

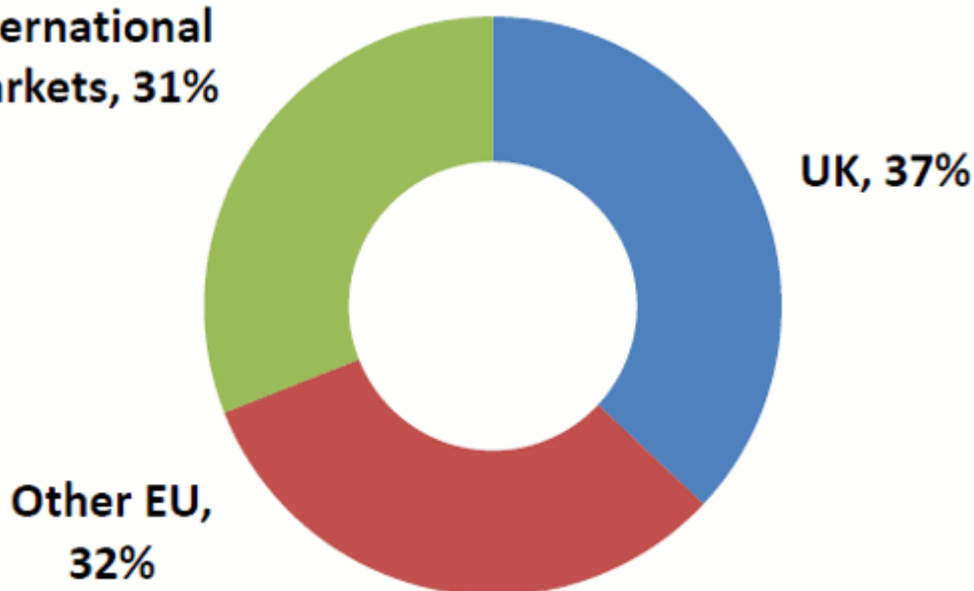
# Factsheet on the Irish Agriculture and Food & Drink Sector



## Food and drink

- The agri-food and drink sector accounts for 7.6% of Ireland's economy-wide GVA, (DAFM, 2014) 10.7% of Ireland's exports and 8.4% of total employment. (DAFM, 2015)
- In 2016, Irish agri-food and drink exports increased by an estimated 2% to approximately €11.15 bn (Bord Bia, 2017).
- The UK was the main destination for Irish agri-food and drink exports in 2016 accounting for 37% of all exports. 32% of exports went to Continental EU markets while the remaining 31% went to international markets.

**International  
Markets, 31%**



- The latest estimates of the distribution of our agri-food and drink exports in 2016 by sector are as follows: dairy products and ingredients (30%), beef (21%), prepared consumer foods (17%), beverages (13%), pigmeat (6%), seafood (5%), poultry (3%), sheepmeat (2%), edible horticulture & cereals (2%) and live animals (1%),

## Primary Agriculture

- In 2016, Gross Agricultural Output (GAO) was valued at €6.92 billion. (DAFM, 2016)
- The beef and dairy categories are the largest and account for 38.8% and 29.5% of GAO respectively. Other sectors to have a share in GAO include pig (7.8%), sheep (4%), cereals (3.9%), and other (16%).

## Cattle and Beef

- There were 6.61 million cattle in Ireland according to the December 2016 livestock survey.
- This represents a 3% increase on previous year levels.

- Irish beef production is predominately a grass based system, with around 588,000 tonnes produced in 2016. Beef self-sufficiency is estimated at over 650%
- In 2016, Ireland exported an estimated 535,000 tonnes of beef worth approximately €2.38 billion.
- In 2016, 145,000 cattle were exported live from Ireland worth approximately €100 million.

### Sheep and Sheepmeat

- The Irish sheep flock showed a rise of 3.4% and totalled 3.44 million head, with the breeding flock decreasing by around 0.2% to 2.48 million head according to the December 2016 livestock survey.
- Net production in 2016 was over 61,000 tonnes and self-sufficiency is estimated at over 360%.
- During 2016 Ireland exported an estimated 50,000 tonnes of sheepmeat which was valued at approximately €240 million.
- The UK and France continue to be the core markets for Irish sheepmeat accounting for almost 60% of total export volumes in 2016.

### Pigs and Pigmeat

- In the December 2016 CSO Livestock Survey, there were 1.53 million pigs in Ireland, this represents an increase of 3.6% on prior year levels.
- Net production in 2016 was almost 283,000 tonnes with a self-sufficiency rate estimated at around 190%.
- In 2016, Ireland exported an estimated 235,000 tonnes of pigmeat worth an estimated €615 million.
- In 2016, the UK was the main market for Irish pigmeat taking 56% of our total exports. Continental EU markets accounted for 16% of our pigmeat exports while the remaining 28% went to international markets.

### Dairy

- In 2016, total domestic milk output was estimated at 6,395 million litres. (CSO, 2017)
- In 2016, 527 million litres was consumed as liquid milk. In addition to this 199,000 tonnes of butter and 117,000 tonnes of skim milk powder was produced while in 2015 207,000 tonnes of cheese was produced.
- In 2016, total dairy and ingredients exports increased by an estimated 2% to €3.38 billion.

### Crops

- Area ('000 hectare) under certain crops in June 2016 (CSO 2016) were as follows:
  - Barley – 186.8
  - Wheat – 67.1
  - Oats – 23
  - Potatoes – 8.8

### Irish Farms

- There are approximately 139,600 family farms in Ireland with an average size of 32.5 hectares per holding. (CSO, Census of Agriculture 2013)
- The land area of Ireland is 6.9 million hectares, of which 4.4 million hectares is used for agriculture and a further 730,000 hectares for forestry (DAFM, 2014)
- 81% of agricultural area is devoted to pasture, hay and grass silage (3.6 million hectares), 11% to rough grazing (0.5 million hectares) and 8% to crops, fruit & horticulture production (0.36 million hectares). (DAFM, 2014)