

# BioFarm 2020

Ireland's Biological Farming Conference



November  
9th - 13th

## Meet the Speakers



### **BASE Group (Ireland)**

BASE Ireland is part of an International community of farmers, agronomists and agriculture professionals who are committed to advancing the knowledge and practice of Conservation Agriculture. BASE Ireland serves arable, livestock and mixed farming. The primary objective of the organisation is the development of sustainable, farmer led and profitable farming practice. The group aim to empower members in decision making through the committed sharing of techniques, on farm learnings, information and ideas. Members are further encouraged to host farm visits and openly share their experiences.



### **Hamish Bielski (New Zealand)**

Hamish Bielski farms on 700 acres in South Otago, New Zealand with his wife Amy and their three children. It is their fifth year into the venture. They have run an integrated sheep, beef and arable operation for the initial years but are heading down the path of using regenerative farming principles and have decided to run 2300 breeding sheep, 200 trading cattle and no more cropping. Their vision is to reach the potential of the land, ecosystems, well being and bank balance. Hamish believes regenerative farming can provide the answers to sustainability in agriculture.



### **Dr Fiona Brennan (Ireland)**

Fiona Brennan is a research officer within Teagasc, where she leads the Soil Microbiome sub-programme. She completed a BSc in Environmental Biology (University College Dublin) and a PhD in Microbiology (NUI Galway). The key focus of her research team is on microbial-soil-plant interactions in agronomic systems, and on understanding how these relate to the role of functional microbial communities in soil biogeochemical cycles and greenhouse gas emissions. Her group also investigate the fate and transport of microbial enteric pathogens in the environment, antimicrobial resistance, soil biological health and microbial adaptation to environmental niches.



### **Gabe Brown (USA)**

Gabe Brown is one of the most widely-revered and celebrated farmers in the field of Regenerative Agriculture. In 1991, he took over a 1,760-acre farm outside Bismarck, North Dakota. Step by step, Gabe Brown included more Holistic Management and Regenerative practices. Today, he continues no-tilling, has added multi-species cover and companion crops, and has become an innovator in managed grazing techniques that allow most of his pastures a year of recovery time between feeding periods. Almost 30 years later, Brown runs a highly successful 5000 acre ranch. His acclaimed book *Dirt to Soil: One Family's Journey into Regenerative Agriculture* tells his story and is designed to be a guide for others.



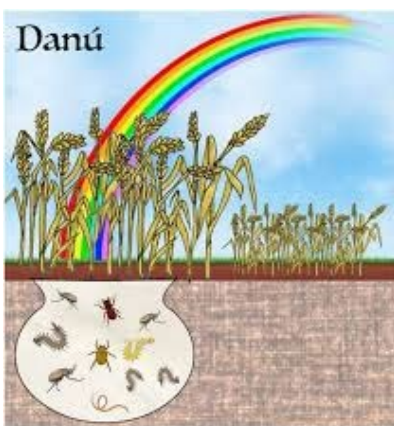
### **Christopher Cooke (U.K.)**

Co-founder of 3LM - the UK & Ireland hub for the Savory Institute, Christopher Cooke and 3LM build upon the legacy of thought leadership pioneers who work with nature to build quality of life for all life. Chris has 18 years of experience training, coaching, and advising people in the adoption of an holistic mindset. He has extensive leadership and advisory experience related to biological agriculture in the UK, Ireland, and Australia. He also holds advanced qualifications in managing change, engineering, environmental monitoring and control, and the psychology of change.



### **Jim Cronin (Ireland)**

One of Ireland's leading horticulturalists, Jim Cronin has been adopting biological agriculture with a strong commercial focus of supplying a range of retail and food service outlets. Jim is a renowned organic vegetable grower who trains people to become growers themselves. Jim operates a market garden in Bridgetown, Killaloe, Co. Clare where he grows a wide range of vegetables year round. He also runs NOTS' popular Organic Market Gardening and Introduction to Market Gardening courses. Jim's topic for BioFarm 2020 will be: "Observations of Biological Farming Practices in the 2020 Cropping Year".



