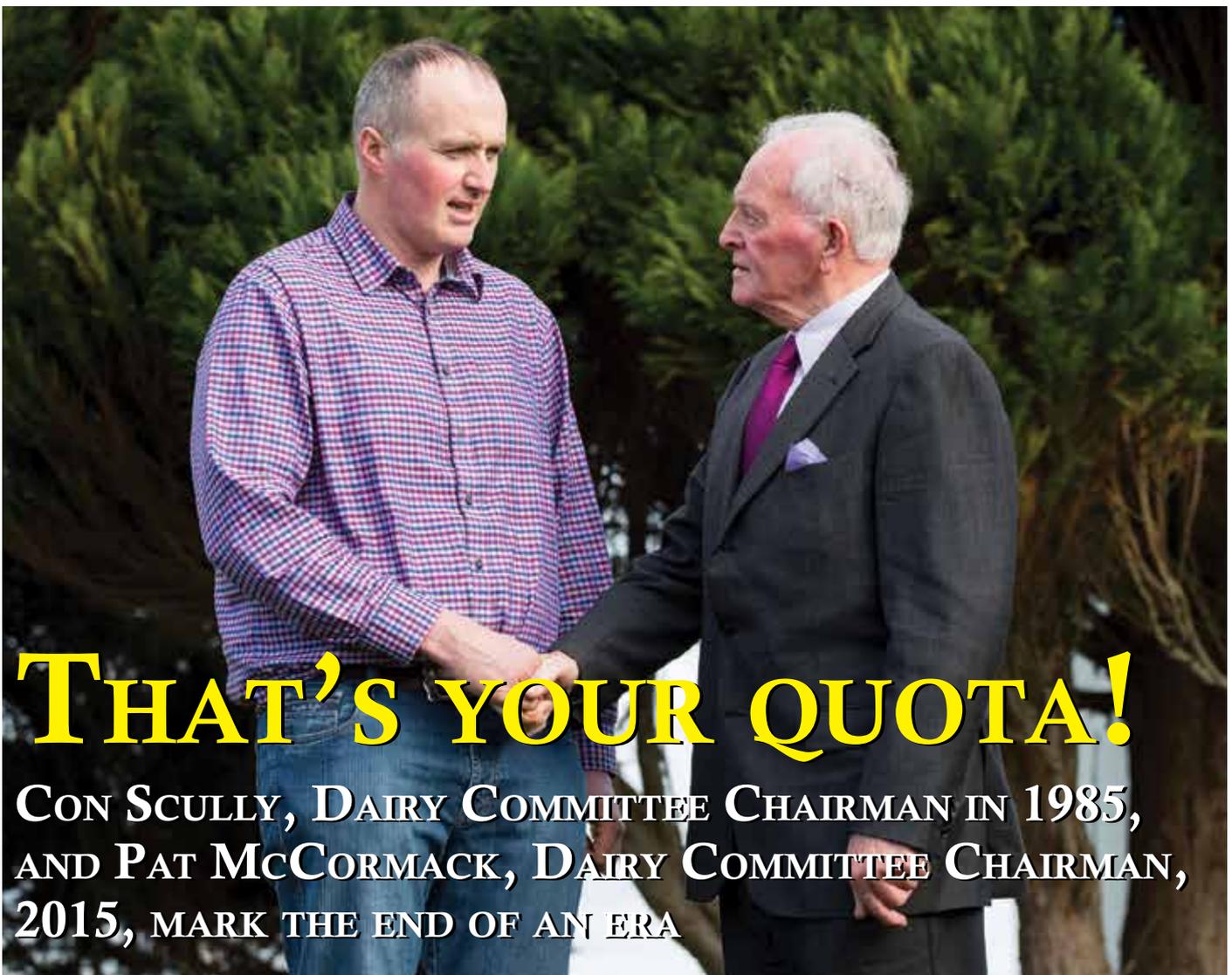




ICMSA

NEWSLETTER

THE FAMILY FARM ORGANISATION THAT CONCENTRATES ON SOLUTIONS



THAT'S YOUR QUOTA!

CON SCULLY, DAIRY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN IN 1985,
AND PAT MCCORMACK, DAIRY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN,
2015, MARK THE END OF AN ERA

ALSO, ABSOLUTELY **FREE** ALL-WEATHER, HIGH-VIZ, FARMER'S
LIABILITY & PERMISSION SIGN, COURTESY OF ICMSA AND
CAMPION INSURANCE, DETAILS ON BACK PAGE

**PLUS, DO YOU WANT THE CASH AND KUDOS FROM WINNING ZURICH FARMING
INDEPENDENT DAIRY FARMER OF THE YEAR? HURRY UP AND ENTER!**

INTRODUCTION

That's our quota!

John Comer, President, ICMSA

Our front cover of this issue refers to what is, undoubtedly, the end of an era. At the time of writing there are mere weeks to go before we enter the post-quota age and we can look forward with the degree of optimism that comes with calm rational calculation and trust in our technical excellence. ICMSA has always disliked the 'White Gold' hype indulged in by some commentators – and we've always noted how few farmers are to be found in these excited ranks. We prefer to trust in the internationally acknowledged standard of our milk and after that to 'make haste slowly', acting prudently, and always mindful of the fact that it is the farmer who has to invest the money necessary to expand and it is the farmer – and the farmer alone – whose income is largely dictated by milk price. That sets us apart from the commentators urging us to borrow more and invest more – they will not have to repay the monies borrowed, we will. ICMSA will always remember that and we won't cease to remind all the 'hurlers on the ditch' that we, as farmers, are the ones assuming the risk and increasing our workload. The next observation to make about the situation is to note the continuing resurgence of international dairy markets – covered more comprehensively in Pat McCormack's article opposite. Dutch Dairy quotations are rebounding strongly with butter/SMP up 21% since their lowest point in December. The drought conditions affecting part of New Zealand's production will also feed-in to rebalancing global supply and demand and the reductions in European supply due to superlevy are all contributing to an increase in confidence regarding our milk price for the balance of 2015.

Speaking of superlevy: the Commission's decision to permit the payment of zero superlevy over a three year-period at zero interest is a significant concession and we now need to see Co-ops contacting those farmers who have already had monies deducted to offer those farmers the choice of either (A) continuing with the payment of the fine 'upfront' or (B) the Co-op repaying two thirds of the monies deducted back to the farmer who can then pay the balance owed over the next two years at zero interest. ICMSA will continue to lobby for a butterfat adjustment but we recognise and welcome this staggered payment option at a time when cash-flow pressures are significant.

As the dairy outlook brightens, the beef situation remains overcast – at best – and unfortunately, it may even be darkening.



The news, reported recently in the Irish Independent Farming that the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine and Teagasc are in the process of performing a 'U-turn' on the commitment to review the QPS Beef Grid represents an unacceptable backtracking and reneging on what was agreed at the Beef Forum Meeting on 13 November 2014. It's worth recalling the agreed statement made on that occasion: "The QPS system will be reviewed, with the assistance of Teagasc, with a view, in particular, to providing a more simple and transparent system, before the middle of 2015". If the reports contained in the press are accurate we are then the credibility of the Beef Forum is called into question and we are left without any means of addressing the underlying problems that undoubtedly persist within the beef sector. By way of illustrating the nature and extent of those problems, ICMSA's has recently calculated that the price differentials between Ireland and Britain on an R3 steer has now reached a point where the Irish farmer is losing over €300 per animal based on an average 350kg steer carcass, a difference of 21% between our two markets.. Similar differences exist between U and O grades. We're sending over 50% of our exports to the UK market and the exchange rate has turned decisively in our favour. The question must be asked: why is our beef sector so manifestly unable to deliver any proportionate return on beef to the farmers? Since it was first mooted, we have identified numerous systematic defects in the QPS grid and the Department and Teagasc must see that the Grid is not trusted and requires, at the very least, an absolutely fundamental review. They agreed to do that and we must insist that they deliver on what was freely agreed.

