

## 2021 KT Walsh Scholarship (MAIS) Project Summary

### 1. Project Title and Associated Programme

<b>KT Programme</b>	Teagasc Dairygold Joint Programme
<b>Project title</b>	Developing an advisory approach to address specific focus areas in relation to the adoption of Selective Dry Cow Therapy by Dairygold suppliers

### 2. Project background

EU legislation restricting the use of prophylactic antibiotics in animal production comes into effect from January 28 2022. (EU, 2018) One of the main aims of the legislation is to reduce antimicrobial resistance through the banning of blanket treatments unless necessary. The practice of administering an antibiotic tube at the end of lactation to all cows within a herd, regardless of the presence of infection is included in this legislation. Selective Dry Cow Therapy (SDCT) is not without risk. Animal Health Ireland (AHI) in conjunction with Teagasc have developed a set of farm-level guidelines for farmers who wish to use SDCT successfully. One of the main requirements of practicing SDCT safely is milk recording. The data harvested at milk recording and presented through ICBF reports are integral to the success of SDCT, as are a number of physical factors (AHI, 2018).

The practice has been adopted by some farmers and ICBF have included the option to record cows that did not receive antibiotic but presently there are no statistics around number of farmers practising SDCT and more urgently, the preparedness of all farmers to adopt this new approach when legislation comes into effect. Teagasc Moorepark are currently writing papers using on farm data taken over two dry periods and the results could supplement the findings of this project.

### 3. Project aims and objectives

The aims of the project are as follows:

- To investigate the preparedness of Dairygold suppliers for the implementation of SDCT and identify areas where suppliers need to focus in preparation for the dry period of 2022/2023.
- To identify gaps in knowledge in relation to Teagasc/AHI criteria;
- To develop advisory content based on findings;
- To deliver this content to farmers in the Dairygold region through the medium of joint programme discussion groups and record videos to target the non-discussion group farmer;
- To relate findings to current Teagasc trials to develop content that could be used by KT advisors nationally.