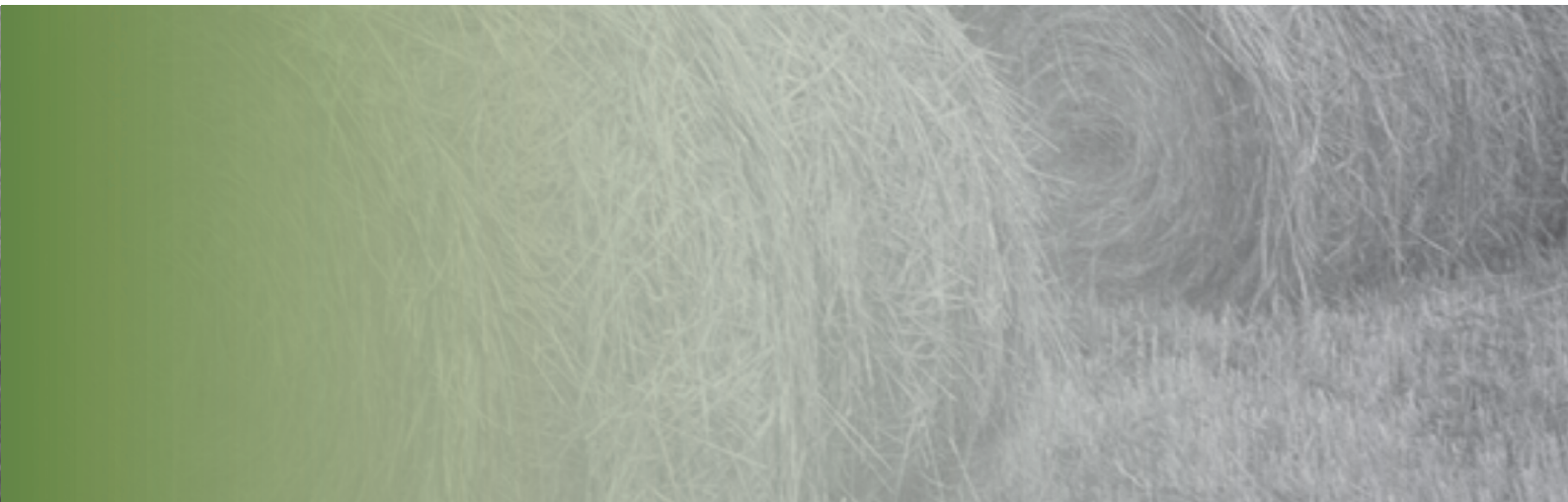


Chapter 9



AGRICULTURE

INTRODUCTION

The majority of land on the island of Ireland is in agricultural and forestry use. In the Republic of Ireland this accounts for approximately 72 per cent of total land area, while in Northern Ireland it accounts for 80 per cent. In both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, the majority of agricultural land is devoted to grassland based enterprises with cattle and sheep farming predominating. Climatic conditions suitable for grass growing allow for extensive livestock farming.

In 1975, the European Economic Community (EEC) introduced the Less Favoured Area (LFA) designation to support farming where production conditions were deemed to be difficult as well as to protect the countryside and reverse rural depopulation. In both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland approximately seventy per cent of the agricultural area is currently categorised as LFA.

In both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland, the number of farms has decreased while the average farm size (in hectares) has increased. There has also been a decrease in the number of people working on farms. The number of farms with diversification activities has increased in recent times as has the number of farms who supplement their income from non-farm activities.

Table 9.1 (a) Estimated value of the agricultural output - livestock and livestock products in the Republic of Ireland

	<i>€ millions</i>					
Livestock and livestock products¹	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Cattle	1,260	1,179	1,244	1,346	1,413	1,502
Pigs	346	301	285	297	292	321
Sheep and lambs	284	202	193	200	192	190
Poultry	138	132	139	151	144	141
Milk	1,566	1,413	1,431	1,416	1,335	1,326
Other livestock and livestock products ²	185	239	252	261	276	300
Total	3,779	3,466	3,544	3,673	3,651	3,780

Source Republic of Ireland: Output, Input and Income in Agriculture, CSO

¹At producer prices (excludes subsidies and deduction of taxes).