We welcome the opening of the new GLAS scheme but we have reservations about ability of those farming intensively - where that means operating small farms with high inputs - to join the scheme. From an environmental point of view, as well as from the perspective of those farmers' incomes, it's vital that the terms and conditions of GLAS allow for their participation.

A somewhat broader definition of 'environment' is involved in our outspoken and widely reported criticisms of Bus Eireann's decision to cut a number of services to rural communities and towns effectively leaving them without any public transport options. We emphasised that people in not-so-remote parts of rural Ireland increasingly feel abandoned as services that took a century to roll-out:

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Free Text and Email Service

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banking, policing, local schools, transport, postal services, have all disappeared within the space of 15 years. It's as if the state has turned around to rural communities and simply announced: "You're on your own from here, lads". That all this was happening at the same time as we had endless discussions about the future of Aer Lingus with the stress laid on the need to retain 'connectivity' was richly ironic. I said then and I repeat now: the need for connectivity doesn't stop at the city boundaries. Rural people are entitled to connectivity as well.

Finally, I'd like every reader to think about entering or nominating another Dairy Farmer of the Year category in the Zurich Farming Independent Farmer of the Year. We are delighted to sponsor this category and we want to see our best and brightest enter to compete for a prize that is both cash and kudos. Details on www.farmeroftheyear.ie or ring Alchemy Event Management at 01-2846096.

Dairy Markets Showing Signs of Recovery in 2015

By Pat McCormack, Deputy President and Chairperson of Dairy Committee.



The decline in dairy product prices in the second half of 2014 had been a major concern for dairy farmers and the potential milk price reductions could have had a major negative impact on farm income for 2015. Thankfully, the start of 2015 has seen a significant improvement in dairy markets.

Up to the end of October 2014, dairy markets were under enormous pressure, principally due to the global supply situation with supply growth almost double the growth in demand. This led to cuts in all dairy product prices, but fortunately there has been a steady improvement in dairy product prices and this has gained particular momentum in February to the point that milk price reductions should no longer be on the agenda of Co-op boards. Forecasting milk price is never easy but certainly the outlook for milk price has improved and is much more positive than three months ago. So, why has this happened?

Principally, supply issues are easing with forecasted reductions in New Zealand for 2014/2015 season. Up until the end of January 2015, New Zealand were 2.7% ahead of the previous year's deliveries, however, due to a severe drought, supplies are expected to be 3.3% below by the end of the season. Supply reductions are also evident globally and in the EU due to lower milk prices and also Superlevy concerns, both leading to stronger demand and price for dairy products. This reduction in supply is highlighted in Figure 1, showing how the net position of the key exporters of milk changed in the two months from October 2014 to December 2014. All the major milk producers had reduced supply in that period except the US who have since followed suit.

Figure 2 shows the Dutch dairy quotations in the last year and the pick-up is quite visible in 2015. The prices



quoted are prices at processor level and thus to convert to farm level, processing costs must be deducted and the VAT included. Interestingly, the Butter/SMP price was 29.3cpl in December and has risen to 35.4cpl for February, an increase of 6.1cpl. A similar trend is occurring with WMP, showing an increase from 29.3cpl in December to 35.6cpl, an increase of 6.3cpl.

The GDT has shown significant strengthening since November to a position now that the 50% that was lost in the 9 months following the highs of January 2014 is being reclaimed at significant pace. The individual changes of each GDT auction for the last year are shown in Figure 3, with the last six auctions all returning increases in the weighted average price but more significantly is the manner of the increases of the last 3

auctions showing a 9.4%, 10.1% and 1.1% increase respectively. These major price signals provide a level of optimism to be considered when setting milk price for the rest of this year.

The weakness of the euro at present has also resulted in greater competitiveness for European exports of dairy products. As most dairy products are sold in US dollars, there is more euros returned to processors when they sell their products on the world market. The value of the Euro has declined in the last year, close to 20% overall and 10% in the last 3 months. The underlying reason of the weakness of the Euro stems from the weakness of the Euro Economy and the ECB's measures to allay deflation and promote investment through quantitative easing.

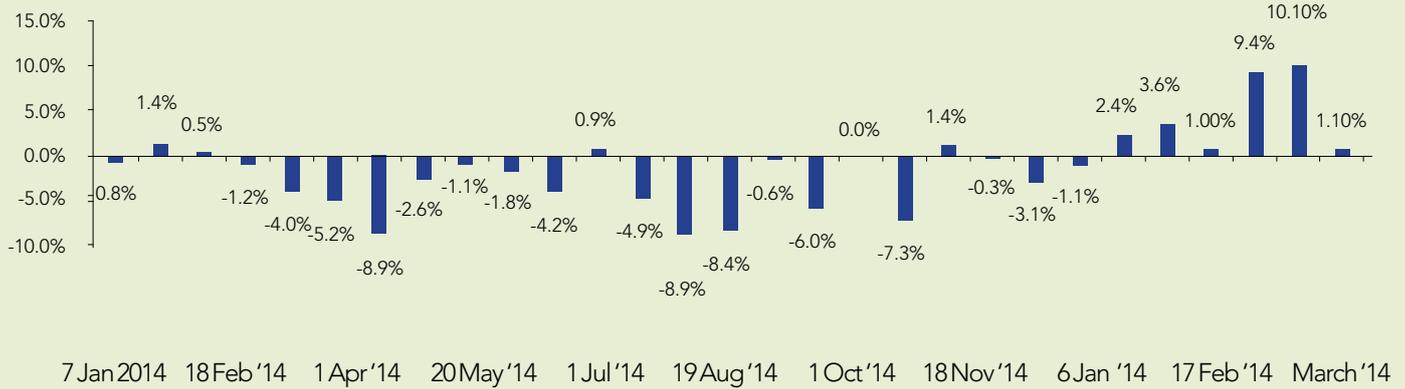
So should we expect higher prices for the remainder of 2015 than are currently offered at the moment? Looking at current markets and if they continue with no major negative shocks, there is no reason for higher prices not to be a reality in the coming year. Processors

have always stated that they don't pay the higher 'spot' prices available at the top of the market and by this reasoning they

Figure 2: Dutch quotations returns for Butter/SMP and WMP (Cent per litre)

	Butter/SMP	WMP
7 Jan 2014	47.7	49.6
1 Apr 2014	43.1	46.1
1 Jul 2014	41.6	41.5
1 Oct 2014	31.3	31
2 Dec 2014	29.3	29.3
6 Jan 2015	27.8	28.9
20 Jan 2015	29.2	30.1
3 Feb 2015	31.8	32.5
17 Feb 2015	35.4	35.6

Figure 3: GDT Auction Changes 2014-2015



should not pay the lowest spot prices that were sold in Autumn 2014. Therefore, as Irish farmers did not see the full heights of the strong markets in 2013 and early

2014, therefore, dairy farmers are perfectly entitled to expect that they will be shielded from the lowest spot prices. There has been a dramatic and welcome turnaround in dairy

markets in the last two months to the point that milk price increases are now more likely than milk price reductions for 2015 which given previous forecasts, is hugely positive.

Milk Superlevy Situation

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has announced that based on estimated milk deliveries as submitted by milk purchasers for the period up to 31st January 2015, Ireland is 5.47% over quota when account was taken of the butterfat content of milk deliveries during the same period.

Estimated butterfat adjusted deliveries in January were 110,701,832 litres. Flexi-milk will be much lower for this quota year according to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Last year, 13 million litres were transferred from the National Reserve to flexi-milk but this year it will fall to 5m litres.

Additionally, a lot less quota will be returned from the Processors and Co-ops as most are significantly over quota. The superlevy bill will be significantly greater than anything previously and farmers need to talk to their Co-ops to deal with this situation as quickly as possible.

Derogation Application Open – Do you need to apply?

The Nitrates Derogation is now open for applications. The Nitrates Derogation allows farmers to exceed the limit of 170 kg of livestock manure nitrogen per hectare set down in the Nitrates Regulations, up to a maximum of 250 kg per hectare, subject to adherence to stricter rules.

