September/October 2025

Research Ireland Education and Public Engagement Network visit to Moorepark

Key Dates

12th Nov — Horizon Scanning: What's next for Agrifood? Online event

16th Nov — Science at the Marina Marina Market, Cork

5th Dec — World Soil Day event Midlands Hotel, Portlaoise

Congratulations

Congratulations to VistaMilk Funded Investigator Prof. Graham Benham from the UCD School of Mathematics and Statistics, who has been awarded an European Research Council grant. Graham is part of the exciting research modeling water flow in the System of Systems platform.

VistaMilk was delighted to host Research Ireland and the Education and Public Engagement (EPE) Managers from Research Ireland Centres across the country at Teagasc Moorepark on October 14th.

The day focused on the growing shift within academia towards engaged research which is an approach that places collaboration, inclusivity, and societal relevance at the heart of the research process. Engaged research emphasises partnership between researchers and the wider community including farmers, policymakers, industry, and citizens, to ensure that research outcomes are meaningful, applicable, and impactful.

The visit was a great success, sparking valuable conversations about how Research Ireland centres can continue to collaborate, share resources, and strengthen their collective approach to engagement.

We recently said farewell to Dr. Raquel Caetano Ferreira, our Business Development Manager, as she moves to a new position within Teagasc. We wish her every success in this exciting next chapter.

HOST INSTITUTION: Teagasc

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS: UCC, University College Dublin, DCU, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe University of Galway, SETU, MTU, Maynooth University, Trinity College Dublin, DUBLIN, TUS, University of Limerick, Tyndall

FUNDED BY: An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Taighde Éireann Research Ireland

National Ploughing Championships

VistaMilk researchers attended this year's National Ploughing Championships, showcasing our latest research and the GroundTruth citizen science project. Visitors enjoyed learning how technology and data are driving more sustainable dairy production, with plenty of interest in our "degraded underwear" display — a fun but powerful way to demonstrate soil health in action.

We were also pleased to welcome Minister Martin Heydon, who stopped by to hear more about our research. Engagement throughout the event was excellent, with strong interest from farmers, students, and the wider public. Thank you to everyone who visited the stand and helped make the event such a success.

New Publication

A recent VistaMilk publication "*Evaluating the effect of white clover inclusion and dairy cow genetic merit on enteric methane emissions within rotational grazing systems*" revealed that dairy cows grazing a ryegrass–white clover mix produced more methane overall than those on ryegrass alone, mainly due to higher feed intake. While clover reduces fertiliser needs, the results highlight the need to balance benefits and trade-offs when implementing climate-smart farming practices.

Meet the RESEARCHER

Pádraig Lacey is a first year PhD student in VistaMilk and is based in UCD. Pádraig completed undergraduate and masters programmes in psychology from 2020 to 2024. He has also been working as a research assistant with the UCD Agri Mental Health Group for over a year. Pádraig's PhD research focuses on Generational Renewal and the attractiveness of dairy farming as a career, which is one of the nine specific CAP objectives set out for 2023-2027.

DON'T FORGET TO FIND US ONLINE

vistamilk.ie

Soil Health Week 2025

Soil Health Week was a real highlight in the VistaMilk calendar during September, celebrating the vital role that healthy soils play in sustainable farming systems. Led by Teagasc and supported by VistaMilk, the week featured webinars, podcasts, farm walks, discussion groups, school visits, and even library talks — all designed to spark curiosity about what's happening beneath our feet.

The response was outstanding, with engagement from right across the country and even interest from audiences in the UK. This enthusiasm reflects a growing curiosity about soil and its central role in climate resilience, water quality, biodiversity, and food production.

#DigitalisingDairy

VistaMilk