

Farmers come together at Ulster Bank agriculture event in Kilkenny

Building Capabilities event hears from panel of farmers and agri-experts on change and the future of farming

Wednesday 25th April 2018, Kilkenny Farmers and agri-businesses attended the Ulster Bank *Building Capabilities* event in the Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny today. The seminar was led by a panel of speakers including Pat Deering, T.D., Chairman of the Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Dr. Ailish Byrne, Senior Agriculture Manager, Ulster Bank; PJ O’Keeffe, Dairy Farmer, Callan, Co Kilkenny; Pat Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald Nurseries, Stoneyford, Kilkenny; Niall Flynn, Dairy Farmer, Waterford; and Stephen Trant, Agriculture Business Development Manager, Ulster Bank.

A lively discussion took place on strategies to build capabilities and manage change on farms, current and future farm systems, funding for growth plans and how to improve your work-life balance. The group also got some practical advice on mental health and how best to deal with the pressures faced by those working in the farming sector.

Pat Deering, T.D., Chairman of the Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine said:

"I was delighted to take part in the Ulster Bank seminar this morning and hear from farmers in the Carlow/Kilkenny region and beyond. It was also an opportunity for me to encourage farmers and agri businesses to redouble our efforts to achieve the FoodWise 2025 vision for the sustainable growth of the sector. It's a challenging time for the agriculture industry with issues like fodder, shortage, Brexit and CAP reform and that's why this event is so important, so we can look for solutions in a collaborative way."

Speaking about the event, PJ O’Keeffe, Dairy Farmer, Callan, Co Kilkenny said:

"Farming is a close knit community and it's really important that we share our ideas and experiences so that we can all learn and benefit from each other. Like most businesses, farmers have to plan for the future and ensure we are well equipped to deal with the changes that lie ahead. Helping each other through shared experiences is a great way to do just that so I was delighted to take part in the Ulster Bank seminar this morning and hear from local farmers and agri businesses about the opportunities and challenges we all face and how we can overcome them together."

Dr. Ailish Byrne, Senior Agricultural Manager, Ulster Bank, said:

"We know that farmers are planning for the rest of 2018 and beyond and managing change is an important part of that planning. We're delighted to offer support through our Building Capabilities event and provide the opportunity to debate issues, share information and ultimately solve problems. We understand that farmers have specific needs and Ulster Bank has a number of supports in place dedicated to farmers such as our Dairy Farm Expansion Loan, Pasture Loan, Cashflow planner and our Young Farmer Package.. Our dedicated Agri Managers are out meeting farmers and agri businesses to find out more about how we can help them grow and fulfil their ambitions."

Further information is available at www.ulsterbank.ie/agri

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