The closing date for receipt of completed online derogation applications in 2015 is **31st March 2015**.

PLEASE NOTE THAT 2015 APPLICATIONS CAN ONLY BE SUBMITTED ONLINE

The Fertilisation Plan should also be submitted with the Nitrates Derogation application, unless a valid REPS 4 plan is in place prepared since 2012 OR you have submitted a Fertiliser Plan to the Department in either 2012, 2013 or 2014.

Nitrogen and Phosphorus statements for 2014 are available to all farmers at agfood.ie. Remember that the statement will show the nitrogen and phosphorus produced by cattle only, so if you have other livestock on your farm (such as sheep, pigs, poultry, horses, etc) you will need to work out the N and P that they produced and add this to the figure for cattle to get the total figure.

Farmers who exceeded the limits in 2014 have been advised in writing of this in early February.

ICMSA urges all farmers that expect to exceed the stocking rate limit in 2015 to apply for a Derogation or take other remedial action and thereby avoid penalties being applied to your scheme payments.

Positive Returns for Beef Markets expected for 2015

Michael Guinan, Chairperson, ICMSA Livestock Committee.

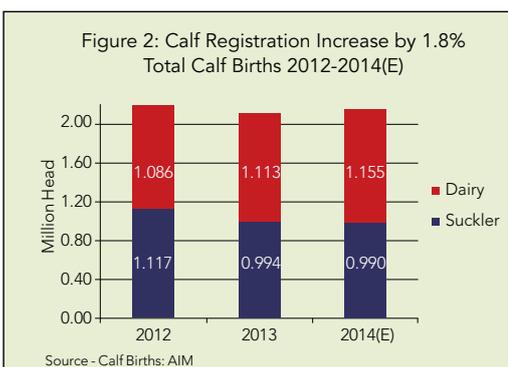
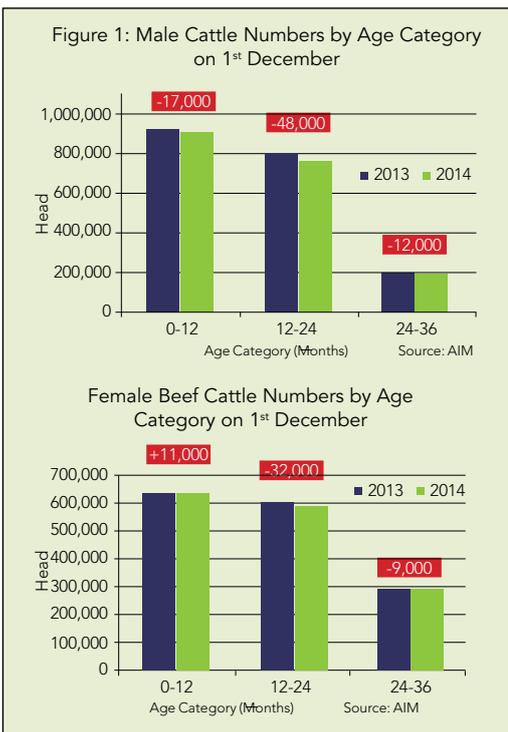


Firstly, let's look to see how the market is expected to perform in the coming year. Principally, supply is the main driver of price in the beef market and cattle throughput is expected to fall 120,000-150,000 in 2015 compared to 2014 and will be close to the levels last seen in 2013. Last year, extra supply coupled with higher average carcass weights led to the significant price reductions and the reversal of this increased trend in numbers is a welcome development.

In regards to future supply, we must make sure that lessons are learnt from the recent past, and while animal throughput numbers are expected to be lower in the

Figure 3:

Time	Ireland/Steers/R3 (Cent)	UK/Steers/R3 (Cent)	Price Difference	Percentage Difference
07/01/2012	394.2	402.6	8.4	2.1%
05/01/2013	395.1	447.6	52.5	13.3%
29/06/2013	437.8	468.4	30.6	7.0%
04/01/2014	385.9	458.9	73	18.9%
01/03/2014	378.4	440.8	62.4	16.5%
07/06/2014	374.9	410.5	35.6	9.5%
06/09/2014	351.3	435.3	84	23.9%
06/12/2014	377.3	453.4	76.1	20.2%
03/01/2015	387.7	466.2	78.5	20.2%
21/02/2015	405.4	492.3	86.9	21.4%



near future, a vibrant live export trade for calves is essential to ensure that cattle numbers going forward remain in the farmers favour. With the number of 12-36 month cattle down 101,000 head on 1 December 2014, as seen in Figure 1, it is quite clear that meat plants will find it more difficult to source cattle in the coming months. Couple these lower supply numbers with the re-opening of the American market, there should be strong demand for finished cattle from the processors in 2015. This in turn should raise prices in the coming months.

However, 2.145m calves were born in 2014 compared to 2.107m in 2013 as seen in Figure 2. The number of births in 2015 are expected to increase substantially and in particular from the dairy herd. There has been an early start to the calving season with a 25% increase in births in the first 8 weeks of the year. Looking at exports, in the first six weeks of 2015 alone, only 1,846 calves have been exported which represents a fall from 4,325 in the same time last year. Based on these figures, slaughter numbers are likely to increase in 2016 and 2017 unless live export levels are increased.

From an ICMSA perspective, this will be a priority to ensure that meat plants are not again in a position to dictate lower prices.

Finally and most importantly, turning to prices, Figure 3 shows the trend in Irish and UK R3 steers prices since 2012.

Analysis carried out by the ICMSA shows that there is still a considerable difference between price in the UK and here in Ireland. Irish beef finishers are losing over €300 on each R3 steer they produce compared to their UK counterparts. According to Bord Bia figures, R3 price for steers in Ireland is 86.9 cents per kg below the price in the UK. On the average 350kg steer carcass, this represents a loss of €304 per head for farmers. This difference amounts to 21% difference between the two markets, a trend that has been constant for the last number of months. At present, farmers feel that they are being short-changed on the price of their cattle and they are looking very hard at the difference between the two markets. If a farmer had sold one 350 kg R3 steer each week since the start of 2014 he would be almost €15,000 euro worse off. This is a staggering amount and amounts to the profit on most beef operations in a year.

In relation to the Beef Roundtable agreement, unfortunately, most of the issues remain outstanding and in particular, the review of the beef grid needs to commence and this is a priority from an ICMSA perspective.

The Sustainability Dairy Assurance Scheme gets down to business

David Owens, Sector Manager, Dairy Ingredients, Bord Bia



Working with nature



The level of activity relating to the Sustainable Dairy Assurance Scheme (SDAS) has been rising steadily month on month over the past year. The SDAS has been in operation since spring 2014 and by the end of February this year the number of dairy farms audited had risen to over 5,300.

The rate of completion of audits under the SDAS, the vast majority of which are conducted jointly with a Beef and Lamb Quality Assurance audit has improved significantly as time has progressed. The findings of these audits reveal the high standards that Irish dairy farmers are operating to in terms of hygiene, animal welfare and environmental protection.

Co-op milk advisors are playing an important role in advising farmers on preparation for the audit and also assisting them in addressing issues highlighted at audit that need attention before full certification is awarded. Some areas that farmers should focus their attention on in preparation for audit include;

- Farm records - including herd register, animal movement records, animal remedy purchase and usage records, and feed purchase records.
- Display of a sign relating to access control, biosecurity and availability of farm safety statement/farm safety risk assessment.
- Provision of disinfection point (footbath/boot dip).
- Complete and up to date farm safety statement/farm safety risk assessment.
- Reports from the milk purchaser on milk quality such as recent text messages or statements.
- If using private well for water for milking machine washing, provide the most recent test results for microbiological levels. A clear test within the last 3 years will ensure full compliance.

The collection of sustainability information at audit continues to build the profile of Irish dairy farming and solidify our position as the most sustainable milk producers in the world. Feedback on the information collected at audit will be provided to the farmer

to allow them view their sustainability performance in comparison to the national average. This will help highlight areas that could be targeted to raise the sustainability standards and the technical efficiency of their dairy enterprise.

