

## Press release

---

# Ministers McConalogue and Hackett launch new Farmland Identification book as part of the rollout of the ACRES scheme

From [Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine \(/en/organisation/departement-of-agriculture-food-and-the-marine/\)](#).

Published on 14 June 2023

Last updated on 23 June 2023

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, and Minister of State with responsibility for Biodiversity, Senator Pippa Hackett, today officially have launched the Farmland Plant Identification book which every participant in Ireland's flagship Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES) have now received as part of their information pack.

The book contains a description of the most common plants found in a wide range of Irish grasslands and peatlands. It is an important guide for farmers to help identify a variety of plants that can have a beneficial effect on our biodiversity. The ACRES scheme has a major results-based payment element at its core, which rewards farmers financially for having a more species rich sward enhancing our biodiversity.

Welcoming the publication, Minister McConalogue said:

“ACRES is our flagship agri-environmental scheme and has set a high level of environmental ambition to be achieved over the next five years. I’m delighted with the interest shown by farmers with over 46,000 farmers participating already. Chief among the environmental objectives is the enhancement of the quality and range of species of our grasslands through appropriate management by farmers and landowners who are the custodians of these pastures. This book will enhance farmers knowledge and enable them to increase their result-based payment under the scheme.”

Minister Hackett added:

“The Farmland Plant Identification book is a fantastic user-friendly resource not just for farmers, but for anyone interested in our grassland and peatlands. The use of imagery, short descriptions, and colour coding make it easier to identify the species that will have a positive effect on our biodiversity. I’d encourage every ACRES participant to take the time to study it and see how it relates to their land.”

The Ministers also acknowledged the ongoing training of ACRES advisers by the eight ACRES Co-Operation teams across the country in the use of the new scorecards which will ensure effective and consistent scoring of fields over the summer. This scoring work has now commenced and the scoring of fields this summer in year one of ACRES will set a baseline for those participants approved into the Scheme under Tranche 1, allowing for progress to be measured over the course of the scheme.

---

## Notes



**FARMLAND PLANT IDENTIFICATION KEY – SPECIES GUIDE Second Edition**  
**September 2023**

[Download \(https://assets.gov.ie/236151/13c6a792-ada9-440c-8203-b95282fe4edf.pdf\)](https://assets.gov.ie/236151/13c6a792-ada9-440c-8203-b95282fe4edf.pdf)

[View \(/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/236151/13c6a792-ada9-440c-8203-b95282fe4edf.pdf#page=null\)](/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/236151/13c6a792-ada9-440c-8203-b95282fe4edf.pdf#page=null)

The Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES) is Ireland's new agri-environment climate scheme under Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan. This €1.5 billion flagship agri-environment scheme is a farmer-friendly scheme to help address biodiversity decline while delivering an income support for up to 50,000 farm families.

Within ACRES; results-based payments were available as an option, for example, low input grassland along with traditional prescription based actions such as hedge planting to farmers in ACRES General; while results-based payments form the core payment for farmers in ACRES Cooperative Project (ACRES CP) alongside bespoke farm and landscape actions.

Result-based payments link the nature quality of the habitats on a farm to your environmental payment. Each field is scored out of 10 using a scorecard that captures the environmental quality of the habitat, which reflects past and current management.



### **ACRES Scorecards General & Co-operation Approach**

These scorecards are for use in both ACRES General and Co-operation approaches, and may be used, where appropriate, on all lands in Co-operation Project areas, Commonage and for relevant ACRES General actions (namely, the Grassland scorecard is to be used for scoring of the 'Low Input Grassland' action and the Low Input Peat Grassland scorecard for the 'Low Input Peat Grassland' action, both of which fall within the ACRES General approach)

[Download \(https://assets.gov.ie/255704/0647b3cd-7ed9-44c5-8c58-56d3c8630c0b.pdf\)](https://assets.gov.ie/255704/0647b3cd-7ed9-44c5-8c58-56d3c8630c0b.pdf)

[View \(/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/255704/0647b3cd-7ed9-44c5-8c58-56d3c8630c0b.pdf#page=null\)](/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/255704/0647b3cd-7ed9-44c5-8c58-56d3c8630c0b.pdf#page=null)

## Part of

Policies

[Agriculture and Food \(/en/policy/268a7-agriculture-and-food/\)](/en/policy/268a7-agriculture-and-food/)

**BETA**

This is a prototype - your feedback will help us to improve it.

**Help us improve gov.ie**

[Leave feedback](#)

## Departments and publications

[Circulars \(/en/circulars/\)](/en/circulars/)

[Consultations \(/en/consultations/\)](/en/consultations/)

[Directory \(/en/directory/\)](/en/directory/)

[Policies \(/en/policies/\)](/en/policies/)

[Publications \(/en/publications/\)](/en/publications/)

## About gov.ie

[About gov.ie \(/en/help/about-govie/\)](/en/help/about-govie/)

[Accessibility \(/en/help/accessibility/\)](/en/help/accessibility/)

[Privacy policy \(/en/help/privacy-policy/\)](/en/help/privacy-policy/)

[Who does what \(/en/help/e170a-who-does-what/\)](/en/help/e170a-who-does-what/)



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland

## Manage cookie preferences

[Manage preferences](#)