

*Purpose of the document is to provide an evidence based assessment of Ireland's current soya use.*

- The Irish animal feed industry produced approximately 5.1 million tonnes of animal feed in 2019. Irish feed production is heavily reliant on the sustainability and quality of domestic cereal supplies and the use of native grains and protein in compound feed rations.
- However, these supplies are limited, with the industry still only 37% self-sufficient in total feed materials (raw materials). Due to a deficiency in protein to meet the requirements of the livestock sector throughout the EU, imports of high protein sources such as soya bean meal have been commonplace to fill this void.
- Ireland is renowned for its unique family farm infrastructure coupled with an extensive grass-based system, where cows graze on pasture for up to 240 days each year. For ruminants, concentrates represent a small proportion of the overall nutritional requirements with 90 - 95% of their diet consisting of grass. Although ruminants are mainly fed on grass, hay and silage, the diets are supplemented by concentrates. These concentrates may include Soya Bean Meal. Ireland's ability to graze livestock for longer periods means the use of soya in cattle and lamb diets is likely to be lower compared to countries whose dairy production is predominantly from confinement systems.
- The monogastric market and the Irish pig and poultry sectors are more dependent on imports of Soya Bean Meal to provide the optimum balance of proteins to meet dietary requirements.
- However, Ireland's import of soya is relatively small, representing just 1.7% of soya imported by Europe.
- In total, 86% of Ireland's soya is from South America. Of this 80% came from Argentina, with 1% coming from Brazil, and 5% coming from Paraguay. The European Feed Manufacturers Federation (FEFAC) developed a risk-based methodology to calculate deforestation risk based on soya country of origin. The report highlights that 26,437 tonnes or 4% of Ireland's soya imports from South America could be linked to areas with a higher level of deforestation risk. This is far below the EU average of 20%.
- The remainder of Ireland's soya is sourced from Canada and the USA, representing a combined 14% of imports. The USA and Canada are considered a low-risk deforestation and conversion origin for soya.
- Within the Origin Green Charter, Sustainable Sourcing is a mandatory target area for processors. Where soya is procured in the supply chain, processors are encouraged to set targets around sourcing certified ingredients within their sustainability plans. To date, a number of processors have implemented this target, and this is confirmed through an independent verification process annually.
- The Irish Grain and Feed Association (IGFA) has been active on the issue of soya sustainability and has taken several important actions in recent months including hosting a workshop on Sustainable Soya in Livestock Products, gathering the most accurate data on soya imports and a membership survey on soy use in all sectors. IGFA continues to be involved in discussions on the European level on the impacts of European soya sourcing policies and fed into the revised FEFAC Soy Sourcing Guidelines in 2021.
- Next steps being considered by Bord Bia and the IGFA is consultation with sustainable soya certification schemes, traders and users of soya to estimate the proportion of soya consumed within Ireland that is likely to already be covered by a deforestation or conversion free standard or other form of assurance (e.g., Amazon Soy Moratorium

contract). As part of this work, Bord Bia also plan to collaborate with other initiatives and platforms working to support the creation of sustainable soya supply chains.