



IFA

IFA Pigs Committee Newsletter September 2016

Chairman Pat O' Flaherty update

Although the Dutch, French and UK prices made steady ground this week in terms of pig prices, it was very disappointing to see the Pig price in Germany fall by 6c/kg this week when all reports suggest that prices should continue to rise for the foreseeable future based on falling pig herds across the EU.

It would appear that the German processors, conscious of this development are attempting to recoup some margin in advance of what will be a very tight supply fourth quarter. Our German colleagues have indicated that the factories were offered more slaughter pigs this week and with next Monday the bank holiday of the Day of German unity, there is one slaughter day missing and the factories have used this to put pressure on prices.

Following our most recent pigs committee meeting, a number of priority issues were identified, you will receive a lobbying document from IFA in the coming weeks covering these issues and I ask that you raise them with your local representatives as priority issues for the industry.

There is a danger that the pig industry will be ignored when prices are deemed to be positive but they must be reminded that pig farmers rarely make money and that there is opportunity to sort some issues now that would secure a better position for pig farmers going forward in terms of environmental legislation, animal health, credit and investment.

Country	Ave Wk 1-39	Wk 39 2016	Wk 39 2015
Netherlands	1.32	1.56	1.28
Belgium	1.31	1.58	1.32
Denmark	1.42	1.61	1.39
France	1.70	1.73	1.54
Spain	1.47	1.75	1.54
Germany	1.39	1.67	1.37
GB	1.44	1.65	1.68
Ireland	1.33	1.50	1.35
Pig Prices corrected for VAT, kill Out Lean Meat Percentage (ISN) €/kg)			

Pig prices Update

The EU average pig price has risen consistently each week for the last month and with that, we will see the differential between Ireland and the EU increase again unless our prices rise this week. The European Union pig carcass price was €1.68/kg in comparison to the Irish VAT exclusive price of €1.60/kg for the week ending September 25th. This means that Ireland drops slightly to 95% of the average in that week. The indications from the EU are very positive with tight supplies of both pigs and sows driving demand.

The market situation has slightly improved due to positive consumption trends, notably for exports, and a decrease in supply in some key Member States.

Nevertheless, the market is still very fragile and highly dependent on exports to China who thankfully are now beginning to buy again after a quieter few months.

According to the commission, there is no need currently to implement a private storage scheme in the short-term, but they will maintain this opportunity in case the market crumbles again.

Russian WTO situation

The Commission has welcomed the fact that the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has confirmed that the Russian import ban on live pigs, fresh pork and other pig products from the whole of the EU is illegal in light of international trade rules. Unfortunately however, the Russian authorities are appealing this ruling, meaning that farmers may not see any benefit from this decision before 2018, unless the European Commission reaches an agreement with the Russian authorities on EU export certificates and veterinary restrictions in order to resume trade in EU fats and lard to Russia.

Reminder: National Pig Health Council protocols must be adhered too by all importers to protect the national herd from Disease importation

The National Pig Health Council was established in 1991 by stakeholders in the Pig Industry, with the specific aim of preventing the introduction of new pig diseases into Ireland. All the AI stations North and South are signed up to the protocols, the most recent of which tests boar semen for PRRS.

Currently Amii McKeever is the secretary of the Council and Patrick Kirwan is the chairman. This is a voluntary organisation comprising of members of the industry (millers, factories, farmers, vets, DAFM officials). This may be a voluntary organisation but its remit is ever more important considering the emergence and increasing problem of ASF in Eastern Europe.

The Council requests the protocols are filled out by anyone who intends to import any biological material into the national pig herd, be it embryos, fresh semen, frozen semen or live pigs. The purpose of this is to ensure that imports of such material are safe and do not jeopardise the biosecurity of the national pig herd

The NPHC committee secretary should be informed of an intention to import a consignment of pigs/ pig material in advance of the intended import date. A reasonable approach would be to inform the NPHC secretary at least 2 weeks before the date of intended import. Nobody embarks on an import of live pigs without having given the matter some advance consideration so this 2-week window pre-import is considered the bare minimum advance warning notification.

The secretary will assign the import to a veterinary committee member to liaise with the importing company.

The secretary will furnish the importing company with advice and guidelines as are regularly updated and amended by the NPHC. This liaison will cover such matters as times, dates and location etc.

The initial requirement in terms of information is:

- The name and address of the source herd

This will allow the veterinary committee member to determine whether the scope of the initial test requirements is sufficient or whether it should be extended based on the geographical origin of the pigs.

- The health status of the source herd

Invariably, the pigs for import would be minimal disease pigs but it would be important to know in advance the health status of the source herd and the herd of destination.

A range of pre-import tests have to be done in advance of importation as laid down in the NPHC import protocols. The NPHC health committee reserve the right to modify the list of tests required depending on the provenance of the pigs for import

- The name and address of the destination herd in Ireland and the isolation facility associated with the import.

Once blood test results have been obtained for the pigs pre-import, these will be forwarded to the supervising vet for confirmation that the pigs are good to import

- The imported pigs are isolated in the quarantine facility associated with the import for 30 days.