Where a farmer is a member of the Beef and Lamb Quality Assurance Scheme (BLQAS), Bord Bia will organise the SDAS and BLQAS audit to take place at the same time. There is no charge to the farmer for the audits. Farmers interested in joining the SDAS should contact their milk purchaser.

REDUCE YOUR COSTS WITH THE DAIRY CARBON NAVIGATOR

The Carbon Navigator tools developed by Teagasc and Bord Bia for both beef and dairy, focus on the potential financial and environmental benefits of improved performance in practical areas, such as grazing season length, nitrogen efficiency and animal productivity.

Some examples of the potential savings possible on dairy farms include:

- **Grazing Season** - It is estimated that for every 10 day increase in grazing season, there is a 1.7% reduction in Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) and profitability is boosted by €27 per cow.
- **Nitrogen Fertiliser** - A reduction in nitrogen fertiliser of 10Kg per Ha will reduce farm GHG emissions by 1% and improve income by €10 per Ha.
- **Slurry Management** - A 20% shift to spring application can reduce farm GHGs by 1.3% while a shift to trailing shoe can reduce GHGs by 0.9%.
- **Energy Efficiency** - For a 100 cow herd, improving the performance of the plate cooler, installing a variable speed vacuum pump and changing the water heating to gas or oil, can reduce enterprise GHG emissions by 1.1% and lead to electricity savings of €1400.

The more things change, the more they stay the same – 32 years of milk quota (1983-2015)

1983 was the year that the racehorse Shergar was kidnapped in County Kildare, a Mexican jet was stranded for five weeks at Mallow Racecourse and the first stretch of motorway in Ireland was opened – the Naas bypass on the N7. 1983 was a very different time in Ireland and many things have changed in the last 32 years but one constant has remained and it's been an everyday presence for dairy farms: the milk quota.

In 1983, as in 2015, the dairy industry was one of Ireland's most important indigenous industries and also a critical component of the wider agri-food sector. Many of today's dairy farmers cannot remember – or have never known – a time of unrestricted supply and they are stepping into the unknown, in many respects. The reasons behind the introduction of milk quota are well documented but in summary the European dairy sector faced massive overproduction in the early 1980s. The mounting milk surplus was initially managed through intervention buying, but it was never the purpose of the intervention system to handle the unrelenting and swelling surplus which began to be experienced in the late 1970s. Production quotas were enforced on each individual dairy farmer within every EEC member state, and were based on historical production of the years 1981, 1982 and 1983. Thirty years later, milk quotas are due to be abolished throughout the EU in the coming weeks, giving farmers the ability to supply milk unrestricted, only constrained by factors of production such as land and labour. Let's take a look at some aspects of the dairy sector then and now and their evolution over time.

The number of dairy herds declined dramatically since 1983 as highlighted in Table 1. Post 1983, as farmers exited milk production, milk quota was redistributed initially through the milk quota restructuring scheme, and more

Table 1:

	1983	2014
Dairy Farmers	68,000	17,500
Herd Size	17.8	68
Dairy Cow Numbers	1,596,000	1,226,400
Milk Price (cpl actual butterfat)	19.8 cpl	38.34 cpl
Urea (tonne)	€206	€395
Sirloin steak (Kg)	€7.85	€22.26
Bread (Loaf)	24 cents	€1.53
Cheese (Kg)	€3.92	€9.03
Butter (Kg)	€2.34	€6.07
Petrol (1 Litre)	77 cents	€1.52
Average Price of a House	€44,871	€193,000
% employed in Agriculture	16%	9%
Milk litre Retail (1 Litre)	45 cents	€1.06

recently through milk quota trading scheme, thus allowing those remaining farmers to increase their milk quota and, as a result, their herd size. The decline in dairy farm numbers is calculated at close to 80% (C.S.O 2010). There was a large reduction in the number of very small herds and average herd size on dairy farms steadily rose through the last thirty years from 18 in 1983 to just over 68 cows in 2014.

The national herd size shows a constant

decline from the early eighties coinciding with the introduction of production quotas. Increasing milk yield per cow in a sector where total milk production was constrained by the milk quota led to a reduction in cow numbers over time. The decline in the national herd ended in 2006 and a slight increase in the national herd size has occurred since then. To plot the main differences between the two eras, Table 1 outlines some interesting changes over the quota period.

John Comer, President, ICMSA with Simon Coveney, TD, Minister for Agriculture, Food, the Marine and Defence on Major Beef Trade Mission in the US



GLAS – New Agri-Environment Scheme Launched

Patrick Rohan, Chairperson, ICMSA Farm and Rural Affairs Committee



Minister Coveney has recently announced the opening of GLAS, the new Agri-Environment Scheme which is a replacement for REPS and AEOS. The inclusion of an Agri-Environment Climate Change Measure is compulsory under the Rural Development Regulation and a total of €1.45bn has been allocated to GLAS over the lifetime of the Rural Development Programme 2014–2020.

The new Scheme provides for payments of up to €5,000 per eligible applicant per annum, with an additional payment of up to €2,000 per annum for those in GLAS+. The closing date for receipt of applications is 30th April 2015 and all applications must be completed on line by an approved agricultural planner. Commitments shall be for a minimum period of five years.

Some farmers undertaking particularly challenging actions may qualify for GLAS+ and for a top up payment of up to €2,000 per year. Typically GLAS+ will apply where the Priority Environmental Assets on the farm require the farmer to deliver a particularly high level of environmental commitment. In addition, GLAS+ is extended to all farms identified

OBJECTIVE: GLAS AIMS TO ADDRESS THE CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVES OF CLIMATE CHANGE, WATER QUALITY AND BIODIVERSITY.

CORE	<p>Core Management Requirements All of these requirements are compulsory: An approved agricultural planner must prepare the GLAS application Nutrient Management Planning Training in environmental practices and standards Record keeping of actions delivered</p>	
PRIORITY	<p>TIER 1 Priority Environmental Assets and Actions Tier 1(a) All farmers with PEAs get first priority access to the Scheme in Year One and subsequent years. If any of these Priority Assets are applicable to the holding, they must be chosen and the relevant actions planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmland Habitat (private Natura sites) • Farmland Birds (Breeding Waders, Chough, Corncrake, Geese/swans, Grey Partridge, Hen Harrier, Twite) • Commonages (50% target participation in GLAS Commonage Plan) • High Status Water Area • Rare Breeds <p>Tier 1(b) If an applicant (whether beef, sheep or dairy) with a whole farm stocking-rate exceeding 140kg Livestock Manure Nitrogen per hectare produced on the holding, or any farmer with more than 30ha of arable crops, wishes to be considered under Tier 1, s/he must adopt at least one of the following four mandatory actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum Tillage (arable farm >30ha) • Catch crops Establishment from a Sown Crop (arable farm >30ha) • Low Emission Slurry Spreading (livestock farm >140kg N/ha only) • Wild Bird Cover (livestock farm > 140kg N/ha only) <p>Registered Organic farmers will qualify for priority access to the scheme under Tier 1(b), by selecting actions appropriate to the farm. However, if any of the assets listed in the first set of bullet-points above apply, they must be chosen first. Commitments under the Organic Farming Scheme will not qualify for payment under GLAS. It is not guaranteed that all eligible applicants in Tier 1(b) will get into the Scheme and a scoring matrix will apply if necessary.</p>	
SECONDARY	<p>TIER 2 Environmental Assets and Actions Tier 2(a) Farmers, who do not have Priority Environmental Assets but whose lands include a Vulnerable Water Area, may apply for access to the scheme under Tier 2. In such cases, the appropriate actions relevant to Vulnerable Water Areas must be selected. Tier 2(b) In the absence of a Vulnerable Water Area, an applicant may still qualify for Tier 2 access provided one of the following actions are chosen and planned for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum Tillage (arable farm < 30 ha) • Catch Crops Establishment from a Sown Crop (arable farm < 30 ha) • Low Emission Slurry Spreading (livestock farm < 140kg N/ha) • Wild Bird Cover (grassland farm < 140 kg N/ha) <p>It is not guaranteed that all eligible applicants in Tier 2 will get into the Scheme and a scoring matrix will apply if necessary.</p>	
GENERAL	<p>TIER 3 General Actions* These actions aim to enhance the climate change, water quality and biodiversity benefits delivered and can be chosen in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 actions or on their own (choosing only General Actions will not guarantee entry to the Scheme):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arable Margins • Bat Boxes • Bird Boxes • Catch Crops • Conservation of Solitary Bees • Coppicing Hedgerows • Environmental Management of Fallow Land • Laying Hedgerows • Low-emission Slurry Spreading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-input Permanent Pasture • Minimum Tillage • Planting a Grove of Native Trees • Planting New Hedgerows • Protection of Archaeological Sites • Protection of Water Courses (not in High Status or Vulnerable Areas) • Riparian Margins • Traditional Hay Meadow • Traditional Orchards • Traditional Stone Wall Maintenance • Wild Bird cover <p>*A scoring matrix will be used to allow farmers join GLAS by means of these actions if take-up of Tier 1 and Tier 2 actions permits.</p>

