



## THE INNOVATION JOURNEY



After 15 years of working as a nurse abroad, Teresa returned home with a vision to establish her own business on

her family farm in Kylemore Abbey, Loughrea, Co. Galway. The Roche family had been dairy farming since the 1960s, gradually expanding their herd to 100 Pedigree Holstein British Friesians.

Teresa saw an opportunity to add value to their dairy enterprise by creating her own farmhouse cheese. To gain the necessary knowledge and expertise, she pursued various business and cheese-making courses in the UK and Switzerland. In 2017, she realised her dream by constructing a cheese manufacturing unit on the farm. To support the setup of the on-farm cheese manufacturing facility, Teresa successfully applied for LEADER funding under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020, which is co-funded by the EU. The funds were utilised to acquire essential items for the cheese production process.

## THE INNOVATION IMPACT

The farm has diversified by developing a cheese manufacturing facility to create alternative income on the farm. The dairy herd is comprised of all pedigree Holstein

Friesians that are grass-fed and considered a “closed herd.” That closed herd produces Kylemore Farmhouse Cheese, a unique, premium Irish farmhouse cheese produced directly on the farm. The whole process from milk production to the maturing, cutting, packaging and delivery of the product all starts and finishes on the farm.

The cheeses are handmade, fully traceable and sustainable from farm to fork and is Bord Bia – Origin Green approved. An onsite farm shop and an online store sells the farm products alongside other local products. To capitalise further on this diversification and to spread awareness of sustainable food production, educational farm and cheese tours are provided. Kylemore farmhouse cheese has won numerous awards including the national Sustainable Rural Innovation Award 2022. Teresa is working towards implementing new tools and technology to increase her farm's efficiency and sustainability measures.

## USEFUL LINKS

[www.kylemorefarmhousecheese.com](http://www.kylemorefarmhousecheese.com)