



SUMMER
2020

RURAL DISPATCH

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
OF THE YOUNG FARMERS'
CLUBS OF ULSTER



**BIG YFCU
CLEAN UP
CHALLENGE**

PAGE 8

AMR Q&A
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Young Farmers'
Clubs of Ulster

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PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



I'm writing this foreword in what has been a remarkable and unprecedented time, which will be remembered for many years to come. I hope you and your families are all keeping well as we navigate through these uncertain times which have seen us prioritise hygiene and spend a lot more time in our homes.

The week before our 90th Anniversary Dinner saw the country go into lockdown in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. I was heartbroken at having to postpone the event but member safety is most certainly our first priority and now I'm really looking forward to the rescheduled date of 6th March 2021.

I would like to commend the efforts of all YFCU members - past and present - for their work in their local communities during the pandemic. I have never been more proud of this organisation. Members donated to food banks, delivered PPE and sanitisers, and made care packs for NHS staff. To me it demonstrated that Young Farmers Clubs are an integral part of rural communities and we should all be extremely proud of what we have achieved during this time. Thank you to all those members who have been key workers on farms, in hospitals and in delivery vans and lorries, who have worked tirelessly to provide us with essential care and items during this time.

Our meetings and events may have been cancelled but that hasn't stopped the YFC spirit and clubs embracing new

technology to meet virtually and take part in competitions. Members have painted rainbows, picked litter, dressed up as old aged pensioners, and demonstrated how environmentally friendly their farms are. Thank you for thoroughly embracing the theme '*Celebrating 90 Years of Change and Challenge*'.

In terms of competitions, we made the decision to cancel those which would be held traditionally during the summer. It was a difficult decision to make but we have managed to hold virtual finals of the Ulster Young Farmer Competition, Home Management Competition, and some of our Stock Judging. Thank you all for adapting to change and rising to the challenge.

The month of May was disappointing as we didn't get our big days out to Balmoral Show however we used the time to launch 'YF Sees You', our mental health strategy for the next three years. The campaign was launched in Mental Health Awareness Week with a week of social media take overs including members from all across the country. Thank you to everyone involved and to the sub-committee for making the idea happen.

Lockdown didn't stop club achievements and Kilrea YFC was announced Club of the Year for 2019/2020 following a last round of video assessments. Lisnamurrican YFC was also awarded Eco Club status and is the first club in the association to be awarded this.

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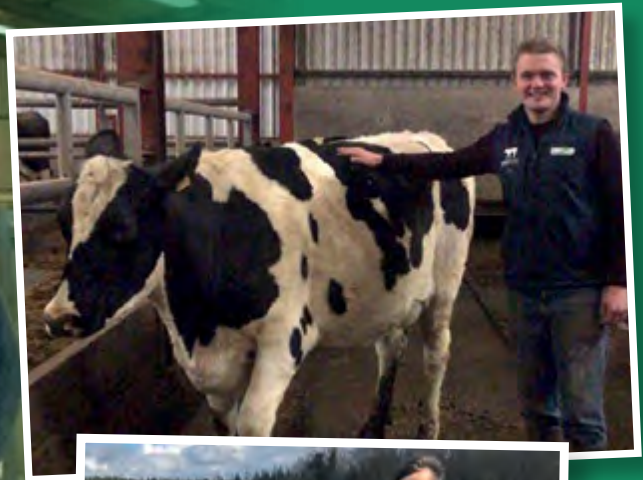
As a result of lockdown we are communicating a lot more to members through our social media and just before the pandemic we appointed our new PR, Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Jenny Martin, a former member of Ballywalter YFC. Make sure you follow us on all platforms to keep up to date with all YFCU activities.

Looking towards the rest of the summer we have plenty of activities planned which are slightly different to normal but let's fully embrace this exceptional time. I'd like to thank the Presidential Team for all their support during these strange times. Thank you also to our team at 475 Antrim Road who have adapted to working from home and using new ways of working to ensure our YFC activities happened over the past few months.

In closing, please remember that you are not alone. We are all part of the one organisation working together, and if you ever need a friendly ear to talk to or have any problems or feedback please don't hesitate to get in touch with myself or anyone on the Presidential Team.

Zita McNaugher

YFCU President



YFCU GO ONLINE

In a move to help communications amongst the organisation during the current pandemic, YFCU turned to online platforms such as Zoom and Facebook to continue the event calendar. The use of these online platforms has meant that members are able to communicate and participate in meetings and events.

Michael Reid, YFCU CEO, commented on the importance of moving to online platforms: *"At the core of all we (YFCU) have done for 90 years is competition and personal development. In these difficult times, it is essential we continue to compete. I have been amazed by the enthusiasm of the staff and members to embrace a range of virtual tools to communicate initially and now compete."*

Being busy is key to our mental wellbeing so we will use Zoom, Teams, Facebook Live and YouTube over the next few months for a mixture of fun, training and competition to keep members busy."

The Ulster Young Farmer 25-30 Final, one of the YFCU's most prestigious competitions, was the first virtual competition, which saw four finalists present their findings to a panel of three judges using the online platform of Zoom.

Judge, Peter Alexander, commented: *"Although somewhat strange carrying out a competition virtually the Ulster Young Farmer worked very well. Members were able to share their screens and present their presentations to the judges. Some members had to remember that we couldn't see them pointing at the screen with their finger and had to use the mouse instead. However, it all ran smoothly and was great to be able to complete the competition."*

This medium has turned out to be very successful and will in no doubt change how some competitions, meetings and events are conducted in the future as it not only cuts down travelling between sites, it also allows competitions to be accessed by a larger amount of members.

Spa YFC have adopted a novel approach to keeping spirits high during lockdown using social media. As the clubs are unable to meet for their usual busy calendar of outings and events, Spa YFC are staying connected through social media and showcasing what members are getting up to.

Using the hashtag #SpaKeepsFarming, and with a different member of Spa YFC every day, the club have been able to showcase a 'Day in the life' on both Instagram and Facebook. The response has been extremely positive, with young farmers from other clubs all over NI (and further afield in England, Scotland and Wales) logging in to see what members are getting up to on their farms in County Down.

Sarah Dorman, Spa YFC remarked: "Social media had become shrouded in negativity amidst the COVID-19 pandemic - we thought, what better way of highlighting the resilience and adaptability of the key workers in our club than through a positive online campaign."

Across the Hedgerow

YFCU, along with Rural Support, launched 'Across the Hedgerow' - a free confidential service to provide vulnerable, elderly and isolated members of the rural community with listening support and companionship via telephone.

The aim of this project is to help reduce feelings of isolation and improve the mental wellbeing of both the client and the volunteer.

Zita McNaugher, YFCU President stated: "Members of the Young Farmers' Executive Committee have volunteered to take part in this new initiative with Rural Support. We are delighted to be involved and play a part in supporting rural communities during this uncertain time. We are looking forward to having a chat with anyone that feels

vulnerable, lonely or isolated during this time and hopefully our members can provide a listening ear and maybe even brighten up someone's day."

Speaking about the new project, Veronica Morris, Chief Executive of Rural Support said: "Our helpline has seen a marked increase in calls since the escalation of the COVID-19 situation and more and more of those are from vulnerable and older members of the rural community who are isolated and afraid. In order to really help these people navigate what is the new normal for the foreseeable future, the 'Across the Hedgerow' project, in collaboration with the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster, will provide our most vulnerable people with extra human connection on a regular basis, via the phone, to help lift their

spirits and bring some happiness during this uncertain time.

Traditionally older and vulnerable people can be in the hard to reach category so this project will help Rural Support to identify people most in need ensuring they are getting the help they need to protect their mental health and wellbeing, as well as connecting them to the right services if they need it. It will also provide a small bit of respite and comfort to their loved ones knowing that there will be someone else checking in on them and providing additional care and a listening ear at this time of uncertainty and fear."

If you or someone you know would like to avail of this free confidential service, please call our helpline today on 0800 138 1678.

DRIVING RURAL EMPLOYMENT ACROSS NI

YFCU is delighted to announce the continuation of their strategic partnership with Riada Resourcing as official sponsor of the Rural Jobfinder.

