



The Irish farmer

Curriculum links:

- **Science** Living things
Environmental awareness and care
- **Geography** Human environments
- **SPHE** Myself and the wider world

Lesson objectives:

To revise material covered in previous modules. To make students aware that farming is also a business. To introduce students to the business of farming

Teacher guidelines

It is suggested that teachers ensure that students are familiar with the vocabulary and concepts introduced in the previous modules before starting this lesson.

Keywords and concepts introduced in previous modules:

farmer food factories packaged seasons spring summer autumn winter

A farm is a place where animals like cattle, sheep, pigs and chickens live, and plants like fruit, vegetables and cereals are grown. Farmers work on farms where they care for the animals and grow the crops. Nearly all food is grown on the farm and then it is sent to shops and markets to be sold. Some food is firstly sent to factories where it is packaged or made into other foods e.g. grain is made into bread. On the farm, there is work to be done every day of the year e.g. feeding and caring for animals. During the different seasons, the farmer has many different jobs to do e.g. putting the animals in sheds in the winter.

After revision of the above, teachers could discuss the more detailed information below.

Keywords for this lesson:

business records Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine government tag traceable exporting environment hygienic tourists

The business of farming

Farming is an important **business** in Ireland. Large farms can employ many workers to help in the business. Day-to-day farm business includes the buying and selling of animals and crops and keeping **records** of the money that the farmer pays and receives. The farmer must also keep records of the animals on the farm and any medication that they might receive.



In their day-to-day business, farmers deal with many other farmers and organisations, such as, banks, accountants, insurance companies, co-ops (milk processing plants), farm organisations, meat factories and many more.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

The **Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine** is a part of the **Government**, which sets out rules and guidelines that farmers must follow. These guidelines are there to make sure that all animals are well cared for and that all the food we eat is safe and of good quality.



**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Remember: Be safe, Stay safe on the farm!

Tagging

Food safety starts on the farm. In Ireland, cattle, sheep and pigs must all wear a special tag in their ears. Tagging animals helps keep track of our food from farm to fork. The tag acts like a passport for the animal. Each animal has their own number and when they move from farm to farm, this must be recorded. Tagging and record keeping are very important, as they make sure that the food (meat) we eat is safe and **traceable**. This is also important when **exporting** (selling to other countries) farm produce.

In 2019, Ireland exported food and drink to more than 180 countries around the world, with an estimated worth of €14.5 billion to the Irish economy.

Care for the environment

Farmers do important work, producing food in safe and **hygienic** (clean) conditions. However, they also do very important work in caring for the **environment**. All farmers must follow a *Code of Good Farming Practice*, which is checked by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

This includes environmental work, protecting rivers and waterways, archaeological sites and wildlife habitats. Work on the farm also includes making sure the farm and farmyard are clean, the fences and walls are in place and that chemicals are used with care. Farmers do an important job maintaining our countryside, which helps to attract **tourists** to Ireland every year.



Suggested activities

- Photocopy the activity sheet on page 41
- Create a poster promoting farming in your area; i.e. beef, tillage, sheep, dairy, poultry etc. Get students to present their posters to their class/school
- Discuss the fact that we are all dependent on the farm and farmers to provide us with food. Ask the class to write an essay with the title “Life without farming”
- Discuss farming as a business, comparing it to another business, for example owning a shop. Compare the work involved under the headings hygiene, record keeping, hours worked, clothes, who they do business with etc.
- Write an essay with the title “The importance of farming”
- Compare animal tags to human passports – they both have a number and they are both used as a means of identification. As an art activity, ask the students to design their own passport. What important information should it require to have?
- As part of Information and Communication technologies (ICT), research the variety of different businesses associated with agriculture. Visit www.agriaware.ie, where you will find a list of founding and patron members to get links to many different agri- businesses
- Research and discuss the important work done by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Irish Farmers Association in helping the Irish farmer and consumer by visiting www.agriculture.gov.ie, and www.ifa.ie
- Discuss Ireland's farming heritage! If in a rural area, locate farming artefacts and discuss how farming has changed over the years, for example the work done by a horse (ploughing) is now done by machinery
- Download pictures of farm machinery from the internet, discuss how they have advanced from the traditional use of the horse

Learning outcomes:

At the end of this lesson, students should understand that farming is an important business.

They should also have a knowledge of what that business involves.

Additional resources:

- www.agriaware.ie



The Irish farmer

Name: _____

Date: _____

1 Use the clues to complete the crossword:

Across:

- 2. Food is sent here from the farm to be processed or packaged (7)
- 3. The farmer uses this to get around the land and pull big trailers (7)
- 4. Like shops, farming is a _____ too. (8)
- 7. Farmers often wear these to keep their feet dry (7)



1												
	2											
		3										
			4	B	5	S	I	N	E	S	6	S
			7									

Down

- 1. Without farming we would have none of this (4)
- 2. The person who works on the farm – can be male or female (6)
- 5. There are four of these. When they change the farmer has different work to do. (7)
- 6. The farmer puts the animals in this when it gets cold in the winter (4)

2 Use the words listed below to fill in the blanks below environment, traceable, government, records, hygienic

The business of farming

Farming is a business and so the farmer must keep _____ of the money the farmer pays and receives and of all the animals on the farm. Cattle, sheep and pigs wear tags in their ears, which act like a human passport. This makes sure that all meat is _____, which means, we can find out what farm it has come from. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is the part of the _____, which has rules and guidelines that the farmer must follow. These rules make sure that the farm is _____ (clean) at all times and that the farmer takes care of the _____.

* To be used with teacher guidelines, page 2