

Summer Newsletter



2026 Upcoming Dates for the Diary

- **October 13th:** Farm Finance Training, Mullingar
- **October 14th:** Agri Update Webinar and Cultivate H1 Review 2026
- **October 20th:** On-Farm Training Session, Gurteen Agricultural College
- **Late November:** Circulation of Print-Ready 2027 Cultivate Farming Calendars
- **December:** National Advertising Campaigns across print and digital media

Regulatory Update

Under the new Prudential Return, which was due 30 September 2026, Credit Unions should classify Cultivate loans as provided by the Credit Union with the support of a CUSO.

The new Return aims to capture any involvement by CUSOs in lending by credit unions. Therefore, although Collaborative Finance has no direct involvement in the lending process, Credit Unions should classify Cultivate loans in the Gross Loans Analysis section, under Gross Loans by Delivery Channel, as provided by the Credit Union with the support of a CUSO.

As per the Central Bank's Prudential Return Guidance Notes for Credit Unions, the relevant pages are 37, 38 & 78. The relevant sections are as follows:

- **Gross Loans Analysis**
- **Gross Loans by Delivery Channel**

This table analyses gross loans outstanding by specific loan category, which:

- Have been provided directly by the credit union on a standalone basis without the support of a Credit Union Shared Service Organisation (CUSO); and
- Have been provided by the credit union with the support of a CUSO.

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Number of Loans Provided via CUSO

Total number of gross loans outstanding by loan categories which have been provided by the credit union with the support of a CUSO.

Provided via CUSO Amount €

Total amount of gross loan exposure amounts outstanding by loan categories which have been provided by the credit union with the support of a CUSO.

Total

Calculated automatically. Totals for loans provided directly and loans provided via a CUSO in the Number and Amount (€) fields. If you have any queries, please contact: thereseconway@collaborativefinance.ie

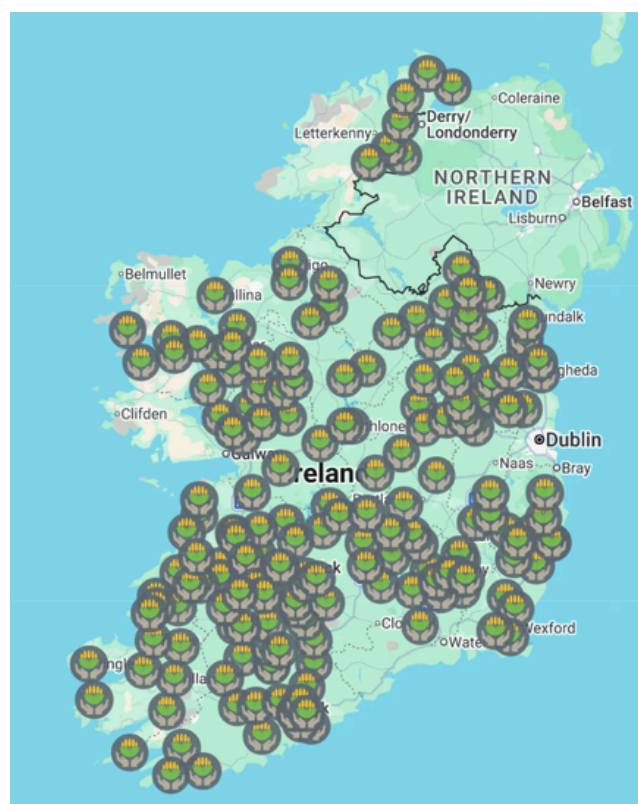
Warm welcome to our latest Cultivate Credit Unions

We were delighted to welcome more new credit unions to Cultivate across the summer. Adding to our nationwide roll-out, participating credit unions now include:

- St Columba's Credit Union, Galway
- North East Credit Union, Louth

The Cultivate network now sits at almost 60 participating credit unions.

We look forward to meeting some of you in-person at our upcoming training days in October.



A busy tradeshow season!

Local CU tradeshow

North West Credit Union attended the Riverstown Show in July. It was great to see them using the available marketing materials and co-branding them for events in their local area. This material, found in the Cultivate SharePoint, can be localised with your logo for any similar events. Thanks to the team for sharing their photos!



Tullamore Show 2026

For the second year running, we had a Cultivate stand at the Tullamore Show & FBD National Livestock Show.

The Cultivate team had a fantastic day meeting with farmers and chatting all things farm finance. Huge thank you to our representatives across nationwide branches for their energy and enthusiasm on the stand.

We have shared some of our favourite photos from the day on the next page!

Visit the Cultivate stand at the Tullamore Show

Stand L - beside the Sustainable Livestock Village

Cultivate is delighted to be exhibiting at the Tullamore Show & FBD National Livestock Show!

Find the Cultivate team at **Stand L2**, located beside the Sustainable Livestock Village and near the Pedigree & Commercial Cattle area.

Join us on our stand for a cup of tea and a chat about all things farming and farm finance – we'd love to hear from you!