A Riada Resourcing spokesperson, stated: "Our partnership supports young farmers and agricultural businesses to recruit the best talent throughout Northern Ireland."

Riada's passion and commitment to provide companies with the tools to meet today's economic demands and local people with the opportunity to find high quality employment align perfectly with YFCU dedication to continue to create possibilities for like-minded people so as to develop new friendships, acquire new skills and secure valuable qualifications and career possibilities.

In partnership with



Zita McNaugher, YFCU President, commented on the collaboration stating: "Very few people remember that the YFCU website offers a jobfinder facility and it's very exciting that Riada Resourcing is continuing their involvement with this function on our website."

Take a look... yfcu.org/jobs

Or to advertise a vacancy, email jenny.martin@yfcu.org

YFCU COVID-19 COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME

SPONSORED BY POWER NI

Over the last few months, YFC's have stepped up to the challenge of helping those in need in rural communities to help with the fight against the Coronavirus. Clubs organised food banks, collected groceries, picked up prescriptions, delivered PPE, and even distributed letters of hope.

In response to this activity, YFCU launched a YFCU COVID-19 Grant Scheme, sponsored by Power NI, to help clubs in their efforts to provide support to their rural communities and across NI. 15 clubs were successful in receiving the YFCU COVID-19 Community Grant.

"During this very challenging time we're all facing, it has been so encouraging to see all the activity that YFCU clubs have been doing within their own communities to help with the fight against Coronavirus.

With this in mind, Power NI is delighted to announce that we are the new YFCU Community Partner through the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are so excited and encouraged by what you all have already achieved in helping those who need it most in our community and we look forward to seeing that work develop further with the support of this scheme."

Amy Bennington & Emily Fair, Power NI



"Using the grant, we purchased food and essential household items. We held a collection evening on 2nd June where members kindly donated lots of non-perishable foods. On 4th June all of these important items were delivered to the Jam Store foodbank in Randalstown. The volunteers at the foodbank were very grateful and impressed with the huge quantity of food donated. The Jam Store in Randalstown provide over 60 food packages a week to people in need within the community."

Jack Johnston, Randalstown YFC



"Part of the money we received went towards buying books and toys for the paediatric ward at Antrim Area Hospital, our local hospital. The ward was in need of books and toys for the children that are wipeable because unfortunately due to infection control they can no longer use books, etc. We also created goodie bags and activity booklets for those who are self-isolating and/or finding the days very long - these are now available at Glarryford Post Office, free of charge."

Ellen King, Glarryford YFC



"Lisnamurrican YFC members have made up 72 care packs and four of our members delivered them to Mill Brae Fold and Innisfree Residential Home. The residents and staff were very grateful."

Katie Witherspoon, Lisnamurrican YFC

"During these tough times our club decided to contribute items to our local food bank based at Shore Street Presbyterian Church in Donaghadee. We managed to collect a whopping 290 items to donate to the food bank. The grant allowed us to donate £100 to Shore Street Presbyterian Church to help cover the cost of essential and much needed items such as milk and meat."

Donaghadee YFC

"Curragh YFC made a donation of food and children's activity packs to Maghera Foodbank (Maghera Cross Community Link). Maghera Foodbank do fantastic work within the Maghera and surrounding areas. The Foodbank has been providing up to 200 food parcels each week to those living within the local area during the COVID-19 pandemic."

Claire Holmes, Curragh YFC



"Through the help of the grant we has been able to extend our grocery boxes to the local community. It has been a great opportunity to return the support to those that support us. Branching out from just groceries we have provided fruit boxes, homemade crumble and custard to help brighten people's spirits who have been isolated during the pandemic. We have also kept up our donation's to ATLAS charity with children's toys and are also starting our 'Positive Pebbles' initiative to help spread some positivity in the local area."

Adam Finlay, Crumlin YFC



5:3

A Model for Effective Rural Youth Work

The Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster are leading the way in rural youth work, with the launch of '5:3 A model for effective Rural Youth Work'.

This vital piece of work helps identify what is different for youth organisations in rural areas and where the needs for assistance have been developed.

Over a 9-month period Beth Ferguson met with 143 young people aged 11-25 across three Council Areas identifying what was important to them and then worked with Government, Councils and Service Providers to develop a youth practice model that impacts future practice for the benefit of rural youth by reducing social isolation of young people in rural areas.

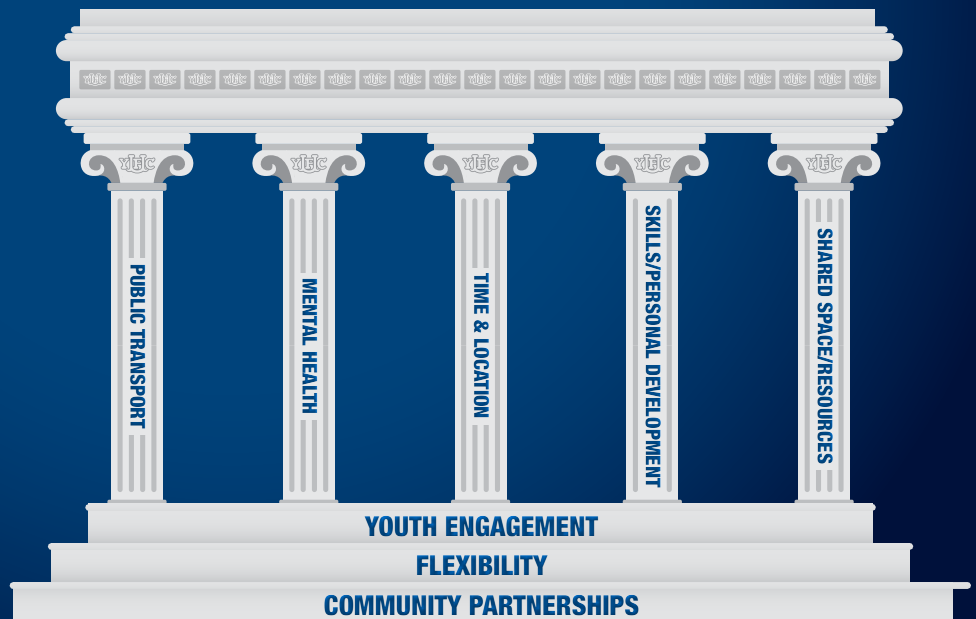
The Rural Youth Practice Model is 5:3 - 5 Pillars & 3 Foundations:

Pillars (Main issues)

1. Public Transport
2. Mental Health
3. Time and Location
4. Skills and Personal Development
5. Shared Space and Resources

Foundations

1. Youth Engagement
2. Flexibility
3. Community Partnership



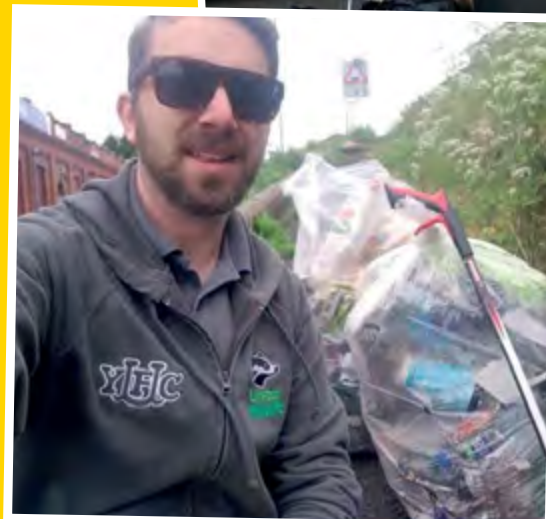
THE BIG YFCU CLEAN UP CHALLENGE

Since lockdown the Countryside Alliance has reported a 300% rise in fly tipping and inappropriate disposal of waste. The waste is being discarded on country roads and hedges which not only affects wildlife it also affects livestock and public health!

With the 90th YFCU Anniversary Theme being '90 years of challenge and change,' YFCU set a challenge for each of their clubs to clear 1.7km of their local roadsides of rubbish and waste.

Clubs from all over Ulster took up the challenge and smashed it by clearing incredible 185km.

Carolyn McDowell, Newtonstewart YFC, stated: "Between all our members we managed to clear 12.5km of our local community! During the clear up members found everything from glass bottles, card board waste, buildings supplies to black bags full of garden waste."





YOUNG FARMERS SEES YOU MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN

YFCU launched their mental health campaign **#YFSeesYou** during Mental Health Awareness Week in May.

The campaign saw seven members taking over the YFCU Facebook and Instagram stories for the day, focusing on seven different topics of mental health such as; isolation, community to social media.

The idea behind the campaign was to show what members are up to during the pandemic and getting members to connect with each other. Some members may

have felt very isolated and alone due to the time they were spending at home so this campaign acted as a reminder that we are all in this together and support is always available.

This initial campaign is only just the start a strategy to provide members with mental health awareness, support and training over the incoming years.

YELLOW WELLIES 600 MILE CHALLENGE

In May, Kilraughts YFC began an epic lockdown challenge to raise money for the Yellow Wellies 'Mind Your Head' campaign. This campaign was started with the aim of breaking the stigma surrounding mental health in the agriculture industry.

The challenge wasn't for the faint hearted... each club taking part was

asked to walk, run or cycle a total of 600 miles in just one week, which is roughly the distance to walk to every club in Northern Ireland.

To date four clubs have taken part: Kilrea YFC, Collone YFC, Lisbellaw YFC, and Trillick & District YFC. The challenge is still ongoing, and these amazing clubs have already raised almost £4000!





DAIRY SECTOR PLAYING CATCH-UP AS INTENSIVE SECTORS REDUCE THEIR RELIANCE ON ANTIMICROBIALS

The absolute necessity for Northern Ireland's livestock farming industry to further reduce its reliance on antimicrobials was the main focus of a webinar recently hosted by the YFCU and DAERA.

The event, which took the form of a Question and Answer Session with a panel of four experts in the field of animal health and antimicrobial resistance (AMR), was jointly chaired by YFCU Agriculture and Rural Affairs Chair Jessica Pollock and DAERA's Deputy Director of Animal Health & Welfare Policy Jim Blee.

The panelists were:

- Seamus Camplisson - Head of Health Protection Branch, Department of Health
- Cathal Carr - AVSPNI President
- Robert Huey - Chief Veterinary Officer
- Colin Smith - Industry Development Manager, Livestock and Meat Commission NI

The aim of the Q&A was to:

- Raise awareness of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)
- Build working relationships with DAERA Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group
- Further raise the awareness of the need for good biosecurity on farms

Jessica and Jim stressed the **need for farmers to address the challenge of improving the general health standards 'enjoyed' by the animals in their care. The pair also pointed to the need for 'improved biosecurity' to become a reality on every farm in NI.**

In the Q&A session that followed, Robert Huey stressed the significance of the 'One Health' strategy agreed jointly by the veterinary and medical professional in 2019. He added: "Both professions are on the same page when it comes to tackling AMR. The reality is that patients are dying right now with conditions such as cystic fibrosis and chronic lung disease because the bacteria causing these debilitating health problems are totally resistant to all the antibiotics that are currently available."

The Chief Veterinary Office confirmed that antimicrobial usage rates have fallen considerably within Northern Ireland's livestock sectors over recent years. He commented:

"Major strides have been made by poultry and pig producers but progress is still very slow within the dairy, cattle and sheep sectors. Dairy is the next priority sector, as the latest figures would indicate that antibiotic usage rates are still worryingly high within that industry."

Colin Smith pointed to the greater use of E medicine books within the pig and poultry sectors, adding: "We are also dealing with significantly smaller numbers of farmers within these industries. As a result, it is relatively straightforward to collate the information that is available from these businesses.

"In contrast, there are many more producers within the red meat industry. Most livestock farmers still use traditional medicine books, which makes it much harder to get a firm grasp of how they actually use antimicrobials.

"A major push is now being made to get more accurate and current information from these businesses farms, where antimicrobial usage is concerned. We need better data."

Colin also profiled the key role of the Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (FQAS) in helping to deliver better management standards, across the board, where cattle and sheep farms are concerned. He commented: "Leading food companies are also playing an important role in driving down the use of antimicrobials within agriculture. A case in point is McDonald's Corporation's zero tolerance policy regarding the use of certain key antibiotics within the beef sector. Very soon organisations like this will be asking the fundamental question: do we need antimicrobials of any kind when it comes to managing farm animals?"

Cathal Carr stressed **the need for all farmers to prevent diseases from getting a grip within their herds and flocks in the first place.** He said: **"Better management practises will help reduce the level of pneumonia and other diseases in calves and other young animals. A greater commitment to vaccination will also help to lower disease levels across the board on farms.** In lots of cases, young animals are being reared in facilities that are not fit-for-purpose. Many farms across Northern Ireland still feature buildings that are up to 80 years' old."

Both of the veterinarians on the panel highlighted the need for farmers to



Article by Richard Halleron

use antimicrobials responsibly at all times, citing the adage: use antibiotics as little as possible but as much as is necessary.

Seamus Camplisson endorsed the 'One Health' strategy. He said that medical doctors are being encouraged to reduce their reliance on antibiotics when treating patients, adding:

"Northern Ireland has the highest prescription rate for antibiotics in the UK. This has to change."

Camplisson welcomed the fact that greater numbers of DAERA staff are now working on the challenge of AMR. But he held out little hope of new antibiotics being the 'silver bullet' that will solve the AMR debacle. He explained: "There is no financial incentive for pharmaceutical companies to develop new antibiotics," Any new drugs coming on to the market will be used as treatments of last resort. As a consequence, their use will be quite restricted. This, in turn, puts a big question on whether or not manufacturers will ever recoup their development costs."

All the panellists were pleased that there was such a good turnout of young people for the webinar and the fact that so many of them actively participated in the event.

Robert Huey concluded:

"We are relying on our young and educated farmers to change the industry. The future is theirs."



Seamus Camplisson

Head of Health Protection Branch,
Department of Health



Cathal Carr

Cathal Carr has been in Veterinary practice in Coleraine since 1996. Originally from Dublin, he graduated with a Physiology degree from Trinity College Dublin before going on to The Royal 'Dick' Veterinary College in Edinburgh. After a short time in mixed practice in Dromore, Co. Down, Cathal moved to mixed practice in Coleraine.

After seven years, Cathal and his wife Anne Marie took the opportunity to purchase a small animal practice. They now concentrate mainly on Small Animal and Equine first opinion practice while still doing some TB testing. Cathal has an interest in all types of veterinary and has been particularly involved in veterinary business having been on the board of the Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons from 2014 to 2020.



Robert Huey

Robert Huey took up the position as Chief Veterinary Officer for Northern Ireland in November 2013.

He joined Veterinary Service in 1989, having spent five years in general mixed veterinary practice in Maghera, Co. Londonderry. After a period in general field duties, there followed a period teaching 'Animal Health' in Loughry Agricultural College, a general emersion in meat hygiene issues and promotion various policy and delivery roles. From 2002 to 2009 he was responsible for the delivery of DARD meat hygiene services for the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland.

He holds the RCVS Diploma in Veterinary Public Health (Meat Hygiene), is co-author of 'Meat Hygiene', and has been awarded a Fellowship of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and an Associate Fellowship of the Royal Agriculture Society.

Robert has been involved in veterinary politics for many years. He has held the positions of President of the North of Ireland Veterinary Association, the Veterinary Public Health Association and the Union of European Veterinary Hygienists, a specialist section of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe. He chaired the FVE Working groups on food hygiene and on the welfare of animals at slaughter both of which worked with the European Institutions on changes to legislation.



Colin Smith

Colin has been Industry Development Manager with the Livestock and Meat Commission (LCM) for Northern Ireland since 2012. He has overall budget responsibility for a wide range of business activities from the Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme to LMC's Education Services and Consumer Promotion Activity.

