



TEAGASC PHD WALSH SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

“An investigation into reducing chemical N inputs and the environmental footprint of pasture based sheep production systems”

Ref: Walsh Scholarship Number – 2022043

Background

Ireland's competitive advantage in sheepmeat production is based on the efficient production and utilisation of pasture. Challenges facing the agricultural sector are based on maintaining or improving current levels of production to maintain an economically viable sector but with an enhanced focus on environmental sustainability and a reduced dependence on chemical nitrogen use. A key focus of the DAFM Agri food strategy 2030 is to investigate the role of Grass, legumes and herbs that can deliver required sward yields and longevity at lower levels of nitrogen application. The use of forage legumes and herbs in combination with perennial ryegrass warrants further investigation to determine their suitability relative to the traditional perennial ryegrass system.

This project proposes to evaluate the effects of both high and low chemical nitrogen input pasture based sheep production systems across varying sward types namely: i)perennial ryegrass, ii)perennial ryegrass plus white clover and iii)perennial ryegrass, white clover and plantain-based swards. Swards will be assessed in terms of their effect on animal performance and output; their physical production, utilisation and quality and their effect on the environmental impact of sheep pasture based systems including nitrate losses and methane emissions.

Requirements

The PhD project will involve data collection, data collation and statistical analysis, reporting and publishing findings at (inter)national conferences and industry meetings. Applications are invited from graduates holding or expecting an honours degree in Agricultural Science or a related discipline. The successful candidate should be highly self-motivated and be prepared for laboratory work and extended periods of field work.

Award

The PhD Scholarship is a joint research project between Teagasc and University College Dublin. The student will be based primarily at Teagasc Athenry working under the supervision of Dr. Philip Creighton (Teagasc) but will also work closely with Prof Tommy Boland (UCD). The Scholarship will commence in September 2022. The Scholarships provides a stipend of €24,000. University fees are paid by the student from the stipend which is tenable for 4 years.

Further Information/Applications

Dr Philip Creighton, Animal and Grassland Research and Innovation Centre, Teagasc Athenry
Phone: +353(0)91 845862 email: philip.creighton@teagasc.ie

Prof Tommy Boland, School of Agriculture and Food Science, University College Dublin
Phone: +353(0)1 716 7144 email: tommy.boland@ucd.ie

Application Procedure

Submit an electronic copy of Curriculum Vitae and a letter of interest simultaneously to:
Dr Philip Creighton (philip.creighton@teagasc.ie) and
Prof Tommy Boland (tommy.boland@ucd.ie)

Closing date: 23rd September 2022