT conference



Teagasc lead on practical work + experience + skills



Competitive open application – results + written + interview



Student monthly stipend of €1,333 (after academic fees)



Programme oversight – joint Teagasc / UCD

Currently Two Programmes

- Masters in Innovation – Research
- Masters in Extension – Taught

Masters in Agricultural Innovation Support (Research, 21 months)

- Research Topics - Teagasc
- 3 mths in UCD
- 15 mths advisory or education centre
- 3 months flexible
- Major Thesis + 30 ECT credits approx.
- Supervised and mentored by experienced staff
- Regular round table seminars + present at national KT Conference

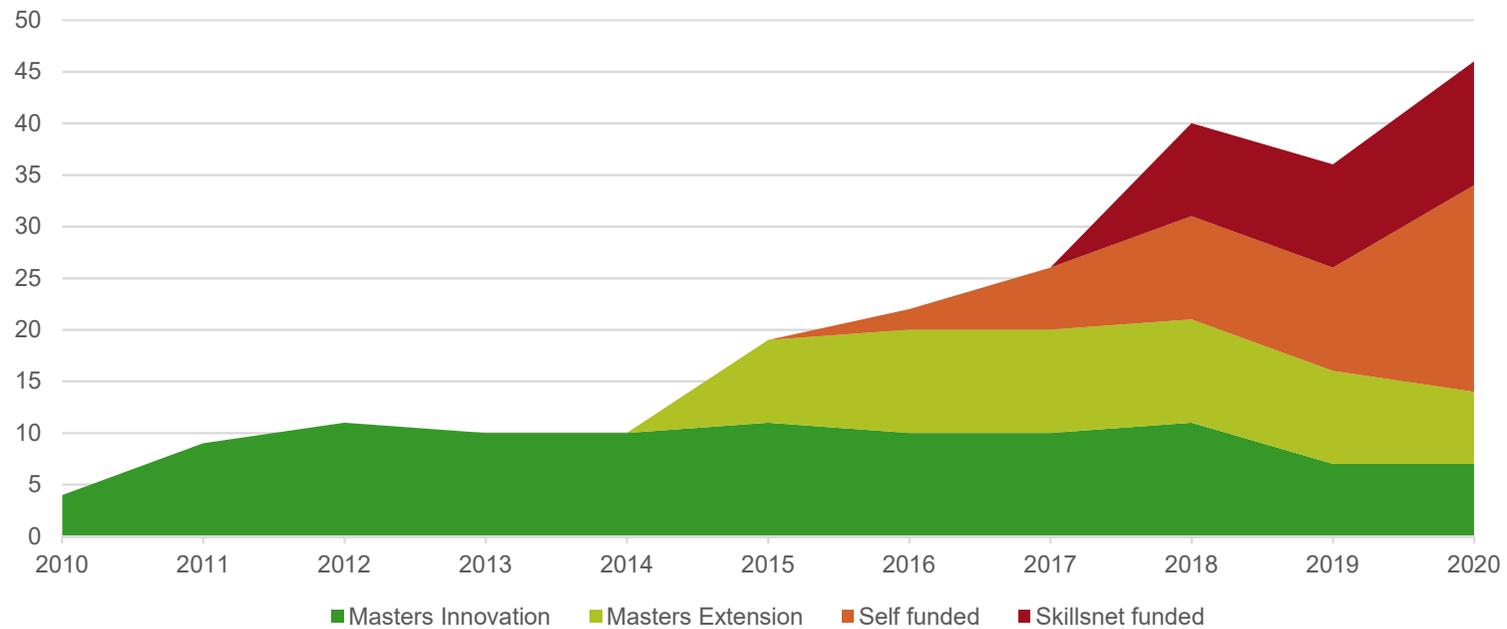


Masters in Agricultural Extension and Innovation (Taught, 24 months)

