

## Norma Dinneen

### *Bó Rua Farm*



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The award-winning creamy milk that comes from the cows grazing on the lush grass of Bó Rua Farm is now being crafted into a range of award-winning farmhouse cheeses. The Dinneens have been farming at Bó Rua Farm in Ballynoe, Co. Cork, for generations. The farm's name was inspired by their Montbeliarde cows, also affectionately called the red cows, or Bó Rua in Irish. The French breed is renowned for the quality of its milk and is linked to traditional cheese making.

Norma, an electrical engineer, took the entrepreneurial plunge after more than a decade working in multinational roles. With a bursary from the DAFM, Norma returned to UCC where she combined her passion for fine food with lessons learned whilst studying for a Diploma in Specialty Food Production. After completing professional farmhouse cheese training at Teagasc and at the School of Artisan Food, she set about developing Bó Rua Farm's traditional but innovative cheese recipes. Norma has also qualified as a farmer, having completed the Teagasc graduate certificates in agriculture and farm management. Bó Rua Farm is one of the farms participating in the innovative BRIDE project, which through farmer led measures is increasing the natural biodiversity on their farm.

In 2018 with assistance from LEADER and the LEO a state-of-the-art cheese dairy was built and commissioned at Bó Rua Farm. In 2019, their first year of production, Tom & Norma were awarded the gold medal at the Blas na hEireann Irish Food Awards for the best Irish hard cheese. They were also jointly awarded the Irish Independent 'Farmer of The Year' Rising Star award. Bó Rua Farm was named the best new business at the North Cork LEO Business Awards.

As an entrepreneur who returned to her farming roots to set up her new agri-food business, Norma finds that her participation in ACORNS continues to be very valuable through networking with fellow businesswomen who inspire and encourage. Sales of Bó Rua Farm cheese continue to go from strength to strength. The Dinneens have big ambitions for Bó Rua Farm and are on track to become one of Ireland's best loved farmhouse cheese brands.

*Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.*



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