In 2018 Colin joined the Board of Animal Health and Welfare Northern Ireland. Colin is a graduate of the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne and after returning to Northern Ireland worked as a Policy Officer and Senior Policy Officer with the Ulster Farmers Union for five years covering the Animal Health, Pigs, Poultry, Rural Enterprise and Rural Development portfolios in this time. Colin has also completed an Advanced Diploma in Management Practice from the University of Ulster.



CALL FOR INCREASED AWARENESS OF FARM SAFETY

With the ongoing high rate of fatal farm accidents in 2020, Minister Creed, Minister Poots, Minister Dodds and Minister Humphreys have urged all farmers across the island of Ireland, and all of those involved in agriculture, to play their part and reduce the rate of farm incidents.

In a joint appeal the Ministers said: "We all have a long association with farming and have all seen first-hand the devastation that follows farm incidents and fatalities.

"It is very concerning to see a surge in the number of fatal farm incidents on our farms. This year, there have been 15 fatal incidents on farms on the island of Ireland, with 12 fatal incidents in the South and three fatal incidents in Northern Ireland."

Three children and eight people over 65 have died this year. Thirteen have occurred during the Covid-19 restrictions.

The Ministers continued: *"There has been a remarkable level of public awareness across both jurisdictions of the need to flatten the Covid curve. Faced with an overwhelming public health imperative, practices such as physical distancing, coughing etiquette and hand sanitising have become a cultural norm. We need a similar and immediate effort if we are to make a real impact on the prevalence of farm incidents. Farm safety has to be built into our DNA. We have demonstrated with our collective response to Covid that this can be done."*

Research shows that farmers and contractors are generally aware of the risks, but often don't adhere to the safety rules or take specific steps to ensure that the work they are engaged in can be done safely."


Farm safety cannot be left to someone else. It has to be lived by the farmer, by all of us, and built into the routine."

You should always plan your work, take a moment to **STOP** and **THINK**:

- How am I going to do this job safely?
- Do I have everything I need?
- Are there other people or hazards (machinery, obstructions, livestock) in the area I'm working in?

Simple basic precautions can reduce the risks and prevent future accidents. This is particularly important at present during the Covid-19 restrictions as more people are at home and on the farm including young children and older members of families.

LAND MOBILITY SCHEME



New entrant? Are you a farmer wishing to step back from the day to day running of your business? Are you considering expansion or changing enterprise? If so, Land Mobility can help!

The objective is to match up older farmers facing the challenge of succession with younger farmers wanting to get into the industry. The service outlines available options and help to develop tailored agreements to suit the specific farming situation, including partnerships, shared farming, contract rearing, and long-term leasing.

These collaborative arrangements will be the key to delivering growth within the farming sectors and safeguarding the future of agriculture in Northern Ireland.

The confidential service has helped to develop 41 arrangements over the last two years.

For more information visit
yfcu.org/land-mobility-scheme

Alternatively you can contact:
John McCallister on **07833 668602**
or email: **landmobility@gmail.com**

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EVENTS ROUND UP

MAR



YOUNG FARMERS CAPTURE SPECIAL MOMENTS FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Members embraced the challenge of interpreting 'Nostalgia' through the medium of photography in the Photographic Competition, which took place in March at Sperrin Integrated College.

This competition recognises this next generation of talented young photographers, helping them to grow and flourish. Entries were judged by NI wedding and lifestyle photographer, David Scott.



1st: Claire Holmes, Curragh YFC



2nd: Taylor Thompson, Lisnamurrican YFC



3rd: Natasha Adams, Lisnamurrican YFC

TOP MARKS FOR KILREA YFC AT THE NI QUIZ

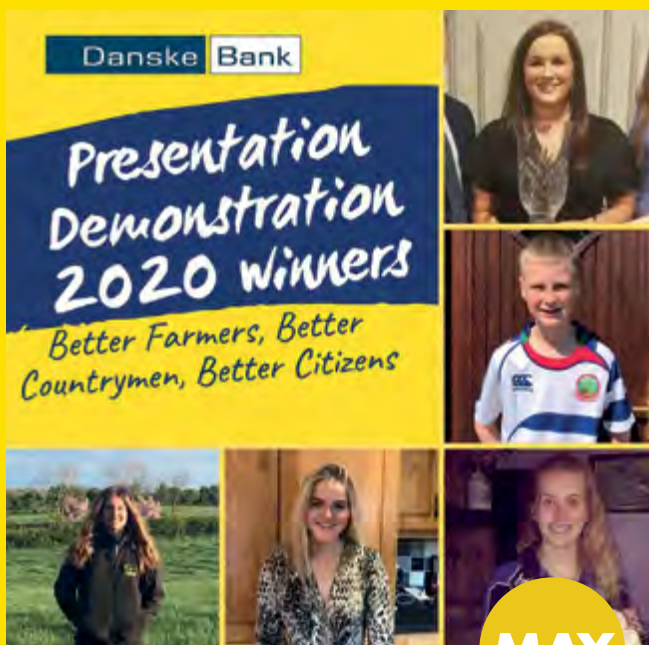
Forty teams of Young Farmers took part in the popular YFCU NI Quiz, sponsored by Ulster Bank, in March at Sperrin Integrated College.

Kilrea YFC were crowned the winners of the NI Quiz which included a general knowledge, picture and music round, and received the top prize of £300 for their club. Their team was made up of Adam Alexander, Steven Arthur, Joel McComb and Vicki Rankin.

Second place went to Lisnamurrican YFC; their team included, Gail McCullough, Chrissy McMaster, Matthew Moorhead and Grace Smyth. They were awarded £200 for their club.

Third place went to Kilrea YFC again, with Ellen Alexander, Mark Anderson, Melissa Sloan and Robert Sloan winning £100 for their club.





YOUNG FARMERS PUT THEIR DEMONSTRATION AND PRESENTATION SKILLS TO THE TEST

The final of the annual YFCU Demonstration Presentation Final took place virtually in May.

Competitors were given a maximum of 10 minutes to speak about or demonstrate a topic of their choice. Sponsored by Danske Bank, judges enjoyed a variety of activities including Irish dancing, baking, first aid and playing the accordion.

12-14 age category:

1st: Leo Kidd, Lisnamurrigan YFC

2nd: Chloe McConnell, Straid YFC

14-16 age category:

1st: Victoria Currie, Kilraughts YFC

2nd: Ellen Smyth, Randalstown YFC

3rd: Kerry Jamison, Kilraughts YFC

16-18 age category:

1st: Zara Davis, Lylehill YFC

2nd: Alexis Kidd, Lisnamurrigan YFC

18-21 age category:

1st: Alex Cleland, Spa YFC

2nd: Alison Davis, Moneymore YFC

3rd: Joyce Allen, Moneymore YFC

21-25 age category:

1st: Adrianna Coulter, Straid YFC

2nd: Lynne Montgomery, City of Derry YFC

3rd: Laura Patterson, Holesome YFC

25-30 age category:

1st: Judith McKinley, Trillick & District YFC

2nd: David Hodges, Moycraig YFC

3rd: Jonny McMaster, Lisnamurrigan YFC



COOKING UP A STORM IN THE HOME MANAGEMENT FINALS

The final of the annual YFCU Home Management competition took place virtually in June.

The final was the culmination of several competition stages which began back in autumn 2019.

Supported by Northern Ireland Pork, this year's task was to produce a 2-course meal (main and desert) with a focus on using ingredients that are commonly found in our kitchen cupboards which reflects the current lockdown situation. The 'hero' ingredient of the main had to be at least one type Northern Ireland Pork and Bacon.

Seniors had the additional task of providing an alternative substitute ingredient suggestion for at least one of their recipes.

Chef Paula McIntyre judged the entrants' presented dishes to determine the results.

Junior

1st: Cara Millar, Coleraine YFC

2nd: Rachel Boyce, Garvagh YFC

3rd: Laura Gordon, Ballymiscaw YFC

Senior

1st: Stephanie McIlroy, Gleno Valley YFC

2nd: Emily Lyle, Gleno Valley YFC

3rd: Olivia Smyth, Dungiven YFC

EVENTS ROUND UP



CLUB OF THE YEAR

Covid-19 didn't stop this year's prestigious final of the YFCU Club Of The Year 2020 from taking place!

