



ANNUAL REPORT

PREPARED BY

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AgriAware

EDUCATE • ADVOCATE • ENGAGE



2021

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2021

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AGRI AWARE PATRONS



2021

ANNUAL REPORT

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2021

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

A Cairde,

2021 was a memorable year, often for the wrong reasons but at Agri Aware it showed how the whole team can adapt to adversity.

The pandemic cast a long shadow over 2021 with almost no events held over the twelve months but our team at Agri Aware continued to ensure we saw growth across every aspect of the organisation.

While the team itself has grown, we are still comparatively small for the impact delivered across schools programmes, campaigns, social media, and events.

More people than ever interacted with Agri Aware across our various initiatives across 2021. We have never had so many students involved in our schools' programmes, with more schools projects in the pipeline.

Our direct audience is one of the biggest in the sector, having grown over 20% to more than 36,000 followers across our social media platforms during 2021. While our media reach broke 14 million for the first time.

According to the research we conducted during the year with Red C, while there is a growing disconnect between consumers and agriculture, there is a desire for consumers to engage with farming. The return of in-person events is one way we will address this alongside our online content and expansion of the Sustaining Ireland project.

Our primary schools' programmes had their biggest ever aggregate intake of participating pupils across Incredible Edibles, Dig In!, Farm Safe Schools and Branching Out.

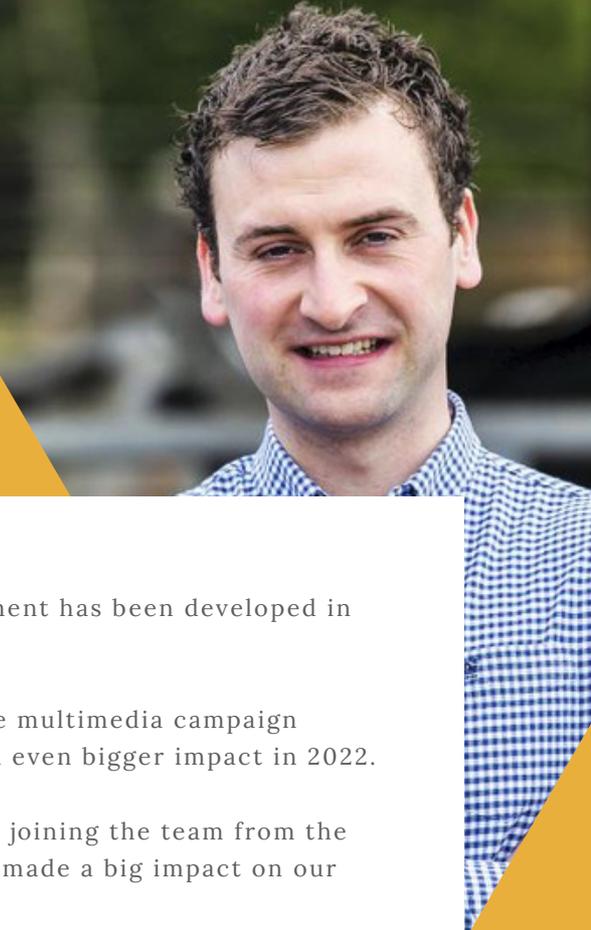
The success of primary schools programmes led to a pre-school pilot of Incredible Edibles and this has shown a clear appetite for further growth in this space.

Our portfolio of secondary school programmes has increased. Our first equine programme, From Foal to Race, in association with Equip went live with more than treble the target participation level.

Our relationship with IASTA and the Irish Farmers Journal continued where we delivered virtual study guides in 2021.

2021

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



While another secondary school programme on the Environment has been developed in 2021, ready to launch in 2022.

2021 saw the beginning of the Sustaining Ireland project. The multimedia campaign delivered on many fronts and has formed a foundation for an even bigger impact in 2022.

Our team grew in 2021 with the recruitment of Thom Malone joining the team from the Off The Ball team on Newstalk. Thom has settled in well and made a big impact on our communications since his arrival.

Aimee Gray joined us from Airfield Estate and has taken over as Education Officer. Aimee has been responsible for huge changes in our education offers already with lots more plans in the pipeline for 2022.

Thank you also to Eilis Greene who has continued to grow our programme participation and keep operations going with so much change during 2021.

All of this growth and development would not have been possible without the support of our patrons. Thank you to every one of them, who despite the challenges of the pandemic continued to support Agri Aware.

I would also like to extend thanks to our five founding patrons – Irish Farmers Journal, Irish Farmers Association, FBD, Bord Bia and Ornuia.

Thank you to our chairman, Alan Jagoe, for his continued support and dedication to Agri Aware, as well as our board members' unwavering commitment to Agri Aware.

