



PRESS RELEASE

COVID-19: ACA Support and Business Continuity for Farmer Clients

18th March 2020

In the interest of health and safety of ACA members, their staff and clients, member offices will remain closed to the public until further notice and meetings will be strictly by appointment only. All member offices will continue to be operational to meet the demand from farmers for the critical deadlines of the 8th of April for the Nitrates Derogation applications and associated documents and the 15th of May for BPS and all related applications.

'These are exceptionally challenging times for everyone in Ireland. ACA members will ensure that all deadlines are met on behalf of our 55,000 farmer clients. The majority of issues can be discussed through phonecalls and emails' according to Tom Canning, ACA President. He added 'ACA members will be contacting their clients individually in the forthcoming days and weeks to ensure their applications are submitted in time for all deadlines. We are working very closely with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to resolve any issues and find solutions collectively to ensure workflows can continue as smoothly as possible for our clients under the current circumstances'.

ACA's current arrangements:

- ACA members' offices will remain closed to the public until further notice and **meetings will be strictly by appointment only**.
- Where essential meetings must take place, all necessary health and safety guidelines as recommended by the HSE will be strictly implemented.
- **Farm visits** will be completed **only where it is deemed essential**, for example Nitrates issues including farmyard assessments and for TAMS applications. All protocols as outlined by the HSE will be adhered to and ACA members will conduct such work without any interaction with the client(s) and others.
- Where possible, all **communications with clients** will be completed **through phonecalls and emails**.
- ACA members will be **flexible to meet the needs of our clients** as we understand these are exceptional times for both them and their families.
- ACA members will ensure to **keep their clients informed** and work closely with them to meet all deadlines.
- Working hours and circumstances may change for some ACA members and their clients will be informed directly by the individual member.
- Updates on behalf of ACA and its members will be available on our website www.aca.ie

ENDS

**For further information contact: Mr. Breian Carroll,
General Secretary, ACA
Contact details: 087 2695425**

Note to Editors:

The Agricultural Consultants Association (ACA) are the sole representative body for private agricultural consultants and advisors in Ireland. Currently the ACA have 166 member offices across all of Ireland and employ 262 Agricultural and Environmental graduates, 17 Forestry Consultants and 120 employed as either administration or technical staff. Members of ACA advise in the region of 55,000 Irish farmers, confirming the private advisory service as the largest in Ireland.

New Vision and Mission Statement of ACA

1. Our vision is to be the most influential and dynamic Agri-business association consulted nationally and internationally and recognised for its excellence in representing the world-class independent professional Agri-business advisors in Ireland
2. The Mission statement: to bring our Vision into reality the Association represents and supports its members and is the professional body consulted on policy by government. The Association ensures that standards of excellence are maintained among the members through its code of ethics, admission qualifications and continuous professional education. This allows members to independently advise and assist the Irish farming community to be profitably sustainable economically, environmentally and socially to ensure an enhanced quality of life for all in Ireland.