The competition, sponsored by Power NI, was extremely tight, however, five clubs stood out and made it to this year's final: Kilrea YFC, Randalstown YFC, Glarryford YFC, Holystone YFC, and Lisnamurrigan YFC.

Unlike, normal years where the final consists of a quiz amongst the finalists, this year, the YFCU

adapted the final stage and asked the finalists to create a video with the title, 'What Makes my Club a Good Club?' Clubs were given five themes which they had to include, which were:

1. The efficiency of the Club Officers
2. The breadth of club activity
3. Membership participation in these activities
4. Adherence to the Articles of Association
5. The innovation of the club

The videos were judged and the scores added to the totals from the previous stages. With all the scores added up, **Kilrea YFC came out on top!**

Kilrea YFC said: "We are absolutely delighted to have won the YFCU Club of the Year. This is a great achievement for the club especially as we are going into our 75th anniversary year. The hard work and dedication of the members over the last 12 months has paid off."

Emily Fair, Commercial Marketing Executive at Power NI, commented: "Congratulations to Kilrea YFC for claiming the title! We've really enjoyed supporting YFCU in their 90th Anniversary year and it's great that the Club of the Year competition was still able to take place, despite the challenging times we're all currently facing."

ULSTER YOUNG FARMER

Sponsored by Danske Bank, the Ulster Young Farmer of the Year competition is one of the most prestigious competitions in the Association's calendar.

OVERALL Senior Ulster Young Farmer Senior

1st: Paul Cottney, Hillsborough YFC - winner of the McCausland Trophy

2nd: place: Timothy Savage, Annaclone & Magherally YFC

3rd: place: Ross Beattie, Finvoy YFC

Junior Ulster Young Farmer Competition

1st: Rachel Boyce, Garvagh YFC - winner of the Robin Swann Trophy

2nd: Russell Kelly, City of Derry YFC

3rd: Tie Amy Henry, Dungiven YFC & Ben McKinney, Curragh YFC

Best Under 21

1st: Rebecca McBratney, Newtownards YFC - winner of the Golden Plough Trophy

25-30 years

1st: William Beattie, Finvoy YFC - winner of the Roberta Simmons Trophy

2nd: Place: Stuart Cromie, A&M YFC

3rd: Robert Keatley, Derg Valley YFC



TOP CLUB OFFICIALS & MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Sponsored by United Feeds, awards are highly anticipated and show the commitment and work that goes into running the clubs, and the drive dedication and enthusiasm of being an active member.



Leaders

1st: Christina McKeag, Ballywalter YFC

2nd: Matthew Gault, Dungiven YFC

3rd: Rachel Gillespie, Ahoghill YFC

Secretaries

1st: Cathy Reid, Glarryford YFC

2nd: Adam Alexander, Kilrea YFC

3rd: Hayley-Rae Hopkins, Donaghadee YFC

Treasurers

1st: Melissa Sloan, Kilrea YFC

2nd: Shannen Vance, Trillick YFC

3rd: Joint- Abby Morton, Blearly YFC & Gillian Henderson, Kesh YFC

PROs

1st: Natasha Adams, Lisnamurrican YFC

2nd: Joyce Allen, Moneymore YFC

3rd: Zoe Maguire, Blearly YFC

Senior Member of the Year

1st: Margaret Little, Cookstown YFC

2nd: Ian Walker, Collone YFC

3rd: Christine Maybin, Lisnamurrican YFC

Junior Member of the Year

1st: Isaac Moore, Newtownards YFC

2nd: Sophie Hawthorne, Collone YFC

3rd: Zara Davis, Lylehill YFC

EVENTS ROUND UP

ONLINE CHALLENGES

I SPY A RAINBOW CHALLENGE

YFCU challenged members to 'Spy a Rainbow'!

The rainbow trend, now global, started in Spain and Italy, with the intention of spreading joy to people in isolation as rainbows are a sign of positivity and hope.

Members demonstrated their creativity in a variety of ways with the aim of spreading positivity to passers-by, reminding them there is hope and the storm will blow over.

The winner of the challenge was Newtownards YFC.



HOW GREEN IS YOUR FARM?

YFCU tasked members with determining how green their farm is; by looking at their own farm enterprise and how they implement environmental sustainability.

Environmental Sustainability focuses on four main aspects:

1. Building and maintaining healthy soil
2. Managing water wisely
3. Minimising air, water and climate pollution
4. Promoting biodiversity

The winner of the competition was the Johnston Brothers from Randalstown Young Farmers.

Judge Andrew Gracey, Ulster Wildlife stated: "The Johnston's have showcased how their farming enterprise has both a connection with farming green and farming profitable which is what it's all about. They hit on some important topics including renewables, ammonia and biodiversity."

OAP FANCY DRESS

Even though the AGM and Conference had been postponed due to the current circumstances, this didn't stop 25 members from embracing the Friday night disco theme 'OAP'.

Bob Esler, had an extremely difficult job of judging all the OAPs, and congratulations to the winner is Lydia Simpson, Glarryford YFC.





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CLUB | NEWS



A&M YFC

Firstly, congratulations to Noel and Victoria on their marriage. The club wishes you both all the best in the future!

The year was kicked off with the annual traveling supper followed by the County Down Quiz. Unfortunately with the pandemic the club year was cut short; but this did not stop A&M YFC from getting involved. Members have been collecting for a local food bank, delivering hampers to care home staff in the area, and taking on the 600 Mile Challenge for the Yellow Wellies campaign. A tremendous effort from the whole club.

The club were also delighted to hand over a cheque to Rural Support for an impressive £2,500 which was raised over the club's 75th year from numerous events, including a tractor run, an abseil down Belfast Castle, a raffle, and the Carol Service.

A&M have had a successful start to the calendar with Club Leader Ellen being named Member of the Year 2020 for County Down, Stuart Cromie placing 2nd in the 25-30 age group, and Timmy Savage placing 2nd in the overall senior category in the Ulster Young Farmer Competition.

Artana YFC

Club member Jason McVeigh was elected County Down Secretary at the AGM in March. Members took part in a practice session for the Dairy Stock Judging Competition at Phillip Tinsley's Farm to give members an insight of what a real competition consists off.

Sadly due to the Coronavirus putting a stop to all activities and competitions, members had to take part in online Stock Judging Heats which was enjoyed by all who took part.



Ballywalter YFC

Before lockdown the club held their last meeting for the winter programme. Members of the club welcomed Northstone Materials who are a new YFCU sponsor; Timothy Savage from A&M YFC carried out a farm safety talk; and Rosie from Cancer Focus NI advised on how to stay safe in the sun and how to live a healthy lifestyle.

Shortly after this the club were faced with lockdown. In order to keep the members active, the club decided to run a few activities online as well joining in with the YFCU social media competitions, such as a TikTok competition in which members competed to win free membership in for the year 2020/2021. Members loved taking part and being creative with their TikTok videos.

In April the club introduced our new committee members via social media platforms. The new club committee tried to keep active and assure a form of normality by holding committee meetings over Zoom. Zoom also provided an opportunity to congratulate Kristina McKeag for placing 1st in Co. Down and 1st in Northern Ireland for Top Club Leader.

May saw members take part in the Big YFCU Clean Up Challenge, and members delivering 50 litres of sanitiser to local nursing homes on behalf of the club. The club supported local by purchasing the hand sanitiser from The Echlinville Distillery.



Bleary YFC

In March 2020, members travelled to Irwins Dairy Farm, Benburb to practice Dairy Stock Judging which would be tested virtually later in the year.

Following club assessment, Bleary YFC were awarded the Best Club in County Armagh, an outstanding achievement for the club! Abby Morton (Treasurer) and Zoe Maguire (PRO) both went on to place 3rd in their official roles within Ulster.

Many of the members took part in the 'YFSeesYou' challenge in the hope of brightening up the countryside and spreading positivity throughout the community. During lockdown, some members completed child protection training and Club Officials completed suicide prevention training, both important subjects within rural communities.