I look forward to working closely with you all in 2022 in continuing to deliver for Irish Agriculture.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marcus O'Halloran". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marcus O'Halloran

Agri Aware Executive Director

2021

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

A Chairde,

The challenges from 2020 that we all hoped would end in 2021 unfortunately continued throughout the year. Agri Aware embraced these challenges wholeheartedly as our programme participation, educational offerings, media coverage and digital engagement all grew throughout the year.

Agri Aware spread the good message of Agriculture to more people than ever this year as the team rose to meet the pandemic-imposed challenges. There was great innovation through the digitalisation of so much of what Agri Aware does both for the public and for schools.

All of our schools' programmes grew throughout 2021, giving Agri Aware its highest ever intake of students on programmes.

Our mission to create national awareness of the value of modern agriculture, stewardship of the rural environment, animal welfare and the benefits of eating Irish food was unchanged but the tools have been different. The results were still outstanding having grown our social media following to over 36,000.

This has all been possible with huge thanks to our patrons for their continued support and the team at Agri Aware that has adapted to the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Throughout 2021 there have been repeated successes for our projects in their digital form. Farm Walk & Talk as a virtual event involved over 18,000 secondary Ag Science students in the absence of in-person events.

The Sustaining Ireland multimedia campaign began during the summer, with thanks to the IFA, the Irish Farmers Journal, and all of the farmers who got involved. The future scope of the Sustaining Ireland campaign is limitless given the initial impact and the digital infrastructure Agri Aware has assembled.

Our flagship schools programme, Incredible Edibles, continued to grow with increased sponsorship and its highest-ever school participation.

The AgCredible initiative provided us with the only opportunity for an in-person event in the autumn.



2021

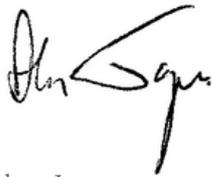
CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Agri Aware remains grateful for the continued support of our patrons and founding members – FBD, Bord Bia, Irish Farmers Association, Irish Farmers Journal and Ornu. I would also like to acknowledge the board members for the time they put in and their continued support of Agri Aware. It has been an honour for me as a farmer to continue to represent Agri Aware as chairman in 2021.

I would sincerely like to thank the Agri Aware team under Marcus's leadership for the excellent work they do in growing the organisation and delivering the Agri Aware message.

We would like to thank you again for your support of Agri Aware and look forward to working with you all again in 2022.

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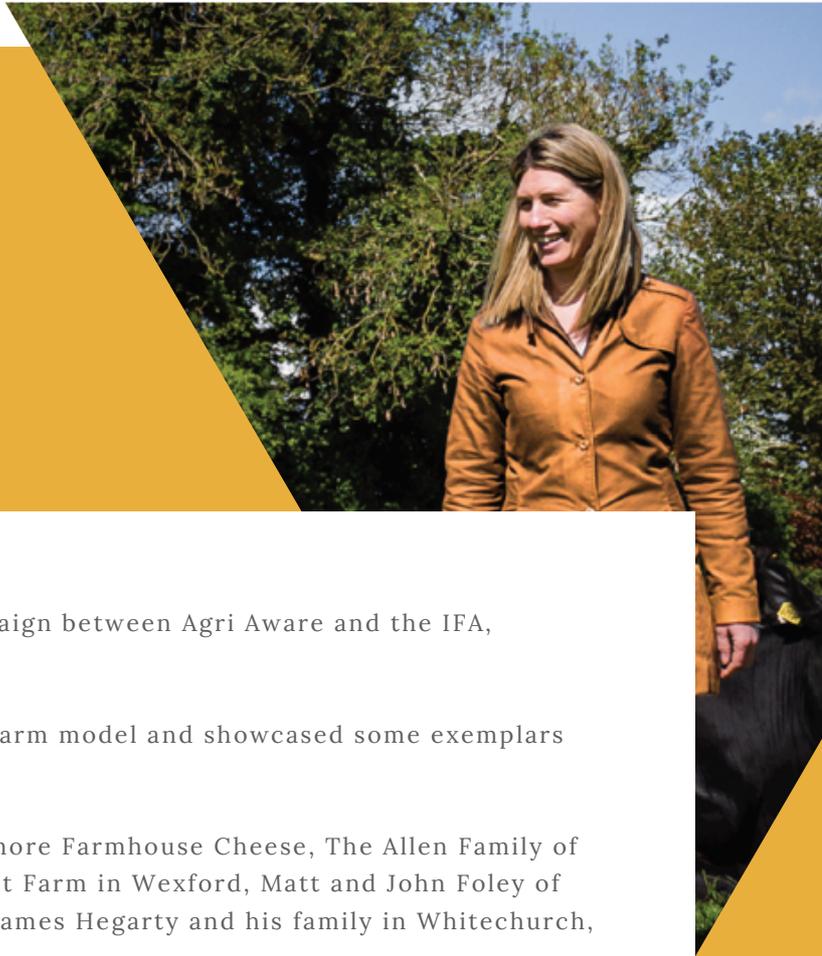
Alan Jagoe

Agri Aware Chairman



2021

SUSTAINING IRELAND CAMPAIGN



Sustaining Ireland was a multi-media campaign between Agri Aware and the IFA, supported by the Irish Farmers Journal.

The campaign highlighted the Irish family farm model and showcased some exemplars across the farming spectrum.

Those featured were Teresa Roche of Kylemore Farmhouse Cheese, The Allen Family of Castlemine Farm, Jimmy Kearns Family Fruit Farm in Wexford, Matt and John Foley of Kilbush Nurseries in Rush Co. Dublin, and James Hegarty and his family in Whitechurch, Co.Cork.

Each farm was featured on a page on the Sustaining Ireland website with videos produced to highlight each story. These were high definition, high quality productions made by Traction marketing and delivered excellent viewing figures across the Agri Aware social media platforms and online with YouTube advertising.

Billboards and signs were placed across the country, with more than 100 farmers offering their land to carry some of the billboards while a summer OOH campaign was conducted nationwide on 50 sites.

The outdoor campaign supported the digital content which was released in stages through late summer and early autumn. Sustaining Ireland featured on EVOKE.IE and Irish Country Living.

The website that was created to showcase the stories for each of the farms remains in place as a possible foundation for the future direction of Sustaining Ireland.

The videos were incredibly popular on social media with almost 4 million impressions, over 600k video plays and a reach of nearly 1 million.



2021

AGRI AWARE NEW WEBSITE

Agri Aware

In a long process along with the team from Big Dog Digital the new Agri Aware website went live this year.

The significant upgrade brought all of the Agri Aware activities together in one place in a much slicker and more presentable way.

The new website is a huge improvement and reflects the ambition and future digital focus of Agri Aware.

The site has the latest technology so can be easily and swiftly adapted. The increased capacity of the new site means that content from other sites within the organisation was integrated into the new website.

Specific improvements have been made with how potential leads are gathered using the very powerful Forms tool, which will be further integrated into the communications plan with increased communications automation into 2022.

This will be used to automate much of the booking featured which have previously been labour intensive given the bespoke nature of our event offerings.

A payment system through Stripe has also been implemented on the website, allowing online payments for the first time.

The Incredible Edibles programme has a microsite within the main homepage so all content is on one site. This will also be made available in an Irish language version while plans are afoot to do the same for Farm Safe Schools.

There is plenty more potential and capacity within the site which will be exploited with future Agri Aware projects, such as the Virtual Farm.

2021

AGCREDIBLE NETWORK



The AgCredible Network gave Agri Aware the first opportunity of 2022 to have an external in-person event with a gathering in the Killeshin Hotel in November.

Agri Aware Chairman, Alan Jagoe opened the day, while other speakers included Pat Murphy from Teagasc reminded us that the solution is 130,000 farmers taking individual action and changing their behaviour to improve the environment.

Irish Farmers Journal Editor, Justin McCarthy presented the KPMG report into possible emissions targets.

There was a discussion on Agriculture communicating their message better from Elaine Keaveny of Alltech.

Thom Malone hosted a Social Media panel with Harold Kirk of the IFA, vet Hazell Mullins, and Maxine Hyde from Ballymaloe Foods.

On the day a social media competition was launched where those in agriculture were encouraged to highlight their stories by using #AgCredible.

After hundreds of entries Katie Shanahan won the prize provided by Alltech of a trip to Kentucky to the One Ideas Conference.

The benefit of the competition is still being felt as the hashtag continues to live on stories across social media.

In early 2020, Agri Aware teamed up with performance nutritionist, Daniel Davey to host an #AgCredible Eating Essentials Instagram Live series. He spoke with John Heslin, farmer & footballer, Alan Jagoe, Agri Aware Chairman and Joanne Devaney. The series picked up over 5000 views.

The AgCredible Programme enables Irish Agricultural producers to effectively communicate our stories to consumers & media.

As part of the project a Social Media panel was assembled help amplify the messages of Agri Aware going forward.

The AgCredible initiative has many opportunities to grow and evolve over the next 12 months depending on investment



2021

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY



Following a review of Agri Aware social media by &Smyth PR, the Agri Aware social content underwent significant changes in 2021, particularly in late 2021 with new dedicated staff additions.

The results have been clear with followers up across all platforms, along with video views, engagement, and impressions.

Agri Aware broke through the 13k follower mark on Twitter, 7k on Instagram while on Facebook Agri Aware has over 11k likes.

