



CERTIFIED IRISH ANGUS SCHOOLS COMPETITION 2024



RAISED WITH PRIDE **SINCE 1995**

FOREWORD

Certified Irish Angus, along with our processor partners, ABP and Kepak, welcome you to the final of the Certified Irish Angus School Competition 2024.

We are honoured and privileged to have had the opportunity to work with these students, along with their schools, teachers and families over the past two years.

We are in awe at the level of enthusiasm and appetite for learning about agriculture and in particular, the production of Certified Irish Angus Beef. The effort that these students have gone to in the rearing of their calves and in the promotion of Certified Irish Angus Beef, along with the in-depth research and reports they have completed is astonishing. This reflects the commitment and effort of their school, teachers and parents to a full and complete education.

To our partners, ABP and Kepak, we wish to thank you most sincerely for your support and help in this project.

We hope this has been a memorable experience for all of the students who have taken part and wish you the very best of luck in the future.





URSULINE SECONDARY SCHOOL THURLES, CO. TIPPERARY

Evie Smyth, Rebekah Smith, Gráinne Callanan, and Kaitlyn Ryan centered their focus on the theme of **“Health and Safety on Beef Farms.”**

Following discussions with local farmers, these inquisitive young women found that mental health often gets overlooked in favour of physical health, despite being equally important. They found that long working hours among these farmers was a major cause of stress with over 74% feeling overworked and often taking potentially dangerous shortcuts to save time.

One of the main goals of this group was educating younger generations about the dangers of farming. They developed an educational programme for primary school children aimed at both urban and rural schools in North Tipperary. They created a range of videos showing their family members taking part in various farming practices. Activities such as loading cattle into a crush and using the cab of a tractor were shown to the young students on iPads. The primary school students were then asked to complete a quiz identifying possible hazards while undertaking these activities. The feedback received from both teachers and students was very positive.



The group investigated what legislation is in place for farm safety compared to other industries. They contacted the French Minister for Agriculture, Marc Fesneau, regarding international farm safety regulations. They were surprised to learn that, unlike

What danger did you spot?

- The gate is open
- There is no food in the trough
- Machinery is working



industries like Construction and Mining which have robust regulations in place, there are no specific sectoral directives on Agriculture across the EU.



SCAN ME



MANOR HOUSE SCHOOL RAHENY, DUBLIN

Caoilinn O’Sullivan Lowry and Aisling Gallagher were tasked with exploring the theme of **“Meeting Consumers’ Expectations on Sustainable Beef Production.”**

At the outset, Caoilinn and Aisling believed that the biggest issues for consumers regarding sustainable beef products would be:

- Cost
- Presentation of the beef
- Traceability



However, when discussing their project with the public at the National Ploughing Championships, they became aware there was a misunderstanding between what farmers and consumers expected of each other.

To further their research, the girls conducted an online survey of both farmers and consumers. Of over 200 respondents:

- 93% believed that family farming is a heritage worth protecting
- 32% were more likely to purchase Certified Irish Angus Beef if the pack displayed the farmer’s name and location

Armed with this information, these pro-active girls created a notice board in their community showing the progress of their calves and project.

The most popular content proved to be photos and

videos of the girls interacting with their calves and the family dog of their host farm in Co. Laois, the Foot family.



In a bid to improve the information displayed on Certified Irish Angus Beef packaging, the girls approached the food processing company, Hilton Foods. They suggested a QR code be displayed on packs with a link to the story of how the farmer works and raises Irish Angus cattle. Hilton Foods was very impressed with the idea and promised to give it serious consideration.

Bobby Ortiz, a local vet known as “Doctor Bob”, was invited by the girls to give a talk to their school on animal welfare. This talk highlighted how animal welfare can link both rural and urban communities from rearing cattle to caring for the family pet. The feedback from attendees was very positive.





ST. COLMAN'S COLLEGE FERMOY, CO. CORK

Cathal McAuliffe, Darragh Morrison, Kian O'Donoghue, and Diarmuid O'Donovan were tasked with investigating the “**Benefits of Farm Biodiversity**”.

