

## **IGFA News Release**

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### **Report shows downward trend in crude protein levels**

Animal feed companies around the country have been participating in a survey of crude protein levels in feed rations to provide accurate information on current practices. Crude protein intakes in excess of animal requirements for optimal health and production can be associated with increased GHG and ammonia emissions. The survey, coordinated and managed by DAFM and Igfa, provided the opportunity to collect and collate reliable data on weighted average protein levels in feed and look at trends since 2015.

The final report highlights the high response rate to the survey, representing 80% of overall national feed production and giving an accurate picture of current protein levels in livestock rations. The results show that average crude protein content of dairy, beef, pig and poultry feed for 2019 was 16.3%, 14.9%, 16.7% and 18.1% respectively. It concludes that overall protein levels have been following a positive environmental downward trend since 2015. The biggest reduction has been in pig feed with an overall reduction of 3.5% over this period.

Commenting on the report Maeve Whyte, Igfa Environment Adviser, said “Irish feed manufacturers and their advisers have been encouraging customers to reduce protein levels where possible for years and these results show that our message is filtering through.

“We constantly work in partnership with farmers to ensure that the needs of the animal and environmental concerns are considered. Higher protein levels are sometimes needed depending on the quality of the grass available and the age of the animal. This is why we continue to encourage farmers to discuss their feed options with their feed suppliers.

“It is positive to see the downward trend in crude protein levels and now industry stakeholders need to consider what more can be achieved as we journey towards optimising dietary balance whilst minimising environmental impact.

“The report is an excellent resource for all to use when discussing protein content in Irish feed stuffs. It contains invaluable information for all our members so they can continue to exercise best management practices in terms of diet and the environment”.