### **DANÚ Group (Ireland)**

DANÚ Farming Group are researching how to make biological farming work in Irish conditions based on a sound understanding of soil structure, chemistry, biology and plant nutrition. The group will be reporting on their ongoing trials and research which has been awarded funding through the EU's EIP programme and the DAFM to carry out a 5-year Biological Farming Transition Programme.



### **Bruno Follador (Brazil)**

Born in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Bruno Follador is an agrarian geographer. He was the founder and director of the "Living Soils" program at the Nature Institute (USA). He is deeply interested in the relation between landscape and culture, and is an international hands-on expert in Farm-Scale composting, having developed a special expertise in the use of Ehrenfried Pfeiffer Chromatography for soil and compost qualitative analysis. He currently works in Brazil as an adjunct researcher of The Nature Institute, integrates the board of the Brazilian Association of Biodynamic Agriculture and consults and gives courses in Latin America, Europe and in North America.



### **Thomas Fouhy (Ireland)**

One of the select few to speak at BioFarm in all three years of its' existence, Tom is an organic, min-till, stockless, arable farmer - based in Cork's Blackwater Valley. A graduate of the MSc in Organic Farming with SRUC in Aberdeen, Tom's presentations showcase farming that is truly productive, profitable, and working in synch with nature. Mr Fouhy is a shining example of how innovative and cutting edge organic arable farming is.



### **John Geraghty (Ireland)**

John Geraghty has close to three decades of research, development and consulting experience in soil management, crop production systems and rural enterprise. He holds both Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Agricultural Science from the National University of Ireland, specializing in crop production and rural development respectively. John is involved in course development with third level institutions such as the Waterford Institute of Technology, University College Dublin where he lectures in agricultural policy, conservation agriculture, sustainable agri-environmental practices and climate resilient agriculture. He is an Associate of the European Conservation Agriculture Federation (ECAAF) and the World Association for Soil and Water Conservation(WASWAC).



### **Dr Christine Jones (Australia)**

Keynote speaker at last year's BioFarm conference, Dr Jones has worked for decades with innovative farmers – including the DANÚ Group in Ireland for the past 18 months. Native of Australia, Dr Jones has a distinguished record of implementing regenerative practices to enhance soils, biodiversity, nutrient cycling, water quality, and community and agricultural health. Dr Jones' speech at BioFarm 2019 was widely praised by the Irish audience in Portlaoise last November.



### **Greg Judy (USA)**

Greg Judy and his wife Jan raise cattle, sheep, mushrooms, pigs and chickens on 1620 acres in Rucker, Missouri. Their livestock graze rich pasture while building healthy soil. As documented in his book, "No Risk Ranching," in 1999, Greg was broke and thought the family farm was history. Since then, in addition to growing healthy soils and animals, the Judys focused on helping others achieve success of their own. With two decades of experience behind him, Greg has learned how to make farming successful by mimicking nature with his grazing management, and building his operation on leased land. He's well-known in the grazing community for sharing his experience to help others be successful.



### **John Kempf (USA)**

John Kempf is an entrepreneur, speaker, podcast host and teacher. He is passionate about the potential of well managed agriculture ecosystems to reverse ecological degradation. John believes regenerative agriculture management systems can regenerate producer profitability and create economic incentives for producers. In addition to being a grower, John is the founder of Advancing Eco Agriculture, Crop Health Labs, Ozadia, and the Regenerative Agriculture Academy. He hosts the *Regenerative Agriculture Podcast*, where he interviews top growers and scientists about the principles and practice of implementing regenerative agriculture on a large scale.



### **Klaus Laitenberger (Germany)**

Hailing from south Germany and now living in Leitrim, Klaus worked as the Head Gardener at the Organic Centre in Co Leitrim for 7 years. He is an acclaimed author of a number of Irish Gardening Books, lectured on the MSc in Organic Horticulture at UCC, and currently works as an organic inspector for the Organic Trust. He has grown a diverse range of alternative and novel food crops - mainly from the Andes region. This year, Klaus was the tutor of NOTS' inaugural online course "Growing in Polytunnels" which was a major success with 350 participants from all over Ireland.