- 2 X 12 month placements in Teagasc advisory offices
- Mentored by experienced advisors
- Blended learning, 90 ECT credits modules (incl. minor thesis of 30 ECT)
- Assignments and projects relate to the work placement
- Emphasis on self reflection and professional development
- Regular round tables and presentation at annual KT conference



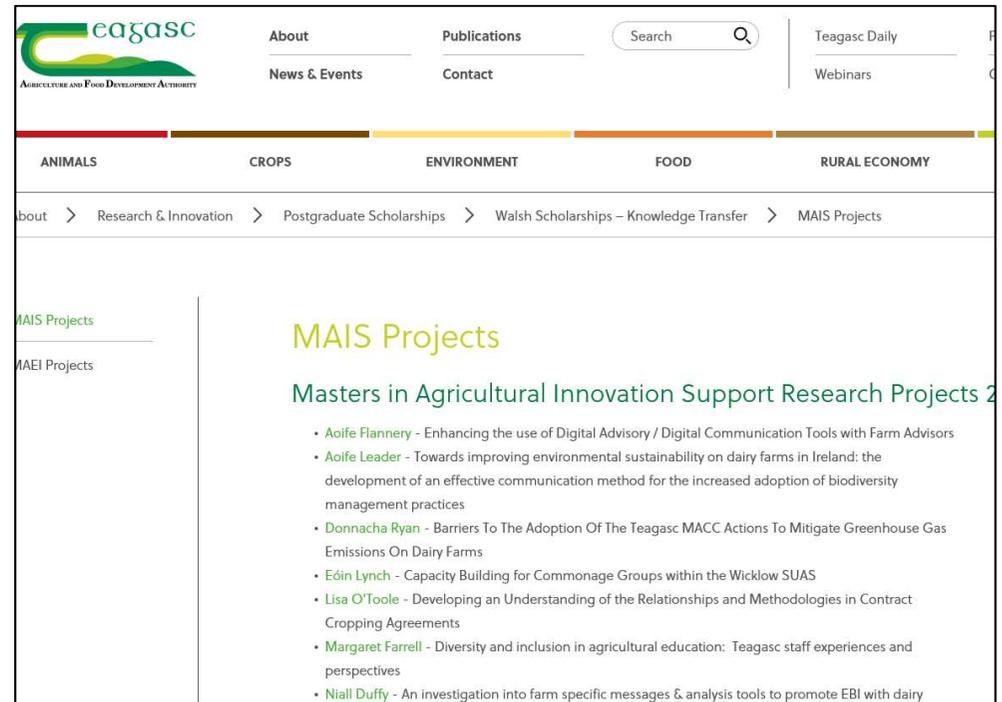
Masters Students Intake UCD 2010 - 2020



Example Projects

■ Masters in Innovation – Research

- Biodiversity
- Discussion Groups
- Farm Succession



The screenshot displays the Teagasc website's navigation and content structure. At the top, the Teagasc logo (Agriculture and Food Development Authority) is on the left, and navigation links for 'About', 'News & Events', 'Publications', and 'Contact' are on the right. A search bar and links for 'Teagasc Daily' and 'Webinars' are also present. Below the navigation is a horizontal menu with categories: ANIMALS, CROPS, ENVIRONMENT, FOOD, and RURAL ECONOMY. The breadcrumb trail reads: 'Home > Research & Innovation > Postgraduate Scholarships > Walsh Scholarships – Knowledge Transfer > MAIS Projects'. The main content area features a sidebar with 'MAIS Projects' and 'MAEI Projects' links. The main heading is 'MAIS Projects' in green, followed by the sub-heading 'Masters in Agricultural Innovation Support Research Projects 2020'. A list of project descriptions follows, each starting with a name and a brief description of the research focus.

Teagasc
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

About
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ANIMALS CROPS ENVIRONMENT FOOD RURAL ECONOMY

Home > Research & Innovation > Postgraduate Scholarships > Walsh Scholarships – Knowledge Transfer > MAIS Projects

MAIS Projects

MAEI Projects

MAIS Projects

Masters in Agricultural Innovation Support Research Projects 2020

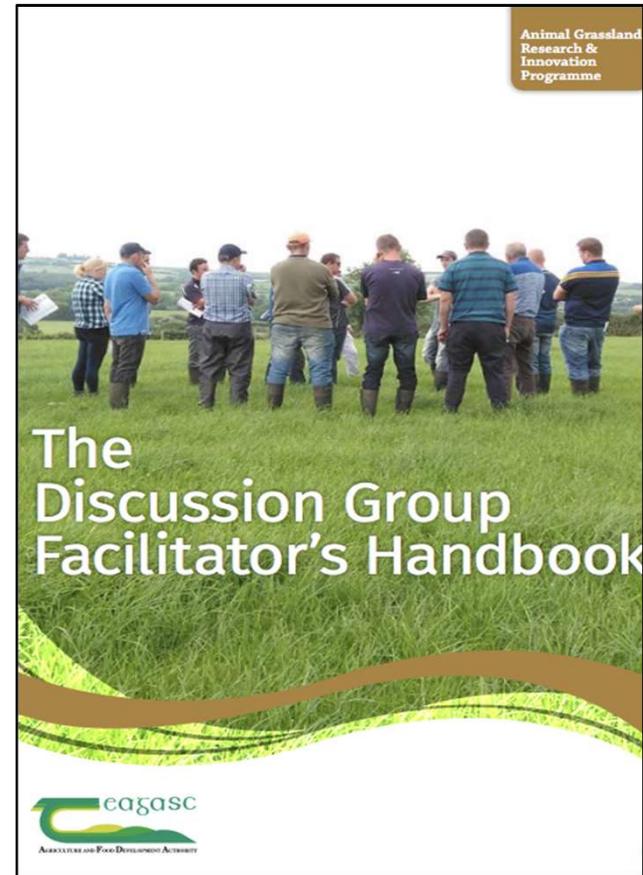
- **Aoife Flannery** - Enhancing the use of Digital Advisory / Digital Communication Tools with Farm Advisors
- **Aoife Leader** - Towards Improving environmental sustainability on dairy farms in Ireland: the development of an effective communication method for the increased adoption of biodiversity management practices
- **Donnacha Ryan** - Barriers To The Adoption Of The Teagasc MACC Actions To Mitigate Greenhouse Gas Emissions On Dairy Farms
- **Eóin Lynch** - Capacity Building for Commonage Groups within the Wicklow SUAS
- **Lisa O'Toole** - Developing an Understanding of the Relationships and Methodologies in Contract Cropping Agreements
- **Margaret Farrell** - Diversity and inclusion in agricultural education: Teagasc staff experiences and perspectives
- **Niall Duffy** - An investigation into farm specific messages & analysis tools to promote EBI with dairy

