

A black and white cow is the central focus, grazing in a lush green field. In the background, a wind turbine is visible against a clear blue sky. The image is partially obscured by a blue circular graphic on the right side.

# Farm Tours 2024

Classroom guide and resources  
Secondary schools



**CARBERY**

# Carbery farm visits - preparation guide

- About these visits
- Meet the farmer
- Before your visit
- Health and safety
- Resources



# About these visits

We are inviting schools from the local West Cork area to visit select farmers and farms.

The intention of these visits is:

- to introduce students to the farming world, especially those who have had no exposure before
- To connect students with the food on their plate and how it is produced
- To explain how Irish farming, in particular dairy, works and is different to other dairy systems
- To showcase farming as an interesting and viable career
- To answer questions students might have about sustainability and how farmers are working to farm sustainably

This deck has some information that will be useful for teachers to cover in advance of visiting the farm

Each tour will last approx. 1.5-2 hours, and will consist of a tour of the farm, including sheds, milking parlour, visiting the cows in the field (at a safe distance) and covering topics such as a day in the life of a farmer, what animals eat, milking cows and where the milk goes, animal welfare, soil and grass, biodiversity and the environment. This will be followed by a tasting of some dairy products.

Each child will also receive a take home pack of information and goodies.

# Meet the farmer



# Some facts about Irish farming

The Irish Dairy Industry is a thriving industry with a national dairy herd of 1.14 million cows producing over 5.4 billion litres of milk. (1 billion litres is about how much water there would be in a small lake)

Ireland has the most sustainable dairy farming system in the world as our dairy products are produced from the milk of grass-fed cows. Irish cows graze on rich green grass for up to 300 days a year!

In West Cork, we have about 1200 farming families who own the four West Cork Co-ops, who in turn own Carbery Group

Regular rainfall means Irish soil is naturally irrigated and void of water stress.

Two thirds of the land in Ireland is in use by agriculture, and luscious green grass makes up 80% of the nation's farmland.

An average dairy cow consumes 12 tonne of herbage per year. An Irish farmer must estimate the amount of herbage needed for the year. (1 tonne is about the weight of a small car, or an African elephant!)

Because we do so much farming in Ireland, agriculture makes up about 1/3 of our climate emissions. Farmers are working hard to reduce that number and make sure they can continue farming and producing food in a way that is good for the planet, for their animals and that they can earn a living from.

# Before your visit

- You might want to look at some of the classroom resources we have linked to in the deck to engage students before the visits
- Ask the class what questions they have for the farmer so we can be prepared!
- Confirm if there are any students with additional needs, or dietary requirements that we need to be aware of.
- Read this [guide to health and safety](#) before the visit. The number one rule when visiting the farm is to obey the instructions of the farmer who is there to keep you safe.

# Additional resources

## Secondary school

Agri Aware runs a great programme for transition years called Environmental Innovators. It presents the various challenges that our global food system faces and invites students to investigate potential solutions. Details and registration are here:

<https://www.agriaware.ie/programmes/secondary-school-programmes/environmental-innovators-transition-year-programme/>

There are several career paths related to the Irish agri and dairy sectors that students may not be aware of – here are details of some:

<https://www.teagasc.ie/animals/dairy/dairy-careers/>

SENIOR CYCLE AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE - TRANSITION YEAR - <https://pdst.ie/node/2418>

## Career opportunities in dairy farming



## This is dairying – overview of the dairy industry



A morning in the life of a dairy farmer (This is a longer video but shows cows being milked on an Irish farm):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cL6pAiaxfSo>

# Questions (for after the visit)

- **Did you enjoy your visit to the farm?**
- **Did you learn some information you didn't know about dairy farming in Ireland?**
- **Did you change your mind on anything about farming during the visit?**
- **What was your favourite part?**
- **Would you visit a farm again?**
- **Would you think about becoming a farmer or working on a farm?**
- **Was there anything that could have been better?**