By the end of 2021 the Agri Aware total following on Social Media across all platforms was over 36,000 an increase of more than 12,000 over the course of 12 months.

Did You Know Series

As part of AgCredible series in 2021 a suite of videos was produced by the Scientific Panel. The panel consisted of agricultural academics from Teagasc and UCD including Tommy Boland, Helen Sheridan, Bridget Lynch, Donagh Berry and Eddie Burgess.

Each contributor made a small video for social media highlighting their area of expertise and how they are positively impacting the environment.

This series of videos was the most successful organic campaign of 2021. There was no budget put towards the project and it delivered the highest organic views across all social platforms.

The Did You Know Series made November 2021 the highest traffic month across social media with over 40k video views and over 795k impressions for the period.

International Women's Day

To celebrate International Women's Day on March 8th, 2021, Agri Aware featured a host of women from the Irish agriculture sector on its social media, who spoke about advice they would give to their younger selves.

The campaign received positive feedback from the farming and non-farming community.

The event created a huge surge of social media activity and was Agri Aware's single biggest day of social engagement and impressions in 2021.

2021

AGRI AWARE MEDIA COVERAGE



All Agri Aware Campaigns and Programmes were accompanied by traditional media support. 2021 delivered over a 100% article count increase to almost 400 over the 12 months.

The reach of coverage was also up over 100% at 15 million, compared to just over 7 million in 2020.

The drivers for this coverage included the Sustaining Ireland Campaign, The Schools programmes who all received national TV coverage. The RTE News2day team were on hand to cover the Incredible Edibles prizegiving in Co. Roscommon as well as the launch early in the year.

Some extra coverage was gained through the five-yearly survey on the state of agriculture. This is a survey carried out by Red C showing the changes in attitude among the public to agriculture over the lifetime of Agri Aware. This story was picked up nationally.

During Farm Safety Week in mid-summer, traditionally a quiet media period, Agri Aware repackaged content from Farm Safe Schools and picked up national press coverage highlighting how many children picked up farm safety knowledge from our pilot Schools Programme.

Consumers believe that agriculture is important to the Irish economy

A recent survey by Agri Aware shows that 94 per cent of Irish people are supportive of Irish farming. The Red C Poll also confirmed that 75 per cent of the respondents thought that agriculture is extremely important to the economy. An interesting fact that emerged from the survey was the lack of understanding of farming among schoolchildren with only 11 per cent showing any interest, with the number rising to 16 per cent among young adults.

The data used in the survey was weighted across gender, age, region and social class, to allow for a nationally representative sample based on the latest CSO figures.

Agri Aware is an independent farming and agri-food educational body founded in 1996 by the IFA, Bord Bia, Ornua, FBD and the Irish Farmers Journal. It is chaired by former Macra President Alan Jagoe. According to Alan the survey is regularly commissioned to try and assess attitudes of Irish people towards farming.

While it's good news that Irish consumers, in general, appreciate the value of Irish farming we obviously need to place a lot more emphasis on increasing the understanding of school children, and young people in general, on the important role of farming in food production and protecting the rural environment. The knowledge gap could be bridged by focusing some of the public funding for the Green Schools Environmental Education Programme and Award Scheme on increasing knowledge and appreciation of agriculture and food production in the participating Green Schools. The programme is run by An Taisce. The degree of engagement in the Green Schools Programme is generally far greater in rural rather than urban-based schools.

IRISH FARMERS JOURNAL

incredible edibles

Irene Birmingham on 24 Mar 2021

Incredible Edibles class diary: 'Getting a break from technology is so important'

For the March Incredible Edibles diary, we hear from the second-class students at St Patrick's Primary School in Galway city

2021

AGRI AWARE SCHOOLS PROGRAMMES



2021

INCREDIBLE EDIBLES



Agri Aware's most popular and long-standing project, Incredible Edibles is a national healthy eating and growing project for primary schools, which ran for the 13th year in 2021.

The Horticulture, Herb and Amenity based project has a target audience of those between the ages 8 - 12 (2nd class - 6th class). Participating schools are sent a free grow pack and logbook. The grow pack contains seeds and other growing materials to help them get started sowing, growing, and eating their own array of healthy Irish fruit and vegetables!

The Incredible Edibles programme in 2021 saw the highest engagement rate 44k participants in over 1400 schools.

The programme is in its 14th year and has impacted over half a million pupils in total. An average of 43k students take part annually with full 26 county participation.

The 2021 version of the Incredible Edibles programme saw increases across the board in participation, student numbers, pack numbers, submission rates, sponsorship and press coverage.

As the new term dawned in September 2021 the programme gained even more sponsors, now 14 in total. The increased sponsorship allowed for increased participation to 1800 schools for the upcoming year.