Communication for Biodiversity Management Planning – Aoife Leader



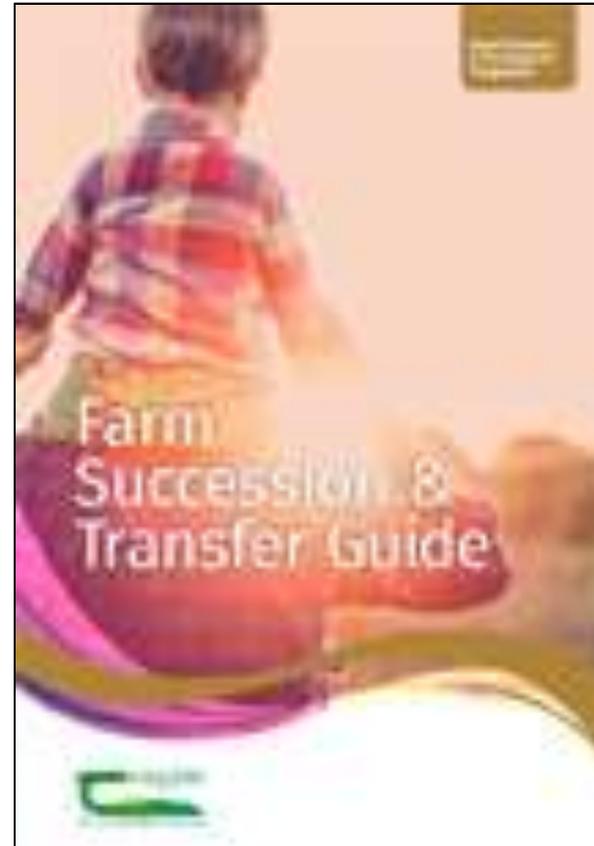
Biodiversity Management Plan 2020/20201									
Name		Address				Date			
Land Set Up									
Grassland (ha)		Tillage (ha)		Farm Yard (ha)		Forestry (ha)			
Intensive Grazing 51.21				0.93					
Biodiversity Baseline 2020									
Internal Watercourse					Internal Boundary				
Length (m)	Width (m)	Ha	%		Length (m)	Ha	%		
2524.77	2.7	0.68	1.31%		4833.1	1.30	2.50%		
External Watercourse					External Boundary				
Length (m)	Width (m)	Ha	%		Length (m)	Ha	%		
	1.35	0.00	0.00%		3952.16	0.53	1.02%		
Watercourse Margin					Fenced Field Margin				
Length (m)	Width (m)	Ha	%		Length (m)	Ha	%		
	2153.93	0.0	0.00%		6627.28	0.66	1.27%		
Farm Yard (ha)					Grass Habitats				
Length (m)	Width (m)	Ha	%		Area (M Sq)	Ha	%		
		0.00	0.00%		9320.99	0.93	1.79%		
Grove					Grass Habitats				
Area (M Sq)	Ha	%			Area (M Sq)	Ha	%		
	1139.58	0.11	0.22%		714.19	0.07	0.14%		
Area (M Sq)	Ha	%			Area (M Sq)	Ha	%		
			0.00%			0.00	0.00%		
No. Fields					Average Field Size (ha)				
11					4.7				
Farming Platform					% Biodiversity on Farming Platform				
52.14					8.25%				
Whole Farm					% Biodiversity Whole Farm				
52.14					8.25%				
Current Practices									
Internal Hedgerow Height	≥ 1.5m								
Flowering Thorn Tree	YES								
Restrict Watercourse Drinking Access	YES								
Field Margin Cultivation	<1.5m from Permanent Boundary								
Field Margin Spraying	Boundary								

Development of handbook for discussion group facilitators – Conor Holohan



Advisors role in supporting farm succession and inheritance

– Tomas Russell



Masters in Extension – Taught Examples

Masters (MAgrSc) in Agricultural Extension Projects 2016-2018 (MAEI)

- **Fergus Bogue** - WhatsApp as a Knowledge Transfer Tool for Dairy Discussion Groups
- **Jane Smyth** - The Role of Commercial Agronomists in the Agricultural Knowledge and Information System
- **Elaine Clifford** - Measuring the benefits of discussion groups for tillage farmers - has the adoption of recording components of yield impacted on crop husbandry practices?
- **Marie Flynn** - "Investigation into the use of WhatsApp group chats to transfer knowledge to beef farmers in Ireland
- **Michael McGonigle** - An Assessment of the Effectiveness of Knowledge Transfer Groups to date in the Mayo Advisory Region"
- **Enda Maloney** - An investigation into why the production of young bull beef is not attractive to Irish Farmers
- **Gavin Doherty** - A Study 'Exploring Suckler Farmer's Attitudes towards the Beef Data Genomics Programme in the North-West'
- **Graham Waters** - The Future Intentions of Teagasc Distance Education Green Cert Students.
- **Claire McAuliffe** - "The role of agricultural advisers in dealing with farmer stress- A case study of the Teagasc Kerry/Limerick region."

