

**Edited by Ciarán Carroll
and Orla Kinane**



Welcome to the January edition of our monthly newsletter.

We're hoping 2023 will be a much more prosperous one for all. While feed ingredient prices are moving up and down, feed prices look like they'll hold their own for the moment. We expect pig price to move up and help us return to profitability, so it was disappointing to see the drop a few weeks ago and again this week, especially as they move up in France (17c/kg) and Spain (3c/kg) for next week.

In this month's newsletter, Louise Clarke tells us all about the Temporary Business Energy Support Scheme and how to apply. Louise also joins Ciarán on the latest episode of the Pig Edge Podcast to discuss the scheme further – more information on how to listen to that episode and more later in this newsletter.

Edgar Garcia Manzanilla tells us about some of the research planned for the Pig Development Department for 2023; from adding value to pig meat to new EU regulations. He asks you to share any ideas or topics that you feel are important areas for 2024.

Emer McCrum gives a summary of Bord Bia's Export Performance and Prospects report 2022/23, with pigmeat shipments to international markets accounting for 69% of export volumes at 157,000 tonnes valued at €345 million last year.

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What is the Temporary Business Energy Support Scheme?

Louise Clarke

The Temporary Business Energy Support Scheme (TBESS) was announced as part of Budget 2023. The scheme was designed to help businesses manage the higher electricity and natural gas bills. Through TBESS, the government is providing up to €10,000 – or €30,000 in some cases – per month to eligible businesses whose energy bills have increased by more than half when compared with the same period last year. The scheme is intended to operate in respect of energy costs relating to the period from **1 September 2022 to 28 February 2023**.

What financial support is available?

The scheme will allow eligible businesses to receive a payment of up to 40% of the increase in their electricity and gas bill up to a maximum of €10,000 per month. Businesses that operate from more than one premises, e.g., from several branches and have more than one meter point reference number (MPRN) or gas meter reference number (GMPRN), may qualify for up to €30,000 per month.

Who is eligible for TBESS?

Firstly, the business must be tax compliant. This means they must be up to date with regards to tax registration, tax payments and the filing of tax returns. The business must have a tax clearance certificate for the claim period. In addition to this, to be eligible to qualify for the scheme, a business must be able to show that their electricity or natural gas bills have increased by 50% or more when compared with the same month or billing period last year. The increase is measured on the average unit price and is known as the 'energy cost threshold'.

How do I apply for the scheme?

TBESS is being administered by Revenue on behalf of the Government. The easiest way to apply is through the Revenue Online Service (ROS). This is a two-step process. Step one is registration and step two is claim. Both of these are accessible through revenues on line system, ROS. You must register via ROS before claims can be submitted. When registering for the scheme you will need to include details of the business and information on the relevant electricity and gas connections.

Time limit for making a claim?

The time limit for making a claim in relation to an electricity or gas bill is 4 months from the end of the claim period to which the electricity or gas bill relates. See the table below for the relevant time limits for making a claim in respect of each claim period:

Claim period	Time limit for making a claim
September 2022	31 January 2023
October 2022	28 February 2023
November 2022	31 March 2023
December 2022	30 April 2023
January 2023	31 May 2023
February 2023	30 June 2023

For more information on the TBESS, revenue has published guidelines on the operation of the scheme, with examples of the energy cost threshold, the eligible costs, and the amount that can be claimed. You can access this information here:

<https://www.revenue.ie/en/starting-a-business/documents/tbess-guidelines.pdf>

Upcoming research in 2023

Edgar Garcia Manzanilla

2022 is over and hopefully 2023 will be a better year for the pig industry. In 2023, the Teagasc PDD will focus on helping pig farmers to recover from the unprecedented 2022 crisis and to prepare for the challenges of the EU regulations and international markets. In a nutshell, we will increase efforts dedicated to analyse the pig production chain and reduce production costs, especially comparing Ireland with other EU countries, we will start a new line of research to add value to pig meat products nationally and internationally, and will further develop the research on strategies that help farmers adapt to the new requirements for environmental emissions and animal welfare.

Adding value to pig meat

For anybody visiting a supermarket regularly, it will be easy to think of multiple pig products on

the shelves. Ham, sausages, rashers, pudding and some other products. Luckily pork is still the most consumed meat (40% of the total), and why wouldn't it be? It is cheap protein, extremely versatile, has the lowest food waste proportion (0.65%), a very good life cycle assessment and it is very tasty. Are we selling all of these advantages at the right price? Probably not.

Pig meat products offer one of the cheapest proteins in the market. This "honour" used to be for poultry but in recent years poultry have diversified and sold their products well. Are we doing enough in the pig sector? Again, probably not. At an international level, we have good activity. However, at a national level we are far from the product range that is seen on the shelves in countries like Germany, France, Italy or Spain.

