

ACA welcome announcement on the opening of the Results Based Environment-Agri Pilot Project (REAP)

The ACA welcome the announcement this afternoon by Minister McConalogue on the opening of the Results Based Environment-Agri Pilot Project (REAP).

ACA President, Tom Canning stated this afternoon 'We have been engaging with the DAFM and their officials on behalf of members in the past number of months on the details of this new project. There were a number of areas we required to be amended and we are pleased and thankful that the DAFM took on board those views'.

Canning added 'This is an exceptionally busy period for our members and we were concerned that other important work would be undermined by the launch of REAP. However, following extensive negotiations, National Council considered the DAFM view that in order to ensure there is a pilot project in 2021 for farmers and to ensure corresponding payments are issued at the end of the year, farms must be assessed at the optimal biodiversity/flora/ecological time in early to mid-Summer. The selection process must take place in advance of such assessments and our members will play their part in making this work for the farmer participants'.

According to Canning 'ACA received a commitment that as many of our members as possible will be part of this project as it is a pilot for both the DAFM, farmers and agri consultants/advisors. We know that this pilot will test the potential suitability of a national results based system, identify training needs of advisors and farmers but also assess the barriers to buy in from our farmer clients. Over the next 2 years of the REAP project and following our involvement, our members will work with all stakeholders and contribute our views to the DAFM for any future results based programmes in the next CAP in Ireland'.

In conclusion, Canning stated 'I want to sincerely thank the Minister and his officials for working with us over the past few weeks and notwithstanding the certain limitations including budget for this project, it is important that all involved now play their part to make it a success'.

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 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.

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.