Co-operative News

Autumn 2024

Centenary Thurles
Co-operative Society Ltd

Welcome to the September edition of Co-operative News!

With this newsletter we are committed to giving you updates in Centenary Thurles every quarter. We want to keep you informed of what's going on in the Society – whether that is new developments in the technology we use, new products we are launching or challenges we are helping our stakeholders with. We also want to give advice on topical issues in agriculture and encourage a sustainable practice within our community.

Follow us for all the latest news in Centenary Thurles:

@centenaryagri
@centenaryhomeandgarden

@CThurles

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Management Sub-Committee

Centenary Thurles has for many years operated with a Management Sub-Committee to develop policies and facilitate more detailed discussion on certain matters. It has proven to be a vital part of the Society's governance structure and is representative of the Committee as a whole.

We welcome three new Committee Members to the Sub-Committee this year: Michael Delaney replaces Michael Maher from Loran; Liam Flanagan replaces John Cahill from Thurles and Paddy Whyte has replaced Mervyn Stanley from Montore.

Network Ireland Tipperary Event

Supporting the local community and local businesses is so important to us, so we were thrilled to sponsor a category in the Network Ireland Tipperary Businesswoman of the Year Awards 2024 earlier this summer. We sponsored the STEM Professional category and the winner was Marian Kennedy from Anewmum. Congratulations Marian, and all the winners on the night! All money raised on the night went to the local Down Syndrome Tipperary branch.

Tips & Events

Follow us on Instagram @centenaryagritipperary for all the latest updates, tips, events and giveaways.

Additions to Feed Range

Following on from the introduction of our 12% Dairy Ultra and our 15% Summer Calf Graze Cube in May, Centenary Feed & Grain Ltd now has available a 13% Beef Ultra Cube. This cube gives another option to beef farmers along with our 15% Beef Cube and 14% Bull Beef Cube. 14% Bull Beef Cube will now be available in 25kg bags as well as bulk. For more information please contact any of our sales advisory team or your local branch.

Milk Price Progression

2024 has been a difficult year for many reasons, grass growth and potential upcoming fodder shortages included. This has resulted in cash flow concerns on many farms.

A positive however has been the progression of milk prices. Autumn 2023 saw base milk price at 33.08c per litre, little encouragement to milk on at the back-end of that year. The announcement of our July milk price has seen the base price today advance to 44.83c per litre, 11.75c more than last Autumn. Feed prices in the meantime have declined by €55 per tonne over the same period. Suppliers may if they can, be planning to milk on somewhat this year to alleviate the cash flow concerns. Milk price will be boosted by the increases in Seasonality Bonuses that can be earned in December, January and February — 5c; 7c, and 5c per litre respectively. This would bring base price to almost 50c per litre for December and February and 52c for January, if milk price remains unchanged in the meantime. Seasonality bonuses have no volume conditions, but do require minimum Lactose of 4.35%; TBC less than 50; and SCC less than 350.

Congratulations to Joe Burke from our Templemore branch who won a bronze medal at the European Athletics U18 Championships in Banská Bystrica in July.

Maximising Weight Gain for Winter Finishing Cattle by Animal Nutritionist, Howard Stanley

Feeding beef cattle for finishing over the winter period has, in many ways, become a specialised area and requires a high level of management from the farmer. Animals are sold on a per kg basis and therefore weight gain is the key to profitability on beef farms. I have listed a few areas below that will help farmers maximise animal performance at farm level.

1. **Animal health plan:** It is always a worthwhile and cost-effective exercise to speak to your vet prior to housing animals and have a herd health plan in place. Your vet will give you the best options for external and internal parasite control along with which vaccination program will suit your needs. This should be the first step in housing animals, as it will provide a good foundation for efficient performance throughout the winter period. It can reduce any health issues and therefore improve animal performance. Testing dung samples for internal parasites while at grass is also very beneficial, as it means you can treat specific parasites and when the animals are housed, they are ready for weight gain.

2. **Housing facilities:** Animals must always have free access to water. It is important to check at least once a day that water is clean, and the animals can access the water troughs. Having no water will greatly reduce feed intake and therefore affect animal performance. Having good airflow is also important. If a shed has poor air flow, then there is a high risk of sickness. A shed with poor air flow will cause the animal to be uncomfortable and sweaty. Similarly, animals don't like a draught. The ventilation can be assessed by lighting a newspaper inside a shed and watching where the smoke goes and how long it takes to clear out of the shed. Having feed barriers at the correct height is also another area that may be overlooked. Barriers should be both high and wide enough that each animal can eat feed without being impeded. A typical sign of a feed barrier being too low is when an animal has a lump on its neck. If this is the case, the feed barrier needs to be adjusted. Having adequate space for animals to lie down and chew the cud is also important.