Farmer's engagement with EIP

A case study of the Rathcroghan's archeological landscape

– Luke Clogher



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Investigating use of Whats App group chats to transfer knowledge to beef farmers in Ireland

- Marie Flynn



THESIS ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the potential use of social media for enabling extension workers to share information, knowledge, and advice to farmers or farm workers. The social media tool examined was WhatsApp, the leading social message site in Ireland.

The research design was based on an action research approach. A mixed method sampling approach was used, using WhatsApp group chat. Then a paper-based questionnaire of the farmers in the group chat was used to analyse the farmer characteristics. The level of participation was measured using the WhatsApp Score model, modified from Galvin (2012) index system for Facebook pages.

The key findings for this study identified that the majority of the farmers had all positive experiences when using the WhatsApp group chat, both as a communication tool for connecting them with the other members of the group chat and also accessing agricultural information. In the study, 92 % of the farmers had a WhatsApp account, with 77 % using WhatsApp daily to access agricultural information. The farmers identified the most popular days to use the WhatsApp group chat were Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (weekend) and the most popular time of day was 8 pm to midnight. The farmers who accessed the internet most frequently had the highest WhatsApp group chat usage. The single respondents who had no dependents had the highest WhatsApp group chat usage. Education did not have a major effect on the usage of the WhatsApp group chat. Part-time farmers had a much higher usage of the WhatsApp group chat compared to the farmers farming full-time.

WhatsApp has huge potential for advisors and farmers to keep in contact, share, and transfer knowledge. Farmers are not solely relying on the advisor to answer questions in the group chat but the interaction and peer to peer learning from other members of the group is far more important.

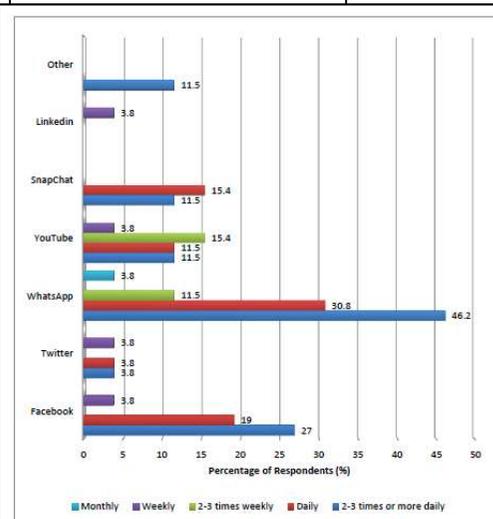


Figure 9: Distribution of respondents by how often each social media tool is used to access agricultural information (N=26)

“Investigation into the use of WhatsApp group chats to transfer knowledge to beef farmers in Ireland”



to University College Dublin in fulfillment of the degree of M.Agr.Sc. Agricultural Extension and Innovation

By:
Marie Flynn (B.Agr.Sc)
Student Number: 16205792

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August 2018



Review and Summary

Programme Impact

- Student
- Teagasc staff – reciprocal learning
- UCD staff
- Visibility of KT – UCD, Conference etc.

Recent Review – some student reflections

- Students value the exposure to an advisory or teaching role
- Student's individual motivation and enthusiasm is critical
- Develops critical competencies especially in terms of knowledge of advisory systems and approaches and skills for advisory work
- The challenge to meet their academic requirements and contribute to the work of the advisory office helps scholars to become more efficient in time management and prioritising work.
- *“Agricultural advisory is not just about being a one-stop shop for technical knowledge. It is about being able to identify the farmer's individual problem, and coming up with a solution that is both within the farmers means and capabilities and will have an effect on the ground”.*

Further Information

For more information, search for

“Teagasc UCD KT Masters”

or

<https://www.teagasc.ie/about/research--innovation/postgraduate-scholarships/walsh-scholarships--knowledge-transfer/>