



4th March 2021

## **ACA President states 'Huge Opportunities in Ireland for the Agri Sector on the full implementation of AKIS '**

The Annual General Meeting of ACA took place this morning, where delegates listened to Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue and also Inge Van Oost, Policy Officer for Research & Innovation, European Commission DG AGRI in Brussels. Van Oost outlined the ambitions of AKIS, the Agriculture Knowledge Integrated Systems to delegates.

ACA President, Tom Canning speaking at this mornings AGM stated: 'Having listened to our guest speaker Inge Van Oost from the EU Commission, ACA recommend the following for the successful implementation of AKIS within Ireland:

1. A DAFM chaired committee/focus group to be established between Teagasc and ACA to explore and find methods to disseminate state paid research, tools and systems to circa 55,000 ACA farmer clients and our members
2. A memorandum of understanding between Teagasc and ACA with DAFM supervision
3. This committee/focus group will develop and implement agreements between Teagasc and ACA to ensure programmes at national, regional and local areas are completed jointly, include both client bases and engage with all other farmers including circa the 30,000 farmers outside this cohort
4. Resources and funding to be given to a back office within ACA to support the national distribution of state funded research from all government Departments and agencies to ACA members and 55,000 farmer clients

Canning added 'farm consultants and advisors and their interaction/inclusion in AKIS is critical to ensure our sector is ready for the objectives of the next CAP. It makes perfect sense to ensure more Irish farmers are captured for policy initiatives and the dissemination of latest research and technologies, thus helping the majority of Irish farmers. Without this structure it will be very challenging to meet our targets and ambitions in the next CAP'.

**ENDS**

**NOTE:** 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 272 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.

**AKIS:** According to EIP-Agri, the term Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) is used to describe the whole knowledge exchange system: the ways people and organisations interact within a country or a region. AKIS can include farming practice, businesses, authorities, research, etc. and can vary a lot, depending on the country or sector.

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