### **Nicole Masters (New Zealand)**

Nicole Masters is an independent agroecologist, systems thinker and educator. Nicole is recognized as a knowledgeable and dynamic speaker on the topic of soil health, and supports farmers in taking their operations to the next level in nutrient density, profitability and environmental outcomes. She is one of a growing number of people who are facilitating a rapidly expanding world of quality food production and biological economies.



### **Dr Jim McAdam (Northern Ireland)**

Dr Jim McAdam is an agricultural scientist specialising in agri-environment measures and in the potential for agroforestry systems to deliver across a range of ecosystems. As the leader for the Crops Grassland & Ecology branch at the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, Jim is responsible for research teams in renewable energy, plant breeding and testing, biodiversity and horticulture. His focus is on adapting to land-use demands for energy cropping: shifting agriculture from a dominance of livestock production to a more balanced, sustainable farm structure with greater emphasis on crop production than at present.



### **Timothy Njakasi (Uganda)**

Managing director of Kasenge Riverford Organic Centre in Uganda, Timothy Njakasi is a vastly experienced organic farmer and grower. He runs KROC, a community-based farming organisation that started in 1992. Since 2001, the farm has been turned into a rural training centre for integrated sustainable organic agriculture. One of KROC's key objectives is to carry out comprehensive research in integrated systems of agriculture, environment and social development in collaboration and networking with the relevant institutions (research), government agencies, civil society organizations, and local farmers.



### **Richard Perkins (Sweden)**

Richard Perkins is an innovative market garden farmer, internationally regarded teacher and influencer, and a Regenerative Agriculture expert. He is author of the internationally acclaimed manual *Regenerative Agriculture and Making Small Farms Work*. He has worked professionally in every major climate zone across several continents consulting to projects, farms and industry, and is known for his pragmatic no-nonsense approach to profitable system design. Richard is now primarily focused at his home Ridgedale Farm AB in Värmland, Sweden.



### **Allan Savory (Zimbabwe)**

Founder and President of the Savory Institute, Allan Savory is the pioneer and originator behind Holistic Management, and a worldwide leader on the principles of regenerative agriculture. Born in Zimbabwe and educated in South Africa, Mr Savory progressed the ideas of a systems thinking approach to managing land resources using livestock. He received the 2003 Banksia International Award, and noted farmer Joel Salatin wrote, "History will vindicate Allan Savory as one of the greatest ecologists of all time."



### **Chris Trump (USA)**

Chris Trump is a world-renown Korean Natural Farmer (KNF) and the first to use KNF on a large-scale farm. Chris aims to equip, empower and inform gardeners, farmers, and philanthropists Korean Natural Farming techniques that will transform livestock and crop production naturally at very little cost. He has experienced the transformation of his crops and land through KNF, and wants you to experience those results yourself. Chris has traveled the world speaking and learning from Master Cho himself (the founder of KNF) and teaching KNF methods across the U.S. and to 3rd world countries to create sustainability.



### **Professor James White (USA)**

Dr James White is Professor of Plant Pathology at Rutgers University, New Jersey. Dr. White specializes in symbiosis research, particularly endophytic microbes. He is the author of more than 180 articles, and author and editor of reference books on the biology, taxonomy, and phylogeny of fungal endophytes. In Dr White's lab, the ultimate goal is to develop new and effective ways to protect plants from biotic and abiotic stresses and enhance the nutritional status of crop plants through construction of functional plant microbiomes with defensive and nutritional properties. It is their belief that plant microbiome technologies may one day reduce or replace chemical inputs currently used to grow crops.



### **Joel Williams (Canada)**

Joel Williams is an independent plant and soil health educator, a healthy soils advocate and presenter on soil biology, plant nutrition and integrated approaches of sustainable farming. He is currently based in Canada but has worked on both conventional and organic farms improving biological farming practices in Australia and the UK. Joel consults with farmers around the world, where he integrates soil chemical and biological assessments along with plant nutritional analyses as a joined-up strategy for crop management. Joel has a keen interest in managing plant diversity, soil microbial ecology and plant & soil nutrition to optimise soil function and crop immunity.