Bleary YFC helped out in the local community by distributing hand sanitisers and were also part of County Armagh's hamper donations. Many of our members have placed in County Stock Judging Heats where they will progress onto the finals.

Cappagh YFC

Club members put together a video passing a toilet roll virtually to club member Matthew Wilson who was in need of it! This was great fun and was shared on Facebook to bring a smile to everyone's face through this troubling time.

In May, club member Kerry Smith and her husband James had a baby girl Amelia - massive congratulations.

We showed our support for NHS and care staff, who were working hard through this pandemic with members donating money to buy coffee machines and put together gift hampers. The Club Leader and Secretary delivered them to Omagh Hospital's Rehab and Palliative Care Units, Slieve Na Mon and Knockmoyle Nursing Homes.

Our members continued to compete in online competitions with Zara coming 1st and Alan 2nd in their respective age categories in the Beef and Sheep Stock Judging Heats.



Clogher Valley YFC

The members of Clogher Valley YFC have been spending their time preparing and delivering hampers to our front line heroes. Since everything has been cancelled for the foreseeable future, Club Leader Daryl Liggett and the members have decided to put their spare time to good use. They collected groceries and skincare products, all supplied by local businesses in the Clogher Valley Area, to make up hampers. These were donated to the staff at the St McCartan's Nursing Home Clogher, Clogher Valley Nursing Home and Gilbrooke Nursing Home, Clabby.



City of Derry YFC

Many young members were delighted to get off school during COVID-19 to be at home on their family farms. They have been kept busy with lambing, calving and cutting silage. YFCU set a Big Clean Up challenge as this year's theme was '90 Years of Change and Challenge', and members worked hard to collect litter and clean up their rural areas.

The Demonstration Presentation Final went virtual and members Jemma Gamble and Lynne Montgomery completed their presentations through Zoom. Well done to Lynne Montgomery who came 2nd place in the 21-25 age category in the NI Final.

During May the Stock Judging Heats also went virtual. Well done to Jessica Dunlop who came 1st in the 12-14 age category for the Dairy Stock Judging and 2nd place in the Sheep Judging.

Club Secretary Emma and sister Lynne Montgomery delivered leaflets to some of the clubs Vice President's in their local area - helping to promote 'Across the Hedgerow'.

Coleraine YFC

Members have kept busy by taking part in the Big YFCU Clean Up Challenge. Each club was to clean 1.7km of the community due to the increase in littering, but Coleraine YFC managed to clean a stretch of 7.5 miles!

After receiving the YFCU COVID-19 Community Grant, the club decided to spend the money on fuel to deliver letters to elderly/vulnerable people in the community. The letter contained information and contact details of how individuals in the club could assist them in shopping/collecting prescriptions. The rest of the money from the grant was used to put together care hampers for two local care homes.

COVID-19 didn't stop the competitions with members taking part in the online Stock Judging for Dairy, Beef and Sheep, and the Home Management with four members taking part and Cara Millar gaining 1st place.

Finally, the Coleraine YFC Choir put together a video to thank the NHS and key workers. This can be found on the club Facebook page!



Collone YFC

Collone YFC started March off turning on their thinking caps having two teams attend the NI Quiz!

Due to lockdown, club nights were cancelled so they reached out to help our local community; collecting prescriptions, doing shopping, delivering water to gardening allotments, donating to the local food bank, and providing a £250 donation to Home Care Independent Living for personal protective equipment.

They took part in the 600 Mile Challenge for Yellow Wellies, smashing the target reaching 1628.66 miles in one week!

Members have kept active - undertaking a clean up challenge of the countryside, painting rainbows, taking part in virtual quizzes, and even a virtual tractor run. Members have been taking part in the Stock Judging Heats online.



Curragh YFC

March was started off with a trip to Slatabogie Holsteins where members had a tour of the dairy herd and anaerobic digester plant. Members took part in the NI Quiz and the Photographic Competition, with Claire Holmes placing 1st for her photo. Ben McKinney placed joint 3rd overall Junior Ulster Young Farmer, with Jonathan Kyle gaining several placings in individual categories within the senior section.

Members enjoyed taking part in the Big YFCU Clean Up, covering over 11km of country roads.

The club was delighted to make a donation to Maghera food bank, thanks to the COVID-19 Community Grant from Power NI.

More success came for the club in the Dairy Stock Judging Heats; Grahame Holmes placed 2nd in the 16-18 age category, Claire Holmes placed 2nd in the 21-25 age category, and Philip Rosborough placed 1st in the 25-30 age category. In the Sheep Stock Judging Heats; Grahame Holmes placed 1st in the 16-18 age category, Cathy Holmes placed 1st in the 21-25 age category, and Philip Rosborough placed 1st 25-30 age category.

Derg Valley YFC

In March, Derg Valley members went to the County Tyrone Efficiency Awards where some members received awards for their efforts throughout the year. Throughout lockdown members have been busy taking part in activities such as the Big YFCU Clean Up Challenge and virtual competitions such as Dairy and Sheep Stock Judging. Club member Robert Keatley placed 3rd in the 25-30 category in this year's Ulster Young Farmer Competition with the final interviews being held via zoom.





Donaghadee YFC

Donaghadee YFC donated to their local food bank based at Shore Street Presbyterian Church in Donaghadee, which supplies families with essential food and toiletries that some families may not be able to afford. The club managed to collect a whopping 290 items! They also donated £100 to the food bank to help cover the cost of perishable items such as milk and meat which can't be donated.

The club was due to hold their annual sponsored walk in June for Huntington's Disease Association NI, however due to the current pandemic this could not take place. Instead members were asked to complete the 10k themselves and track it on their phone. A Local Giving page was set up to collect donations.



Finvoy YFC

With the Coronavirus pandemic causing most events to be cancelled the club turned to virtual ways of taking part in competitions and activities. The first virtual competition Finvoy members took part in was the YFCU 'Spy a Rainbow' challenge where members had to create rainbows to help brighten up rural areas.

Members decided to have some fun during lockdown and took part in the 'milk challenge' which received over 11K views on Facebook and put lots of smiles on faces.

The club also helped out at the local food bank collection helping those in need during the pandemic, and cleaned up litter for the Big YFCU Clean Up Challenge. Members put the trainers on and started running 5K for the NHS whilst donating a massive £5,000 to the charity, a great way to keep fit and raise money for charity.

Garvagh YFC

Garvagh YFC have kept members busy and got involved in community initiatives to bring hope to the locals. They have collected food for distribution by a local Social Worker to families in need and the local food bank. As a club they took part in the 'Spy a Rainbow' challenge to spread some positivity throughout community, and the toilet roll challenge. Members also helped to clean up the countryside as part of the Big YFCU Clean Up challenge.



Glarryford YFC

When all things young farmers related came to a sudden halt because of COVID-19, Glarryford YFC members worked harder together to provide signs of hope and positivity across the community. They decorated the rural area with rainbows, took over Instagram with TikToks, joined in with the Belfast City Virtual Marathon, and ran 5K to donate to the NHS! Thanks to Power NI (COVID-19 Community Grant Scheme), we were able to provide essentials for Craigdun Nursing Home, buy wipeable books and toys for Antrim Area Hospital, and create goodie bags and activity booklets to help prevent the local community from feeling isolated.

