



# *IFA Farm Employment Information Session*

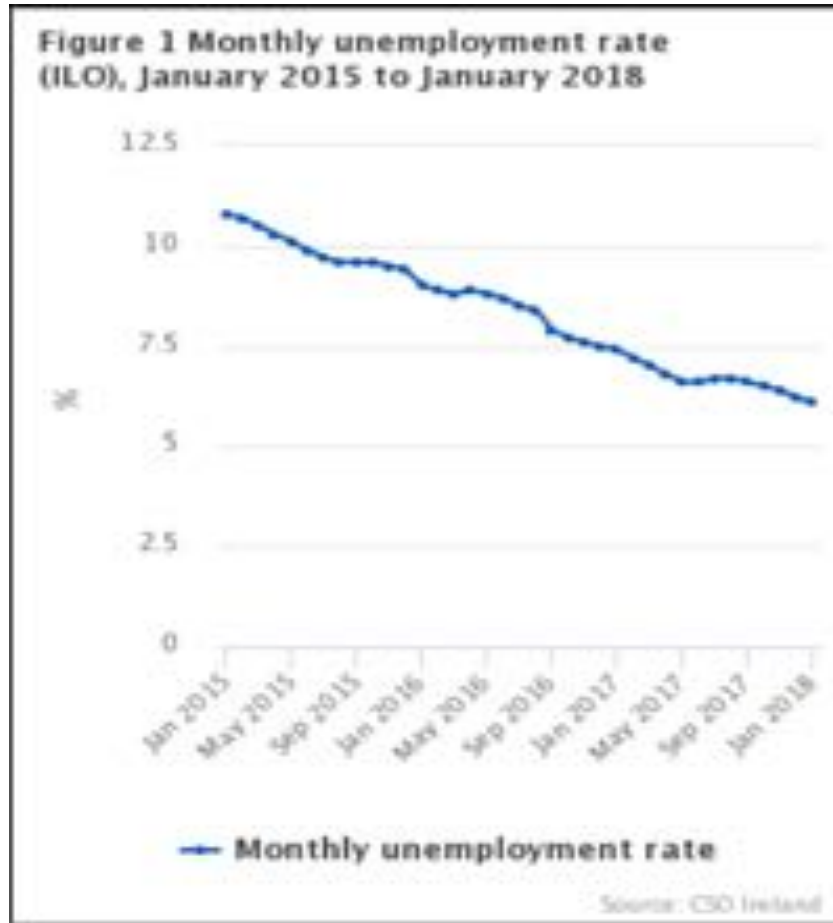
*12<sup>th</sup> December 2018*



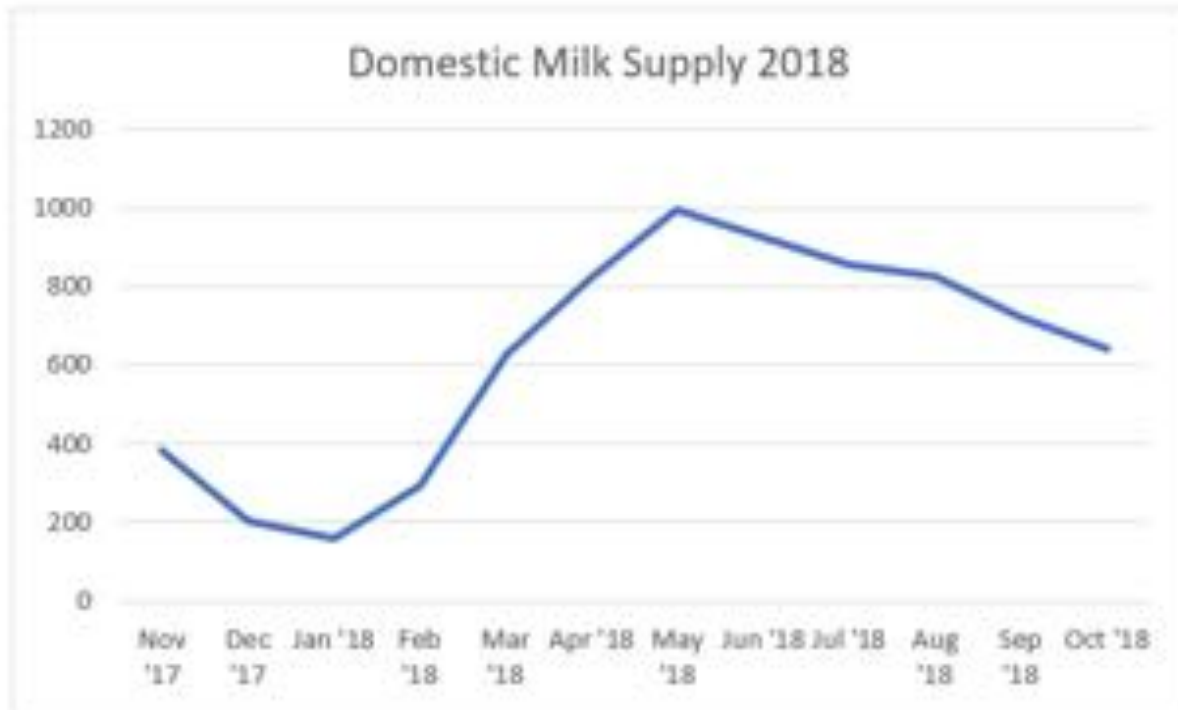
## *Current Situation*

- ▶ *FRS have been engaged in matching the supply and demand of people, skills and tasks since 1980, so 40 years of nationwide experience*
- ▶ *Almost full employment in Ireland - less Irish people available full-time*
- ▶ *Eastern Europe also at almost full employment*
- ▶ *Average herd size is increasing post-quota*
- ▶ *Demand is very seasonal - Spring peak, Summer is less demanding*
- ▶ *50hrs per week in March and 10hrs per week from Sept not attractive for workers*
- ▶ *Hiring for 40hrs per week all-year round not attractive for the average farmer*
- ▶ *Aside from seasonal peaks, also a demand to support holidays and time off*
- ▶ *FRS also operates a Member Benefit Scheme to protect Farmers in the event of accident and sickness - further demand*
- ▶ *Seasonality, scale and attractiveness an issue - i.e. not enough work for a second FTE on an average farm*
- ▶ *Shortage of flexible workforce with the appropriate skills*