During the course of this isolation, blood samples will be taken from the requisite number of pigs for screening for the range of diseases as outlined in the NPHC import protocols

- When the results are received they will be forwarded to the secretary of the NPHC and the veterinary supervisor to the import.
- If the supervising vet finds blood results in order, then he/she will issue a recommendation that the pigs are now free to be introduced into the destination farm.
- A register of imports will be maintained by the secretary of the NPHC

A specific e-mail address was set up to review the import documentation that must be filled in in advance of any importations (attached). This address is nphcpigs@gmail.com.

The import protocols are also available on the IFA website:

<http://www.ifa.ie/sectors/pigs/pig-health/>

Legal Requirements separate to the NPHC requirements

Although there is free movement of live animals between EU Member States in accordance with EU trade regulations. Live animals are subject to veterinary inspection and health certification by an official veterinarian prior to export at their place of origin or an approved assembly centre in the exporting Member State.

The intra trade animal health certificate (ITAHC) which must be completed by an official Veterinarian in the exporting Member State is available on their website

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/agri-foodindustry/tradeimportexports/importsofanimalsandanimalproducts/importofanimalsandanimalproducts/registrationofimportersofanimal-sandproductsofanimalorigin/>

(or by contacting Amii). This certificate is usually issued within 24 hours of scheduled departure of the animals and the original health certificate should accompany the pig to the place of destination specified on the health certificate.

If anyone has any queries in relation to this please, please call me (Amii — 086-8574420).

The IFA Pigs Committee launched a strategy on pig health to see the country produce the 'healthiest pigs in Europe', a strategy that has been underlined by the Dr. Sean Brady report that focuses on animal health and how it can be improved in Ireland.

National Pig Identification & Tracing System (NPITS)

We have been asked to remind our members of their legal requirements in accordance with the Department Of Agriculture Food and Marine, in relation to the National Pig Identification and Tracing System (NPITS), which came into operation in July 2002.

In broad terms the system involves the identification of all pigs that are moved off farm by either an ear tag or a slap mark and the identification of breeding stock with an individual number.

All pig movements are recorded on a central movement database. Only persons registered with the

Department and issued with valid pig herd numbers are allowed to own or trade in pigs.

All pigs moving directly from the



holding to the slaughter plant must be clearly slap marked on the shoulder with the herd identification.

All pigs moved off the holding that are going anywhere other than direct to the slaughter plant must be tagged with an ear tag bearing the letters IE and your herd registration number.

Specifically in relation to breeding pigs: All breeding pigs on the holding must be tagged with an ear-tag bearing IE, your herd registration number and an individual number.

4-6th October 2016: Meeting and Webinar on Actions to Prevent Tail-biting and Reduce Tail docking of Pigs

The European Commission Directorate General for Health and Food Safety is organising a three day meeting at the offices in Grange, Co. Meath, of its Health and Food Audit and Analysis Directorate in Ireland on actions to prevent tail biting and reduce tail docking of pigs.

This is considered an important issue by the FVO and Commission. The programme includes a wide range of topics delivered by experts from industry, Member State Competent Authorities, research bodies, EU institutions and NGOs.

According to the Commission notification, case studies will facilitate the exchange of good practice and workshops will focus on better solutions for the future.

The work of the EU FareWellDock (<http://farewelldock.eu/>) project will also be presented at this meeting.

The meeting is aimed at the au-

thorities of Member States, international organizations, scientists, industry and NGOs. The Chairman of the IFA National Pigs and Pigmeat Committee as well as members of the Pigs Committee health Group will attend on various days to represent the views of Irish pig farmers. Mr. Antonio Tavares, the Chairman of the CO-PA COGECA Pigs Committee will also be in attendance to represent the views of EU pig farmers.

Members of the Teagasc Pig production Development Unit will also be in attendance at this event.

Please note that proceedings from this meeting, apart from breakout groups, will be broadcast live on the Internet and can be followed by logging in to the following links:

4 October: 14:00- 16:45 GMT. <https://webcast.ec.europa.eu/meeting-on-actions-to-prevent-tailbiting-and-reduce-tail-docking-of-pigs-4>

October: 09:00- 16:30
<https://webcast.ec.europa.eu/meeting-on-actions-to-prevent-tailbiting-and-reduce-tail-docking-of-pigs-5>

6 October: 09:45-15:00
<https://webcast.ec.europa.eu/meeting-on-actions-to-prevent-tailbiting-and-reduce-tail-docking-of-pigs-6>

The FVO has indicated that anyone who wishes to send any questions may send them to the following e-mail address

SANTE-IRL-WEBINAR-REARING-PIGS-WITH-INTACT-TAILS@ec.europa.eu

and they will endeavour to answer as many as they can during the time for questions at the end of each presentation.

If they cannot answer your question during the webinar, they will forward your question to the presenter for response after the event.