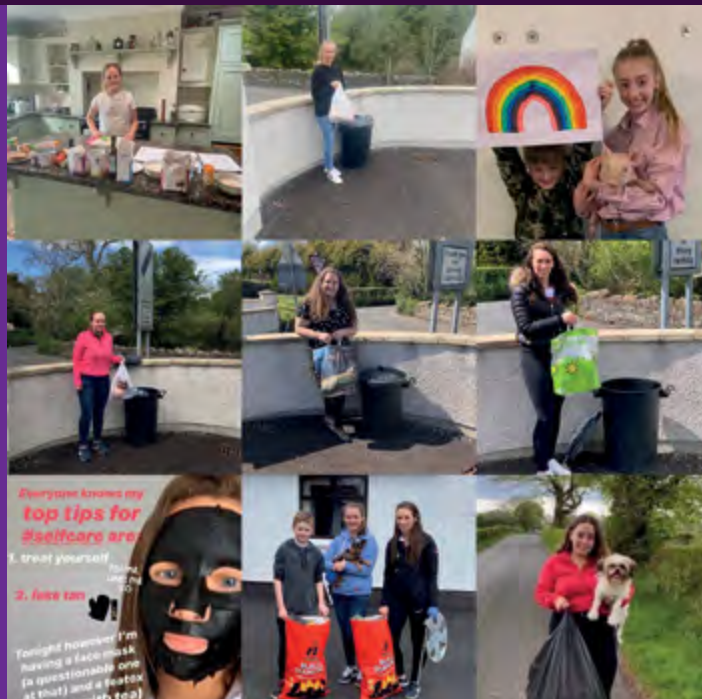


Gleno Valley YFC

After a different start to the summer programme, Gleno Valley have been kept busy during lockdown. Gleno Valley were nominated by Holystone YFC to join in with the toilet roll challenge, which was a great way for club members to interact, have fun and show appreciation to key workers. Members collected food and necessities for the local food bank to help the community in difficult times. Gleno Valley YFC participated in the YFCU Big Clean Up and YFseeSYOU with Anna Carmichael winning day one self-care.

Additionally, members have been taking part in virtual competitions. After successfully passing the first round of Home Management, Emily Lyle, Stephanie McIlroy and Anna Carmichael made it through to the final. On 17th June all three girls competed virtually from their kitchens and produced spectacular dishes with Stephanie McIlroy placing 1st and Emily Lyle placing 2nd.

Gleno Valley had 24 members take part in the virtual Dairy Stock Judging and Sheep Judging. 1st place went to Iain Wilson and 2nd place to Philip Buchanan in the 21-25 age category in the Sheep Stock Judging.



Hillsborough YFC

Despite the limitations of COVID-19, Hillsborough YFC has had a very successful few months. Members Robert McCrory and Paul Cottney placed in the top three of many categories of the Senior Ulster Young Farmers Competition, with Paul Cottney going on to be named Overall Senior Ulster Young Farmer of the Year.

In the recent period of lockdown, members participated in an online collage to show their support for and to thank the NHS and key workers for their hard work and dedication in difficult times.

With the cancellations of many agricultural shows and events, members enjoyed taking part in the virtual Dairy Stock Judging.



Kells and Connor YFC

During the COVID-19 Lockdown Kells and Connor YFC found many ways to keep connected online. They put together a very entertaining toilet roll video which had lots of views on Facebook, and hosted a bingo night on zoom.

Members joined in supporting the NHS with the 'Spy a Rainbow' challenge. Virtual Stock Judging has been a way for members to keep their hand in competitions, taking part in Dairy, Beef and Sheep Stock Judging. This has proved challenging as it is obviously more difficult when you cannot see the animals in real life, but members have embraced this challenge.

Hillhall YFC

Hillhall YFC has had a jam packed start to 2020 with the AGM, Stock Judging practice and giving our members the opportunity to learn some vital first aid skills.

The club and committee have been keeping in touch regularly via zoom calls and group chats. 2020 has seen the first ever virtual committee meeting, helping us all to develop our technology skills. Members have also taken part in both Dairy and Sheep Stock Judging Heats online.

Kilraughts YFC

The club have been keeping busy throughout the COVID-19 crisis by helping the community with their 'Here to Help' campaign. They began by completing food runs for members of the public, donating stress relief packages to their local care homes and goods to Ballycastle food bank, along with becoming delivery drivers for the charity Marie Curie.

However, the club's biggest success was the 600 Mile Challenge where they challenged their members to walk 600 miles in just one week for the Yellow Wellies 'Mind Your Head' Campaign. The challenge was a great success by raising £1,400 for the charity and completing an amazing 1000 miles. They have now passed the challenge on to a club in each County in Northern Ireland to further its success in raising awareness for mental health in agriculture.



Lisbellaw YFC

Lisbellaw YFC, like every other club, have had their season cut short due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19. This has not stopped the club members by keeping in touch and doing a bit of fund raising along the way. After being nominated by Collone YFC to take on the 600 Mile Challenge, members took it in their stride clocking up 768.1 miles and raising a total of £255 towards for Yellow Wellies.

Lisnamurrican YFC

The beginning of March saw the annual NI Quiz where a Lisnamurrican team placed 2nd overall. The Photography competition results were also announced, with two Lisnamurrican members placing in the top 3.

As the club could not be together to show the new committee, each committee member was introduced on their Facebook page allowing everyone to get to know them.

Members helped within the community through joining 'Broughshane Buddies', this required them to collect prescriptions and be a friendly face to those alone in the community. The club also made up care packages for local care homes.

The club became the first ever club in NI to pick-up the Green Flag Eco-Clubs Award. The County AGM saw the club come out on top in the efficiency competition and Christine Maybin was voted County Chair. Christine also placed 2nd in the virtual Dairy Stock Judging and 1st in Sheep Stock Judging Heats.



Lylehill YFC

March began with a successful Parent's Night and a Grassroots Challenge Meeting, however due to COVID-19 further meetings and events were cancelled for the safety of members and the local community.

This didn't stop Lylehill YFC members from keeping active and busy! Besides many members being essential workers they took part in the toilet roll and smile challenges on Facebook, clapped for the key workers and carers on Thursday nights, and took part in an online suicide awareness course.

April saw member, Zara Davis, place 3rd in the NI Junior Member of the Year competition. Zara also participated in a social media takeover for the YFCU during Mental Health Awareness Week in May to spread the message that "we are in this together!"

Members also participated in Demonstration Presentation and various online Stock Judging competitions where some of our members were placed in their respective age categories.

Moneymore YFC

Kicked off March with their annual club prize giving. Members gathered at District 80, where they were presented with their YFCU Certificate of Proficiency and club trophies.

When lockdown struck, the club took part in the online YFCU challenges including 'Spy a Rainbow' and the Big YFCU Clean Up. The club also took part in the mental health campaign, YFSeesYOU, where members demonstrated how they practice each theme in their everyday life and explained what kindness means to the members of Moneymore YFC.

Members have also been busy taking part in the virtual competitions including Stock Judging with club members Ryan Brown and Sian Hogg both placing 1st in their perspective age category in the Dairy Stock Judging Heats.

Congratulations to member, Joyce Allen who placed 2nd in NI for best PRO! The Senior Ulster Young Farmer results also saw Christopher Bell placing 2nd in the sheep section!

Club members have also been busy collecting food and toiletries for their local food bank, HOPE Magherafelt.



Moneyrea YFC

At the beginning of lockdown, members offered help to the local community and became involved with the Moneyrea Community Support Hub. They helped to start a food bank and donated food hampers to it.

Moneyrea YFC had great fun taking part in the milk challenge where past and present members got involved.

They teamed up with Springmount Farm Free Range Eggs to run a competition for a key worker to win a hamper in order to say thanks for all their hard work during the pandemic.

Moneyrea YFC also donated hand sanitisers and chocolate to Maryland Healthcare Centre to say thanks for all the hard work and dedication.



Moycraig YFC

Early March saw Moycraig YFC's drama group begin a five week run with their Three Act Play, "Married Bliss!", having just performed to 400 people in Aughnacloy College when Lockdown happened. They had hoped to finish with performances in the Club Hall at the beginning of April but unfortunately this was not to be.

Instead, club members did what they could to help the local community and even featured on BBC Newsline for their efforts! They organised two food drops at the Club Hall where members collected donations to redistribute to the elderly and most vulnerable with the support of Mosside Community Association.

Throughout Lockdown, members continued to participate in YFCU competitions online; David Hodges attained a 2nd place finish in the Demonstration Presentation Final, and James Stevenson and Colin McAlister placed 2nd in their respective age groups of the Dairy and Sheep Stock Judging Heats, proceeding to the NI Finals.



Newtownhamilton YFC

With club meetings cancelled due to COVID-19, members showed their support and appreciation by taking part in the 'Clap for the Carers' every week. Members also took part in the 'Spy a Rainbow' challenge to bring a symbol of positivity, peace and hope to the community.

