



# Kerry Social Farming



Participants Antoinette O'Sullivan and Bronagh Enright, Rena Blake, Barna, Ballybunion, participant John O'Connor and Carmel Nolan support worker on Rena's farm in Ballybunion.

## 'The horticultural side of Social Farming is very important...'

I'm involved in Kerry Social Farming just over a year. I first heard about it on a rural social scheme where they were promoting it. I just felt it would be very fitting to what we do here on the farm. My partner Lisa and I wanted to do more social based events in our organic farm and we thought this would be really good.

I have Antoinette, Bronagh and John coming to me every Friday and the sense of joy we get from them is immense. We have great craic and

I find they have such a keen interest in growing seeds. Their attention when they sow is so direct and their reaction when they grow is brilliant. They seem to have this magic touch propagating seeds and we have great fun over it.

They also get to meet a lot of people as we have people calling for vegetables during the week. Bagging vegetables and going on deliveries is something that's really enjoyed. They love being out and socialising. I give them choices in what

they want to do on the farm.

People often say they don't have time for Social Farming but believe me when I say what you get back from a participant is well worth the time you give. It has become part of my week and I don't feel held back in the slightest. If you feel like you want to give something to a community then Social Farming is the perfect match for that. There is a lot of goodness in it and you feel part of something. It's lovely to see the effect it has.

There are so many aspects to Social Farming and the fact the horticultural side of things is being explored more is even very positive because working with soil is very therapeutic. Also, our land has a small woodland walk and overgrown meadow. This is something the guys enjoy. It's all about getting out in the open and being part of nature.

Rena Blake, Barna, Ballybunion

## KERRY PARENTS & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

The Old Monastery, Port Road, Killarney, Co. Kerry

Tel: 064 6632742 • Website: [www.kpfa.ie](http://www.kpfa.ie)



### A Message from Marie Linehan CEO KPFA



The American civil rights activist, Baptist minister, and politician, Jesse Jackson once said, "when everyone is included, everyone wins". No truer words could be spoken about Social Farming in Kerry.

Kerry Parents & Friends became involved in social farming because this initiative offered the people we support, the opportunities to live and work within their local communities, to engage with the farming community and to learn about farming life. We were confident that it would also be equally beneficial to farmers and looking back now, that was a huge understatement. Kerry Social Farming has been a great success!

The day that Joseph McCrohan, South Kerry Development Partnership, made a passionate presentation to me, describing the benefits of social farming and his vision for inclusion, participation and connecting people, is the day we looked forward and found new opportunities for growth and development of the people we support.

It's wonderful to see participants anticipate the upcoming events of the day, to have a reason to leave their homes, to participate in everyday farming life [meals, feeding animals, mucking out], to have accomplishments to reflect on at the end of the day.

In this supplement, you will read about changed lives, new families, satisfaction at work and endless opportunities realised. Kerry Social Farming is not done yet! We hope to take this initiative further and ensure the farming families and participants can make a decent living into the future and open more doors to ordinary living, as it should be!

Kerry Parents & Friends Association is a proud partner in the delivery of this shared service initiative and will continue to support and promote Social Farming as its New Directions Service into the future.

Sometimes the greatest gift you can give to a person is to simply include them!



@kerryparentsandfriends



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On Dessie's Farm



Job done! Claire takes a break



Leo meets Earl and Ger at the Ploughing Championships