3. **Monitor animal behaviour:** Animals should be assessed from a health point of view at least once a day. The purpose of a daily health assessment is to keep any illness/ viral outbreaks to a minimum, any sickness or lameness will have a big impact on profitability. There are numerous behaviour signals that animals can be monitored for daily. The first is to monitor intake. This is done by noting what the animals will eat everyday but by also looking at the animals to see if the rumen is full. This can be done by looking at the triangular area on the left on side of the animal. Monitoring animals 2-3 hours after feeding is also key. There should be at least 70% of the animals lying down chewing the cud. If you have a diet feeder it makes it easier to measure intakes, due to the machine having a weighing scales on it. If you don't have a diet feeder available, it would be a good idea to weigh a bucket of silage/ bale of silage. Any ration or any other feed can be weighed via a diet feeder or finding out a weight on whatever else might be included. Monitor animals' dungs in the shed. A very loose dung will indicate digestive upsets and this will give poor weight gains; if dungs are too stiff it might indicate lack of protein in a diet or it can be an indicator of too much fibre in the diet.

4. **Group cattle appropriately:** First, there are numerous ways to group animals, and this will change from farm to farm. The same advice goes for both dairy and beef farmers - separate thin animals, and group separately as they may need a different plane of nutrition. A beef finisher will typically group animals according to age, weight and how well fleshed they are or how close they are to slaughter. From an economic point of view, there is little point in feeding lighter cattle with less flesh the same quantity as heavy well fleshed animals. Sometimes these lighter, leaner animals would benefit from being kept on a lesser diet for a few weeks to give them a chance to get into better condition.

5. **Ensure correct mineral supplementation:** Minerals are a very important supplement for the winter period, as forages naturally have a lower mineral profile than fresh grass. Minerals are important to support growth and the immune system of the animal and care should be taken when choosing a suitable mineral pack. Minerals such as phosphorus might be required if you are feeding maize or beet; young bulls on adlib feeding will also have a small phosphorus requirement. These young bulls will have the potential to get high weight gains and both phosphorus and calcium are required to ensure the animals' bones are strong enough to carry the weight of the animal. It is always recommended to speak to a nutritionist about mineral requirements.

6. **Feed management:** By feed management, I am referring to the way a farmer feeds their animals and how clean feed troughs are kept. This is an absolute critical area. All categories of animals will have better feed intakes when feed is kept fresh. Feed troughs should be cleaned out if they are dirty to stop any spoilage and feed going off.

7. **Get the diet right:** There have been numerous trials carried out across different continents, in many different feeding scenarios and they all have results to prove animals that have high daily live weight gain will have a better killout % at slaughter. They will have a better confirmation grade, hence the importance of having a correct diet for the finishing period. I would always recommend to a farmer finishing cattle to start animals off on a transition diet for a 3-week period. This is usually 50%-60% of the finishing diet and it's a great way of introducing high starch feeds. By offering a transition diet, it gives the bacteria in the rumen a chance to adjust to a change in the diet. After this 3-week period, feed levels can be increased slowly. Getting the diet right is the key to success and that will depend on what else is in the diet. For example, a farmer feeding good quality silage with a high DmD silage + fodder beet will need to have a different feed specification in comparison to a farmer feeding silage and concentrate only. I would always recommend talking to a technical sales advisor to talk through different feeding options.

Fodder Budgeting Worksheet from Teagasc

On A Five-Month Winter:
Six cull cows eat 50 TONNES OF SILAGE (or 55 bales)
Seven store cattle eat 50 TONNES OF SILAGE (or 55 bales)

Farmer Details

Name	Land type
Enterprise	County
Herd number	

Section 1: What fodder is required on the farm?

Animal Type	A No. of stock to be kept over winter	B No. of months	C Pit silage needed/ animal/month	Total tonnes of silage needed — multiply AxBxC

Total tonnes needed	**Tonnes**	X
or	or	
Total bales needed (tonnes multiplied by 1.1)	**Bales**	Y

Section 2: How much silage is in the yard?

Farms with pit and bale silage	A	Pit silage[1]	
	B	Bales — in the yard	
	C	Bales, converted to equivalent of pit silage (multiply B by 0.9)	
	D	Total silage (A+C)	D
Farms with bale silage only	E	Total Bales	

[1] Pit silage (length x breadth x settled height) metres ÷1.35 = tonnes (t) equivalent.