The pandemic has led to an increased digitalisation of the project with huge online submissions and schools sharing their progress online and on social media, while webinars and significant video have been incorporated into the lesson plans.

The top three participating counties continue to be those within Dublin, Cork, and Galway, which are city areas and areas most noted by Agri Aware to have higher levels of disconnect to agriculture and the farm to fork process of food.

2021

INCREDIBLE EDIBLES



2021 the Incredible Edibles project Summary

- Extended outreach to schools from 1,000 schools/packs (one third of primary schools) in 2020 to 1600 (half of primary schools) in 2021.
 - Directly impacted over 44,000 primary pupils (30,000 in 2020).
 - Increased sponsorship/budget from industry members, including the new additional sponsor: Safefood
 - Increased project submission rates. Highest ever number of submissions in 2021
 - Increased project communications strategy: Advertising Value Equivalency Value: €161,000 and Reach: 3.4 million
 - o Examples of high-profile coverage - Irish Farmers Journal, Irish Country Living
 - o Online Articles - Irish Examiner and RTE.IE - LEARN
 - o TV - RTE News2Day -
 - Created new digital resources - Meet the Farmer Assets for the website/online use.
 - Created and Included a new Biodiversity section in the project logbook, which highlighted the Importance of Pollinators for growing food. Supported by the National Biodiversity Data Centre/All Ireland Pollinator Plan. Wildflowers were also included in the grow pack sent to schools.
 - Diversified project participant communications with a new website and online uploading system.
- 2021 saw the highest number of submissions and ultimately engagement within the project, with the winning schools taking home prizes of a greenhouse, composter and many more garden supplies for their school.

2021

INCREDIBLE EDIBLES



Full list of Incredible Edibles Winners 2021

1st Prize - 1st & 2nd Class/Whole School Tarmon N.S. Ballinphuill, Castlerea Co. Roscommon took home a raised bed and soil for their school garden, as well as a gardening hamper including: a rainwater tank, tool kit, mesh tunnel and a watering can!

2nd Prize - 3rd Class Scoil Mhuire Latton Latton Castleblayney Co. Monaghan received a greenhouse, a gardening toolkit and mesh grow tunnel for the school

3rd Prize - Entire School of Loughfouder NS Knocknagoshel Tralee Co. Kerry (ONLINE) received a rainwater tank, gardening toolkit and mesh tunnel for the school!

Category Prizes: The below category winners received a watering can, gardening tool kit and mesh tunnel!

Best As Gaeilge - 1st Class - Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh Garbally Drive Ballinasloe Co. Galway (ONLINE)

Best Online - 5th Class Ballinspittle NS Ballinspittle NS Kinsale Co. Cork.

Best Home School - Home school, 5th Class Co. Dublin

Best Special School *NEW*:Special Fifth Class, Fr. Cullen Memorial School Tinryland NS, Co. Carlow

Feedback

Overall, this project is continuously enjoyed and trusted by pupils and teachers nationwide. Here are some of their comments:

- “This is one of the best child and teacher friendly programmes I have engaged in. Keep up the great work”.
- “We found it fantastic and gave us a whole new focus on our learning this year. Documenting it all made the learning very evident and the progress was more obvious”.
- “Fantastic – can’t believe it’s free”.

2021

INCREDIBLE EDIBLES



Extra Initiatives: UCC School of Public Health Partnership

For the 2021-year Agri aware also teamed up with University College Cork (U.C.C.) School of Public Health to undergo a thesis evaluation of the project's objectives.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: From this programme evaluation, it is apparent that teachers enjoy the Incredible Edibles programme. Agri Aware has developed fun and exciting hands-on lessons for teachers and students. While this programme has been successful for 13 years, there are opportunities for improvements.

Five recommendations should be considered following this evaluation. The recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Offer the Incredible Edibles lessons and resources in Irish
- 2) Future and more frequent guest appearances on webinars
- 3) Simplify materials to make them more age appropriate
- 4) Consistent reminders through emails or text reminders that encourage teachers and parents to increase programme participation
- 5) Continue to offer effective resources (such as grow packs, gardening and cooking videos, and logbooks).

The role of teachers in this programme is vital in influencing their students' eating behaviours. Despite a difficult school year with the COVID-19 lockdowns and submitting time sensitive activities to Agri Aware, the teachers continued to do their best in teaching the curriculum.

In conclusion, the teachers felt supported by Agri Aware and believed that the Incredible Edibles programme was an exceptional project for teachers and students, and they continue to look forward to participating in the future.

