

## Deirdre O'Mahony Statement

For over two decades, my practice has focused on the role artists can play in providing cultural space to examine the complicated relationship between land, landscape and ecological sustainability in rural places. My ideas developed in the west of Ireland as conflicts about farming and land use played out in response to conservation regulation and rural policy development. My previous projects have used public engagement, archival and moving image installation and critical writing to communicate historical narratives' affective power on unconscious, subjective relationships and understandings of land, landscape and productivity.

Cultural production: heritage, tourism, artisanal foods and festivals, has overtaken agriculture in economically unproductive but diversity rich, high nature value landscapes. Large scale, industrial farming for the global food markets currently dominates State agricultural policy, with traditional, small scale farming considered economically unsustainable. However, the future of rural places - including human and non-human inhabitants - requires that we think beyond purely economic or habitat-based, value systems.

My aim is to create cultural space to harness the collective agency of artists, farmers, food producers, scientists, and policymakers to imagine new approaches to climate change and food security. Given increasingly precarious food security, linking culture and agriculture, rural and post-urban, artist and Agri/culturist is vital; a collective form of social, aesthetic and dialogical production necessitated by the gravest challenge to all lifeforms on earth, climate change and the collapse of ecological biodiversity.