Section 3: Surplus or Shortage?

Surplus or deficit	Using pit and bales Deficit in tonnes (D-X)	Using bales only Deficit in bales (E-Y)
What's the % deficit? (Deficit/X (or Y) x100*)		

* If you are using alternative feed sources, please contact your adviser.

Dovea Genetics Opens New €1m Sexed Semen Lab

Ireland's first purpose-built sexed semen lab was officially opened on Thursday 29th August by Dovea Genetics. The lab will produce sexed dairy and beef genetics for both Irish and global customers.

Pictured at the official opening are L-R Vice-Chair of Dovea Genetics Mervyn Stanley, chair of Dovea Genetics John P Nugent, lab manager Sexing Technologies Helena Meally, Dr Andre Cromie (vice-president and general manager Europe for Sexing Technologies) and general manager of Dovea Genetics Dr Ger Ryan.

Royal Canin Staff Training

Some of our Home and Garden staff attended training on Royal Canin Pet Care earlier this summer.

CENTENARY
Home & Garden

Royal Canin

Cashel | Littleton | Roscrea | Templemore | Thurles

20% off
Royal Canin Feline Care Nutrition Wet Pouches

15% off
Royal Canin Feline Care Nutrition Dry 1.5-4kg

Both offers end on 30th September. Terms & conditions apply. Some products only at selected shops.

Cell Check Award Winners

Four of our Suppliers have won National Cell Check Awards for 2023:

- Patrick Campion Drom;
- John Fogarty Fethard;
- Gerry Laffan Castleiney; and
- Eugene O'Dwyer Cashel

We congratulate each of them and they will be recognised later in the year at an awards ceremony hosted by Animal Health Ireland.

Grain Harvest 2024

The 2024 Grain Harvest kick-started on the 14th July with our first intake of Winter Barley. Whilst 10 days later starting than in 2023, and after a sluggish start, it quickly picked up pace and our Winter Barley Intake for 2024 settled at 4,550 tonnes. This was down a little over 600 tonnes on 2023, but understandable given the poor sowing conditions endured. Moisture levels were virtually unchanged, with Bushels up from 64.8 to 66.9. Intake of Winter Oats was back 100 tonnes this year, but Winter Wheat was somewhat ahead of 2023. Our intake of Rye was also ahead, more than double that of 2023

Optimism was beginning to creep in, that the Spring harvest may not be as bad as initially feared due to the late sowings and the re-allocation of land to maize. 2023 Spring Barley Harvest had started on 2nd August that year, but was delayed until 17th August this year. However, at the time of writing, we would be confident in predicting that our final intake will exceed the 7,300 tonnes received in 2023.

On an overall basis, Grain Intake declined in 2023 to 15,800 tonnes and we predict some recovery to the final figure for 2024, possibly in the region of 18,000 tonnes, despite all the hurdles faced.

South Eastern Cattle Breeding Society

Con Callanan of Ardbawn Thurles has been elected to represent Centenary Thurles on the Board of South Eastern Cattle Breeding Society at Dovea. Con succeeds John Cahill of Kilrush Thurles who retired from the Board last June.

Tipperary Fresh

We are pleased to announce that our Tipperary Fresh product has now been listed in a further 45 Dunnes Stores, bringing our total to 92 stores or almost 80% of its ROI Stores. This is a major success for our business, which created this niche product of milk produced from cows fed only a non-gm diet. The commitment of our suppliers and staff to developing this product is acknowledged.

The product was brought to market initially just before Covid in 2020. It then had to be withdrawn for a period as the number of product lines on shop shelves was restricted. We relaunched then in September 2020 on a small scale and having been allocated additional stores three times since, sales grew to such an extent that we were awarded these 45 new stores. Prior to this new business, the sales had grown to account for 15% of our total sales.

We look forward to the challenges and benefits of our new phase of growth.

Solar PV Panels - Littleton

We have agreed to install PV Panels to the roof of our Littleton Branch and these works may have commenced by the time this article is published. The journey, to say the least, has been interesting and eventful. Whilst there was a strong willingness in Centenary Thurles to enhance our environmental credentials, bureaucracy and grid connection were a different matter entirely.

This installation was designed to be a prelude to the consideration of other larger installations across our branch network. At just 60 panels, one would have expected a relatively simple process as we dipped our toe in the solar water. A licence to export the surplus production to the grid would be required. However, our application was refused on the grounds that we would generate 'too much' electricity for export, particularly on a Sunday when the branch would be closed. We then had to proceed with a smaller installation of approx. 35 panels.