as habitats of endangered birds, including the hen harrier. This means that all such farmers could receive up to €7,000 a year, if the area they have to manage is large enough. While, these payments for SAC/SPA areas are welcomed it is important to note that farmers in these areas are still farming under very severe restrictions and ICMSA believe further solutions to the ongoing challenges need to be found that will allow farming at a realistic level on

these lands with opportunities to develop their business.

With regard to Commonages, the requirement for 50% participation has been reconfigured as a target, rather than an eligibility criterion, and all shareholders can now submit individual applications to join GLAS in their own right. Commonage advisers will also be given more time to complete the necessary plans.

ICMSA believe it is essential the cost of completing applications is kept to a minimum and encourages farmers to negotiate the cost of completing GLAS applications with their Planner to ensure value for money.

GLAS is structured around a hierarchy of three tiers, with Tier 1 receiving priority over Tier 2, and Tier 2 over Tier 3. A summary of the Scheme Tiers and Actions plus payment for various Actions selected are outlined in the attached tables.

Action	€ per metre/year	€ per ha/year	€ per unit/year	€per m ³ /year
Arable grass margins				
a. 3 metre margin	€0.35			
b. 4 metre margin	€0.50			
c. 6 metre margin	€0.70			
Bat boxes			€13	
Bird Boxes			€6	
Commonages		€120		
Conservation of solitary bees				
a. Box			€6	
b. Sand			€45	
Catch Crops		€155		
Coppicing Hedgerows	€2.20			
Environmental Management of Fallow Land		€750		
Farmland Birds				
a. Breeding Waders		€366		
b. Chough Farm Scheme		€365		
c. Corncrake		€364		
d. Geese and Swans		€205		
e. Grey Partridge	€2.10			
f. Hen Harrier		€370		
g. Twite A – Semi-natural/semi-improved grassland field management option		€375		
h. Twite B – Improved grassland field management option	€1.50			
i. Twite C – Winter feed option		€900		
Farmland habitat (private Natura sites)		€79		
Laying Hedgerows	€3.70			
Low-emission Slurry Spreading (per m ³ per year)				€1.20
Low-input Permanent Pasture		€314		
Minimum Tillage		€40		
Planting a Grove of Native Trees			€0.90	
Planting New Hedgerows	€5.00			
Protection of Archaeological Sites				
a. Grassland option			€120	
b. Tillage option			€146	
Protection of water courses (not High-status or Vulnerable)	€1.50			
Rare breeds (per LU)			€200	
Riparian margins				
a. 3 metre margin	€0.90			
b. 6 metre margin	€1.20			
c. 10 metre margin	€1.60			
d. 30 metre margin	€3.60			
Traditional hay meadow		€315		
Traditional orchards			€23.50	
Traditional stone wall maintenance	€0.70			
Wild bird cover		€900		

Leasing of Farmland – Tax Relief and Registration of Leases

Lorcan Mc Cabe, Chairperson, ICMSA Farm Business Committee



TAX RELIEF

This time of the year tends to be a particularly busy period in terms of renewing existing farmland leases or entering into new agreements. The number of individuals entering into a lease for the first time is likely to increase given the opportunity for New Entrants and Young Farmers to avail of Basic Payment Scheme Entitlements from the National Reserve as outlined in our last Newsletter.

In addition, Budget 2015 introduced a number of incentives to encourage long term leasing of farmland. One of the main changes was a 50 percent increase in the income tax exemption levels for all long-term leases plus the addition of an upper limit of €40,000 as outlined below;

THRESHOLDS FOR EXEMPTION WHERE QUALIFYING LEASE IS TAKEN OUT ON OR AFTER 1 JANUARY 2015

- €40,000 where all the qualifying leases are for 15 years or more,
- €30,000 where all the qualifying leases are for 10 but less than 15 years,
- €22,500 where all the qualifying leases are for 7 but less than 10 years, and
- €18,000 where all the qualifying leases are for 5 or 6 years.

A qualifying lessee is an individual who is not

connected with the lessor (or with any of the lessors if there is more than one). Effectively this means that a lessor is not entitled to relief where the land is let to family members or family members of their spouse or civil partner. This is causing considerable difficulties for many farm families many of whom may wish to lease the farm to the next generation prior to retirement age for many different personal and financial reasons. ICMSA believe that farm families should be able to avail of the same tax relief for farm leases as non-related persons and continue to address this issue with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Finance.

However, it is important to note that nephews/nieces qualify as eligible leasees. In addition, non-connected limited companies are allowed as an eligible lessee and the lower age threshold of 40 years of age for eligibility is removed.

REGISTRATION OF COMMERCIAL LEASES

Any commercial lease (including agricultural lease) entered into on or after the 3 April 2012, as declared to the Revenue Commissioners for Stamp Duty purposes, must be registered with the Property Services Regulatory Authority. This is a result of the Property Services (Regulation) Act 2011 which imposes an obligation, on

the tenants of such properties, to register the lease with the PSRA. The "Commercial Leases Return" can be filled in on-line. The following information must be registered;

- The Address of the Commercial Property the Subject of the Lease,
- The Date of the Lease of the Property,
- The Term of Years of the Lease,
- and, The Rent Payable in Respect of the Property.

It is important to note that the name and/or address of the lessee or lessor will not be available for view on the Property Services Regulatory Authority website but details outlined above are available for view. Registration is not required for Conacre.

Tenants of commercial properties (including agricultural leases) are required to return particulars of their Lease agreement to the Property Services Regulatory Authority within 30 days of receipt by them of the Stamp Certificate from the Revenue Commissioners. The penalty for failure to complete the Return on conviction could result in a fine not exceeding €5,000.

ICMSA believe that the requirement to register such commercially sensitive and private information is very onerous on farm families and have met with the PRSA to outline our concerns and the implications for farm families.

Teagasc Get Farm Financially Fit Events

Most of us struggle with managing money. Farm families have the added challenge of balancing the needs of the farm household with the financial requirements of the farm. Defining long-term goals for both the farm and the household can enable farm families to plan to have the funds in place to achieve these goals. Your financial needs will vary depending on your stage of life – sending children to college is expensive – can your business cope with providing for the additional expenditure? Family living expenses are often much higher than people realise – do you know what it costs to run your household?

Get farm financially fit

There are many benefits to actively managing your finances.

1. You will know where your money is going and whether you are spending more than you can afford.
2. It will give you peace of mind and a sense of control.

3. It will help you save money to achieve your future goals.
4. It can help you to avoid debt problems and prepare for emergencies.

Find out how to get financially fit at one of five regional events (see below). Teagasc has teamed up with financial and support agencies to highlight the range of services and financial tools that can help you to plan, budget and take better control of your finances. Attending one of these events could be a first step to improving your situation.

