

Inspirational Rural Women

A Sharing Practice Guide



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About the Rural Network for Northern Ireland



The Rural Network for Northern Ireland works to support the implementation of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (NIRDP). Since its inception in 2008 the Network team has worked at a regional, national and european level. It does this by:

- Coordinating a series of thematic activities and working groups on Rural Development Programme Communications; Cooperation and LAG Networking
- Organising workshops, conferences and seminars on a range of programme themes
- Delivering a suite of training modules
- Providing information exchange facilities such as website, facebook, good practice publications, newsletters and study visits.

What is a 'Thematic Working Group?'



The concept of 'Thematic Working' was developed by the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) as a means of researching and sharing existing learning and experiences on specific themes across the EU.

Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) bring people together in small groups around specific, focused areas of interest. The aim is to improve the effective delivery of the Rural Development

Programme 2007-2013 and inform the development of future programmes. The Rural Network for Northern Ireland coordinates a series of Thematic Working Groups including:

- Women in Rural Development
- Information Communication Technology (ICT)
- Local Food
- Children and Young People

During the one year work programme for the Womens Thematic group over 180 women attended 3 seminars on the theme of 'Inspirational Women in Rural Development' and 'Early Steps into Business'. In addition to the events and the publication of this sharing practice guide the members contributed to a piece of research undertaken by Dr Sally Shorthall of Queens University Belfast on 'Gender Mainstreaming the Rural Development Programme' which will be published in Spring 2013.



Women in Rural Development

Economic and social ventures have a positive effect on rural areas in that they are seen as places in which the needs of those living there are met and that they are attractive, thriving and interesting places to live and work.

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2007-2013 is very much focused on people and place. Improving quality of life and encouraging diversification of economic activity is one of its key aims. Traditional agricultural practices are no longer the sole economic employers in rural areas and this programme offers considerable capacity for those wishing to grow a small business or to begin something completely new.

Many women have been encouraged by the opportunities arising from the Rural Development funding streams and have become involved in

the implementation of a variety of projects. Direct investment has been given to ventures including diversification from traditional farm activity, the creation of new businesses, tourism development schemes and projects which address basic services gaps in local rural communities. Significantly many of these innovative projects have created jobs and it is this local economic impact which is hugely important in the retention of a good quality of life for rural dwellers.

Many of the female entrepreneurs featured here attended the seminars run by the Rural Network for Northern Ireland, indeed several spoke at the events while others exhibited their business or enterprise. The breadth of ideas and energy showcased is truly encouraging and inspirational.



Words of Wisdom from Wonderful Women

"Do your research, and if you want your business to grow you will have to take chances."

"Finding new markets at home and abroad is our priority every day we get up."

"The events coordinated by the Rural Network were great opportunities for women to network, learn about support and resources on offer."

"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak, it was yet another huge step forward for me"

"I also valued the positive feedback from everyone afterwards. It gave a big boost to my confidence."

"Believe in yourself and above all be mannerly."

Ministerial Forward



As Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development I am very pleased to have been asked to write this foreword. The Guide is just one outcome of the work of the Women in Rural Development Thematic Working Group. These are a dedicated cadre of women active in the rural development programme and in championing rural women's issues that span the entire NI Rural Development Programme NIRDP. They, with the facilitation of the Rural Network for the north of Ireland, have undertaken investigation into the roles women are playing in business and rural development today. They have hosted conferences with support from exceptional role models to inspire and empower others to realise their ambitions.

Women have been under represented in the business world. This guide showcases that this need no longer be the case. The case studies set out here demonstrate what real women with vision, determination and a 'can-do' attitude have achieved both locally and further afield, with a little support from the Rural Development Programme. The

women featured are trailblazers in their own right, they have seen a potential opportunity and turned it into reality. Some were already running their own businesses, others had simply decided that now was the time and for others the driver was the desire to improve their local community. Turning the disadvantage of a rural location into an asset these women have utilised their skills, resources and opportunities to live their dream.

The businesses showcased here are diverse ranging from tourism to an ingenious engineering heat loss prevention system, taking in soap making, baby foods and handcrafted pottery on the way. They demonstrate that women cannot be pigeon holed into 'women's jobs' but rather they have the skills, aptitude and appetite to take on the world of business in all its facets.

I had the pleasure of attending one of the Thematic Working Group conferences last year and I heard from many of the women featured here who through the RDP are now running their own businesses. To me these women are inspirational they share the characteristics of positivity, pro-activity and possibility and despite a harsh economic environment they are keen to get on with business.

In the home women are organisers, mentors, managers and problem solvers. These are all transferrable skills and represent a vast and largely untapped source for driving rural development. I would encourage others to believe in themselves and to make the same journey as these

remarkable women whether into business, self employment or community development. The first step will certainly be the hardest but I can assure you that the Rural Development Programme with all its resources and all those engaged in it are there to help and encourage. Just read this guide to see how it has worked for others and how it can work for you.

Michelle O'Neill MLA
Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

"I had the pleasure of attending one of the Thematic Working Group conferences last year and I heard from many of the women featured here who through the RDP are now running their own businesses. To me these women are inspirational they share the characteristics of positivity, pro-activity and possibility and despite a harsh economic environment they are keen to get on with business."

Introduction



The Rural Network for Northern Ireland is very proud to present this brochure which focuses on women who are changing the face of 'rural' by creating and successfully running their own business. It features a range of initiatives developed by women with support from the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (NIRD) which is jointly funded by the European Union, through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD).

Improving the quality of life for all rural dwellers by encouraging new enterprises as well as supporting farmers, farm families and producers are key aspects of the programme. Traditional agricultural practices are no longer the sole economic employers in rural areas and this programme offers considerable capacity for those wishing to grow a small business or to begin something completely new. Promoting equal opportunities is also a key programme focus. It aims to address the inequalities faced by women, amongst these isolation, unemployment and poverty, by introducing funding

opportunities to attract women and encouraging women's groups to become involved. In an attempt to get to the grassroots involvement of women in the life of rural areas the Rural Network for Northern Ireland established a Women in Rural Development Thematic Working Group comprising representatives of Local Action Groups, Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster (YFCU), Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN) and Countryside Agri Rural Partnership (CARP). The group focused on a range of issues facing rural women and held events and activities to encourage women to become economically active.

Those who participated in the events were from a range of backgrounds, ages and interests; many associated with farming and part of farm families others involved in community groups and many more who had begun or developed innovative business ideas. Our first event '*Inspirational Women in Rural Development*' was a showcase of women who had received funding under all aspects of the Rural Development Programme. Feedback was excellent and demand was such that two further highly successful '*Early Steps into Business*' seminars were held attracting more than 160 women.