²Includes eggs.

Table 9.1 (b) Estimated value of the agricultural output - livestock and livestock products in Northern Ireland

	<i>£ millions</i>					
Livestock and livestock products	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Cattle	333	361	373	413	243 ¹	239 ¹
Pigs	62	59	69	69	63	65
Sheep and lambs	65	59	58	67	44 ¹	52 ¹
Poultry	107	116	122	140	136	139
Milk	352	293	331	349	343 ¹	328 ¹
Eggs	22	26	32	23	22	22
Other livestock and livestock products	8	8	8	9	9	9
Total	949	922	993	1,069	860¹	853¹

Source Northern Ireland: Statistical Review of Northern Ireland Agriculture, DARD

¹Due to national accounting principles output figures do not include the 'single farm payment', which was introduced in 2005. Therefore, data are not directly comparable to previous years (see technical notes).

The importance of cattle and milk to the agricultural industry is evident from the data above. They account for the majority of the total value of livestock and livestock products both in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland, cattle and milk products contribute around 75 per cent of the total estimated value of output. In Northern Ireland, around two thirds of the total value of livestock and livestock products can be attributed to cattle and milk products.

Figure 9.1 Estimated percentage distribution of agricultural output - livestock and livestock products, 2006

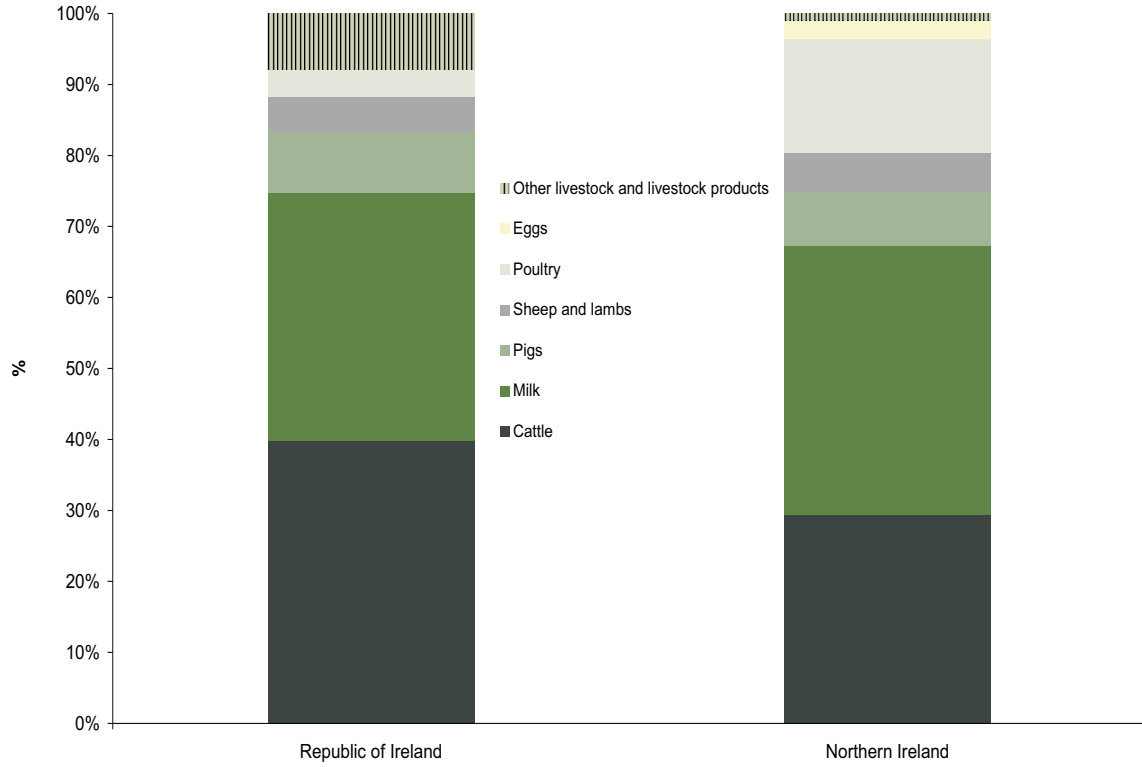


Table 9.2 (a) Estimated value of the agricultural output - crops, fruit and horticulture in the Republic of Ireland

