



Survey on Agricultural Production Methods September 2010

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to collect data on agricultural production methods. The data is required to meet European Union and National needs for statistics on agri-environmental indicators.

The information provided by you on this questionnaire will be treated as strictly confidential and this is guaranteed by National and EU law.

For the purpose of this survey, please adhere to the definitions/explanations outlined below as closely as possible even though these may vary from definitions available elsewhere.

1. Landscape

Please indicate if Hedges, Tree Lines or Stone Walls have been maintained (even minimally) or newly established on your farm in the past 3 years. Examples of maintenance include cutting of hedges and repair of stone walls.

Tree Lines are continuous rows of trees usually along a road or water course or forming a field boundary.

2. Crop Rotation and Soil Conservation (Tillage Farms)

Arable land is land worked (ploughed or tilled) regularly, generally under a system of crop rotation.

Crop rotation is the practice of alternating annual crops grown on a specific field in a planned pattern or sequence so that crops of the same species are not grown continuously on the same field.

Crop residues are straw, stubble or other plant parts left over from the previous growing season.

A **Cover crop** is a crop sown specifically to reduce the loss of soil and nutrients during the winter months. These crops are not harvested or used for grazing but are ploughed in during spring before sowing another crop.

Inversion tillage is ploughing with a mouldboard or disc plough followed by harrowing.

Zero tillage (or direct seeding) is a minimum tillage practice in which the crop is sown directly into soil that has not been tilled since the previous harvest.

Reduced tillage leaves at least 30% of the stubble or other plant parts on the surface for soil protection. It generally means no ploughing and reduced tilling.

3. Grazing Land

Number of months livestock spent grazing should be counted from the first month that any livestock were put out to graze until the month when all livestock were housed for the winter.

4. Manure Storage and Movement

Storage facilities can be above or below ground and can be covered with concrete, wood, metal, tent or tarpaulin.

Solid manure is excrement of domestic animals (with or without litter), possibly including a small amount of urine or water.

Liquid manure is urine from domestic animals possibly including a small amount of excrement or water.

Slurry is a mixture of excrement and urine of domestic animals, possibly including water and/or a small amount of litter.

A **slurry tank** is usually made of impermeable material such as concrete or steel including pits beneath livestock housing.

A **lagoon** is a pit dug in the soil, with sloping earth bank walls which may be lined with waterproof material to prevent leaching of water into the soil.

The removal of manure and slurry from a holding normally applies to pig or poultry producers who do not have sufficient land to dispose of the manure and slurry. Manure and slurry removed for industrial processing (eg. for production of mushroom compost) should also be included here.

Solid manure and slurry may be imported by tillage farms that do not have livestock to produce manure and slurry to fertilise their own land.

5. Slurry and Manure Application

Slurry application methods

Splashplate spreading: Slurry is forced under pressure through a nozzle onto an inclined plate to increase the area covered.

Band spreading: The boom of the spreader has a number of hoses connected to it distributing the slurry close to the ground in strips or bands.

Trailing shoe: This is similar to a band spreader with a shoe added to each hose allowing the slurry to be deposited under the crop canopy directly onto the soil.

Injection of slurry: Slurry is injected under the soil surface, either immediately upon application or within 4 hours (approximately) of application.

Under the Nitrates Directive, the **Closed Periods** are as follows:

Counties **Carlow, Cork, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Offaly, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow -**

(a) 15 October to 12 January in the case of the application of organic fertiliser (other than farmyard manure)

(b) 1 November to 12 January in the case of the application of farmyard manure

Counties **Clare, Galway, Kerry, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Roscommon, Sligo and Westmeath -**

(a) 15 October to 15 January in the case of the application of organic fertiliser (other than farmyard manure)

(b) 1 November to 15 January in the case of the application of farmyard manure

Counties **Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim and Monaghan -**

(a) 15 October to 31 January in the case of the application of organic fertiliser (other than farmyard manure)

(b) 1 November to 31 January in the case of the application of farmyard manure

6. Livestock Housing

Please note this section refers to total number of housing places available and not the number of animals/birds actually housed.

Cubicle housing (cattle) consists of partially enclosed spaces usually separated by metal partitions.

Slatted floors allow manure to drop through to a storage tank underneath.

Outwintering pads (cattle) allow livestock to be housed outdoors during winter on pads covered with wood chip.

Deep litter housing consists of a bed of straw or sawdust which is repeatedly replenished as the bedding material becomes soiled.

Cage systems consist of tiered cages, usually made of steel wire arranged in long rows in a closed building with forced ventilation.

Enriched Cage systems: Laying hens have at least 750cm² of cage area per hen.

Unenriched Cage systems: Laying hens have at least 550cm² of cage area per hen.

Cage systems - Deep Pit: Poultry housing where the manure falls into a deep pit beneath cages.

Cage systems - Stilt House: Poultry housing where the housing area is raised above the manure storage area.

Cage systems - Manure Belt: Poultry housing where the manure is removed mechanically by a belt below the cages to outside the building.

Other Poultry Housing refers to any other non-cage systems eg. free-range or barn.

7.Measuring Administrative Burden

Please state approximately how many minutes it took to complete this questionnaire.

8.Declaration

Please sign the declaration and return the form in the freepost pre-addressed envelope provided by Friday October 1st 2010.

CSO Agriculture Team

If you have any queries relating to this survey or if would like to provide your details by phone, please contact the Central Statistics Office on:

LoCall:1890 924 990
E-Mail: agri@cso.ie

Thank you for your cooperation in completing the 2010 Survey on
Agricultural Production Methods.