



POLL RESULTS

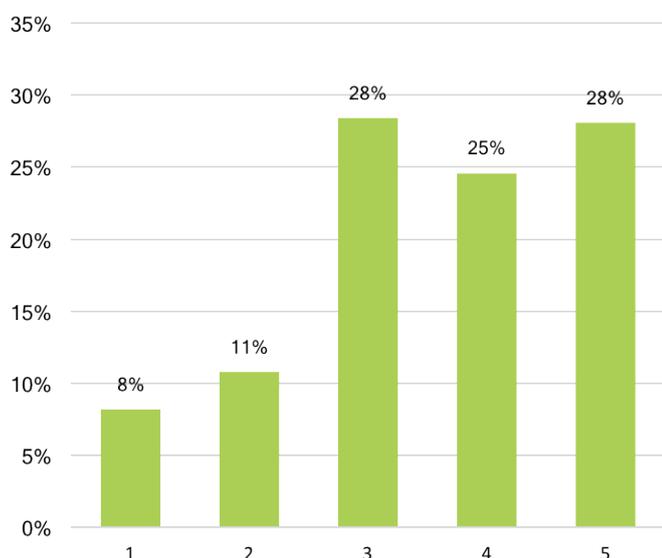
August 2017

The majority of dairy farmers in the Republic of Ireland are more likely than not to recommend a career as a dairy farmer to next generation farmers (53%).

The National Farm Research Unit interviewed 265 dairy farmers in Ireland and asked "On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being very likely, how likely would you be to recommend a career as a dairy farmer to a young person?"

Fig 1. Results of recommendations from dairy farmers in Ireland

On a scale of 1 - 5 with 5 being very likely, how likely would you be to recommend a career as a dairy farmer to a young person?



Source: National Farm Research Unit poll with 265 farmers, weighted up to represent 12,164 farmers in the Irish dairy sector participating in the survey from 26th June - 28th July 2017. The Farm Structures Model (2016) estimates that there are 13,321 dairy farm businesses in Ireland and 1,219,751 dairy cows*.

Only 19% gave a score of 1 or 2 on their likelihood to recommend and 28% were impartial. Despite farming being the sector with the highest risk for fatalities (Source: Fianna Fail), 53% of farmers were positively inclined to recommend a career (scoring 4 or 5).

Last month, Farm Ireland reported that dairy farming is in fact more lucrative than construction. One of Ireland's leading dairy farmers, Michael Murphy, has encouraged young people to think long term, and said "If someone is good enough then they will make an awful lot more money over their working lives in dairy farming than in construction." Interestingly, whilst the recovery of the construction industry has resulted in a fall in the number of applications at agricultural colleges, the demand for management staff on dairy farms is higher than ever.

To breakdown these results further, we looked at the number of years in farming. Farmers who have been farming for 40+ years were more positive at 59% in comparison to farmers who have been farming for 1-40 years at 50%.

* Based on farms with 10+ cows.

The chart has been categorised by the following:

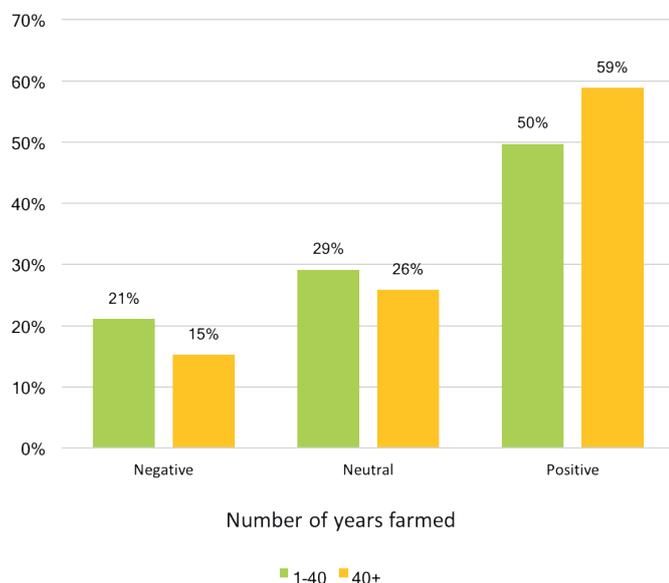
Negative: Score 1 or 2

Neutral: Score 3

Positive: Score 4 or 5

Fig 2. Overall results focusing on number of years in farming

On a scale of 1 - 5 with 5 being very likely, how likely would you be to recommend a career as a dairy farmer to a young person?



In 2014, the age profile of the dairy sector was 52% over 50 years of age and 48% under. In this poll, when asked the number of years in farming, 72% answered 1-40 and 28% at 40+.

Overall, considering the evolution of the dairy sector, this poll exposed a positive result with farmers swaying towards the more likely end of the scale. JP Dorgan, spokesperson for the National Farm Research Unit said "It appears that Irish farmers have a great belief in the future of the dairy sector, which is very encouraging as new young people entering the sector over the next 10 years are key to its success. The youth bring energy, enthusiasm and question whether it can be done better or more efficiently."

Sources

Allen, M. (2014). *The Dairy Industry in the Republic of Ireland - strategic direction, current state and challenges moving forward.*

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Phelan, S. (2017). 'The high number of farm fatalities must be reduced'. Available: <http://www.agriland.ie/farming-news/the-high-number-of-farm-fatalities-must-be-reduced/>. Last accessed 3rd August 2017.

Farm Structures Model (2016). <https://farmstructuresmodel.co.uk/>

About the National Farm Research Unit

Established in 1994 in the UK, the National Farm Research Unit is a respected research organisation and is considered an independent authority on farming. We have the largest, comprehensive and most detailed database in the industry and have carried out over 500,000 telephone interviews. We are proud to have built trust and reputation with over 50,000 UK and Irish farmers and communicate regularly with them by telephone, online and face-to-face interviews.

Press Enquiries:

Rachel Watling

Tel: +44 (0)1728 621364

Email: rachelwatling@nfru.co.uk

National Farm Research Unit
Deben Mill Business Centre, Old Maltings Approach, Woodbridge IP12 1BL, UK

www.nfru.co.uk | nfru@nfru.co.uk