As we are all encouraged to become more sustainable, investment in the critical infrastructure is surely a necessity.

Tipperary Cup

We were delighted to sponsor the Tipperary Cup at Thurles Greyhound stadium. This year's winner was Tribal Syd for trainer Murt Leahy and owner Martin Costigan.

Tethered Caps

From 3rd July, all plastic beverage containers with a capacity of up to 3 litres with a cap or lid, must be manufactured so that the cap or lid remains attached. This regulation obviously applies to our Thurles Fresh Milk products and we have had to make the change. Whilst initially, customers found the bottles/cartons a little bit inconvenient, over time we will become accustomed to the change. If this helps the environment through reduced littering, it will be of significant benefit to all.

Dulux Colour Consultants

Cathríona, Cecelia and Paula, from our Templemore, Cashel, and Thurles branches respectively, are now qualified Dulux Academy certified colour consultants! Congrats to all three and big thanks to Cora Collins from Dulux Academy and Tim Walsh from Dulux for arranging and delivering this training. If you are looking for some inspiration to transform a space in your home, call into one of our branches to get expert advice from one of our Dulux colour consultants.

Cabragh Wetlands
Part 1: The Early Days

By Tom Grace, Founder, long-time Chairman and currently Life President of Cabragh Wetlands Trust.

The story of Cabragh Wetlands Trust has its origins in the mid-1960s.

Prior to that winter floods covering hundreds of hectares on both sides of the river Suir extended from Loughmore to Cabragh and beyond, creating a vast wintering ground for thousands of wildfowl, as well as a major problem for the landowners involved. Drainage to relieve the flooding took place in the later 1960s and this created a problem for the Irish Sugar Company. The detritus from washing the sugar beet which had previously been dissipated by the flood waters , now made its way much more quickly into the Suir, causing major fish kills.

Local anglers started a campaign led by Bob Stakelum to have the matter addressed by the Sugar Company. This led to the excavation of the three large settling ponds , one at Cloughmartin and two at Cabragh. This sorted out the fish kill problem, and also created areas of wild fowl habitat. Some years later the Government made a widely-criticised decision to close the Sugar Factory. The Sugar Factory in Thurles ceased production, resulting in a major loss , leading to serious damage to the economy of Thurles Town and the surrounding locality which had benefitted from part-time employment for many years during the beet harvesting season.

The Sugar Company proceeded rapidly to demolish its buildings and dispose of its property which included a large area of land on which the settling ponds were located. It was decided to fill in the ponds, quoting safety and instructions from the Council as the reason.

I, as then President of Thurles Chamber of Commerce wrote to the County Manager protesting at this alleged instruction but did not receive as much as a reply. As hope of their retention began to fade I visited the area for a last look around, and as I was leaving I met the late Willie Gaynor who was on a bird watching visit. We chatted about the environmental loss and decided that we would engage with the Sugar Company. This resulted in a small group meeting with Factory Manager Eddie Olden.

The group consisted of Chamber of Commerce , Holycross and Thurles Gun Club members and local environmentalists. Little progress was made with the pond issue, but possibly in an effort to placate us an offer to cede twenty-three acres of their land, largely Fenland was made.

The offer was accepted and the asking price of five thousand pounds was subsequently reduced to three thousand pounds on the intervention of Larry O Connor of Killinan, who was a Sugar Company Board Member.

Providing the money became a big challenge for the group, but by running a clay pigeon shoot, sponsored greyhound racing , St Stephen's Day swim, card drive flag days, street collections, putting competitions and other efforts, we had sufficient to pay their purchase price and Cabragh Wetlands Development Trust and later Cabragh Wetlands Trust , a volunteer led and run organisation came into existence.

The early members included Sean Donnelly, Liam Byrne, Sean Maher, Joe Halloran, John O Shaughnessy. Willie Gaynor, John J Ryan. Sean Buckley, Wilbert Huben, Jimmy Duggan, Tom Gallagher, Billy Stapleton, and Joe Bourke, who set about developing, restoring and rejuvenating the area.

Proudly Supporting
Cabragh Wetlands Trust

Gardening tips from horticulturist

Terriesa Torode

Hello everyone, here are a few jobs to be done this month.

