Embrace FARM

2024 – 2027 Strategy

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Introduction

Embrace FARM (Farm Accidents Remembered & Missed) was established in 2014 to provide support and comfort to farming families who have lost a loved one or suffered injury in a serious farming accident. Embrace FARM was set up by Brian and Norma Rohan, in response to their own experience of having lost Brian's beloved father, Liam, from a farming accident. Like many farming families before them, the Rohan family experienced invaluable support from friends and neighbours, in their time of need. The experience also highlighted to them the dearth of emotional or practical support networks available to farm families suffering similar losses.

Embrace FARM is a voluntary organisation and registered charity, initially providing support through an annual ecumenical remembrance service. Over time, this has grown into providing a range of supports such as counselling and emotional supports, legal supports and agri-business supports. The board is controlled and guided by a voluntary Board of Directors, with board members recruited from bereaved family members, who have used Embrace FARM's services, and professionals working in the agri-sector. Embrace FARM remembers those who have lost their lives or have been injured, and supports both survivors of farm accidents and family members impacted.

Key Strategic Achievements 2020 - 2024

In the last 10 years, Embrace FARM has supported 460 families, 160 of those families have been supported in the last 18 months. Embrace FARM's reputation for helping families, in their time of need, has built up over time and that momentum is continuing to build.

For much of the 2020 – 2024 strategy period, funding has been through fundraising initiatives, typically organised by service users. They have experienced the supports Embrace FARM provides to farming families in need and want to pass it on to future farming families that find themselves in similar situations. This fundraising has been very welcome. Along with spreading the word, it has also enabled the organisation to grow and increase the number of families it can assist.

As all the services are free to users, another welcome funding stream was a sizeable grant secured from the Department of Agriculture, which allowed Embrace FARM to pilot and fund the Encircle Programme. Designed and managed by Embrace FARM, this programme provided a range of practical and emotional supports, such as access to a financial advisor or counselling, to farm families experiencing grief and loss. This funded an Embrace FARM programme manager and was delivered across Ireland in 2022 and 2023.

The scale of the Encircle programme highlighted the comprehensive supports that could be provided to farming families to assist them in multiple ways during a very difficult time. Building on these insights, Embrace FARM entered a partnership with Yellow Harbour, a consultancy focused on helping charities to secure funding grants.

2024 – 2027 Strategy Development

In preparation for reaching the end of the previous strategy, running from 2020 – 2024, Irial O'Farrell of Evolution Consulting was retained to work with Embrace FARM, to develop the 2024 – 2027 strategy, to commence in July 2024.

The approach taken was to initially meet with the General Manager, Norma Rohan, and the Business Development Manager, Catherine Kenneally, to gain an understanding of Embrace FARM, and its culture, goals and aspirations. Building on the previous strategy, it was determined that the current vision, mission statement and values, having been amended during the previous strategy period, were still valid and are included below.

Reflecting on the achievements to-date, discussion focused on what could be achieved while recognising the need for financial stability. It was determined that the focus of this strategy should be solidifying gains made and ensuring the long-term viability of the organisation. As a result, the three key strategic areas identified were:

- Sustainable funding
- Corporate governance
- Organisational competence

Research was conducted, to identify and understand funding models pursued by other voluntary organisations. Follow up meetings with the management team and the board, to discuss research findings, identify options and agree most appropriate approach for Embrace FARM, enabled discussion and alignment around the key areas of focus for 2024 – 2027. A final meeting with all staff focused on further refinement of strategic goals and planning. This approach ensured clarity of desired strategic outcomes, at all levels within the organisation.

Embrace FARM's Vision, Mission and Values

Embrace FARM's current vision is:

"*To be a caring, supportive and non-judgemental community for all farming families affected by sudden death and serious injury.*"

Embrace FARM's Mission is:

"*To grow and sustain a support network for those affected by sudden death and serious injury.*"

There are many organisations that support preventative measures to prevent accidents and accidental deaths happening. Embrace FARM recognises its remit is to support farm families when they do happen and does not see itself playing a role in farm safety.