Get Farm Financially Fit Events

- March 23, 1-00pm Talbot Hotel, Carlow, Co. Carlow.
- March 24, 1-00pm Radisson Blu Hotel, Little Island, Cork.
- March 25, 1-00pm Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
- March 26, 7-30pm Breaffy House Hotel, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
- March 27, 1-00pm The Anner Hotel, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

2015 – A Key Year for Basic Payment Scheme and Greening

By John Comer, President ICMSA.



While every year is important from a payments perspective, 2015 is a particularly important year as it is the first year of the new Basic Payment Scheme and Greening scheme and decisions taken in 2015 will have a bearing on your payment up to 2020. In this article, ICMSA outlines a number of important issues that people need to consider in 2015.

1. What is the Basic Payment Scheme and Greening Scheme?

Up to this year, every farmer would have been familiar with the Single Farm Payment which was the annual payment that each individual farmer received in October and December. The Single Farm Payment has now been abolished and has been replaced by two schemes, the Basic Payment Scheme and the Greening Payment. In summary, after the various deductions, the Basic Payment Scheme is 70% of your Single Farm Payment and the Greening Payment is 30% of your Single Farm Payment (after deductions). These payments will be made at the same time as the Single Farm Payment with 50% on 16 October and 50% on 1 December.

2. What is Greening?

Greening is primarily a tillage issue. For a farmer who has grass only, there are no additional requirements in relation to Greening and once you meet the requirements in relation to the Basic Payment Scheme, you will qualify for the Greening Payment as well. For farmers with tillage, it is more complex but there are also exemptions. The link below provides details of the exemptions and conditions of Greening and it is important that if you also have tillage or grow maize for example that you ensure that you are meeting the requirements of Greening. <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/farmingschemesandpayments/payments/cap2015directpayments/Greeningmanual200215.pdf>.

3. When is the closing date for the Basic Payment Scheme and Greening Payment Scheme?

The closing date for the Basic Payment Scheme and Greening Payment Scheme is Friday, 15th May 2015. This is a key date and unfortunately for various reasons, in excess of 1,000 farmers miss this date each year. It is absolutely essential that farmers meet this date.

4. How is my Basic Payment and Greening Payment calculated?

At this stage, each farmer should have received a letter from the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine setting out the value of their entitlements between 2015 and 2020 based on entitlements held in 2014 and the land area approved for 2013. Your Basic Payment is based on either your 2013 or 2015 land area whichever is the lower so at this stage, the only issue a farmer can influence is the area declared in 2015. If you declare less land in 2015, your entitlements will be based on the reduced 2015 area with the result that you will have a higher payment per hectare. Please note under the regulations, you must declare every hectare under your control. Every farmer should check the letter regarding their entitlements from the Department and ensure the information is correct and accurate. If you are unsure, you should contact the Department to seek clarity to ensure that you receive your full entitlement.

5. Land Eligibility Is Now A Key Issue.

Farm inspections is a major issue that ICMSA has to deal with on a daily basis for members and it is quite clear that over the last two years, the issue of land eligibility has come to the fore in terms of penalties being imposed on farmers. The main issues that arise relate to scrub on land and whether the land is being properly farmed. In terms of dealing with this matter,

2015 provides all farmers with the opportunity to resolve land eligibility by excluding ineligible areas. Please note that you can still claim your full payment on the reduced land area under the new system in 2015. ICMSA believes that it is hugely important to ensure your land is eligible in order to avoid severe penalties

6. When is the Closing Date for the National Reserve and Young Farmers Scheme?

For a farmer applying for both the National Reserve and Young Farmers Scheme, the closing date is Tuesday, 31 March 2015. For a farmer applying for the Young Farmers Scheme only, the closing date is Friday, 15 May 2015. Applications under both these schemes must be submitted online.

7. What is the position of leasing/renting entitlements and land?

The position regarding the leasing/renting of entitlements is complex and farmers should seek advice on this matter. In relation to renting/leasing out entitlements in 2015, the lessor must declare at least 1 hectare in 2015 in order to ensure that the rented/leased out entitlements remain valid under the new system. In addition, a PCC (Private Contract Clause) form must be completed by the lessor and leasee and submitted to the Department to ensure that the entitlements are valid and paid on going forward.

8. What is the position of farmers who have moved from soletrader to joint herdnumber, Partnerships or Companies?

Farmers who change legal status for example from soletrader to Partnership need to ensure that their entitlements are protected and a form in relation to the change of legal status may need to be completed. Farmers should seek individual advice in relation to this matter.

SHINING A LIGHT OF HOPE.....

Marie Moran, Administration Manager, Pieta House



Farming is long regarded as one of the most noble of occupations. Patience and perseverance are key characteristics of farmers, along with a supportive and caring attitude towards their livestock but more so within their homestead and local community. Despite this the farming world has had more than its share of tragedy and the stigma of suicide is still very strong in our farming communities.

Pieta House offers professional solution focused one to one counselling service to those in suicidal crisis or engaging in self-harming behaviours. A key feature of our service is that it is offered free of charge and does not require any formal referral making it as accessible and barrier free as possible.

We presently have 9 centres across the country and in our experience most people who are in crisis are usually reacting to a difficult life event. Specifically, the two key triggers that would most often cause this distress are the loss or lack of a major relationship or anything concerning their livelihood. Both of which are prevalent factors as farmers face increased financial challenges coupled with the difficulties associated with rural isolation.

SPOT THE SIGNS – SAVE A LIFE

Men in particular are renowned for not seeking help for themselves. Possible reasons for their reluctance are because they believe that they can 'fix' the situation, or that their feelings will pass. They are also anxious about confidentiality and how they may be perceived within their community when challenging times affect them.

Signs of distress to look out for:

- Isolating themselves and being less communicative
- Withdrawing from social situations - turning off their mobile phone, not receiving visits from neighbours
- Lack of interest
- Emotional outbursts - either angry or tearful
- Possible increase in alcohol or drug use
- Behavioural changes - change in sleep patterns, loss of appetite, change in self-care or hygiene behaviour
- Becoming lethargic and emotionally withdrawn
- Becoming accident prone or continuously distracted
- And more importantly, it's the language that they use that is most telling.....
 "I have no future"
 "I see no light at the end of the tunnel"
 "My family would be better off without me"

If you have identified some signs that this person might be in distress, and noted that he/she is acting differently lately, take the following steps:

- 1 Take them seriously
- 2 Take action - Talk to them about Pieta House or other support services and offer to help to link them in.
- 3 Stay supportive - Contact Pieta House on any of the following numbers:

Dublin	01 6010000	Roscrea	0505 25568
Cork	021 4341400	Tuam	093 25586
Limerick	061 484444	Kerry	066 7163660

www.pieta.ie



MIND OUR MEN

SPOT THE SIGNS - SAVE A LIFE
TOGETHER WE CAN HELP REDUCE THE RATE OF MALE SUICIDE

SLEEP DISTURBANCE

ISOLATION

GIVING AWAY POSSESSIONS

NO INTEREST IN ANYTHING

SPEAKING OF NO FUTURE

of suicide




www.pieta.ie
www.mindourmen.ie

01 6010000 (Dublin) 061 484444 (Limerick) 0505 22568 (Tipperary) 093 25586 (Galway) 021 4341400 (Cork)

A date for your diaries.....May 9th 2015

Pieta House has helped over 16,000 people since 2006 and demand for the service continues to grow.....

Our key annual fundraising and awareness event is Darkness into Light, supported by Electric Ireland. In May every year thousands of people gather in darkness at 4am in locations all across Ireland and walk, run or jog a 5km route together as the dawn breaks. Darkness into Light represents hope and solidarity, as it symbolizes the work of Pieta House – bringing people from darkness into the light.

This year Darkness into Light is now a thoroughly international event with over 75 venues expected to take part, all at the same time. 19 of these take place outside Ireland. Please visit dil.pieta.ie for further information.

Can anything stop the shocking toll of death and injury in Irish Farming?