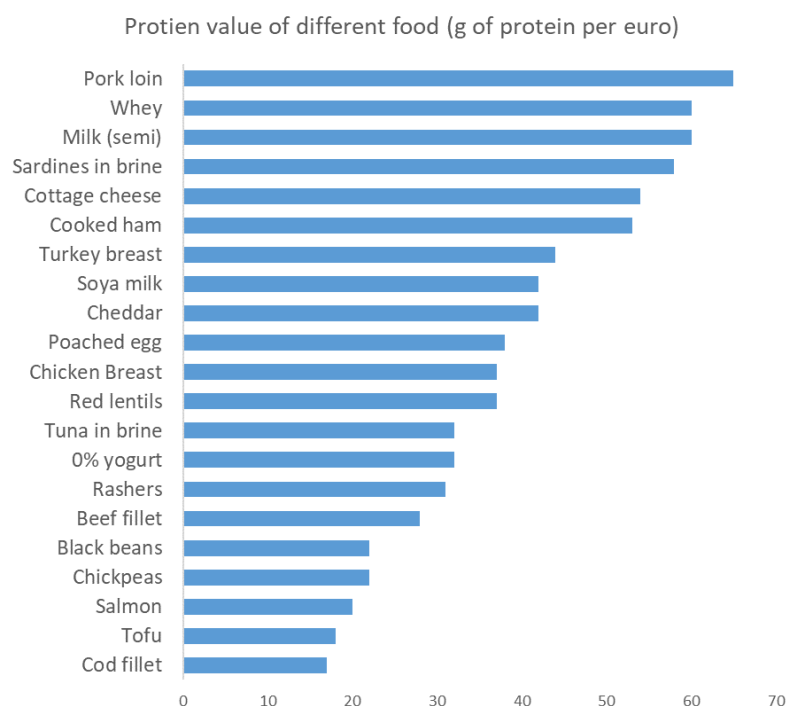


Figure 1. Protein content of different food expressed as per euro.

In 2023, Teagasc will launch project ValuePig that will look at the pig meat production chain, analysing opportunities to add value to pig products by reducing costs, exploring new production options and product ranges. However, the most important part of this project is the focus

to make sure that the added value reaches the farmer.

As part of the preparations for this project, the Pig Stakeholder group visited the research facilities in Teagasc Ashtown and the National Prepared

Consumer Food Centre where part of the research will take place. The Teagasc Ashtown Research Centre has worked for years with the beef industry and this experience will be very valuable for the pig industry. In the coming month the stakeholder group will also visit different companies in Spain to

gather data on how the production chain and product development processes work over there and what are the costs involved and future strategies.



Figure 2. Images from the stakeholder group visit to the Teagasc Ashtown research facilities.

New EU regulations

We have dedicated articles in previous newsletters to the new animal medicine laws, nitrates regulations or the new EFSA welfare recommendations that are currently being discussed in Brussels and expected to become regulations in 2023. These regulations will most likely have an economic impact on farm and we need to start working as soon as possible to minimise that impact. Although these new regulations are developed separately, they cannot be considered independent on farm. For example, a recommendation for a certain percentage of solid floors based on animal welfare may have a direct impact on ammonia emissions or Salmonella counts.

In the area of animal medicine and especially prudent antibiotic use, the Irish pig industry is making a significant effort and Teagasc PDD will continue with the projects already in place (PigNutriStrat, MonoGutHealth, BM-Farm, FARM-

CARE, Vir-FARM, AMU-FARM) where many new strategies to reduce antibiotic use are tested including supplementary milk, hygiene protocols, analgesia during farrowing, strategies to control the flow of pigs, feed additives, modulation of the microbiota, vaccination strategies and staff training among others. All the current projects in this area add up to more than €1.5 million in research investment.

A research area where Teagasc PDD plans to increase its activity is in reducing ammonia and odour emissions by studying current and future solutions for farmers. Project LE-Farms (LE for Low Emissions) will test nutritional (feed additives and low protein diets) and slurry management strategies as short term strategies to reduce ammonia emissions and will start working on new designs for pig facilities. For this purpose Teagasc has built a new low emission facility including two different ventilation areas, slurry scrapers and

external covered tanks. This facility will allow us to test several new technologies to reduce emissions in future buildings.

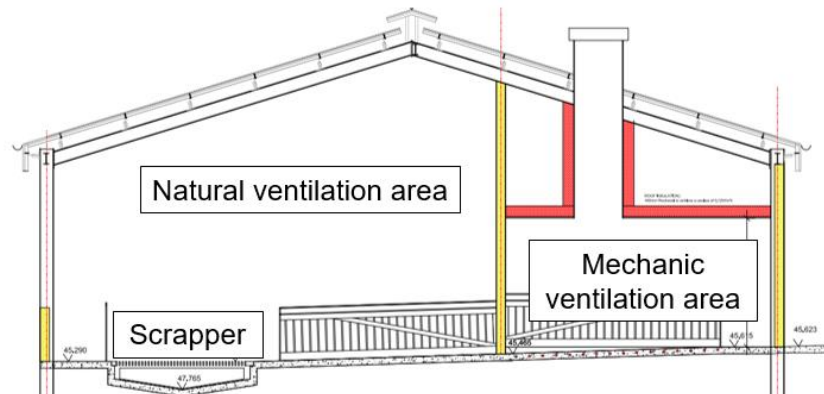


Figure 3. Lateral section of the new building in Teagasc Moorepark.