Rather than finding that women were discouraged by obstacles and challenges in getting involved in the life of their rural areas the attendance at the events, and the stories in this guide, prove that while women recognise that barriers exist they are determined to get past them and create their own future. This guide showcases the scope and diversity ranging from hat and handbag hire, beauty industries, marketing and corporate

business services, engineering and tourism provision, childcare centres to textile design and dressmaking. In many instances these enterprises were up and running before the Rural Development funding came on stream and it was seen as an opportunity to expand but for many others the investment helped them on their first crucial step to purchasing equipment or investing in technology which helped mobilise ideas. The beauty of many of these businesses is that they operate from the family home, whether that be on the farm or located in a rural community. This is a significant attraction to women who often also hold the main responsibility for childcare and eldercare duties.

A new Rural Development Programme will begin in 2014. Many ideas and schemes, which are only at early stage now, could be made reality in the next few years and we hope that the women included here will act as a spur to all readers to get ready for the next programme when it opens for funding. Three women who are volunteers on Local Action Groups are also featured here and encourage women to get involved.

This brochure will be circulated to all those involved in the delivery of the Rural Development Programme in Northern Ireland as well as to the south of Ireland, across the UK regions to Wales, Scotland and England and across Europe. It will also be made available on the Rural Network website and can be issued to anyone who feels inspired by its contents.

Teresa Canavan
Rural Network for Northern Ireland



Words of Wisdom from Wonderful Women

"Without the support and encouragement of the Rural Development Programme, which has been amazing, none of this would have been possible."

"Follow your dreams and don't ever give up, you only live once."

"It was only with the help of the Rural Development monies that I was able to establish my business; it gave me the support required to take the leap of faith."

"The RDP funding I received came at a crucial point in our development."

"Starting up my rural business has been a constant and ongoing learning curve. You will make mistakes and need to accept that."

"The information seminars were a fantastic way to gain inspiration and motivation for those thinking of starting their own business via listening to the wonderful case study speakers who are already doing just that."

"I have learnt to surround myself by people I trust enough to tell me the truth and not what they think I want to hear."

FROM HERDS TO SCARVES



Victoria Glenn, is a self named textile design business specialising in handcrafting innovative scarves/ neck wear. A graduate in Contemporary

Textile Design from Norwich University College of the Arts, Victoria experimented with fabrics to create innovative fashion accessories, all handmade with the greatest attention to detail. Victoria lives on a dairy, beef and potato farm in Co. Antrim and had already completed the Invest NI Go For It Business Programme and written a business plan when her father suggested she apply for Farm

Diversification funding. Victoria received assistance from the Rural Development Programme to purchase equipment which has been essential in the development of the business and has greatly improved production. Victoria's workshop is based on the farm where all the products are created.

Name of Business: Victoria Glenn

Contact Person: Victoria Glenn

Location: Ballycastle, Co. Antrim

www.victoria-glenn.com

HARNESSING CREATIVITY



Through her own experiences and speaking to others, Emma Anderson

identified a gap in the market for a safe off road trekking facility in her local area. She sought funding from the Rural Development Programme to construct an off road trek in a safe, secure area within the grounds of the family farm for locals and tourists alike. The trek offers the rider an opportunity to take in the fantastic views and scenery of the surrounding area. In addition to developing the trek, buildings were refurbished and a sand arena constructed to offer an all weather surface allowing all year round use and floodlighting to accommodate darker evenings. Emma's venture, Drumbarragh Stables, now caters for all equestrian needs from lessons to trekking for pleasure.



Name of Business: Drumbarragh Stables

Contact Person: Emma Anderson

Location: Ballinamallard, Co. Fermanagh

www.drumbarraghstables.co.uk

MARKETING FOR SUCCESS



Eilish established Ardean in 2006 and it is now an established consultancy

practice assisting small businesses with their marketing and business development needs. During the last six years Eilish has worked with numerous small businesses developing business plans, marketing plans and growth strategies for companies from a wide range of sectors. She also assists companies to implement marketing plans, working in association with graphic and website designers, and as a result has gained a wealth of knowledge on various resources and tools on offer to the small business community to assist them implement web building strategies, social media strategies, email marketing strategies, etc. In 2010, Eilish established

Made Easy Business Solutions, a part time business, with assistance from the NIRD. It provides an online solution giving small businesses the opportunity to develop their own website and email marketing campaigns. Eilish credits the Rural Development Programme for her business success commenting, "It was only with the help of the Rural Development monies that I was able to establish my business; it give me the support required to take the leap of faith and develop the online portal". Eilish presented at one of the 'Early Steps into Business' seminars coordinated by the Rural Network for Northern Ireland.

Name of Business: Made Easy Business Solutions

Contact Person: Eilish Devlin

Location: Moortown, Co. Tyrone

www.ardeaninfo.com

NATURAL DEVELOPMENT



Louise McFall, a registered childminder, grasped an ideal opportunity to develop her family farm. Not only has Louise created a new source of income for herself and the farm but also now provides local employment. Louise had already owned a successful children's nursery for 15 years which employed 47 people before she sold it in 2007. With business in her blood Louise decided to apply to the Rural Development Programme for the necessary financial support to help build and furnish a new centre. Primrose Hill Day Nursery now provides spaces for 39 children and has created 5 full time and 5 part time jobs.

This is no ordinary childcare facility though, the farm setting is an idyllic environment where the children cared for by Louise and her team have access to the natural world at all times. The children have the opportunity to feed and care for the farm animals including hens, rabbits and miniature goats and have plots to grow their own vegetables and flowers. A happy Louise says the decision to diversify has been the right one creating an additional farm income and



providing an essential service for working parents. She comments "I felt this was the ideal opportunity to not only generate a new source of farm income but also to create employment opportunities and a unique experience for children to enjoy the great outdoors".

Name of Business: Primrose Hill Day Nursery

Contact Person: Louise McFall

Location: Ballyclare, Co. Antrim

www.primrosehilldaynursery.com

CORE BUSINESS



The Co. Armagh countryside is known for its rich and fertile soil. Known as the 'Orchard County' its local apple growers are celebrated at the annual Apple Blossom Festival held each May. Helen Troughton's family farm, Ballinteggart House, may be located in a tranquil part of the county but it is a hub of progressive industry. In addition to general farm activities and the operation of two other enterprises, a Stud Farm and Honeyhill Rosettes, the farm is also home to a progressive cider company producing 1000 bottles per hour.

