

# Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

## Single Suckling Enterprise Factsheet



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## Single Suckling Enterprise 2022

### Average performance



#### Irish Cattle Slaughter

1.911 million head (up 6.6%)



#### Stocking Rate (Calf to Weanling)

average of 1.2 lu/ha (up 4.3%)



#### Live Exports

286,265 head (up 15.8%)



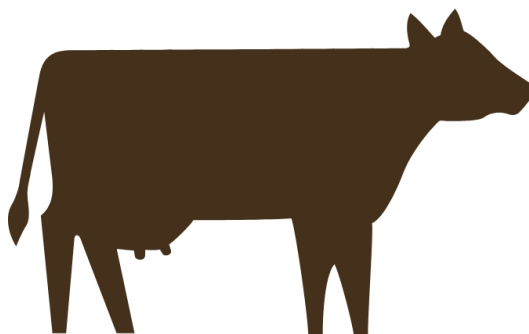
#### Stocking Rate (Calf to Store)

average of 1.4 lu/ha (down 10.8%)



#### Irish Suckler Cow Numbers

0.86 million (down 3.1%)



#### Weanling sales price

average €954/head (up 8.6%)



#### Male Store sales price

average €1,226/head (up 7.3%)



#### Total Production Costs

(Single Suckling)

average €1,281 per hectare (up 16.2%)



#### Female Store sales price

average €1,227/head (up 10.1%)



#### Gross Margin

(Single Suckling)

average €580 per hectare (up 5.4%)



## Background

The 2022 Teagasc National Farm Survey (NFS) recorded data on 795 farms, 201 of which were single suckling farms. The performance of the single suckling enterprise in 2022 is summarised here and relates to those farms with herds of greater than 10 cows. The single suckling enterprise is the predominant cattle enterprise in Ireland, operated on over 25,000 farms.

### 1. Analysis of Financial Performance

The profit figures reported here exclude all decoupled payments and any costs relating to family labour. The enterprise profit figures do however include coupled direct payments. These payments have contributed importantly to enterprise gross output in 2022. Due to the rise in weanling and store cattle prices, the gross output increased (8%) on the average single suckling enterprise in 2022 to €1,201 per hectare. The average direct costs per hectare increased by 10% in 2022. As a result, the average gross margin increased by just 5% on a per hectare basis. On average, energy and fuel costs increased by 14% year-on-year and other fixed costs increased by 24%. In 2022, the increase in gross output was insufficient to offset the higher total costs and average net margin per hectare decreased significantly to -€80 per hectare.

**Table 1: Average gross and net margin 2021 and 2022**

	2021 € per hectare	2022 € per hectare	2022/2021 % change
<b>Gross Output</b>	1,112	1,201	8
Concentrate Costs	162	180	11
Pasture and Forage Costs	267	311	17
Other Direct Costs	133	129	-3
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	562	621	10
<b>Gross Margin</b>	550	580	5
Energy and Fuel	121	138	14
Other Fixed Costs	419	522	24
Total Fixed Costs	541	660	22
<b>Total Costs</b>	1,103	1,281	16
<b>Net Margin</b>	9	-80	n/a

Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

Due to the increase in gross output on a per cow basis, gross margin per cow increased by 11% in 2022 to an average of €710, as illustrated in Table 2. Total fixed costs increased by 25% on a per cow basis. Due to the higher cost expenditure, the net margin per cow decreased significantly to -€122 per cow in 2022.

**Table 2: Average, gross and net margin 2021 and 2022**

	2021 € per cow	2022 € per cow	2022/2021 % change
Gross Output	1,321	1,497	13
Total Direct Costs	680	787	16
Gross Margin	642	710	11
Total Fixed Costs	668	832	25
Net Margin	-26	-122	n/a

Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

## 2. Variation in Production System

Data for 2022 relating to the various production systems found on Irish single suckling farms (calf to weanling, calf to store and calf to finish) are presented in Table 3. Single suckling to weanling and suckling to store systems are more prevalent than calf to finishing systems. However, the latter is more profitable, as evidenced by the calf to finishing enterprises in 2022, which had the highest gross margin per hectare (see Table 3). A higher stocking rate and superior soil quality are more prevalent on suckling to finishing farms.

**Table 3: Variation in gross margin per hectare by production system 2022**

	Weanling	Store	Finishing
% of Farms in production system	34	33	20
Stocking rate (Livestock units per hectare)	1.20	1.40	1.58
% of Farms on Very Good Soils	33%	37%	65%
Gross Output (€/hectare)	1,027	1,150	1,485
Total Direct Costs (€/hectare)	528	570	758
Gross Margin (€/hectare)	499	579	727

Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

Table 4 shows that the changes in animal sales prices between 2021 and 2022 varied across the categories of cattle sales. Average weanling prices increased by 8% between 2021 and 2022. Male store sales prices increased by an average of 7% between 2021 and 2022. Female store sales prices increased by an average of 11%. Sales prices increased by 18% for male and by 15% for female finished cattle between 2021 and 2022.