The building also includes some of the welfare recommendations currently being discussed in Brussels and it has been very informative even before the building started. The planning and building has revealed several uncertainties that are currently not resolved and need more research and it has become clear that these type of facilities have a cost far superior to the current farms. Thus, the new recommendations in building designs should always be accompanied by a plan on how the farmer will be able to face such investments at a national level. Project OneWelPig will study the improvements needed in such new facilities from a health and welfare point of view.

Thinking about 2024

Some of the projects developed in recent years by the Teagasc PDD require high levels of investment and the planning needs to start well in advance. A discussion that needs to start in 2023 so that we can start working on this area in 2024 is the new requirements and available options for farrowing accommodation. This area is currently under discussion in Brussels following the recent recommendations published by EFSA. However, in Teagasc we are already looking at the options available so that we can start testing them in 2024 in our Pig Research Facility or in commercial farms.

If you have ideas that you think are important, please let us know.

Bord Bia's Export Performance and Prospects report 2022/23

Emer McCrum

The publication of Bord Bia's Export Performance and Prospects Report 2022/23 on Wednesday last revealed the value of Ireland's food, drink and horticulture exports increased by 22% last year to reach a new record high of €16.7 billion. The significant increase of €3 billion on last year can be attributed to increasing unit prices due to inflation and rising input and operational costs, and an increase in the volume of goods exported. The stronger-than-expected performance came despite the impact of war in Ukraine, inflationary pressures on producers and global supply chain issues related to Covid.

The meat and livestock sector is the second largest element within Irish food and drink exports totalling over €4 billion last year, up 15% or €520 million on 2021. In spite of the significant financial challenges over the last 18 months, Irish pigmeat exports contributed €540 million to the Irish exchequer in 2022 (up 2% on 2021) representing 13% of the total value of food, drink and horticulture exports. The volume of pigmeat exported last year totalled 228,000 tonnes, down 20,000 tonnes on 2021. The pigmeat trade across the EU started slower in 2022 reflecting weaker global demand as the foodservice channel remained challenging due to Covid restrictions and reduced import demand from China. In addition, lower production was recorded for pigmeat last year although the impact on overall exports was offset by higher average prices.

Pigmeat shipments to international markets accounted for 69% of export volumes at 157,000 tonnes valued at €345 million. While China remains the key partner destination, the recovery in Chinese domestic production negatively affected Irish pigmeat exports during 2022 with the value of shipments to China falling by 31% to

€130 million. This decline however was largely offset by stronger growth in other international markets such as Australia, the Philippines, the US and South Korea where lower domestic output levels boosted import demand. The value of Irish pigmeat shipped to these international markets was 40% higher in 2022 at €150 million. Closer to home, lower pigmeat availability across the EU mostly notably in Denmark, Germany and Poland saw Irish exports to the region increase by 23% to €100 million during the year. Exports to the UK were 3% higher in value terms at €95 million driven by higher unit pricing. Volumes to this market however also saw a decline on the previous year.

Value added meat exports are a vitally important outlet for traditionally lower value cuts and trimmings. Consisting of products such as value-added ingredients for foodservice and manufacturing channels, and products such as burgers for retail and foodservice, value added exports in 2022 reached an estimated €925 million. When broken down by species, value added pigmeat exports represented 50% of the total at €460m in 2022. Key markets for value added meat exports during 2022 included the UK, France, Germany, Spain and Denmark.

If you would like to find out more information, the Export Performance and Prospects report 2022/23 is available to download on the Bord Bia website at the following link: [2022---2023-export-performance--prospects-final.pdf \(bordbia.ie\)](#).

Recordings from various speakers who presented at the launch of the report are also available to view on the website at the following link: [Meat Marketing Seminar 2023 \(bordbia.ie\)](#).

How to avail of the Temporary Business Energy Support Scheme



With the current situation of energy costs on pig farms, Louise Clarke, specialist advisor at Teagasc Ballyhaise, joins Ciarán Carroll on the latest Pig Edge podcast to discuss the Temporary Business Energy Support Scheme (TBESS) and other energy cost-saving measures.

Louise first explains the financial help available to pig farmers via TBESS and the criteria to be eligible for it. Plus she also highlights how to best monitor and control energy costs on farm including possible cost-savings that can be introduced.

Click [here](#) to listen to this and more episodes of the Pig Edge podcast.

2023 IPHS Symposium



The 2023 Irish Pig Health Society Symposium will take place on Tuesday 18th of April at the Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise, Co. Laois. The theme of this year's event is 'Quality over quantity by maximising health & efficiency'. There will be a host of speakers, industry leaders and exhibitors in attendance. This event always proves a valuable information source for pig producers and across the wider industry.

Topics:

- How to stimulate mammary gland development and increase sow milk yield
- Getting the most from your herd – maximising sow longevity and gilt retention
- Looking towards a renewable future – a closer look at viable energy options
- Pig Producer discussion panel

[More information is available here.](#)



For more information visit our website
www.teagasc.ie/animals/pigs

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