Armagh Cider Company was formed in 2005 by the Troughton family to manufacture apple juice and cider from apples grown in their own orchards which surround their family home. They have 80 acres of orchards in production and the company has developed its product range to include two varieties of cider, apple juice, mulled cider, apple punch and a cider vinegar. The cider and apple juice have competed on the world stage and won two gold stars for its 'AJ' apple juice in 2010 at the Great Taste Awards and is now supplied to the Hastings Hotel Group where it features on their breakfast menus. In the same year its two main ciders, Carsons Crisp and Maddens Mellow,



won gold and silver medals in the first International Cider Challenge and this hand crafted cider is now supplied to the iconic Guinness Storehouse in Dublin.

Name of Business: Armagh Cider Company

Contact Person: Helen Troughton

Location: Portadown, Co. Armagh

www.armaghcider.com

FUN ON THE FARM



Breidge McAlister is the proprietor of Clementsmount Farm, which has been a working farm for over 30 years but ten years ago Breidge took a decision to diversify the general farm activity and establish a children's nursery. From this a Fun Farm developed where the family's passion for farming combined with Breidge's love of caring for children.

The range of activities incorporate pony rides, pedal go karts, mini golf, a human hamster ball and a jumping pillow. Recently Breidge saw a niche in the market to introduce zorbing, an activity which would target teenagers, groups and even parents to visit the Fun Farm and join in the fun. Breidge received funding from the Rural Development Programme to purchase the zorb ball and additional facilities which included a mobile animal petting service for schools and community groups and toddler equipment. Now the business is a successful day attraction welcoming almost 5,000 individuals and groups per year.



Name of Business: Clementsmount Fun Farm
Contact Person: Breidge McAlister
Location: Crumlin, Co. Antrim
www.clementsmountfunfarm.co.uk

TRADITIONAL HOMECRAFT REVIVAL



Gayle Hegarty, a farmer's wife and mum of three, has combined her part-time 'normal' job and mothering with setting up a business from the kitchen table. Unimpressed with the lack of local courses on crafts Gayle decided to run them herself and now offers one-day courses in crochet, knitting, bag-making, sewing machine skills, patchwork, easy gifts and cupcake decorating from her home.

Gayle explains, *"The emerging 'make-do and mend' ethos of recent years has led to increased interest in crafts. I was really into crafting myself and wanted to learn some more, but there was nothing on offer. My husband suggested I run the courses myself and get others to teach some subjects. What used to be taught at the fireside and in the classroom has lost its traditional place. Skills used to be passed down but there is now a whole generation of people who either never learned to sew or knit; or learned at school and then promptly turned away from it as it wasn't cool. The number of times I heard people say, 'I wish I could learn how to sew, knit, crochet, even decorate cupcakes. I felt the same but I didn't have time for a six week evening course' which set me to thinking about my own business. I believed you didn't need long term courses to get you up and going".* Support by the Rural Development Programme allowed Gayle to buy equipment and develop a delightful, interactive website.



Name of Business: Homecraft Revival
Contact Person: Gayle Hegarty
Location: Co. Tyrone
www.homecraftrevival.com

ENGINEERING CHANGE



Agnew General Engineering is a family owned steel fabrication company run by husband and wife team Gerard and Kathleen Agnew. Kathleen is very active in the business within an industry which is usually a male dominated profession. The business has been running for 18 years and employs 8 people. The company successfully bid for funding through the Rural Development Programme which has now allowed the business to develop current product lines. These include its

innovative boot cleaning equipment which has proved popular with sports clubs and farmers across the country. Kathleen showcased the business at several agricultural shows in 2012 and also was one of the invited panellists at the recent 'Rural Futures' conference organised by the Rural Network for Northern Ireland.

Name of Business: Agnew General Engineering
Contact Person: Kathleen Agnew
Location: Gilford, Co. Down
www.agnewengineering.com

FASHION IN HER FINGERS



A Fashion Design graduate from the University of Ulster Lorraine worked in a menswear retail store until its closure as a result of the economic downturn. While working full-time Lorraine had done some dressmaking part-time and the store closure encouraged her to take part in the Invest NI 'Go For It' programme. Lorraine now works from home undertaking dress-making and garment alterations. She also makes bridal gowns, bridesmaids dresses & flowergirl dresses for weddings, occasional and formal wear for school formals and fancy dress costumes. Several bridal shops have also requested Lorraine

to carry out bridal alterations. Lorraine received support from the NIRDP to establish her business and also exhibited at the 'Early Steps into Business' seminar hosted by the Rural Network for Northern Ireland.



Name of Business: Lorraine McGonigle
Location: Macosquin, Co. Antrim
www.facebook.com/lorraine.mcgonigledressmaking

MUCH MORE THAN BED & BREAKFAST



Lynne McCabe runs a rural Self Catering and B&B business at the beautiful Lisnacurran Country House which was built in the 1930's. The red brick house is set in an old style courtyard with guest rooms located in a separate part of the building with their own private entrance.



Lisnacurran offers a range of options for travellers to Northern Ireland with bed and breakfast, self catering and motorhome hire all on site. The business benefits greatly from its prime location adjacent to the very pretty village of Hillsborough and the property has now been extensively extended and refurbished with the property benefitting from flat screen TVs and free WIFI throughout. Lynne is looking towards the future in many ways and has established distinct income streams, including business linkages with a nearby country estate which hosts weddings. Lynne's business caters for tourists and regular local guests alike and always offers sublime breakfasts on Lynne's traditional Aga range.

Lynne applied for funding through the Rural Development Programme to install a vintage framed kitchen in keeping with the existing period decor and fittings. The investment also supported a marketing budget aimed at a new website and promotional literature.

Name of Business: Lisnacurran Country House B&B
Contact Person: Lynne McCabe
Location: Dromore, Co. Down
www.lisnacurrancountryhouse.co.uk

PREVENTING HEATLOSS WITH HEATBOSS!



A highly skilled computers graduate Janette has developed a revolutionary product called 'heatboss', which provides energy efficient heating controls.

It comprises a state-of-the-art 'Smart Plug' with associated wireless software and heating timer which allows a user to control the temperature in individual rooms, setting heating levels independently. Research has shown that it reduces energy costs by up to 35% per year. Jenette's immediate aims are to build and launch the heatboss brand with an initial focus on the commercial and residential care home market.

The business has been supported by Invest Northern Ireland and has just received investment from the Rural Development Programme towards the development of software and business planning. At a strategic policy level, government recognises the definitive need to cut energy wastage and its associated costs and needless carbon emissions. With rising fuel costs and pressures to reduce emissions Janette's research suggests that the market place is more than ready for the heatboss product. She has invented a product that may just revolutionize the way we heat buildings in the future!