Online www.cultivate-cu.ie

Freephone 1800 839 999

Visit your local Cultivate Credit Union

Andrew Smith, Dairy Farmer

Watch Andrew's story

www.Cultivate-CU.ie

Tullamore Show in photos



National Ploughing Championships 2026

We returned again to the National Ploughing Championships in Scraggan, Co. Offaly. Cultivate had a strong presence at this year's event, with a large stand at the heart of the action. We were delighted to have volunteers from our participating Cultivate credit unions across the country, many of whom travelled a good distance to be part of the day. Their energy and enthusiasm made all the difference, giving farmers and potential members the chance to meet the people behind Cultivate face to face. A huge thank you to everyone who gave their time and to the ILCU for their collaboration on the stand again this year. It was a fantastic showing for the Cultivate brand and we are already looking forward to 2027 in Rathangan, Co. Kildare.



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National Ploughing Championships 2026



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National Ploughing Championships 2026



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Ploughing Media Coverage

The period before the Ploughing is one of the busiest times for Cultivate's marketing calendar.

Below is a snippet of some of the media campaigns that went live and the national media coverage secured across the National Ploughing Championships.

- A national advertising campaign ran across Agriland.ie, Irish Farmers Journal, DoneDeal, Irish Farmers Monthly and The Irish Independent
- Activity included full page print ads, digital ads and sponsored articles
- To the right is a sample of one of three editorial pieces that ran on Agriland, Irish Farmers Journal and Farming Independent.



We also secured radio coverage for Joe Healy, Cultivate Chairperson, across the three days of the National Ploughing Championships. He spoke on the record growth of Cultivate loan applications for H1 2026, up 37% on the same period in 2025.

Joe's interviews were featured on Newstalk, C103 Cork's Farmtalk, Highland Radio Galway and Tipp MidWest Radio.



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Cultivate Review H1 2026

The 2026 H1 Cultivate Review was released ahead of the Ploughing to complement our presence at this key agri event. Some of the highlights from the review were:

- Farming loan demand reached a record €41.3 million in H1 2026, up 37% on last year
- Average loan amount: €43,007
- March was the busiest month for loan applications (19% of the total)
- Beef farmers remain the largest sector for Cultivate lending
- Stocking and working capital was the most popular loan purpose

New Hero Farmer

Recently, we launched our new campaign assets with Louise Rennie, our New Hero Farmer.

Louise currently has a herd of Angus cattle. She lives on the farm with her husband and their three daughters. For a long time, Louise relied on borrowing her father's tractor whenever she needed one, so she availed of the Cultivate loan to buy her own. She spoke so highly of her experience with her local credit union, Mitchelstown Credit Union.

We are delighted to have Louise representing Cultivate and would like to say a huge thank you to Brian Whelan from Mitchelstown Credit Union for facilitating this.

The video content for this campaign will begin to be rolled out from next week. Jane will be in contact about new social clips that you can post to your individual credit union social accounts.



Cultivate Business Case Review, July 8th 2026

The Cultivate Business Case Review webinar was hosted by Therese Conway. It went through editing the Business Case document for your own credit union. The latest template is available to download in the Cultivate SharePoint from the Education and Training > Cultivate Business Case folder.

The recording is also available in this folder. It is a really helpful resource for when you are revisiting the Business Case to update it each year.

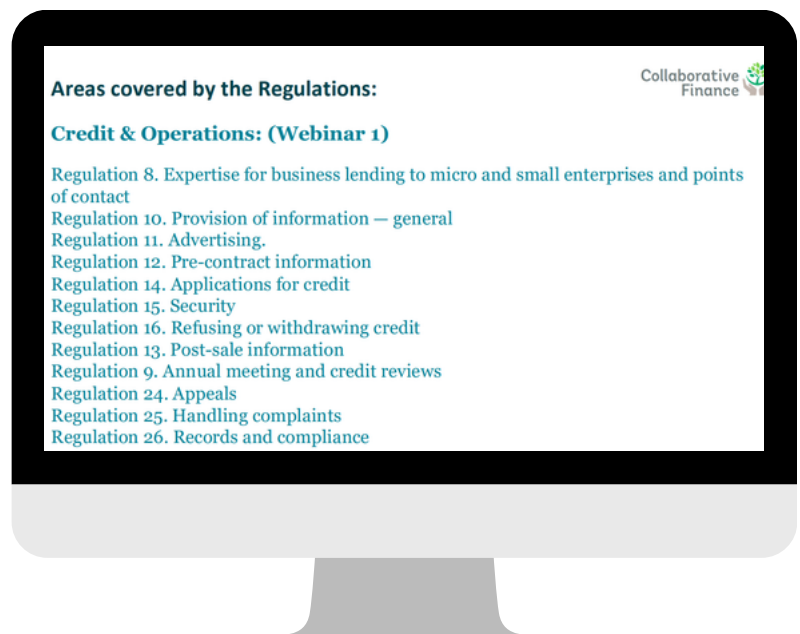
Cultivate - SME Regulations (Operational & Credit), July 16th 2026

Cultivate - SME Regulations (Credit Control), July 23rd 2026

There was a two-part webinar series held for SME Regulations in July, the first being on Operational and Credit Regulations and the second on Credit Control.