Pat Griffin, Senior Inspector, Health and Safety Authority

It continues to frustrate me to read in many articles in the farming press, that there doesn't seem to be any way of stopping farm deaths or that we still haven't found any way of improving the dreadful loss of life in farming. When farmers and those in the farming community talk about farm deaths, almost every death is reasoned away as being "a pure freak", "sure what could you have done to stop it?", "wasn't it very unfortunate" and so on.

Of course, I agree to some extent that some would be very difficult to prevent & that they are indeed shocking and unfortunate, and we may not have found a clear solution that will prevent some of these dreadful situations. However, our detailed plans to prevent these deaths and the resources we have developed to attempt to prevent them remain generally unused. H.S.A. safety inspectors and I have spoken at dozens of events over the last couple of years, ranging from very large to very small groups, to groups of students, to mixed groups of farmers and their wives at events organised by farmer representative organisations. We often show and attempt to highlight the quite significant amount of guidance on farm safety and health issues that have been developed by the Farm Safety Partnership over the last 5 years. However, when we ask for a show of hands from anyone who has looked at any of these publications or video clips, sadly there are generally either none or just one or two hands to be seen.

The Farm Safety Partnership made up of representatives from all the major farming stakeholders have worked very hard over recent years to identify the critical issues that need attention and have produced lots of detailed but simple practical advice. Tractors & Machinery consistently account for up to half of all farm deaths, yet farmers haven't read our guidance, generally don't read the operator manuals, don't get any training in its safe use and critically don't carry out basic maintenance or get expert maintenance carried out until the tractor or machinery stops.

Livestock is the next biggest killer on Irish

farms, yet farmers again haven't read our guidance, (rightly recognised as some of the best guidance on livestock safety available in the world), farmers often have poorly designed handling facilities, place themselves in dangerous situations, particularly with freshly calved cows (heifers) and have endless stories about "their narrow escape". Extensive guidance on other issues such as Slurry Handling, Child Safety, Electrical Safety, Chainsaw Safety, Farmers Health and videos that explain how to prevent death and injury to Older Farmers, from livestock, QUAD bike operation and survivor testimonials remain unknown and un-viewed by the vast majority of farmers. The Farm Safety Partnerships, its member organisations and the H.S.A. can continue to develop useful guidance in all its forms, but it's all worthless if it remains unused?

Farming representative organisations need to lead the charge on this, encourage all their members to use the Farm Safety Code of Practice for the right reason, which is to find ways of controlling dangers on the farm and a way to actively manage farm safety. The code of practice "Risk Assessment" document

should be completed and followed by every farmer to protect himself and his family and not merely to satisfy a safety inspector, an insurance or quality assurance assessor. Farmer representative organisations should ensure that their county executive meetings dedicate some time (15 to 30 minutes) at every meeting to deal with the most current health and safety issue, such as calving and slurry management in the spring and harvesting and road safety in the autumn. Farming representative organisations should identify farmers from within their ranks that could talk on a farm safety issues, possibly using HSA guidance material if necessary, to convince fellow farmers to take appropriate actions to prevent injury or worse. The bottom line really is that we will never know if what we are producing is part of the solution until farmers and farm families and indeed farming representative organisations & discussion groups start working at managing safety as an integral part of farm management and a good starting point would be to use the resources developed for them, see www.hsa.ie and www.farmsafely.com.

Kerry ICMSA delegation meets Minister Simon Coveney



The delegation, headed up by the new Chairperson of Kerry ICMSA, Kevin Galvin of Lixnaw, met the Minister during his visit to Listowel before Christmas. They impressed upon the Minister the need for much more proactive approach at both national and EU level to the challenges facing milk suppliers in 2015 - the year of quota abolition. Back row, L to R, Maurice Walsh, Lixnaw, Patrick Harrington, Causeway, Patrick Rohan, Annascaul, Noel Murphy, Milltown, Conleth McMahon, Lisselton, Maurice Foley, Milltown, Kevin Galvin, Chairperson of Kerry ICMSA. Front row, Tommy O'Connor, Lisselton and Edward O'Sullivan, Killarney

Animal Health Update

BRUCELLOSIS TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR 2015

1. A pre-movement test is mandatory for all female animals aged 24 months or more and bulls aged 24 months or more that are being moved from a holding, except when being moved direct to slaughter. The validity period for the pre-movement test is 60 days. The Minister has indicated that the 60 day pre-movement test is being retained until Northern Ireland obtains Officially Brucellosis free status, which is expected in the middle of 2015
2. The Annual Brucellosis Round test is being discontinued. However, under the Brucellosis monitoring programme, some risk based testing will be scheduled, in particular, for animals that may have been imported from countries that are not free of Brucellosis. Should you be in possession of such animals you may be required to have them presented for testing.
3. It remains a legal obligation to report all abortions in cattle and to submit the aborted fetuses, if

available, for testing for Brucellosis to the Department's Regional Veterinary Laboratory and/or to have the animal that aborted sampled for Brucellosis as soon as possible by the Veterinary Practitioner for the herd.

4. Where deemed appropriate on veterinary grounds, a farmer may be required to carry out a Brucellosis test on a herd or on an animal, regardless of age e.g. where disease is suspected or an animal from a herd has given a positive result to a test.

BVD COMPENSATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2015

The BVD supports provided for 2015 are as follows:-

Dairy Herds

- A payment of €100 for each dairy breed PI heifer calf born in a dairy herd that is shown to be disposed to a knackery within 5 weeks of the first test.
- A reduced payment of €50 will apply in respect of such calves disposed of to a

knackery within 7 weeks of the first test.

Beef Herds

- A payment of €140 for each beef breed PI born in a suckler herd that is shown to be disposed of to a knackery within 5 weeks of the first test.
- A reduced payment of €90 will apply in respect of such calves disposed of to a knackery within 7 weeks of the first test.

These supports will only be available to those herdowners who are compliant with the 2015 testing requirements and where all 2015 born PI's are removed within 7 weeks of the first test. In addition it is a requirement that all PI animals born in 2012, 2013 and 2014 were disposed of prior to 1 March 2015.

In addition, to be eligible for both the BVD support arrangements and to participate in the proposed Beef Data Genomics Programme and successor programmes, it will be a stipulation that no PI animals are present in the herd, with the exception of those recently born and within 7 weeks of the first test.

Overview 2013 – 2014 National Inspection Plan – Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems

In the period 1st July 2013 to 31st December 2014 there was a total of 1,509 Domestic Wastewater Treatment System (DWWTS) Inspections carried out by Local Authorities. 46 percent or 699 systems failed the inspection and received an Advisory Notice. Failure to de-sludge was the main reason for systems failing the Inspection.

Not every DWWTS/Septic Tank will be inspected. A minimum of 1,000 inspections will be carried per annum and inspections are allocated according to area risk-assessments, i.e. more inspections will be done where risk to health and the environment is higher and fewer where the risk is lower. If you are selected for inspection, you will receive a letter from your local authority advising you of this and giving you at least ten working days' notice.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN INSPECTION IF YOU ARE SELECTED:

- Have your registration certificate available for inspection.
- Know where your wastewater system is.
- Have the details of the contractor if you've had your system de-sludged recently. Please ensure you use a licensed contractor to de-sludge your tank and get a receipt.

- Have any paperwork available relating to installation, maintenance or improvement work carried out, where appropriate.

THE ACTUAL INSPECTION:

- When the inspector arrives they will show you their ID card and authorisation, and ask you some basic questions about your system.
- The inspector may look at your registration certificate and other paperwork.
- The inspector will check manholes and pipework for leaks and that there isn't an excess of sludge in the system.
- The drains will be checked to ensure that wastewater and greywater are entering the system where they can be treated, and that roofwater and surfacewater are not entering the tank as that may cause flooding.
- The percolation area will be checked for signs of ponding, as well as nearby ditches and drains for discharge pipes and signs of pollution.
- The system will also be checked for nuisance odours and noise.

Guidance for Professional Users under the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive (SUD)

The Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive which is due to come into effect later this year is of particular importance for farmers who use low levels of pesticides. The new regulations will not allow any operator to apply pesticides without a minimum FETAC education. The ICMSA believes there should be an exemption from the above requirement for low level use of pesticides and we continue to lobby against the introduction of these regulations. Here are some frequently asked questions on the regulations as they currently stand:

What is a Professional Pesticide User?

A professional user is any person who uses pesticides in the course of their professional activities, including operators, technicians, employees and self-employed people, both in the farming and other sectors. All professional users must be registered by 26th November 2015. From this date, only a registered professional user can apply pesticides authorised for professional use.

How does a Professional Pesticide User register?

Existing clients of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (e.g. farmers) who are registered to use the DAFM agfood.ie online facilities should apply to register as a Professional User by logging onto www.agfood.ie and select the Sustainable Use Directive System from the menu of options that are available. The application can then be made by completing a short form. If not currently registered to use the DAFM online facilities you should do so at www.agfood.ie.

How can I check if I've already completed a Pesticide Training Course as part of my agricultural training with Teagasc?

If you have a query about a Pesticide Training Course you completed in the past with Teagasc, please follow the attached link and complete the "Query Form" <http://www.teagasc.ie/training/courses/pesticide-training.asp>

Can an individual who is not registered as a Professional User buy pesticides authorised for professional use?

Individuals who are not registered as a professional user can buy pesticides authorised for professional use but these pesticides must be applied by a registered professional user. There is a requirement to keep appropriate records with details of the registered professional user who applied the pesticides.

By what date must Pesticide Application Equipment be inspected?

All boom sprayers greater than 3m and all blast and orchard sprayers must be tested at least once by 26th November 2016 by a registered Inspector of Pesticide Application Equipment. The interval between inspections must not exceed 5 years until 2020 and must not exceed 3 years thereafter. A list of registered Inspectors of Pesticide Application Equipment is available on the PCS website (www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/SUD.htm).

When must other Pesticide Application Equipment (e.g. boom sprayers less than 3 metres, weed wipers, etc.) be inspected?

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, will determine appropriate timetables and inspection intervals for other types of pesticide application equipment in 2014. It is anticipated that all types of application equipment, with the exception of knapsack sprayers, will be required to be tested at least once before 2020.

What checks should a Professional User complete on their Pesticide Application Equipment?

Professional users should conduct regular calibrations and technical checks of their pesticide application equipment.

How much will it cost to have Pesticide Application Equipment inspected?

The cost of inspection is agreed between the Inspector and the owner of the equipment.

ICMSA AGM



Farm Business Chairperson, Lorcan McCabe, makes a point from the floor at the ICMSA AGM.

Waterford Delegates at the ICMSA AGM in Limerick



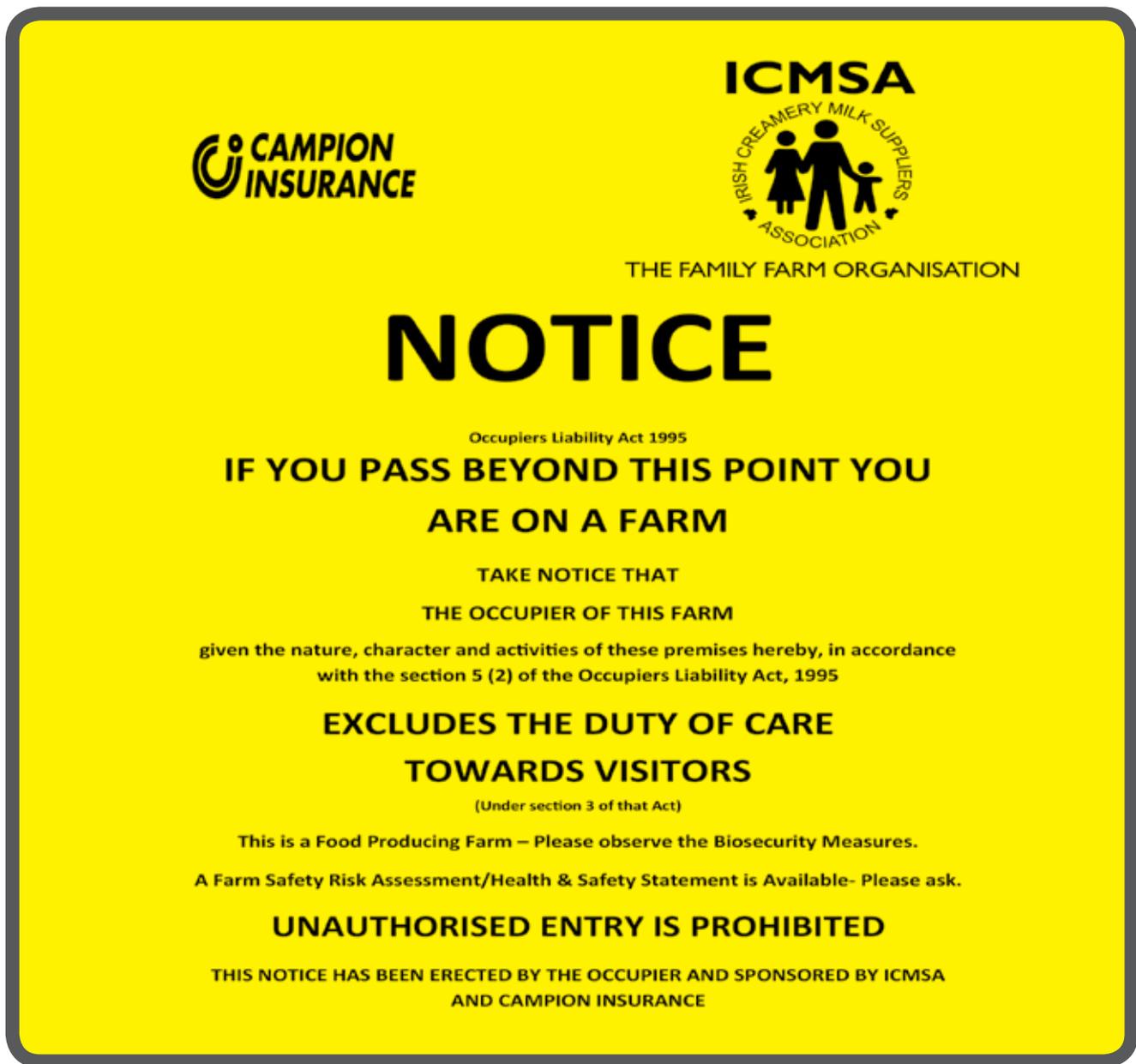
Pictured are: John Skehan, Pat Fitzgerald, John Dowley and Tom Ahearne.

How to get your Free Occupiers Liability Sign

Get your All-weather, Long-Lasting, High-Viz Occupiers Liability sign ABSOLUTELY FREE courtesy of ICMSA and Champion Insurances. As part of our relationship with Champion Insurances' FarmForce policy – the most comprehensive and best priced farm insurance policy on the market today – ICMSA and Champion Insurances have come together to offer members this A3-

sized sign measuring approx 30cm wide and 42cms long made of durable and highly visible fomex, tried and tested in all weather conditions and specially designed for high visibility. You'll want this and we're delighted to offer it to you absolutely free. Merely contact Denis McCarthy at Champion Insurances, 062-70782, or write to him at Champion Insurances, 100

Main Street, Cashel, or email at denis@championins.com. A representative of Champion will deliver the sign to your farm and might avail of the opportunity to discuss your farm insurance. You'll get a free sign and free insurance advice without any obligations and we get the satisfaction of knowing we've helped our members in an area where help is always welcome.





ICMSA – THE FAMILY FARM ORGANISATION

FarmForce- A superb farm insurance package especially designed for dairy farmers, underwritten by Zurich Insurance, and exclusively available through Champion Insurance to ICMSA members at a discount. Ring 062-70782 and ask for Denis. Do it today.

