



# Sustainable Food Systems Ireland

A partnership of Irish Government agencies

## An Initiative to Offer Ireland's Agri-food Expertise Internationally

Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (SFSI) was established in 2014 to offer the expertise of Ireland's Government agri-food organisations internationally, to help partner countries to strengthen food security, sustainability, productivity, and safety.

SFSI is a collaborative project between the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), Enterprise Ireland, Teagasc, Bord Bia and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. It works on a commercial basis to the benefit of both public and private Irish organisations and in support of Ireland's trade objectives. By offering Ireland's experience and skills, we also enhance the international reputation of Ireland's agriculture and food sectors. SFSI provides consultancy and training services to clients around the world - partner governments, regions and sectors - on self-funded projects or through internationally funded development programmes.

Since establishment, SFSI has won projects worth over €8m, and has directly supported new export opportunities for other Irish firms and organisations worth several multiples of this, including livestock, food, agri-tech and services. It has directly and positively influenced the perception among clients about Ireland's agri-food systems, and contributed to efforts to secure market access for Irish produce in new markets in North Africa and the Middle East.

SFSI's offer is based on Ireland's strong reputation in food production, livestock, food safety and animal health standards, education and advisory systems, and the application of science and technology in food and agriculture. Such a range depends on a whole-of-government approach and makes SFSI relatively unique internationally.

SFSI has focused to date on territories like Middle East, Africa, the EU neighbourhood and Russia. Its largest project win to date is a €5m EU-funded project to strengthen Albania's food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary standards (with lead implementation by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland). SFSI also works with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid, especially in East Africa, where it has



*Forage production training for lead farmers on the Teagasc-led DairyKenya project funded by Irish Aid.*



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



## SFSI Strategy Summary 2021-2023

created a number of livestock development projects (with lead implementation by Teagasc).



*Seed propagation demonstration at DAFM Tops, Raphoe, Co Donegal*

In terms of resources and organisation, SFSI is a tightly focused and innovative initiative, using the networks and resources of its founders, collaborating with other Irish organisations and firms and adopting an integrated approach to agri-food development challenges. It has shown that a multi-agency initiative of this scale can deliver direct and indirect impacts at relatively low net cost.

Covid-19 impacted on project delivery and resource mobilisation in 2020, reducing turnover and business development activity. However, through re-engineering of existing projects and new business development, it is expected that 2021 will see recovery and full return to the previous growth trajectory in 2022.



*Launch of the FSAI-led EU-funded Albania Food Safety, Veterinary & Phytosanitary Standards Project attended by Minister Helen McEntee, Tirana 2019*

## Strategy 2021-2023

- The underlying principle behind SFSI will be built upon – that sharing Ireland’s agri-food expertise and knowledge will create benefits both for our partners and for Ireland.
- SFSI will pursue a strategy of organic and incremental growth, based on the resources of its founder organisations.
- SFSI will prioritise business development in a range of territories - Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, North Africa, EU Accession and Neighbourhood, Russia, and South East Asia. A strategy for China will be managed in close co-operation with Ireland’s trade promotion activities in that market. Other markets will be managed on a reactive basis, depending on strategic priorities.
- SFSI’s relationship with DFA will be deepened, particularly in response to the recommendations of the National Task Team for Rural Africa (2020), which



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



## SFSI Strategy Summary 2021-2023

emphasised the role of State Agencies in Ireland-Africa co-operation, and SFSI's role in helping to deliver that.

- SFSI is governed by a Steering Committee, chaired by DAFM Assistant Secretary General level and including the leaders of three State agencies, Enterprise Ireland's Food Division Head and other members.
- From 2021, an Operations Group nominated by the participating bodies will supplement the SFSI structure.
- The participation of organisations from across Government including those governed by DAFM, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Department of Health is a unique and powerful integrated offer and will remain the core structure of SFSI into the future.
- Strongest demand for SFSI services is likely to be in the following areas:



- productive systems – especially livestock, including breeding programmes;
- sustainable value chain development;
- food safety - capability building in national competent authorities and in value chains;
- veterinary public health and animal disease control;
- food systems – policy formulation and implementation processes; food systems analysis;
- agri-food innovation and knowledge management.

[www.sfsi.ie](http://www.sfsi.ie)

[@SFS\\_Ireland](https://www.instagram.com/SFS_Ireland)

[✉:info@sfsi.ie](mailto:info@sfsi.ie)



Photo credits: DairyKenya, John Rae & The Food Safety Project Albania



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



## Our Vision

That Irish expertise can lead the transformation of agri-food systems internationally and that providing these skills will create new export opportunities and enhance Ireland's reputation in the sector.



## Our Mission

To be a unique source of Irish government-sponsored expertise in agri-food, capable of delivering this expertise across the world in support of Ireland's reputation and trade objectives.



Our Goals	Expected Outcomes
1. To respond to international demand for Irish agri-food expertise on a commercial basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SFSI continues to grow turnover, gross and net margins through implementing short- and long-term international knowledge transfer projects.</li> <li>Ireland recognised as providing an innovative and integrated approach to international engagements for knowledge-sharing.</li> </ul>
2. To enhance Ireland's global image as source of high-quality food produce and technology, underpinned by world-class science, knowledge-transfer, research and food safety standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ireland's reputation as world-leading example of a sustainable food system and a source of high-quality food and technology, increased through SFSI client engagements.</li> </ul>
3. To support Irish Government partners in delivering Ireland's international development priorities related to agri-food as given in <i>A Better World</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SFSI and DFA agree a set of actions to increase long-term collaboration.</li> <li>SFSI plays an implementation role as part of the anticipated improved agri-food development eco-system that emerges from the NTTRA process.</li> </ul>
4. To support other Irish organisations in generating and maintaining new export opportunities in agri-food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct and indirect new export opportunities realised for Irish firms and organisations in food, agri-tech and international services.</li> </ul>



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine

