



Circular No: 06-2025

From: LEADER Policy and Operations Unit

To: All LAGs, Implementing Partners and Administrative Check Bodies

Date Issued: 18 July 2025

Subject: Post-2027 CAP

This circular is being issued to provide recipients with an update on developments in relation to the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) post-2027.

As you are aware, the CAP critically supports the economic, social and environmental performance of rural Ireland. The development of the post-2027 CAP is therefore a matter of significant importance for the department.

The European Commission has recently begun to outline its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) proposals as part of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), or EU budget for the period 2028 to 2034. It is important to note that the publication of EU proposals is just the beginning of the process to develop EU regulations.

As part of the MFF and CAP negotiations progress, the department will continue to advocate for continued prioritisation of rural development measures, particularly for the LEADER programme to remain a core element of the new CAP framework, continuing this key element of support to rural Ireland.

Minister Calleary will be working closely with the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine Martin Heydon, EU Commissioner Michael McGrath and colleagues in the European Parliament to ensure that Ireland, and specifically rural Ireland, is kept front and centre in all negotiations.

Minister Calleary is committed to ensuring that the LEADER programme remains a core element of the new CAP framework. He has noted publicly (appendix I) that the development



of the post-2027 CAP is a matter of significant importance for the department, and that he will advocate for the continued prioritisation of rural development measures, particularly the LEADER Programme.

In this context, please note that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) recently established a CAP Consultative Committee, opened by Minister Heydon, so that relevant stakeholders could provide their views on this important matter (appendix II).

Marie Duffy, Principal Officer for LEADER will be representing the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) on the committee, advocating the position stated by Minister Calleary. In addition, as the committee was being formed, the DRCDG requested the inclusion of representatives from the County and City Management Association in Ireland (CCMA) and the Local Development Company Network (LDCN), and this request was accommodated by DAFM. This will provide these representatives with an opportunity to engage and contribute to the development of the future CAP framework.

Furthermore, as part of on-going policy developments regarding the LEADER programme, updates on negotiations for the post-2027 CAP will be shared and discussed via the LEADER Forum, which is chaired by this department with four representatives from each of the CCMA and the LDCN.

Any queries in relation to the application of this Circular should be submitted to OR2327@drcdg.gov.ie

LEADER Policy & Operations Unit



Appendix I

Media Release

Wednesday, 16th July 2025

Minister Calleary reiterates the importance of CAP to rural Ireland

Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, Dara Calleary TD, has today (Wednesday, 16th July) reiterated the importance of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to rural Ireland.

Minister Calleary was speaking ahead of the publication of proposals for the next EU Budget (MFF) post-2027 and the next Common Agriculture Policy (CAP).

Minister Calleary stated:

“The Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) critically supports the economic, social and environmental performance of rural Ireland. The development of the post 2027 CAP is therefore a matter of significant importance for my department. I will advocate for the continued prioritisation of rural development measures particularly the LEADER Programme which provides vital funding and is administered through my department.

“Since its inception in 1991, the LEADER programme has been at the heart of rural development in Ireland, empowering bottom-up, community-led rural development. It has supported thousands of local projects, revitalised our rural communities and supported jobs and services across rural Ireland. I want to reiterate my commitment to ensuring that the LEADER programme remains a core element of the new CAP framework, continuing this key element of support to rural Ireland.”

Minister Calleary concluded:

“It is important to note that today’s publication is just the beginning of the process. I will be working closely with my colleague, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine Martin Heydon, EU Commissioner Michael McGrath and colleagues in the European Parliament to ensure that Ireland, and specifically rural Ireland, is kept front and centre in all negotiations.”



Appendix II

Minister Heydon launches Ireland's CAP Consultative Committee for CAP post-2027 tomorrow *(issued 16 July 2025)*

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Martin Heydon, TD, will open the first meeting of the CAP Consultation Committee tomorrow morning following the announcement today by the European Commission of its proposals for the next EU Budget (MFF) post-2027 and the next Common Agriculture Policy (CAP).

Minister Heydon said "The Commission launched its proposals today, and the detailed legislative proposals are expected to be published tomorrow. These are very significant proposals, and we have been through considerable reforms before and we've managed to negotiate through them in the past and we'll do the same again. What always remains as a constant is the importance of the work of our farm families and our agrifood businesses to our rural economy. Today is the starting point and we'll negotiate through this proposal line by line, and we'll have a very significant role to play during our EU Presidency in the second half of next year.

"Tomorrow morning, I will begin the engagement with key stakeholders at the first meeting of Ireland's CAP Consultative Committee. The Committee will play a crucial role in ensuring that the CAP reform process is transparent, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of various stakeholders within the agricultural and rural community."

Minister Heydon concluded "The Commission proposals for new CAP structures in a new MFF architecture will require careful analysis. This seems like a very big change, but in fact this announcement marks the starting point in a long negotiating process. I will continue to work very closely with Commissioner Hansen, the European Parliament and my EU counterparts to ensure that the end result delivers the best possible outcome for Irish farmers and the rural communities in which they live."



Committee Membership - Organisations

- Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine
- (Sinéad McPhillips, Assistant Secretary General, Chair)
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (including NPWS)
- Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation
- Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment
- Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht
- Agricultural Consultants Association
- An Taisce
- Bord Bia
- County and City Management Association (CCMA)
- Environmental Pillar
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC)
- Irish Cattle & Sheep Farmers Association (ICSA)
- Irish Co-operative Organisation Society (ICOS)
- Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA)
- Irish Farmers Association (IFA)
- Irish Grain Growers Association (IGGA)
- Irish Natura & Hill Farmers Association (INHFA)
- Irish Organic Association
- Irish Rural Link (also representing National Rural Network)
- Local Development Company Network
- Macra na Feirme
- National Bio-diversity Data Centre
- National CAP Network
- Academic members (UCD and UCC)
- Teagasc
- Women in Agriculture Stakeholder Group