2021

INCREDIBLE EDIBLES



Early Years Expansion

In 2021, Agri Aware were approached by Kerry County Council and Kerry Children and Young People Services Committee (CYPSC) to pilot a refined version of the Incredible Edibles project in 65 services in 138 pre-school rooms in Co. Kerry.

This project was funded under round 3 of the Healthy Ireland fund, this project matched to Theme 3: Nutrition, Indicative Actions: Healthy Food Initiatives and Community/School gardens and is also supported by the Obesity Policy and Action Plan 2016-2025

Project logbooks and resources were adapted for the early years curriculum and grow packs sent to services. This affected an additional 2,000 children within these services.

The project was activated and communicated to service staff via monthly webinar meetings (including follow up recordings for reference), a monthly newsletter to follow up on any unanswered questions or tips relating to that months task, and a Facebook group to network progress & ask questions/engage.

A pre and post project survey was carried out, resulting in the following:

- 100% of participants agreed the project had a positive impact on their service
- 96% agree the project links to curriculum.
- 98% agree there is a good-excellent quality and quantity of activities in guidebook.
- 98% agree there is a good-excellent leader support from Agri Aware.
- 92% agree the resources included in the packs are very good & excellent.
- 98% agreed the Children's learning and enjoyment throughout was good-excellent
- 89% participated in Healthy Eating Week in 2021.
- 87% used the produce they had grown with the children to eat or cook healthy food.
- Overall, gardening knowledge increased by 24% post project

Task/Activity Feedback:

- 100% agree that the children enjoyed the planting experience.

Educators from the project also had very positive feedback and comments on the project:

- “We loved being involved, linked preschool with home and vice versa”.
- “Thanks so much for this resource as everyone gained from this”.

2021

INCREDIBLE EDIBLES



BORD BIA

Keep Well Campaign

While the main Incredible Edibles school programme remained top priority in 2021, Agri Aware partnered with Bord Bia to deliver a national Keep Well campaign.

The Incredible Edibles project mainly aligned with the campaign under two strands: Keeping Active and Eating Well.

The “Keep Well” campaign encouraged all primary schools to participate by hosting:

- A worksheet on the website, designed to teach and reinforce messages on how to Keep Well by eating healthy and keeping active in the garden – supported by the Department of Health’s messaging.
- Video competition – Keep Active to Keep Well
- Art competition – Switching off and being creative
- Recipe competition – Eat Well to Keep Well

The campaign also included:

- A new Keep Well webpage on the Incredible Edibles website – over 1,000 views
- Feature on the Incredible Edibles newsletters – sent to 1515 schools.
- Video assets – videos from influencers Mummy Cooks and The Happy Fitness Guy
- Webinars – over 1,000 schools joined in to two fun sessions. Over 25,000 students were impacted by these webinars alone.

Agri Aware received submissions from over 90 schools across the country, equating to around 16,000 pupils impacted and an additional media reach of 390,000 and over €20,500 in value. 22 articles, featuring 7 online, 14 print and 1 radio broadcast in total.

The winners of the competitions were:

Ms. Lucy Larkin's 3rd Class, Scoil Mhuire, Latton, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan – Recipe winners

Tagoat National School, Co. Wexford – Video Competition winners

Gaelscoil Cobh, Carrignafoy, Cobh, Co. Cork – Art Competition winners

2021

DIG IN! PROGRAMME



Dig In! had a refresh in late 2021 with new modules added as part of the refresh.

The new 'Fun Fridays' webinars series was started with 5000 kids getting involved in the series of live in-class webinars that ran for ten weeks from October to December based on the Dig In! modules.

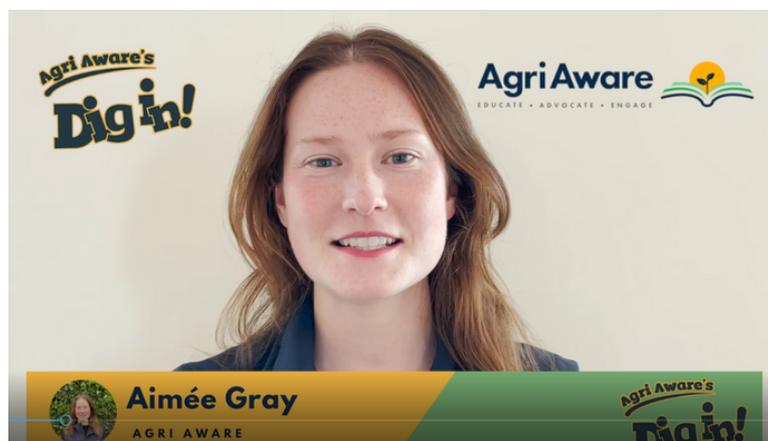
There was a trip to the Zoo for those who took part in all of the 'Quiz Challenger' questions. Ms. Webster's 5th & 6th Class in All Saints in Mullingar were the lucky class who are off to the zoo.