During the sessions, Therese took the group through a selection of different policies and templates that your own credit unions can avail of such as Policy for SME Borrowers in Financial Difficulty, Approval/Refusal of Cultivate Loan Letter and many more useful resources for your lending team.

These templates are available to download from Cultivate SharePoint > Education and Training > SME Regulations. The webinar recordings from both sessions are also available in this folder.



Community & Business Lending Webinars, June 17th and September 2nd

As we near the launch of Business Lending and Community Lending with our pilot groups, there were two webinars held in June and September to progress both product offerings.

We took the group through the recent survey results, identifying what the key priorities will be for each product and highlighting what support credit unions need to offer Business and/or Community Lending to their members.

We also provided a breakdown of objectives for each product and what supports and materials will be given to the credit unions under Community Lending and Business Lending. To the right is a snapshot of some of the material shared. Recording of the session can be found in the Cultivate SharePoint > Business and Community folder.

There is an upcoming in-person session on October 6th for the pilot groups where they will meet as a group for the first time.

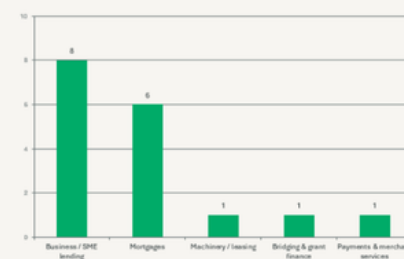
We look forward to seeing the full roll-out of both products to market in 2027.

UNMET NEEDS

Collaborative Finance

What's the single biggest unmet member lending need your credit union is currently turning away or referring elsewhere?

Business / SME lending remains the most common named gap; mortgages and self-build are also repeatedly cited.



Themes behind the responses

- Business gaps include SME competitiveness, loan insurance and business accounts.
- Mortgage mentions include large mortgages and self-build.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES – BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY

Collaborative Finance

Building Ireland's standardised business finance and community finance offerings for the credit union movement

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1) Naming, brand strategy and identity | 4) Twelve-month marketing plan |
| 2) Marketing assets | 5) Pilot involvement |
| 3) Standalone website | 6) National launch event |

Regulatory Framework

Collaborative Finance

Collaborative Finance worked to identify how best to build out the necessary framework to facilitate credit unions lending to SMEs and Community organisations in a regulatory compliant way.

CF examined what the gaps were, what solutions were available and how best to create a viable support framework for Credit Unions.

Work had already been done on a dedicated Business & Community Lending Framework by a number of Credit Unions under the BizFin umbrella, which was established by CUDA, to enable Credit Unions to expand their lending portfolios by serving small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including micro-enterprises, clubs and associations.

The framework recognised that Business & Community lending is a specialised area, requiring a practical structure for Credit Unions to meet the SME regulatory requirements and provide guidance for managing Business & Community lending in a prudent and effective manner.

CF will now be providing this Framework to Credit Unions as part of the Business and Community offering and will provide training and support to Credit Unions to aid them with gaining expertise in the area, similar to what has been done with Cultivate and Greenify, through regular updates, training and dedicated points of contacts for credit unions, which will in conjunction with the development and marketing of the brand, enable Credit Unions to confidently offer Business and Community lending to their members.

Upcoming: In-person Cultivate Trainings

Farm Finance Training, 13th October, North Midlands CU, Mullingar

This first day focuses on the practical side of farm lending.

Martin Clarke, Commercial Manager at ifac, will walk through understanding farm loan requirements: the specific financial needs of farmers from equipment to stocking and working capital, risk assessment in farming and tailoring loan products to suit, the differences between a sole trader, a partnership and a limited company, how to read farm accounts including the P&L and balance sheet and when a business plan is needed for expansion or diversification.

Colm Begley of Graphic Financial Analysis will then train the group on using Visualyse. Colette O'Connell, Head of Lending at North Midlands Credit Union, will also attend and share the member-centric approach to lending. There will be an opportunity at the end to provide feedback learnings and advice for growing Cultivate.

On-Farm Cultivate Training, 20th October, Gurteen Agricultural College

The second day will take the learning out of the office and onto the farm at Teagasc Gurteen.

John Parry, Principal of Gurteen College, will lead a practical day at the Teagasc Gurteen campus, giving teams a first-hand look at beef, dairy, tillage and sheep farms in practice.

Emma Dooley, Senior Farm Support Advisor at ifac, will give an introduction to Irish agriculture, covering current agricultural schemes, agri-terminology and the farm life and financial cycles, alongside current trends and issues in farming and an update on the latest ifac report.

Together, the two days will give credit union teams both the financial grounding and the on-the-ground understanding to back farmers with confidence.



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