



## **EGF 2018 Mid-conference Tours**

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

### **Tour 1 – Sustainable Grass-based Meat Production**

This Tour will travel west of Cork City to mid-Cork. It will visit a beef farm and a sheep farm. Both farms are family run businesses and are grass based. Livestock are turned out to grass in February and the grazing session continues until November. Grazed grass is the primary source of feed for meat production on these farms. Delegates will visit paddocks and learn about the grazing and grassland management, the production systems implemented on the farms, and production and financial data will be presented. The beef farmer is currently the Beef Grassland Farmer of the Year.

### **Tour 2 – Using SMART Technology in Grassland Research and Grassland Farming, and Grass-based Dairy Products**

This Tour will visit the Teagasc SMART Farm at Dairygold Research Farm, close to Moorepark. Delegates will learn how smart technologies such as sensors and decision support tools are being used on a dairy farm and the benefits of technology for research and dairy farming. Incorporating automatic milking with grazing systems will also be discussed. The Tour will then visit a dairy processor in North Cork and discover the importance of grass based milk production for Irish dairy products.

### **Tour 3 – Biodiversity and Sustainable Production**

This Tour will visit Teagasc Curtins Research Farm and a dairy farm. Developing sustainable grass based dairy production systems is a key focus of Curtins Research Farm, with particular focus on water quality. The second visit is to a productive dairy farm where there is a particular interest in incorporating measures to increase bio-diversity. The farmer on this farm was recently successful in securing funding for a project from the European Innovation Partnerships Initiative (EIP). Delegates on this tour will learn about grazing and grassland management, nutrient use management, water quality, biodiversity enhancement, and production data will be presented.

#### **Tour 4 – Forage Production and Evaluation**

This Tour will visit the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Crop Evaluation Site at Ballyderown, Fermoy, Co. Cork. The visit will focus on the evaluation of grass and clover varieties for the Recommended List in Ireland. The evaluation protocols will be discussed and delegates will see the varieties in-situ. The Teagasc Pasture Profit Index will also be presented. The Tour will then visit the GoldCrop Facility. GoldCrop are Teagasc's commercial breeding partner, with responsibility for propagating and marketing all forage material coming from the Teagasc Grass and Clover breeding programme.

#### **Tour 5 – Irelands expanding milk pool**

Milk production in Ireland is expanding since the removal of milk quota. Grazed grass is the basis of Ireland's efficient milk production systems. This tour will visit two of the top dairy farmers in Ireland. Both are family run farm businesses with excellent grassland management. Both farmers are amongst the top grassland farmers in Ireland, and one of them is currently Grassland Farmer of the Year. Delegates will view and discuss farm infrastructure, grassland management, dairy cow breeding, and production and financial data will be presented.