Name of Business: Heatboss
Contact Person: Janette O'Hagan
Location: Glenravel, Co. Antrim
www.okotech.com

COTTAGE INDUSTRY



Stacey Hamill could see the potential of a new tourism venture at her home. Literally on the doorstep was a disused 200 year old stone dwelling which was full of character, located in a perfect setting with stunning views over Colin Mount, it provided the ideal opportunity for 4 self-catering properties. Stacey, as a local bar owner, was in the ideal position to hear first hand from local residents and visitors to the area alike who found it increasingly difficult to find self catering accommodation in the vicinity. Many wanted accommodation which offered the flexibility for families, groups or budget-conscious travellers.

With a young, growing family Stacey decided to give up her lease on the bar and apply for support from the Rural Development Programme to transform her outbuilding. When the funding was offered Stacey and her husband Jamie converted and extended the cottages into three separate units which cater for a wide variety of needs. The building has been transformed from a derelict shell which had housed evacuees during World War II in to high quality tourist accommodation. Stacey was one of the speakers at the Rural Networks 'Early Steps into Business' seminar and laid out her plans



for the future which include extending the current accommodation to include a luxury spa. Of the event she said, "It was an inspiration and very motivating hearing other peoples exciting ventures" and she shared advice with others starting out, "follow your dreams and don't ever give up, you only live once!"

Name of Business: Dunamoy Farm Cottages
Contact Person: Stacey Hamill
Location: Ballyclare, Co. Antrim
www.growsouthantrim.com/projects/dunamoy-cottages

SKILLS SET IN STONE



Established by Ann Mullan Kara Irish Pottery is a new business manufacturing a specialist craft product from a natural stone material. Having previously worked as Marketing Manager for Ulster Ceramics in Derry Ann lived for many years in the USA and retained an interest in ceramics and stoneware.

She noticed that certain gift shops, where she lived in Boston, had high demand for stone designs and products. Having researched the market Ann founded Kara Irish Pottery to design, manufacture and distribute drink coaster sets made from Irish sandstone. The product is a tourism and gift product targeting the Irish Diaspora market in the US and tourists to Ireland. Irish Stone Coasters have been shown on QVC Network and are now stocked at the Disney Epcot Centre in Florida. Ann's business venture was supported by the Rural Development Programme through ARC North West Local Action Group.

Ann presented and exhibited the 'Early Steps into Business' event which was coordinated by the Rural Network for Northern Ireland and has shown that while her business is based locally it also has a global appeal.



Name of Business: Kara Irish Pottery
Contact Person: Ann Mullan
Location: Greysteel, Co Derry
www.karairishpottery.com

LUCKY BUMPKINS



Country Bumpkins Ltd is a private day care nursery run by mother and daughter team

Sandra Symington and Ruth McGowan. Following the birth of her first child Ruth encountered a dilemma common to many rural women – the lack of good quality local childcare. Ruth and her mother Sandra discussed the issue and began thinking about setting up their own enterprise.

Between them the ladies certainly had an excellent mix of skills - Sandra had worked in the banking sector and Ruth is a Registered General Nurse who attained NVQ 3 & 4 in Childcare and Management. Since its opening in 2002 Country Bumpkins has steadily built up a good reputation and numbers and in addition provides a key source of employment locally.

All ages of children are catered for from 6 week old babies up to the age of 11. There are currently

54 children registered and the applicants have a waiting list for places in the year ahead. As well as full time day care places they also offer an after schools club including school drop offs and pick-ups. Each child is catered for individually and Ruth and Sandra have gone to considerable lengths to ensure that all food offered is fresh, home cooked and nutritious and have locally sourced meat and fresh fruit on the daily menu.

To enhance their service, and the happiness of the children in their care, Ruth and Sandra applied to the Rural Development Programme to transform their outdoor area into a specially designed all weather play area, along with the installation of a CCTV system allowing them to monitor the facility at all times.

Name of Business: Country Bumpkins Ltd
Contact: Ruth Magowan & Sandra Symington
Location: Comber, Co. Down
www.countrybumpkinsnursery.co.uk

A TASTY START



Since launching Heavenly Tasty Organics Ltd in 2011, Shauna McCarney's

baby food company has become a major award winner. It was always Shauna's dream to run her own business but the idea for Heavenly Tasty Organics Ltd came unexpectedly. Shauna explains, "Like all new mums I wanted to provide the best for my baby, so I tried to make all my own organic baby food from scratch. I scoured the shops for pure, fresh, nutritious and tasty baby food, just like what I made at home, but it just wasn't available anywhere". Shauna then decided to do it herself!

The company now has a strong base in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and hope to retail in Britain in the next 12 months. There has been major recognition too for Shauna's product and business. In 2011 she won a local Business Award for 'Best New Start-up', the Women in Business Award for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the Maternity and Infant Award's 'Business Parent of the Year' for All Ireland, and was one of the top three businesses in Northern Ireland in the Business Accelerators competition which was promoted by Prime Minister David Cameron and Dragon's Den star Deborah Meaden. Heavenly Tasty Organics was also listed in the top 10 products in the Maternity and Infant Awards 2012 and Shauna was a finalist in 'The Pitch'



Business Awards held in Britain in November 2012. "It has meant a lot of research and hard work in recent years", says Shauna, "but with the support of the Rural Development Programme, I'm delighted to say I now have a thriving rural business". Shauna was a speaker at the Rural Network for Northern Ireland Enterprise and Entrepreneurship seminar 'The Changing State of the Rural Economy: Where to now?'

Name of Business: Heavenly Tasty Organics
Contact Person: Shauna McCarney
Location: Co. Tyrone
www.heavenlytastyorganics.com

A RURAL RETREAT



For centuries the land surrounding the area of Helene O'Neills home has

been a place of solace for those seeking a spiritual retreat. It is situated in the shadow of an ancient monastery overlooking one of the most beautiful valleys in Northern Ireland. Helene, a qualified beauty therapist, runs a beauty treatment business in a nearby village and having spoken to clients knew there was demand for a Health Spa in the locality.

With support from her husband Sean, Helene forged ahead with plans to create a tranquil day spa in the grounds of her own home. The couple converted their domestic garage and now operate Lavender Health Spa adjacent to their family home. Treatments offered at Lavender include a range of beauty, sports massage, holistic treatments and use of a hydrotherapy pool. Helene also applied to the Rural Development Programme for support and has created a spa garden, with



hot tub and log burner. Solar panels have been installed and a marketing strategy has been initiated. Lavender Health Spa is undoubtedly a rural retreat where the stresses of modern life disappear.

Name of Business: Lavender Health Spa
Contact Person: Helene O'Neill
Location: Ballygawley, Co. Tyrone
www.lavenderhealthspa.com

SOAPY STUFF



Having left behind a teaching career to concentrate on bringing up her two children

Orla Hamilton began to look for an alternative career which would best suit her family's needs. Orla always had an interest in Irish Folklore and Celtic designs and having read an article about a lady who made her own soap, she decided to combine the two together and create Organic Celtic Soaps.



