

## **Strong Interest in New Forestry Options - Teagasc**

Farmers are showing keen interest in new forestry options. These forestry opportunities are currently being discussed at a series of 27 special Information evenings run nationwide by Teagasc and the Forest Service. The well attended meetings outline the attractive options available to farmers for planting land.

Particular interest has been shown in the new Forest Environment Protection Scheme (FEPS) which is available to REPS farmers. FEPS encourages the establishment of high nature value forestry on farms which participate in REPS.

Farmers in REPS who join FEPS receive a premium of up to €200 per hectare for the first five years, in addition to the relevant afforestation premium, while the establishment grant covers the cost of planting. Farmers are also reminded that the Afforestation scheme, open to all landowners, remains very attractive with recent increases in grants and premiums.

Frances McHugh, Teagasc Forestry Development Officer in the south-east said: “Farmers have shown a renewed interest in forestry due to the launch of FEPS”. She continued: “It is vital that farmers are informed of the many benefits and implications of forestry in order to make the right decision for whole farm planning for the future”.

Farmer turnout at the meetings in the west and northwest has also been high. Speaking from Roscommon, Noel Kennedy, Teagasc Forestry Development Officer said: “Farmers in REPS should discuss their interest in the FEPS scheme with their local forestry development officer and REPS planner in order to choose the best option for their specific situation”.

More information on FEPS and the Afforestation Scheme is available from your Teagasc forestry development officer or see [www.teagasc.ie](http://www.teagasc.ie). Also available from [www.agriculture.gov.ie](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie)