

2022 Masters in Agricultural Innovation Support

Project Summary

1. Project Title and Associated Programme

KT Programme	Health and safety
Project title	Farm safety interventions to help advisers promote safety with livestock.

2. Project background

In Ireland NFS estimate that 2,500 serious farm injuries occur of which 42% are livestock related (Dillon et al., 2018). Accordingly, improving the OHS of farmers working with Livestock continues to be a major challenge.

There is a need to evaluate and then implement approaches to support increased **advisor / farmer engagement** in OHS in livestock safety adoption.

Advisory and training work offers a considerable possibility of helping and encouraging farmers to improve livestock facilities and practices to cut injury levels.

Over 25% of the fatalities that occurred to older farmers (65years +) in the last 10 years were associated with livestock, so livestock safety issues related to this age cohort deserve particular attention . Research indicates behavioural patterns of farmers are formed when they are younger and are passed on generationally (Mohammadrezaei et al, 2022). Advisors need to be equipped and encouraged to help farmers' understanding and manage animal behaviour using Temple Grandin theories and new technologies.

3. Project aims and objectives

The proposed study aims to establish a closer working relationship between farmers and advisors in livestock OHS practice adoption. Specific objectives are:

- To identify OSH management practices on dairy and drystock farms.
- To assist 30 farmers develop a short and long plan to improve OHS practices associated with livestock.
- To identify OSH challenges faced by older farmers on livestock farms in particular and devise bespoke solutions.
- To develop a pilot Advisory training plan that uses practical examples of improved farmer understanding of cattle behaviour and how it can be influenced by cattle handling processes and facilities.
- Draw lessons on how farmers develop bespoke plans that improve OHS practices associated with livestock management. .
- Develop a set of advisory and educational resources based on the case study findings.
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4. Suggestions for methodology

The proposed study will:

- Select 10 Teagasc advisors from livestock disciplines in the selected location who will receive two days training on animal behaviour. Training will have input from Miriam Parker MBE, associate of Temple Grandin, Teagasc livestock Researcher Dr Earley, Teagasc Specialists and HSA inspectors.
- The advisors will each identify three farmers for the study.

The research will

- Document animal handling facilities and behaviours on each farm.
- Identify challenges for older farmers
- Assist the farmers (30) in the development of short and long-term plan for management of livestock safety.
- Identify particular challenges in safe livestock management for older farmers and workable solutions

Outputs

- Knowledge from an advisors survey on utility of training for advisory work
- Knowledge from a farmer's survey on impact of the initiative on livestock safety behaviours.
- A set of common solutions collated.
- Case testimonials prepared by each advisor.
- Paper published in peer-reviewed journal
- Successfully submitted MAIS thesis

5. Expected Impact of the Project

Improved knowledge transfer: This project will help fill the current OHS knowledge transfer deficit by identifying best practice through developing, evaluating and implementing approaches to support advisor / farmer engagement in livestock OHS Adoption.

Improved efficiency: The plans will provide a resource to highlight common issues to aid advisors/ inspectors to engage farmers livestock OHS which integrates with the overall management of the farm.

Enhanced quality of service: Study case studies will provide a new evidence base to develop supports and materials to engage farmers in OHS with livestock at meetings, discussion groups and at large events.

Improved extension service: The findings from this project will provide a template and resources to help improve OHS knowledge and engagement among both advisors, inspectors, farmers and educators with livestock.

Publications: An article for Teagasc media and a paper will be drafted for submission to an extension journal.