**Table 4: Average animal sales prices 2021 and 2022**

	2021 € per head	2022 € per head	2022/2021 % change
Weanlings	878	954	9
Male Stores	1,142	1,226	7
Female Stores	1,109	1,227	11
Finished Males	1,603	1,886	18
Finished Females	1,401	1,617	15

Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

## 3. Variation in Financial Performance

Table 5 summarises the 2022 Teagasc NFS results for single suckling farms classified on the basis of gross margin per hectare; the best performing one-third of farms (Top), the middle one-third (Middle) and the poorest performing one-third (Bottom).

**Table 5: Profit per hectare for Top, Middle and Bottom one-thirds of farms in 2022**

	Top	Middle	Bottom
Stocking rate (LU/hectare)	1.73	1.28	1.13
% of Farms on Very Good soils	59	35	25
Gross Output (€/hectare)	1,722	1,070	814
Concentrates (€/hectare)	200	161	180
Pasture and Forage (€/hectare)	323	278	332
Other Direct Costs (€/hectare)	172	95	121
Gross Margin (€/hectare)	1,027	536	181

Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

Table 5 shows the broad variation in gross output per hectare on Irish single suckling farms across the three groups, with gross output on the Top performing farms being €1,722 per hectare and only €814 per hectare for the Bottom performing group. The gross margin (€ per ha) earned is over 5 times higher on the Top performing group of farms as compared to the average gross margin earned by the Bottom group of farms. The variation in expenditure on feed across the three groups of farms is less marked than the variation in gross output. It is evident that a higher proportion of the Top performing single suckling farms have a superior soil type.

Table 6 shows the average sale and purchase prices recorded for the various animal types on the Top, Middle and Bottom single suckling farms. Table 6 shows that average weanling and store (male and female) sales prices are higher for the Top and Middle performing groups relative to the Bottom performing group. In terms of finished cattle (male and female), the average sales price is highest for the Bottom performing group and lowest for the Middle performing group.

**Table 6: Average sale price (€ per head) for Top, Middle and Bottom one-thirds of farms 2022**

	Top	Middle	Bottom
		€ per head	
Weanlings Sales	992	978	894
Male Stores Sales	1,277	1,284	1,022
Female Stores Sales	1,227	1,179	1,006
Finished Males Sales	1,895	1,834	1,975
Finished Females Sales	1,609	1,591	1,697

Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

#### 4. Variation in Technical Performance

The proportion of single suckling farms attaining the Teagasc 2027 Sectoral Road Map Targets in 2021 and 2022 is set out in Table 7. There was an improvement over the period 2021/2022 in the proportion of farms reaching the gross margin target set out in Teagasc's 2027 Road Map. The proportion of farms earning a gross margin greater than €615 per hectare increased by 6 percentage points year-on-year. However, the proportion of farms meeting the net margin target declined by 3 percentage points. This decline is due to the large increases in fixed cost expenditures as reported

in Table 1 and Table 2. There has been an improvement in the proportion of farms meeting the threshold relating to concentrate usage per LU of less than 334 kg per LU. The proportion of farms meeting this target increased by 5 percentage points between 2021 and 2022. There are small changes to report in terms of the environmental targets set out in the Teagasc 2027 Road Map for the beef sector. Most notably, the percentage of farms applying less than 80kg of fertiliser per hectare increased from 68% in 2021 to 84% in 2022. The proportion of farms using protected urea increased slightly from 6% in 2021 to 8% in 2022. The proportion of farms applying LESS (Low Emissions Slurry Spreading) increased from 28% in 2021 to 30% in 2022. This adoption rate remains well below the target of 75%, which was set out in the Teagasc 2027 Road Map for the beef sector.

**Table 7: Percentage of farms achieving selected Teagasc Cattle 2027 Road Map Targets**

	% of farms 2021	% of farms 2022
Gross Output per hectare > €1,216	32	44
Gross Margin per hectare > €615	36	42
Net Margin per hectare > €159	29	26
Concentrate per Livestock Unit < 334 kg	59	64
Nitrogen Fertiliser per Hectare < 80 kg	68	84
Percentage applying protected urea	6	8
Percentage slurry applied by LESS	28	30

Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

Table 8 shows an increase in the share of farms in the higher part of the gross margin distribution in 2022 relative to 2021. In 2022, there was a 5 percentage point increase in the proportion of single suckling farms with a gross margin per hectare exceeding €500 per hectare.

**Table 8: Distribution of gross margin per hectare 2021 and 2022**

Gross Margin	% of farms 2021	% of farms 2022
<€0 per hectare	1	2
€0 to €149 per hectare	11	11
€150 to €299 per hectare	11	12
€300 to €499 per hectare	27	22
€500 per hectare and above	48	53

Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022

For further information on this publication or other Teagasc National Farm Survey Publications please contact [NFS@teagasc.ie](mailto:NFS@teagasc.ie)