ICMSA take issue with ?rather casual attitude? displayed by Minister Coveney in relation to 40% fall in dairy farmers? income

The ICMSA has said that dairy farmers will not be particularly encouraged by the ?rather casual attitude? displayed by Minister Coveney in relation to the 40% fall they are experiencing in their incomes. ICMSA President, John Comer, said that it was difficult to imagine any other workforce in Ireland being told that they were going to have to take a 40% cut in their income but not to worry because it was ?predicted' that they could recover by the middle of next year. Mr Comer wondered what the reaction would be if any element of the public sector, for instance, was handed that option. He also noted that even if a price recovery occurred by that point it would be far too late in terms of the peak milk production period when the bulk of the State's milk is produced.

?Price will certainly have to recover before March and Minister Coveney will be fully aware of that ?if prices remain at their current level and if the ?Reign of Ruin' of the retail corporations is allowed to continue without the question of fair margins being addressed then we are facing a desperate situation. The individual farmers coming into to our stand to ask about milk price just can't be reassured by vague predictions about a price recovery for mid-2016. They may well have borrowed to expand because they were told in reports like ?Food Harvest' that it was ?onwards and upwards' for the dairy sector and now they're looking at the new debt and a 40% fall in income and being told that a price recovery is 'predicted' for next year but even if it comes it will come too late for their best production months. They won't be sleeping any better for hearing that?, said the ICMSA President.

Mr Comer said that during the course of this morning's visit by the Toiseach to the ICMSA stand, he had raised the issue of the wholly inadequate ?13.7 million EU aid package resulting from the Farm Council 7 September meeting and had received very positive signals that the Government would be adding considerably to the monies already allocated.

Ends 23 September 2015.

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Or

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