Members got involved to help with the hamper donation to thank local key workers, and also helped the community by taking part in the Big YFCU Clean Up Challenge. Some members took part in the virtual Stock Judging for Dairy, Sheep and Beef.



Newtownstewart YFC

Throughout lockdown Newtonstewart YFC kept members busy! In May, members took to the roads as part of the Big YFCU Clean Up Challenge picking up litter which had been carelessly discarded. They surpassed the 1.7km target by clearing 12.5km of local roads which were full of waste.

On 28th May they held a tractor run to show support to key workers and the NHS. There was certain people

assigned to collect money who wore appropriate PPE - they raised an incredible £521.86 which was donated to the local practice.

Members also took part in virtual Stock Judging; with four members through to the final in the Dairy Stock Judging took, and one member making the final in Sheep Stock Judging.

Randalstown YFC

Congratulations to Ellen Smyth who was placed 2nd in the Presentation Demonstration Final before lockdown. During March some members participated in the 'Spy a Rainbow' challenge. April saw members helping to keep our countryside tidy by taking part in the Big YFCU Clean Up Challenge.

Members delivered food bank donations to The Jam Store, First Presbyterian Church Randalstown. A grant of £100 was given to Randalstown YFC from the COVID-19 Community Grant Scheme, sponsored by Power NI, and was used to buy more non-perishable food for the Jam Store.

In the online Dairy Stock Judging Heats, Thomas Smyth was placed 1st and Ellen Smyth placed 2nd. Members Jack and Mark Johnston won the 'How Green is your Farm' competition. Randalstown YFC also made it through to the final 5 of Club of the Year.



Rathfriland YFC

Members have faced the current situation of COVID-19 straight on and helped the community by delivering food packages to the elderly. The food packages were small gestures but can make a huge difference to individuals letting people know the club is thinking about them.

Rathfriland YFC presented their chosen charity of the year, The Southern Area Hospice, with a fantastic sum of money £2,163.57.

Due the absence of club meetings and social gatherings, the club has aimed and been successful with keeping united using social media. Members enjoyed getting involved in the 'loo roll' challenge video, and posting 'flashback Fridays' on the clubs Facebook page, this is a photo from the past posted on Facebook, this is a great way to involve past members.

May and June saw members take part in the first ever virtual competitions with the Beef, Sheep and Dairy Stock Judging Heats. Congratulations to Matthew Gibson for placing 2nd in the Dairy Stock Judging.



Seskinore YFC

Despite club meetings being put on hold due to COVID-19, Seskinore YFC has still been actively involved in YFCU competitions and doing their part for the community and charities.

As a club, they donated hampers to local hospitals, which were kindly received by Treasurer Catherine Short who has been working tirelessly throughout this pandemic. They also donated £500 to Air Ambulance NI to show their appreciation for all their hard work and dedication, particularly in the farming sector. Members also took part in the Big YFCU Clean Up Challenge by picking up litter around the rural area.

Seskinore YFC have had many members take part in competitions and challenges, such as virtual Stock Judging Heats and 'How Green is your Farm' with many members being placed.



Spa YFC

Spa YFC kept spirits high during lockdown by launching 'Spa Keeps Farming' at the end of March.

The campaign kicked off with outgoing Club Leader Stephen Majury and ended nearly seven weeks later with new Club Leader Hannah Shaw. The clubs Instagram page hosted daily 'Instagram Takeovers', with a different member everyday showcasing what they were getting up to during lockdown.

#SpaKeepsFarming showcased members farms from all over County Down, spending time on Dairy, Beef, Sheep, Pig and Arable units. The club even hosted a 'Guest Takeover' week, with members from other clubs in NI getting involved in the campaign.



Straid YFC

In true Straid YFC fashion, members rallied to make the best of a bad situation, with club members keeping active and taking parts in various online challenges and campaigns. Members passed the time by downing pints of milk to support farmers and making rainbow posters to support the NHS.

Member have embraced the virtual competitions by taking part in the Beef Stock Judging.



COVID-19 Unsung Heroes

Young Farmers' Clubs have been the unsung heroes of the Coronavirus pandemic in rural communities across every stretch of NI.

Food banks

Donaghadee YFC contributed items to their local food bank based at Shore Street Presbyterian Church, and donated £100 to help cover the cost of essential items.

Curragh YFC were informed that several families who normally receive free meals at school were struggling so they made a donation of food and children's activity packs to Maghera Foodbank.

Personal Protection Equipment

Ballywalter YFC wanted to give back to the community during these uncertain times to help them during the pandemic; they delivered 50 litres of hand sanitiser to local residential/nursing homes.

Kilraughts YFC joined forces with Marie Curie and became volunteers as PPE delivery drivers. Members received online training and began to pick up PPE and deliver it during this difficult time when PPE and deliveries are at their maximum.

Hampers

The members of Clogher Valley YFC have been spending their time preparing and delivering hampers to frontline heroes - staff at the St McCartans Nursing Home, Clogher, Clogher Valley Nursing Home and Gilbrooke Nursing Home, Clabby.

Communicating with the elderly and isolated

Covid-19 has led to the isolation of many vulnerable people within the rural community, so members of Coleraine YFC decided to make a difference and came up with the idea of delivering letters to the older members of our community. The letter included contact details of those who they could contact if they needed anything such as groceries or prescriptions or even just someone to talk to.

Due to lockdown restrictions, several individuals have been advised to stay at home in order to protect themselves. This therefore has meant several members of the community are unable to pick up much needed prescriptions, City of Derry YFC came up with a delivery and pick up plan in order to help these people in their communities.



POULTRY IN MOTION!

MOY PARK LAUNCHES 'CHICKEN RUN' IN SEARCH FOR COMMUNITY HEROES

Moy Park has been embarking on a community 'Chicken Run' initiative, which has seen Ireland's number one chicken brand take to the road, delivering its products to doorsteps across all six counties in Northern Ireland.

The initiative has been running through Moy Park's Facebook channel, with the company calling upon people to nominate someone they know who is deserving of a visit from the 'Chicken Run' van – and a hamper with enough Moy Park chicken to make six meals for a family.

Ellen Wright, Moy Park Brand Marketing, said: "We know the sense of community spirit in Northern Ireland is so strong and

we received some wonderful nominations for neighbours, older relatives, key workers and colleagues. At Moy Park, we recognise our role in contributing to the wellbeing of those in the local areas in which we operate. Through our Chicken Run initiative, we hope each hamper helps a household and reminds us all of how kind and neighbourly we are in local communities right across Northern Ireland."

As well as the doorstep deliveries, Moy Park's 'Chicken Run' also supported three charities from the local area around its Northern Ireland sites with product donations - Lurgan Area Community Aid, Good Morning Ballymena and Food For All @ The Junction, Dungannon.



Ellen Wright, Moy Park Brand Marketing



MOY PARK LAUNCHES £1 MILLION COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND

Moy Park has established a £1 Million Fund to support community organisations local to its operations across Europe.

Charities and support groups can apply for a grant from the Moy Park Community Support Fund which is aimed at supporting and enriching the lives of those in need across its local communities. This new initiative builds on Moy Park's range of existing and long-established community measures, including charity and educational programmes.

Launching the £1 Million Community Support Fund scheme, Moy Park's HR and Performance Director, Kirsty Wilkins said: "At Moy Park, our commitment to contribute to the wellbeing of the communities we operate in has always been at the heart of our business.

We draw most of our employees from the areas surrounding our facilities and we see our communities as important partners.

This new £1 Million Community Support Fund will help provide extra assistance to our neighbours over the next 24 months.

"The food industry plays a vital role, keeping our supermarket shelves stocked and we are thankful to our local towns, villages and team members who are part of this important effort. Moy Park is a people focused organisation, and we invest heavily in development

opportunities for our colleagues in the workplace. This new community initiative is a natural extension of this approach and we look forward to receiving applications from local groups."

Applications to apply for a grant from the Moy Park Community Support Fund can be made via Moy Park's website moypark.com/community-support.

Gareth Wright, General Manager, Moy Park Craigavon and Kristin Wilson, Moy Park



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