These eager young men set about identifying the challenges of biodiversity on farms and were keen to come up with positive solutions with the aid of technology. Speaking to local farmers, the main challenges identified were:

- Water quality
- Soil health
- Methane emissions
- Biodiversity loss



From their research in the early stages of the competition, the boys found that small changes



can make big differences such as the type of grass grown or fertiliser used. They furthered this

research when they became finalists with a visit to Teagasc Moorepark Research Centre where they viewed trials on Red and White Clover.

They learned that there were a large number of pro - active farmers from their local area involved in the Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES), a farmer-friendly agri-environment scheme to help address biodiversity decline and the Biodiversity Regeneration in a Dairying Environment (BRIDE) project, an innovative agri-environment project. The boys were keen to apply the practices from these schemes to their own farms and to the wider community.



After visiting these farmers and seeing the success of integrating biodiversity into farming the boys learned that the re-wetting of less productive areas of land created flourishing wildlife areas and farm ponds without affecting the overall productivity of the farm.



[Visiting Our Local School](#)



DUNSHAUGHLIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DUNSHAUGHLIN, CO. MEATH

Eoin O'Sullivan, Eric Allen, Liam Byrne, and David Malone undertook the challenge of exploring **“A Holistic Approach to Improving Animal Performance.”**

To gain a better understanding of the key factors affecting animal performance, this forward-thinking group contacted a local company, Alltech, who specialise in animal nutrition. The students gained excellent information on the importance of animal nutrition and continuous research to improve the health and performance of beef animals.



Working alongside Alltech, the students carried out an assessment on their calves to predict their lifetime carbon footprint. They predicted a final outcome for their calves was 8.5kg CO₂ per kg beef which is 3.55kg lower than the national average and 23.5kg lower than the continental average. They achieved this by conducting on-farm trials using supplements in the animals' diet.

Soil analysis showed high levels of molybdenum in the fields where the students were raising their calves. This could lead to poor weight gain and could impact the response to vaccines. The students

counter-acted these risks by supplementing with an Allsure calf bolus and a garlic lick block. They found that there was an ADG (Average Daily Gain) of 0.81kg across the summer for these treated animals versus a batch of calves that were reared the previous year that only achieved an ADG of 0.45kg. They concluded that data-driven management was vital in a health and nutrition based approach to rearing livestock.



The students created a newsletter for their school community that ran over the lifetime of the

calves. This included regular updates on the calves' performance, in-school activities and up-coming events the students had planned. The newsletter proved to be a great success with an average 125 readers of each edition.



SCAN ME



MERCY SECONDARY SCHOOL KILBEGGAN, CO. MEATH

Sinéad Bracken, Chloe McDermott, Trása Bracken, and Mary Ellen Colton were assigned the task of **“Exploring the Opportunities of Low Carbon Beef.”**

These ambitious young women decided to base their topic around a 5 point plan covering all aspects of the animal’s journey from farm to fork. They were:

1. The breeding of the animal
2. Grassland management
3. Herd Health Plan
4. The use of home grown feeds
5. Supporting local

uring the course of their project, the girls saw first hand how important the support of the local community was when raising their calves. The majority of their contacts were within a five mile radius of their farm from the farmer who supplied beans as a feed, the local vet, to the local meat processor, Kepak. All were vital

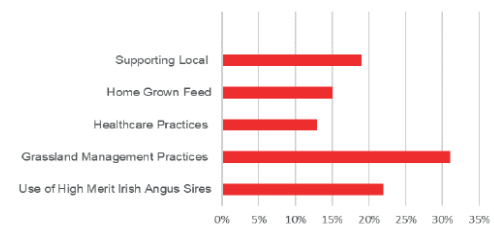


assistance to the successful rearing of the calves.

The girls very cleverly used one of the busiest agri events in the country, the Tullamore Show, to raise awareness of their project. They showcased their ideas for lowering emissions and displayed two Irish Angus calves on their stand. They promoted a raffle for an Angus heifer, which was kindly donated by their host



Tullamore Show 5-Point Plan Results



farmer, Colm Bracken. Over €4,000 was raised and donated to Crumlin Children’s Hospital. Minister for Agriculture, Charlie McConalogue TD, picked the winner and congratulated the girls on their achievements.



SCAN ME