September

Gardening Tips

September is a riot of colour as autumnal perennials flower in vivid colours and apples so juicy and red glisten in soft rain. The air breathes a freshness so sweet whilst we collect our harvests of dark green cabbage and fluffy potatoes. Scarlet tomatoes glisten in bunches and carrots so orange and sweet are enjoyed by all. There are plenty of jobs to do in the garden in September like sowing spring cabbage, planting out onion sets for an early harvest, and you can begin to start to divide large clumps of perennials.

Here are a few tips to guide you through September in your garden.

Harvest all vegetables when ready.

Some vegetables can be quickly blanched and then frozen and labelled for winter use. Cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli are perfect for this. Others like root crops can be placed inside a clamp and used when needed. A clamp is a structure or corner where you can layer your root crops with either straw, sand or even mushroom compost. The vegetables must be kept dry so store inside a shed or garage, but it will keep the frost from the crop and the vegetables will be as fresh as the day you picked them for several months into winter. Surplus vegetables can be made into delicious chutneys and pickles for use all year round. Talking of which, do have a go at making your own jams, jellies, cordials and syrups. This is an excellent way to capture the exquisite flavours of fruits, and it is enjoyable to make with children who love to take part as the fragrance drifts through the house amidst the laughter of sticky fingers and bubbling pots

Spring bulbs are available now.

Yes, it feels too early to be thinking of spring next year but buy the bulbs now for their freshness. Plant out in the garden where you would like cheerful colourful displays. For stunning front door displays, try layering your bulbs in pots. Use crocuses on top, narcissus underneath and tulips on the bottom layer or any combination you would enjoy. Each section of bulbs will flower at different times and give you a continual display for at least three months.

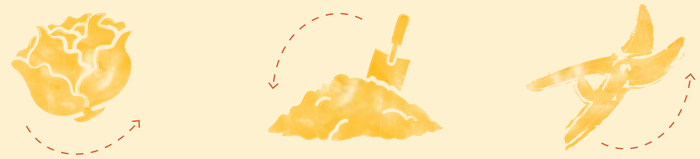
Start to improve the soil on vacant land in your vegetable garden or anywhere you have heavy clay and want to garden.

Use either well-rotted manure, green manures or spent mushroom compost. Just spread thickly over the ground and leave all winter. The micro-organisms will bring the matter down into the ground and break up the clay particles. With a green manure, leave the growth until early spring where you will dig it all back into the ground. Green manures do tend to radically improve the soil structure and are an excellent way to improve the quality of your soil.

Cuttings are an easy way to increase your plants in the garden.

September is one of those months when you can take many different types of cuttings. Roses take well from hardwood cuttings so cut a few, label them and just place in a small trench in the ground for six months where they will have rooted by this time. Perennials have plenty of growth to take cuttings from and all shrubs and trees will have growth and seeds and nuts to help you grow your own plants for free.

Top 3 to dos:



1. Harvest vegetables
2. Improve soil
3. Take cuttings

Autumn is the perfect time to grow a new lawn.

The seed germinates better with the warm soil rather than a spring sowing. Use an autumn fertiliser on the lawn to improve its quality and health in readiness for the winter months. This contains less nitrogen and more potassium.

The whole garden can be fertilised now over the next month.

Use a slow-release fertiliser and sprinkle underneath shrubs and trees and after weeding a flower bed, spread the fertiliser over the ground. When you plant out bulbs use fertiliser in the planting hole.

Happy gardening folks.

Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan

We would like to wish a big congratulations to all the organisers and participants of the Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan - it was a huge success!

Pictured at the opening night from L-R: Tomás Maoldomhnaigh (National Secretary of Comhaltas), Joe Kerrigan (CEO Centenary Thurles Co-Op), Tadhg Ó Maolcatha (Chairman of Munster Council), Barbara Farrell (Chaothirleach Munster Fleadh), Jackie Cahill TD and Eamonn Bergin (Deputy CEO Centenary Thurles Co-Op).

Mid Tipp SHC Final and Final Launch

Loughmore Castleiney were the winners of the Centenary Agri Mid Tipp Senior Hurling Championship for this year, defeating Moycarkey Borris with a score of 1-25-1-16. Well done to all involved.

CENTENARY
Home & Garden

Fuel Essentials

centenarythurles.com Cashel | Littleton | Templemore | Thurles | Roscrea

2 FOR
€12.50

Waxies Firelighters
30 pack

2 FOR
€11.50

Willow Warm Carbon
Neutral Wood Briquettes

6 FOR €9 | €1.99 EACH

Firebloc Fire Log 1kg

Terms & conditions apply. Some products only at selected shops. Prices subject to change.

Offers also available at Centenary Agri stores

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