Orla explains, "At first I began making the soaps for home use and for presents for friends and family but they proved so popular that I decided to turn my hobby into a business. I combined my love of organic soap with my interest in Celtic design and launched Organic Celtic Soaps". Her products are luxurious as well as organic, "My soaps are highly moisturising and made with luxurious glycerine and fragranced with essential oils" says Orla, "I am currently creating five types of soap in a variety of Celtic designs and like to produce natural, earthy colours so I use a combination of coloured clays, botanicals or ultramarines".

far to the Rural Development Programme, "Without the support and encouragement of the Rural Development Programme, which has been amazing, none of this would have been possible. The funding I received from them helped me to invest in some much needed equipment, without which I could not have moved my business forward." Orla now has a permanent stall at St. George's Market Belfast and also sells through selected retailers, craft fairs and charity events. She was a keynote speaker at the Rural Network For Northern Ireland 'Inspirational Women in Rural Development' seminar.

True to her business name Orla has recently created three soaps inspired by the folklore of fairies, mermaids and dolphins in Ireland with each soap packaged with a little piece of folklore. Orla attributes her success so

Name of Business: Organic Celtic Soap
Contact Person: Orla Hamilton
Location: Moira, Co. Armagh
www.organiccelticsoaps.co.uk

COOPED UP NICELY



Ciara Tiernan, a graduate in Consumer Studies, was well placed to start her own business and now runs

Willow Tree Cottage Timber Products with her husband Derek. Ciara, the mother of twin boys aged five and a two year old girl, worked as manager of a branch of Age Concern for 5 years following her graduation from the University of Ulster. She also completed a Masters from the CASS Business School in London in Voluntary Sector Management but having her third baby encouraged Ciara to forge ahead with her own business plans.

top quality timber products including Dove Cotes, Bee Hives, Bird Avaries, Owl Boxes, Rabbit Hutches, Dog Kennels, Garden Sheds and Children's play Houses.



Willow Tree Timber Products is one of the leading animal housing manufacturers in Ireland. Ciara and Derek have used their experience of design and love of wood along with their knowledge of poultry keeping to produce beautiful handcrafted Chicken Coops which are finished to a very high standard. With investment from the Rural Development Programme Willowtree supplies everything you need to begin keeping chickens including hen houses, feed, feeders, drinkers and even the hens themselves! They also specialise in manufacturing a full range of

Ciara and Derek have attended agricultural shows throughout Ireland showcasing their innovative and unique products and have even greater plans for 2013. Ciara attributes her success to hard work and enjoying being her own boss. Ciara's business features in the 'Earning a Living' section of Country Homes and Interiors magazine, April 2013, and was one of the speakers at the Rural Network for Northern Ireland 'Inspirational Women in Rural Development' seminar.

Name of Business: Willow Tree Timber Products
Contact Person: Ciara Tiernan
Location: Annalong, Co. Down
www.willow3.com

GOOD COTTAGES



Elaine Good and her husband Wesley have enjoyed 15 years of experience in the hospitality trade having owned and managed Good Cottages, a self catering cottage facility since 2007. The Cottages are now a highly popular and sustainable rural self-catering business attracting custom from both the business and leisure tourism sectors. While Elaine's business regularly achieves 90% occupancy she also noticed that many guests required close access to local amenities. Elaine spotted a market

for a 'village based' self catering unit and with her sound experience in the tourism sector she has now redeveloped a terraced cottage in a nearby village to create additional accommodation. The cottage will attract visitors and create new employment opportunities and support the sustainable development of the rural economy in the area.

Name of Business: Good Cottages
Contact Person: Elaine Good
Location: Moira, Co. Armagh
www.goodcottages.co.uk

WHATS ON EVERYWHERE?



Jacqueline McGonigle is a mother of three who runs the extremely popular website WhatsOnNI. The site is a one-stop-shop for events around Northern Ireland listing every sort of event imaginable from outdoor events such as soccer games, and equestrian activities and family fun days out to bridal fairs, collectors fairs and exhibitions. If you are looking for something to do, somewhere to go or have an event to promote this site is the hub! As an events manager in a previous career Jacqueline understood the difficulties faced by event organisers in ensuring good attendance at events. She noticed that for locals and tourists alike there was nowhere online to go to get a full listing of events and activities in Northern Ireland and she was sure she had the solution to address this problem!



Jacqueline launched WhatsOnNI providing a platform for event organisers to promote their activities free of charge, creating a searchable database of things to do and see. Interestingly Jacqueline achieved this all with no programming ability and applied to the Rural Development Programme to support her in that regard. She comments, "The RDP funding I received came at a crucial point in our development and the initial business growth was based on social media" and advises others not to be afraid of using social media but to get advice on how to use it properly and to its full potential.

was one of the speakers at the 'Inspirational Women in Rural Development' seminar run by the Rural Network for Northern Ireland in 2012. Jacqueline has some tips for any would be entrepreneur, "Since starting up my rural business in 2009 it has been a constant and ongoing learning curve. You will make mistakes and need to accept that. Believe in yourself and above all be mannerly. I have learnt to surround myself with people I trust enough to tell me the truth and not what they think I want to hear. Do your research, and if you want your business to grow you will have to take chances. My final tip is to network!".

The success of the site, attracting locals, tourists and of course those trying to promote events, has accelerated to such an extent that Jacqueline has now won the following awards: Best Sole Trader, Women In Business Awards 2011; Best Tweeter, Northern Ireland Social Media Awards 2011; Best Customer Service through Social Media, Northern Ireland Social Media Awards, 2011. Jacqueline also

Name of Business: WhatsOnNI
Contact Person: Jacqueline McGonigle
Location: Upperlands, Co. Derry / L'Derry
www.whatsonni.com

HATS OFF TO A FASHIONABLE FARM

Laura Jayne McCrea and Rebecca Jackson began their hat and handbag hire business in September 2011 when, as friends, they both realised that their combined interest in hats, handbags and accessories and experience in retail was a perfect joint venture.

Laura Jayne had always wanted to open a hat shop and Rebecca had worked in a clothing retail business and harboured a desire to get into the handbags and accessories business. With much discussion the friends established their enterprise 'Lady Hat Bag' based at Laura Jaynes house on her family farm. The partners carried out some initial research which proved that there was nowhere in their immediate region which catered for the hire of designer handbags and hats.