Embrace FARM's Values are:

- Empathy – drawing on our personal experience, we are always there to help those impacted by farming accidents;
- Understanding – based on our personal experiences, we aim to be understanding and supportive to all who need us;
- Transparency – we will be compliant with relevant regulations and treat all our partners/stakeholders with integrity;

- Guiding & listening – we are a network for people to 'reach out' to with confidentiality and will offer understanding and support to all who contact us;
- Respect – we will respect each other, the people we support and the organisations we work/partner with;
- Committed – we are committed to supporting those in need (bereaved, traumatised, overwhelmed) as best we can;
- Inclusive – we will support all of those who need our services; and
- Person-focused – at the heart of everything we do are bereaved families and survivors.

Strategy 2024 – 2027

The focus of this strategy is to support farm families facing serious injuries and sudden deaths, by:

- Provide a comforting face to service users
- Present a professional face to other stakeholders e.g., employees, board, funders, agri-sector, etc
- Build on current achievements, to ensure Embrace FARM is sustainable in the long-term
- Ensure excellent corporate governance
- Migrate to a sustainable financial funding model, by lessening the dependency on community fundraising
- Build and continue to develop the organisational capability to deliver all of the above

Following on from the above points, the three strategic pillars agreed are:

1. Financial Sustainability
2. Good Governance
3. Organisational Capability

Strategic Pillar	**Success Indicators**
Financial Sustainability	• Financial line of sight for at least 2 years, ideally 3 years • Confidence that funding levels can be retained for desired level of growth, in terms of: o Services provided o Numbers of families supported o Access across country
Good Governance	• Achieve Triple Locked Member status
Organisational Capability	• Good performance with little internal friction • Competence employees • Culture and ethos of recognition aligned with Embrace FARM values • Effective standardised work procedures across organisation

The strategic plan to deliver this strategy is set out in Table 1: 2024-2027 Strategic Plan below.

Table 1: 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan

Pillar - Description	Deadlines	Outputs	Outcomes
Governance – Triple Locked	• Q4, 2026 • 2027+: on-going monitoring for governance changes	• Documented policies & procedures • Triple-locked Award granted	• Provides good governance credibility to potential funders, employees
Governance – Funding Matrix	• Policy approved – Q4, 2024 • Implemented beginning 2025	• Funding matrix policy • Funding decision matrix	• Efficient funding strategy aligned to on purpose
Financial – Community Funding	• Policy approved – Q4, 2024 • Toolkits developed – throughout 2025 • Annual fundraising targets	• Community Fundraising policy & governance boundaries. • Promotional toolkits per approved fundraising activity • Proceeds in bank	• Good governance & credibility. • Increased brand awareness • Good will within farming ecosystem
Financial – Corporate Patronage	• Approved strategy – Q1, 2025 • Assets/packages available – Q3, 2025 • Implement strategy Q4,2025 onwards	• Corporate Patronage policy • Promotional toolkits, packages per category • Donations in bank	• Building strong relationships within wider agri-business community • More families across island can be assisted
Financial – Insurance Feasibility Study	• Board approval – Q1, 2025 • Q2-Q4 2025+: implement agreed plan • Q4, 2025: Board update	• Secure multi-year funding source • Proceeds in bank	• Provides on-going stability & financial sight to Embrace FARM • Organisational longevity
Organisational Capability – Policies & procedures	• Board approval of policies – Q1, 2025 • Procedures documented & implemented – Q4, 2025	• All policies documented & approved • All procedures documented & implemented	• Provides clarity and alignment to all staff • Basis of good governance & enabling organisation to grow
Organisational Capability – Communication schedule	• Create schedule – Q4, 2024 • Q1 2025+: implement schedule	• Meetings scheduled • Meeting purpose defined	• Clarity of meeting types & purpose
Organisational Capability – Team Development	• Q4, 2024	• Completed Team Charter	• Clarity of roles, responsibilities, ways of working, expectations
Organisational Capability – Transition to Finance software	• Fully implemented by Q4, 2024	• System installed & all financial activities are captured	• Increases financial governance & transparency, reduces risk