Equine modules were included for the first time as part of Dig In! where the content was given a refresh and made available digitally to all schools for free.

During the home-schooling period of early 2021, teachers and parents also downloaded the digital, Dig In! resource from the Agri Aware website.

Dig In! made for an ideal home-school resource as it is divided into four modules according to levels of ability for Junior and Senior Infants; 1st&2nd class; 3rd&4th class and 5th&6th class.

Each module contains 20 ready-to-go lesson plans and corresponding activities. Agri Aware, supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine launched its revitalised Dig In! Learning About Life on the Countryside resource aimed at primary school students in November 2020.



2021

FARM SAFE SCHOOLS



**BEWARE
OF
BULL**

Agri Aware, AgriKids and the Irish Farmers Association (IFA), supported by FBD Trust teamed up to bring the Farm Safe Schools pilot programme to Irish classrooms in March 2021.

The curriculum linked educational programme is designed to help increase the awareness of farm safety and to help children become part of the solution, by influencing behavioural change at a class, family and community level.

The interactive resources fully support teachers in educating their students about the potential dangers associated with farming and agriculture, and overall complement the national strategy, aimed at reducing the number of accidents on farms and in the countryside.

As an existing component of the SPHE curriculum, the programme provided Irish primary school classrooms with fun, interactive resources and webinars all tailored to the Farm Safe School ethos.

The first of its kind, collaborative, pilot programme aimed to engage, educate and empower Irish children to become farm safety ambassadors and in doing so help create a safer, brighter future on Irish farms.

Farm Safety pilot schools scheme was experienced by 22,000 students in 488 schools nationwide in the FBD Sponsored initiative, gaining National TV and Radio coverage.

In the second part of 2021 The Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine supported the project and it will look to grow significantly in 2022.

Sample Teacher Feedback

“Fantastic programme with so many important messages for the participating pupils. Unfortunately, many children feel that growing up on a farm means they are safe from danger. This project highlighted many of the bad habits that we had developed and hopefully made an impact on the actions of the children in the future”.

2021

FARM SAFE SCHOOLS



Farm Safe School Champions

To further incentivise participation, there is an opportunity to win prizes and to become both regionally and nationally recognised at individual, class and school level for making a positive contribution towards farm safety in the wider, rural community.

Farm Safe Schools Regional Champions:

During the programme, children are nominated by their teachers to be recognised as the regional champion. These children will have shown excellence in their participation of the programme.

Winners 2021: Scoil Naomh Bríd, Talbotstown, Co Wicklow (see prizes in picture below)

Runners Up 2021: Ballymore National School, Dunfanaghy Co Donegal.



*Ballymore National School, Donegal.
Farm Safe Schools - Runners Up*



2021

FARM WALK & TALK

Agri Aware had to adapt Farm Walk & Talk to a digital interaction of the event due to the global coronavirus pandemic ending any chance of an in-person event.

Environmental conservation was the key focus of the 2021 Agri Aware Farm Walk and Talk 2021 notes & video series, in conjunction with Teagasc and Kildalton Agricultural College.

The series was also supported by the Irish Agricultural Science Teachers Association (IASTA) and Agri Aware patrons.

The free, educational notes and 13-part video series, which featured expert Teagasc staff, filmed in Kildalton Agricultural College in Co Kilkenny, was an invaluable resource to Leaving Certificate Agricultural Science students and teachers, who had limited class time in early 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Over 460 Agricultural Science teachers and 17,000 Agricultural Science students nationwide signed up to receive the free video resources, which also included free notes that align with the new curriculum, its eight cross-cutting themes and focussed on those themes including topics such as conservation and sustainability.

The video series was a hybrid event replacing Agri Aware's flagship Farm Walk and Talk physical event series, which usually takes place each spring and welcomes thousands of students and teachers but due to Covid-19 restrictions in 2021, this was not possible.

While everyone would prefer an in-person, hands-on experience, the digital version had a much larger footprint and impact than previous years.

Despite the digital success, all parties including teachers, students, partners, patrons and the team at Agri Aware are very much looking forward to getting out and about again for a live in-person experience of Farm Walk and talk in 2022.

2021

AG SCIENCE STUDY GUIDES

Each school year, Agri Aware; The Irish Farmers Journal (IFJ); and IASTA (Irish Agriculture Science Teachers Association) produce 30 Study Guides for Leaving Certificate Agricultural Science students.

Over the years, the guides have benefitted over 15,000 students and are of increased importance going forward given the newly revised curriculum specification. This year's study guides are another example of the increased digitalisation of the Agri Aware educational offerings.

Teachers can sign their students up to 30 weeks of digital guides that are released on a weekly basis during the school term.