They then undertook some business training with Invest Northern Ireland. Laura Jayne's husband Andrew runs a pig breeding farm which is one of DARDs 'Focus Farms'. Farms participating in this scheme are commercial farms which demonstrate good practices. They are available for visits by groups of farmers,

where they can learn, share experiences and solve common problems through discussion, farm walks and demonstrations. Focus Farms are offered mentoring support by the Countryside Agri Rural Partnership and as Andrew had been worker with a mentor this also assisted Laura Jayne to crystallise her idea and go ahead with her business venture. The business has now taken flight with Lady Hat Bag stocking hats and handbags from exclusive designers in London and Italy such as Whitely Hats, Peter and Suzanne Betley, Royal Milliner Rachel Trevor Morgan and Bulaggi.



Contact Person: Laura-Jayne McCrea
Location: Stewartstown, Co. Tyrone
www.ladyhatbag.co.uk

ON FARM SHOPPING

Lorna Robinson is the Managing Director of Cloughbane Farm Shop which is located on a working farm which houses 80 beef, 150 ewes and 15,500 free range laying hens. Lorna participates in the Focus Farms Programme, regularly opening her doors to share good practice to others, and has also been a recipient under the Processing & Marketing Grant Scheme (PMG) which provides capital investment in buildings, plant and equipment for business working in agri food processing. Both schemes are supported under the NIRDP.



The enterprise began life in 2003 and emerged from a local Farmers Market which Lorna helped establish. Realising that people wanted produce on a regular basis, the shop initially opened part time, but quickly moved to full time. Lorna is responsible for the personnel and marketing, whilst one of her sons, Robert, runs the farm, and another son Richard takes on the financial planning and control of the business. The family concentrates on producing quality at reasonable prices and supplies

approximately 40 retail outlets with plans to expand to ROI and GB. The business now employs 32 staff and has won several awards and was a finalist in the UK Small Processor of the Year Awards gaining the title of the Agri-Food Business of the Year.

Contact Person: Lorna Robinson
Location: Pomeroy, Co. Tyrone
www.cloughbanefarm.com

MENTORING MEANS BUSINESS



Countryside
Agri-Rural
Partnership

Gillian Reid has over 15 years experience as a business mentor providing professional services to rural and farming businesses. Gillian previously worked in the agricultural banking sector and now divides her time between running her own mortgage advice and farm businesses and working on the Farm Family Options Mentoring and Supply Chain Development Programmes under the NIRDP.

assists farm families take a positive approach to planning for the future. As a mentor she uses her expertise to provide farm families with support to review their business and help to identify options for the future of the farm business and family in order to develop an action plan for the way forward. This includes support with identifying options in relation to succession planning, which is a complex issue affecting every farming family. Gillian believes that women play a pivotal role in both farm businesses and rural development and comments, *"It is important that the Rural Development Programme ensures that women avail of the opportunity to participate and benefit from the Programmes on offer on equal terms."* To date 75% of farm businesses mentored on the programme had participation from one or more female members of the farm family.

Gillian is the wife of a dairy farmer and is aware of the many challenges facing farm businesses and practically

www.countrysiderural.co.uk

DIVERSIFICATION BUSINESS PLANNING PROGRAMME

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) run a Diversification Business Planning programme which is aimed at farm families who want to explore new business ideas to enhance farm income. This short, free programme is delivered across Northern Ireland and covers the key elements of a business plan. It's helpful if you simply want to add value to farm produce or could involve offering a service or manufacturing a new product. During the programme participants are also offered one to one mentoring from an experienced team of Rural Enterprise Advisers. The Diversification Programme is also unique in that it brings together farm families who can share knowledge and experiences.

Claire Anderson, Senior Rural Enterprise Adviser, DARD, outlined the support offered by the programme at the Rural Networks *'Early Steps into Business'* seminar and encouraged women to become involved in thinking of how their existing skills could be enhanced and developed towards a new enterprise, *"We have observed that women are increasingly becoming the main drivers in taking forward and developing new business ideas"*, says Claire, *"They have a unique skill set which means that they are able to multi task and get jobs done efficiently and effectively"*.

One of the women who availed of the Diversification Business planning is Catherine Cunningham who lives on a farm in Co. Antrim with her husband Andrew and their four children. Convinced that she would be a good businesswoman but not sure what service she could offer Catherine undertook the Rural Diversification Business Planning Programme. It included 6 hours of



one to one business mentoring from a Rural Enterprise Adviser and gave her the tools and confidence to start her own business. Whilst watering the trees on the family farm one day she had a *'Eureka'* moment with the idea to send young trees as gifts and immediately it felt right! *'The Present Tree'*, an online selection of beautiful young trees to order, wrapped in organza, accompanied by a personal message was born! Catherine continues to avail of workshops, training and on-going support from DARD Rural Enterprise and was one of the speakers at the *'Early Steps into Business'* seminar held by the Rural Network for Northern Ireland. *"I think it is always helpful to spend time with other pro-active women. The opportunity to speak was much appreciated as public speaking was yet another huge step forward for me. I also valued the positive feedback from everyone afterwards. It gave a big boost to my confidence"*.

Contact Person: Catherine Cunningham
www.thepresenttree.co.uk

DARD Diversification Business Planning Programme – see Contacts section.

Beyond Northern Ireland

Programmes and initiatives to support women exist across the EU under the equivalent Rural Development Programmes within each member state. Some examples are outlined below. These are showcased as sample projects demonstrating the diversity of support to women across the EU.

BUTTERFLIES: RIGHT TO BE SAFE

Some projects and programmes which have been funded under the current Rural Development Programme have been established to support women at a more fundamental level in their domestic lives. The truly innovative *'Butterflies: Right to be Safe'* project has been developed by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) in North Wales to provide professionals and communities with an opportunity to tackle domestic abuse in rural areas. The programme is specifically aimed at mothers and children who have been negatively affected by their experience of domestic abuse. It also accommodates teenagers who are at risk from dysfunctional behaviours and coping strategies connected with their witness and experience of domestic abuse. The NSPCC have pioneered these programmes across Wales and independent evaluation from Cardiff University has provided positive recommendations for further rollout in rural communities.



Funded by the Rural Development Programme by the Wales Rural Network
www.wales.gov.uk

TOTALLY FRESH FROM MALTA

Totally Fresh Ltd produces fresh, bottled smoothies and juices made without sugar, additives, preservatives or heat treatments – it is basically just like the smoothie done at home – but instead it comes in cool little transparent bottles with a 10 day shelf-life. The bottled smoothie concept was initiated in Malta and the surrounding Mediterranean countries by Smoochies, a company set up by a female entrepreneur and mother of four Sandra Zammit. The aim is to combine traditional agricultural values with modern process and technology to ensure that all products are 100% natural, delicious and healthy.