Year	Total Fac-ings	QA Fac-ings	%
2007	5728	2162	38%
2008	33960	15669	46%
2009	31366	11890	38%
2010	40317	20225	50%
2011	40333	23407	58%
2012	41185	26306	64%
2013	36939	25043	68%
2014	33698	23058	68%
2015	39416	27833	71%

Bord Bia update

The IFA Pigs Committee has worked tirelessly to increase the volume of Quality assured Irish product on retail shelves. As you can see from the table to the left, this has been very successful with the level of Quality Assurance on retail shelves reaching its highest levels in 2015. It is important that this continues to rise. Please let Amii know of any issues that you see at retail or food service level that is of concern. We follow up on these leads in a number of

different ways, through DNA testing of the meat, meeting with the companies and negotiating an increase in Irish and/or publicising the fact that a company refuses to support Irish pig meat and Irish farmers thereafter.

The current focus is on food service and hotel chains. A number of hotels were sampled in August and more in September. Action will be taken when all samples are collated and evidence is empirical.

IFA meet with Swedish Delegation

IFA met with a delegation of Swedish pig farmers in September to discuss the industry with a particular focus on our DNA traceability scheme.

Swedish pig farmers achieve a very generous premium for their product from Swedish processors, however, in recent times this has started to come under threat from cheaper imported Pigmeat products.

Swedish farmers are very keen to maintain their premium price and are assessing a number of ways



to achieve this. IFA explained the advantages of using a science based DNA traceability system. IFA can now trace the meat rather than the label and prove whether the meat is of Irish origin.

Since the implementation of IFAs DNA Scheme pig prices have increased from 93% of the EU average price to over 100% of the EU average price.

Feed price Update (figures provided by TPPDU)

MONTH	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug 16
FEED PRICES	€ PER TONNE						
FINISHER	275	275	274	265	265	265	266
COMPOSITE	298	298	298	289	289	289	289
Feed Cost/kg dead	109	109	109	105	105	105	105

The average finisher price in August actually increased by €1/tonne in August in comparison to July which is totally unjustified. September prices are not yet available but a drop is warranted based on the fall in cereal and soya prices (Jan'17/Dec'18 €340ex)

EPA update

A meeting was held with the EPA early this year and the EPA agreed to respond in writing to the concerns outlined by the Pigs Committee.

However this correspondence has yet to be received despite several letters from the Chairman of the IFA National Pigs and Pigmeat Committee.

Dara Lynott, EPA Director wrote in May outlining *“these deliberations are not concluded as they involve assessment of multiple pieces of European Legislation relating to the regulation of the Intensive Agriculture Sector, split competencies among Agents of the State and legal interpretation, following which the Board of the Agency will have to adjudicate”*.

The IFA President Joe Healy has also since written to the Director General of the EPA requesting a written response to the concerns.

We have argued the following:

1. Tank and Pipeline Assessment

There is no requirement in the GAP regulations for tank assessment or testing. Statutory requirements in relation to tanks and management of tanks for the collection and storage of animal manures/slurry are contained in the Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters against Pollution by Agricultural Sources Regulations.

Therefore, the EPA have no entitlement or requirement for information on tanks or pipelines, such as date of construction, type of construction, sign-off by engineers etc., from either licence applicants or licence holders.

This matter must be addressed as it is putting unnecessary additional cost on farmers.

2. Limitation on Stock Numbers

The number of animals that can be accommodated in an existing pig housing structure or poultry housing structure is governed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, as the competent authority for the Animal Welfare Regulations.

Producers must be allowed vary the numbers within the legal limits so as to maximise efficiencies on their units. Compliance with Animal Welfare Regulations for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine limits the scale of activity within an installation.

We are simply asking that the Agency respect and accept this position.

3. Lands Identified for the Use of Slurry/Manure

The demand of the EPA from licence applicants and licensee's for information about their customers for slurry/manure or about their customers' lands is completely unnecessary.

In any case, a licence applicant or a licensee cannot, in advance, reliably identify all the lands farmed or fertilised by customers.

Every farmer who supplies any organic fertiliser to a customer must record all transfers of slurry/manure to such customers as is required to by Article 23 (i) (g) of the GAP regulations.

4. Fertilizer inventory

The EPA has included conditions in some licenses relating to organic fertiliser opening and clos-

ing inventory for each calendar year.

Farmers report organic fertiliser transfers from the their activity to the Department of Agriculture so this is duplication of reporting. These conditions should be removed as they are unnecessary.

It is very important that all farmers, licensed and unlicensed return the form 3 record of slurry transfers to the Department of Agriculture every year.

5. Annual Fees

The EPA continues to charge annual fees to intensive agriculture licensees which we believe are at an excessively high level considering the reduction in the volume of work now required. We also think it is unfair that farmers are being coaxed to comply with inappropriate requests by the promise of lower fees.

Next Steps

Concerns have been raised by members about the length of time it is taking for a resolution to be reached on these matters with the EPA.

For this reason, the IFA National pigs and pig meat committee are holding a meeting specifically on this issue on October 12th.

Please contact your local pigs committee representative to ensure that your view is portrayed at the meeting and/or should you wish to attend in their place if your rep is not a licensed farmer him/herself.

IFA National Pigs & Pig meat Committee 2015-2016

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There are currently two vacant position on the IFA Pigs Committee Elections to fill these positions will be held in November 2016

If you have queries or comments on anything contained in this newsletter or the work of the committee, please do not hesitate to contact any of the committee



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