



## **Europe's Most Innovative Grassland Farmers Set for Award Ceremony in Germany in June**

Europe's most innovative grassland farmers are set to receive international awards for their innovation and commitment to excellence in grassland. This initiative is part of the three year Inno4Grass Thematic Network project, a €2 million project funded by Horizon 2020. The farmers receiving awards represent eight member states in Europe and are all excelling in grassland and grassland management despite differences in climate, systems and soil types. Each member state has recognised a farmer excelling in grassland through different competitions which took place in the member states.

The eight countries being celebrated at the Inno4Grass award ceremony are Germany, Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden, in which grasslands have a considerable share in the agricultural area and where production of dairy, beef and sheep from grassland is of major economic importance.

The award ceremony is set to take place in Germany from 11th to 12th June 2019. Participants will visit local farms near Oldenburg, Northern Germany to discuss grassland management with different grazing and conservation techniques on the 11th June and will then travel to Hannover for a Grassland Conference and the official award ceremony the following day. The German Ministry for Agriculture is supporting this event.

Ireland's Project Leader Dr Michael O'Donovan commented 'Eddie and Denis O'Donnell the inaugural Grassland Farmers of the Year in 2017 are representing Ireland at the award ceremony. It is really important for Ireland to be involved in this event where we can showcase our excellent grassland farmers. The O'Donnell's hosted a visit during the European Grassland Federation conference in 2018, which was received very well'.

Project coordinator Arno Krause remarked “I’m looking forward to presenting innovative grassland farmers around Europe with awards for their fantastic achievements in grassland. We call these farmers ‘lighthouse farmers’, they are shining lights in their countries, providing other farmers with guidance, ideas and knowledge in grassland, so it is important that we recognise their contribution to society in the award ceremony. This is one of the major achievements of the Inno4Grass project”.

The Inno4Grass programme strives to bridge the gap between practice and science communities to ensure the implementation of innovative systems on productive grasslands. The long term goal of the project is to increase profitability of European grassland farms and to preserve environmental values across Europe.

The following Table shows the award winning farmers and the Inno4Grass contact persons.

Country	Award winners	Inno4Grass Contact	Inno4Grass Contact Email
Ireland	Eddie and Denis O’Donnell	Fergus Bogue	<a href="mailto:fergus.bogue@teagasc.ie">fergus.bogue@teagasc.ie</a>
Germany	Hof Butendiek	Felicitas Kaemena	<a href="mailto:felicitas.kaemena@lwk-niedersachsen.de">felicitas.kaemena@lwk-niedersachsen.de</a>
The Netherlands	Hielke and Hanny de Rooij	Agnes van den Pol-van Dasselaar	<a href="mailto:agnes.vandenpol@wur.nl">agnes.vandenpol@wur.nl</a>
Belgium	Velghe Jean-Marie	Benoit Delaite	<a href="mailto:b.delaite@trame.be">b.delaite@trame.be</a>
Poland	Mariusz Duda,	Artur Paszkowski	<a href="mailto:artpa@up.poznan.pl">artpa@up.poznan.pl</a>
Italy	Gavino Pulinas	Rita Melis	<a href="mailto:rita.melis@ispaam.cnr.it">rita.melis@ispaam.cnr.it</a>
France	Earl Bordeau	Fanny Baste-Sauvaire	<a href="mailto:fanny.baste@apca.chambagri.fr">fanny.baste@apca.chambagri.fr</a>
Sweden	Per and Tore Larsson	Nilla Nilsdotter-Linde	<a href="mailto:nilla.nilsdotter-linde@slu.se">nilla.nilsdotter-linde@slu.se</a>

**Acknowledgement:**

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727368