Totally Fresh Ltd received funding from the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 allowing the company invest in a soup production processing line, refrigeration equipment, printer for labelling, refrigeration units, a photovoltaic system, supply and installation of PVC wall-panels, aluminium partitioning, marketing and communication plans. Smoochies is very conscientious about its fruit production, keeping a keen track on how the fruit, and the farmers who grow it, are treated. They are also, according to Sandra, *'obsessed with the environment'* taking responsibility for recycling their



own waste, all hot water is heated by the sun through solar panels, lights are energy saving and all paper is recyclable. The company now employs 6 people and distributes drinks all over the island supplying most supermarkets, food stores, eateries, schools, hospital and the Malta International Airport. At the moment, Totally Fresh is working on the process of franchising smoochie in other European states. Sandra's Smoochie concept has succeeded in making fruit fun as well as easing the possibility of eating healthy and conveniently.

Funded through the Rural Development Programme for Malta
www.gismalta.com/smoochiedrinks

GEES GORGEOUS JAM

The success of Gs Gourmet jams, a farm diversification venture established by Helen Gee in Co. Laois, is a perfect example of a business which has rural roots with widespread appeal. Helen began producing jam at her kitchen table in 1999 but now employs 12 people and those browsing in the prestigious Fortnum and Mason gourmet food store in London can also buy a little pot of her Irish jam.

Helen and her husband Cyril were tillage farmers growing sugar beet until the sugar industry closed in 2006. Cyril now concentrates on wheat and barley and also grows raspberries and rhubarb for Helen's jams. As well as growing some of their raw materials on the farm, the Gee family strive to source as much as possible from Irish growers and suppliers, for example all of their blackcurrants come from Co. Wexford. This is an important boost to fruit growers.

The first pots of Gs Gourmet jams were sold in the Temple Bar Farmers Market in Dublin but are now sold in all major retail outlets and specialty food stores, craft butchers and delicatessens in Ireland. Helen has also had an enquiry from a store in New York. A range of chutneys and relishes and an apple jelly have been added to the product range and two years ago a new 'funky' label, Abbey Farm Foods, was launched. While production has moved from the kitchen to a special unit in the farmyard the jam is still made the traditional way in pots with a wooden spoon and sugar though the rise in sales has dictated that the filling, capping and labeling be automated. Around 40% of total output now is sold to the food service sector such as hotels,



restaurants and caterers. The success of her business is, according to Helen, travelling "all over the country to get onto every shelf and table I could find. We have the capacity to produce 50% more product so finding new markets at home and abroad is our priority every day we get up," she added.

Helen acknowledges that the business could not have taken off without the support of Laois LEADER Partnership and the grassroots support she received through the Rural Development Programme. It is a tribute to the ingenuity and tenacity of Helen Gee that a venture that started off in the family kitchen has blossomed into a business selling products in the most competitive market places and generating secure local employment. It has also resulted in careers for a son and daughter in the family's farmyard.

**Courtesy of the Ireland National Rural Network
Funded through the Laois Leader Partnership (ROI)
www.laoispartnership.ie or www.gsgourmetjams.ie**

SALLYS SAFFRON IS A GOLDEN ACHIEVER

Sally Francis of Norfolk Saffron is eastern England's only commercial saffron grower. Last year Sally's business received funding from the Rural Development Programme through the Norfolk Coast and Broads Local Action Group and since then has won Gold in the Guild of Fine Food's annual Great Taste accreditation scheme.

Sally re-introduced saffron to a traditional production area after an absence of over two centuries and quality and sustainability are at the heart of her business philosophy. The saffron is picked and dried for maximum strength and potency and Sally will only sell the most recent season's harvest without chemical inputs. The endorsement of the Great Taste Award has been a huge boost for Sally's rural business. The

competition saw 8,807 food and drink products blind-tasted and whittled down to 350 experts including former Masterchef winners and food critics. After 45 days of judging Norfolk Saffron came out on top. She commented "This is the first time we have entered Great Taste, so I am thrilled and delighted with our gold award. We go the extra mile to produce the best quality saffron, and it's great that our efforts have been recognized by such a prestigious group of independent food experts". Sally's business is another example of traditional production benefitting a rural area.

**Funded through the Rural Development
Programme for England
www.rdpnetwork.defra.gov.uk**

Female Focus: Local Action Groups

The Rural Life measures in the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) are implemented using the LEADER methodology. LEADER is a French acronym which translated means *'links between actions for the development of the rural economy'* and has been used as a model for implementing local rural development in Northern Ireland and in other European regions for over 20 years.

The aim of LEADER is to enable 'bottom-up' community involvement in rural development. This means that those at community level are encouraged to become involved in the decision making process to improve quality of life and economic prosperity at grassroots level. In the current Rural Development Programme the Leader approach is a channel for the direct allocation of monies to applicants. It is implemented through Local Action Groups (LAGs), which represent the local community. These LAGs are comprised of social partners and

elected representatives. The District Councils in Northern Ireland operate together on the basis of 7 'clusters'; and a total of 187 LAG members volunteer across Northern Ireland through these clusters.

Of these members 64 are women, which equates to 34% of total LAG membership and means that women have a significant input and voice at the decision making table. Three of those female LAG members who have been at the forefront of rural development in the current NIRDP are profiled here.

Cllr Frances Burton



Cllr Frances Burton, a mother of four, was first elected as a public representative on Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council in 2005 and is now the Deputy Mayor and Political Gender Champion. Frances is also a very active member of South West Action for Rural Development (SWARD) Local Action Group and sits on the Women in Rural Development Thematic Working Group. She also is a member of her local First Steps Women's Centre, which improves the quality of life for women through education and personal development, supporting women with childcare, to enable them to benefit from the courses. As Political Gender Champion Frances continuously seeks to encourage women to consider a role in political life. She is strongly committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity for women and encourages upskilling, building confidence and education so they can take up opportunities as elected members, Council officers, users of Council services and work to support families or initiatives within their local community.



"Inequalities still exist in terms of gender, mainly in relation to female participation" says Frances, "Things appear to be changing but women remain under represented in senior employment, in policy development, and other areas. Our Council is very forward thinking in that it has developed a plan to support and promote the development of women in these areas".

Frances works hard at a local level to ensure that women have access to opportunity; she supports and encourages women to find skills to empower themselves and build confidence to reach their full potential in whatever role they choose in life. Her commitment to the Thematic Working Group, whilst also balancing a busy political and family life was testament to her belief that women's achievements should be celebrated.



Majella Murphy



Majella has a background in women's rural community development issues having worked in the rural women's sector for the last 20 years. Majella is the co vice chair of the Southern Organisation for Action in Rural Areas (SOAR) Local Action Group, the Chair of the Women in Rural Development Thematic Working Group and is the coordinator for the Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN). Majella believes the grass roots approach of LEADER offers opportunities for rural people to participate in and benefit from the programme but points out that young people of all genders can be a difficult to reach group and need to be actively encouraged to participate on the RDP. She also feels women need to more involved in the development of the LAG structure so as to ensure that it is a structure that is encouraging for the involvement of women.