# Some Figures - Unemployment



# *Supply Curve Remains Very Seasonal*



# *FRS Response*



- ▶ *Dairy Operative Skills Training Programme*
- ▶ *Domestic Recruitment Campaign - aimed at women, drystock farmers and unemployed/underemployed*
- ▶ *Engaging with Agricultural Colleges and Universities*
- ▶ *Exchange Established with NZDC*
- ▶ *Engaging with EURES - early stage*
- ▶ *Engaging with European Universities to promote Ireland as a destination for practical work experience*
- ▶ *Identifying suitable Non-EEA people - slow and costly*
- ▶ *Working with industry to improve attractiveness of farms as places to work*

# About the Dairy Operative Skills Programme



- ▶ *Began July 2017 with a Pilot, run in conjunction with Teagasc*
- ▶ *20 days training - 16 on host farm, 4 in college or training milking parlour arranged by FRS and Teagasc*
- ▶ *Jobseeker trainees are paid a subsistence rate of €80 pw (flat rate) for the 16 days on farm and are entitled to retain their DEASP payments.*
- ▶ *Other participants are paid a training rate whilst on the host farm.*
- ▶ *Trainees are assessed throughout the course by host farmers and Teagasc tutors*
- ▶ *Successful trainees who have been deemed to have reached the required work standard will be offered a paid position on the FRS team*
- ▶ *Brings in people to the farm workforce who may not otherwise join*
- ▶ *Application through DEASP or FRS directly*



# *Dairy Operative Skills Prog - Numbers to Date*

- ▶ *Kilkenny/Waterford*                      *25 people - 20 working*
- ▶ *Cavan course complete*              *5 people - 2 working*
- ▶ *Meath course complete*              *6 people - 3 working*
- ▶ *Louth course ongoing*                *6 people - 4 successful*
- ▶ *Westmeath course starting*            *01/12/18    6 people - TBA*
- ▶ *Midleton course ongoing*            *4 people - 2 successful*
- ▶ *Clonakilty course starting 2/11/18*        *3 people - 2 successful*
- ▶ *Limerick course starting 30/10/18 x2*    *6 people - 3 successful so far*
- ▶ *Kanturk info meeting 30/10/18*        *DEASP    4 people - 2 successful*



## *Other Domestic Activities*

- ▶ *Promotion online and on social media*
- ▶ *Specific campaign aimed at Drystock farmers - they have the skills and the time but not the willingness to work for other farmers in many cases*
- ▶ *Some success in attracting women to the workforce, particularly with flexible arrangements which work around other commitments*
- ▶ *Issues with attractiveness of the work, the on-farm facilities, the hours and rates of pay vs other employment options*
- ▶ *Students still come to FRS but mainly in summer - this leaves a gap in peak spring demand*



# NZ Exchange



- ▶ *FRS partnered with New Zealand Dairy Careers in 2017*
- ▶ *Opposite Seasons Suit*
- ▶ *Well motivated people coming over on 'OE'*
- ▶ *Numbers low but building*
- ▶ *Experience has been positive to date*
- ▶ *Takes work, commitment and investment - promotion of the exchange, assessment, induction and training, matching to host farms, ongoing support*
- ▶ *More Irish farms need to consider supplying accommodation - would give them more options*

# *European Universities*



- ▶ *Opportunities exist to promote Ireland as a practical work experience destination for European students - agricultural science, animal science, veterinary science students*
- ▶ *Lithuania taken as a pilot*
- ▶ *Erasmus+ funding possible for students which is an incentive*
- ▶ *Takes time and investment to build relationships*

# EURES



- ▶ *DEASP and their European Counterparts*
- ▶ *Experience has been positive, very helpful*
- ▶ *Eastern Europe is no longer the source it once was*
- ▶ *Southern Europe now recommended by EURES - Northern Spain in particular but also Northern Portugal, Italy and Greece due to high youth unemployment*
- ▶ *More recent accession states also an option - Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia*
- ▶ *Skills, experience and language may be barriers*
- ▶ *Now working with EURES on Northern Spain - will know more in Jan/Feb*
- ▶ *Advantages - no permit required, people are closer to home, search costs are reduced*

# *Non-EEA*

- ▶ *FRS have advertised on Social Media*
- ▶ *Seeking suitable international partners*
- ▶ *Slow and time-consuming, a lot of unqualified applicants*
- ▶ *Language an issue*
- ▶ *Dairy Farm Worker Permit welcome but approval process is slow*



# Summary

- ▶ *FRS has been and will continue to pursue all options to source and train suitable candidates in Ireland and Overseas*
- ▶ *More short-duration targeted training programmes required but funding is an issue*
- ▶ *We welcome input and partnerships and will work with all interested parties to achieve solutions which are in the best interests of the industry*