There is also a suite of additional resources hosted on the IFJ's Schools Hub such as the Farmer Case Study videos and webinars with IFJ specialists.

The move to digital has given the guide writers freedom to include relevant links, educational videos and other digital resources. The guides, along with resources such as the Agri Aware Virtual Farm, function as an interactive textbook that enhances learning opportunities beyond words on a page.

Some new additions to the Study Guides package developed by Agri Aware this year are:

1. New edition of the Dictionary of Agriculture Science Terms, 230+ new terms;
2. Eight brand new classroom posters based on the eight cross-cutting themes;
3. An original student worksheet provided with every weekly guide.

This year, over 1750 students have signed up to the digital package – a fifth of all Agricultural Science students.

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE STUDY GUIDES 2021-2022

AgriAware
EDUCATE • ADVOCATE • ENGAGE

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Irish Agricultural Science Teachers' Association

**IRISH
FARMERS
JOURNAL**

2021

BRANCHING OUT



Agri Aware's Branching Out - Pilot Programme is a new, interactive programme that aims to increase primary school children's knowledge and understanding of the importance of forests.

There are five topics covered in the programme:

Hand in Hand with the Land – Farmers and Forests

Students to learn about how farmers utilize forests on their land, including the importance forests have on the environment.

Curbing Carbon and Spearheading Sustainability

Students learn about how trees and forests can help to reduce and combat greenhouse emissions. They can explore how forests can promote sustainable resources and industry.

Forest Flora and Fauna

This topic covers the biodiversity that resides within an Irish forest and learn the roles that woodland flora and fauna play.

Wonderful Woodworks

Discover the various uses of forestry and the products made from wood.

Walk through the Woodlands

Students can go on a field trip through the woods and experience nature first-hand.

The Branching Out booklet contains links to the primary school curriculum, as well as facts and information, each topic includes suggested activities and other supporting websites to enhance learning.

Agri Aware piloted Branching Out from November 2021 - March 2022 with 55 schools. Teachers are asked to take part in as little or as much of the activities as they can throughout this time, and will complete a survey at projects end for feedback.

2021

SECONDARY SCHOOLS EXPANSION

From Foal To Race

Transition Year Programme Pilot 2022

Transition Year Programmes

Transition Year programmes have been identified as a huge potential area for growth. Some plans have already been put in place with a partnership established Equuip, the educational part of Horse Racing Ireland. An Equine Schools transition year programme will start in early 2022.

From Foal to Race is ready to launch in 2022 with more than treble the initial number of schools signed up.

More plans are in place to create more programmes for transition year students.

Environmental Innovators, a programme covering the environment is at an advanced stage.

While an Agricultural Science programme for secondary students below leaving cert level is at an exploratory stage.

Essential Experiments

Agri Aware and UCD School of Agriculture & Food Science came to the assistance of Leaving Certificate Agricultural Science students by developing a new curriculum-linked experiment video series to aid them in their studies in March 2021.

The Essential Experiments series contains at least 11 experiments that cover mandatory, Leaving Cert Agricultural Science experiment topics such as soils, milk quality and crop science.

The experiments in the videos were carried out by UCD School of Agriculture & Food Science professors and staff, who have a wealth of in-depth knowledge and experience working at the forefront of the agriculture and food science sectors.

The videos were shared with Leaving Cert Agricultural Science teachers nationwide. They were also made available on Agri Aware's YouTube and social media platforms.

2021

MOBILE FARM

Agri Aware's Mobile Farm visited 13 school visits from May – June 2021, impacting over 3,000 primary pupils directly. Unfortunately the coronavirus pandemic had a detrimental effect on our ability to host many more mobile farm days with severe restrictions in place across Ireland's primary schools.

The Mobile Farm is a unique outdoor classroom that is used to educate children and adults via a hands-on learning experience. The Mobile Farm unit safely and humanely transports animals to any school, company or event.

The aim of Agri Aware's Mobile Farm is to educate young and old about the different farm animals on Irish farms and their role in producing quality food that is safe and affordable for consumers. Agri Aware's Mobile Farm is accompanied by trained farmers.

This is Ireland's only mobile farm with educational resources. Keeping the geography, science and social, personal and health education (SPHE) curricula in mind, visitors will learn about each animal, from their natural habitat to their role in food production.

2021 was the final year in the career of Pat our long-standing mobile farmer, who took the decision to retire from his Mobile Farm.

Agri Aware would like to sincerely thank pat for his amazing contribution to so many brilliant experiences for so many Irish children.

Agri Aware is in the process of recruiting a potential replacement but this process has been hampered by the uncertainty around COVID-19 restrictions.

Agri Aware's
Mobile Farm