"It is important that the Rural Development Programme ensures that women avail of the opportunity to participate and benefit from the Programmes on offer on equal terms."



Cllr Jennifer Coulter



Jennifer is a trained teacher with her own business. She is a member of the Lagan Rural Partnership Local Action Group and feels that women need to be more supported and encouraged to apply for grant aid. *"Given the current economic climate, a viable option for women is setting up their own business, but there needs to be more information and promotion about what funding is available to them. They also need greater support through the set up period once they have secured grant aid"*. Jennifer feels encouraged by the feedback received regarding the local projects funded through her LAG. *"When I speak to the recipients of this funding, they tell me they received full support throughout their application process. It has allowed them to set up and diversify in ways they would not normally have been able to do, had it not been for the funding they received."*

Useful Contacts

DISTRICT COUNCILS	CLUSTER	CONTACT/ADDRESS	TELEPHONE/EMAIL/WEB
L/Derry Limavady, Omagh, Strabane	ARC NORTH WEST	Claudine McGuigan Omagh District Council, Mountjoy Road, Omagh, Co. Tyrone, BT79 7BL	T: 028 8225 0202 E: arcnorthwest@omagh.gov.uk W: www.arcnorthwest.com
Ards, Banbridge, Down and North Down	DOWN RURAL AREA PARTNERSHIP	Marguerite Osborne Ards Business Centre, Newtownards, Co. Down, BT23 4YH	T: 028 9182 0748 E: info@downruralareapartnership.com W: www.downruralareapartnership.com
Antrim, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey	GROW SOUTH ANTRIM	Emma Stubbs Antrim Borough Council, Civic Centre, 50 Stiles Way, Antrim, BT43 6EQ	T: 028 9448 1311 E: info@growsouthantrim.com W: www.growsouthantrim.com
Belfast, Castlereagh, Lisburn	LAGAN RURAL PARTNERSHIP	Padraic Murphy Lisburn City Council, Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn, BT27 4RL	T: 028 9250 9419 E: info@laganruralpartnership.com W: www.laganruralpartnership.com
Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Larne, Moyle	NORTH EAST REGION	Andrew McAlister Ballymena Borough Council, ECOS Centre, Ballymena, BT43 7QA	T: 028 2563 8263 E: northeast.rdp@ballymena.gov.uk W: www.northeastrdp.com
Cookstown, Dungannon, Fermanagh, Magherafelt	SOUTH WEST ACTION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SWARD)	Eamon Gallogly Gortalowry House, Church St, Cookstown, Co. Tyrone, BT80 0HX	T: 028 8676 4714 E: sward@cookstown.gov.uk W: www.sward.org.uk
Armagh, Craigavon, Newry & Mourne	SOUTHERN ORGANISATION FOR ACTION IN RURAL AREAS (SOAR)	Elaine Cullen Craigavon Borough Council, Lakeview Road, Craigavon, Co. Armagh, BT64 1AL	T: 028 3831 2573 E: craigavon@soarni.org W: www.soarni.org

RURAL ENTERPRISE ADVISERS

Rural Enterprise Advisers assist farmers and farm family members who are considering farm diversification as an option for their farm business.

ANTRIM	Claire Anderson	Kilpatrick House 38 – 54 High Street Ballymena, BT43 6DH	T: 028 2566 2823 E: claire.anderson@dardni.gov.uk
ARMAGH	Bill Leeman	Atek Building Edenaveys Industrial Estate Armagh, BT60 1HS	T: 028 3752 9061 E: bill.leeman@dardni.gov.uk
DOWN	Mark Poots	Rathkeltair House Market Street Downpatrick, BT30 6AJ	T: 028 4461 8082 E: mark.poots@dardni.gov.uk
	Gareth Gormley	Carbane Industrial Estate Newry, BT35 6RF	T: 028 3025 5912 E: gareth.gormely@dardni.gov.uk
FERMANAGH	Eamon O'Harte	Killyhevin Industrial Estate Enniskillen, BT74 4EJ	T: 028 6634 3100 E: eamon.o'harte@dardni.gov.uk
TYRONE	Debbie Moore	Crown Buildings Thomas Street Dungannon, BT70 1HR	T: 028 8775 4786 E: debbie.moore@dardni.gov.uk

Useful Contacts Cont...

Farm Family Options Mentoring Programme:

A wide ranging programme of support designed to encourage farmers and farm family members to identify and consider opportunities for both their own future and that of the farm business.

Tel: 0845 026 7539

Email: mentoring@countysiderural.co.uk

www.countysiderural.co.uk

Enterprise NI

Enterprise NI (ENI) is the organisation represents the network of Local Enterprise Agencies in Northern Ireland. Local Enterprise Agencies (LEAs) are independent, locally based not-for-profit companies set up to support small business development and undertake economic development.

Tel: 028 776 3555

www.enterpriseni.com

Invest NI

Supports business development, helps to increase productivity and export levels and stimulate a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.

www.investni.com

Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN)

A regional organisation to advance rural women's equality and participation in society by articulating and amplifying women's voices at local, regional and strategic level.

Tel: 028 87753389

Email: info@nirwn.org.uk

www.nirwn.org.uk

Women into BusinessNI

Women Into Business is a business-women's programme which aims to guide women who have decided to start their own business or return to the workforce.

Tel: 02890 224006

Email: info@womenintobusinessni.com

www.womenintobusinessni.com

Thanks To Thematic Working Group

The Rural Network for Northern Ireland would like to thank those who gave their time, energy and expertise to contribute to the Women in Rural Development Thematic Working Group. The members were as follows, Cllr Frances Burton, Edna Walmsley, Angela O'Hagan, Brenda Morris (representing Local Actions Groups); Majella Murphy (Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network); Jane Kilpatrick (Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster) and Sheelagh Blair (Countryside Agri Rural Partnership).

" I think it is always helpful to spend time with other pro-active women. I love a bit of Girl Power!"

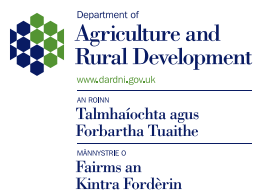
The Rural Network team would like to thank the Local Action Groups for submitting projects and photographs for use in this guide. Thanks also to individual businesswomen, to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and our colleagues in the England, Wales and Ireland Rural Networks for contributing case studies and images.



Rural Network for Northern Ireland
17, Loy St, Cookstown
Co. Tyrone BT80 8PZ

Tel: +44 (0)28 867 66980
Email: info@ruralnetworkni.org.uk
www.ruralnetworkni.org.uk

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