	<i>€ millions</i>					
Output	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Crops						
Potatoes	98	97	99	89	79	107
Barley ¹	105	73	102	99	67	85
Wheat ¹	58	61	59	72	52	62
Oats ¹	7	8	10	10	7	13
Sugar beet ¹	75	72	76	76	67	0
Turf	27	28	34	34	37	41
Other crops ¹	49	51	53	65	65	67
Fruit	17	23	30	29	34	41
Vegetables	83	73	79	84	89	89
Mushrooms	116	138	125	115	110	100
Total	633	623	667	672	606	605

Source Republic of Ireland: Output, Input and Income in Agriculture, CSO

¹At producer prices (excludes subsidies and deduction of taxes).

Table 9.2 (b) Estimated value of the agricultural output - crops, fruit and horticulture in Northern Ireland

	<i>£ millions</i>					
Output	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Crops						
Potatoes	21	21	22	21	13	20
Barley ¹	19	14	18	18	10 ²	11 ²
Wheat ¹	3	5	7	8	5 ²	7 ²
Oats ¹	1	1	2	2	1 ²	1 ²
Sugar beet	.	.	.	.	.	.
Turf	.	.	.	.	.	.
Other crops ¹	10	8	9	8	9 ²	10 ²
Fruit	7	4	6	8	5	8
Vegetables	16	15	16	16	15	16
Mushrooms	29	27	25	23	24	19
Total	106	96	104	104	82²	92²

Source Northern Ireland: Statistical Review of Northern Ireland Agriculture, DARD

¹Includes arable area payments but excludes 'set-aside payments', which are included in 'other payments'.

²Due to national accounting principles output figures do not include 'single farm payment'. Therefore, data are not directly comparable to previous years (see technical notes).

Table 9.3 Area of agricultural land under crops, fruit, horticulture and grass

Thousand hectares

Output	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Republic of Ireland						
Crops, fruit and horticulture						
Wheat	84.9	102.7	95.7	102.7	95.2	87.5
Oats	16.8	18.8	21.0	20.0	16.8	20.4
Barley	182.0	176.0	183.1	183.7	164.4	167.0
Vegetables for sale	4.3	4.0	4.1	3.7	4.1	3.9
Fruit	1.2	0.9	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.5
Potatoes	14.3	15.4	14.2	13.3	11.8	11.5
Arable Silage	24.4	20.8	29.4	21.2	19.6	14.7
Maize Silage	19.7	19.3	15.6	13.5	14.6	20.2
Other crops, fruit and horticulture	67.9	65.6	71.9	64.7	72.9	54.4
Total	415.4	423.3	436.4	423.9	401.1	381.0
Grass	3,531.4	3,476.9	3,465.8	3,427.5	3,429.4	3,408.5
Crops, fruit, horticulture and grass^{1,3}	3,946.8	3,900.2	3,902.2	3,851.4	3,830.5	3,789.5
Northern Ireland						
Crops, fruit and horticulture						
Wheat	4.1	7.2	7.3	8.6	8.4	8.7
Oats	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	1.9	1.9
Barley	32.8	28.4	27.7	27.0	25.7	22.8
Vegetables for sale	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4
Fruit	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5
Potatoes	6.7	6.7	6.0	5.7	4.5	4.7
Forage Maize	1.4	1.7	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.7
Other crops, fruit and horticulture	3.7	3.2	4.3	5.0	5.7	6.1
Total	54.1	52.6	53.0	53.9	51.5	49.8
Grass	840.1	843.7	848.2	838.5	811.4	803.7
Crops, fruit, horticulture and grass^{2,3}	894.1	896.3	901.2	892.3	862.9	853.5

Sources Republic of Ireland: June Crops and Livestock Survey, CSO
Northern Ireland: The Agricultural Census in Northern Ireland, DARD

¹Republic of Ireland figures include set-aside land; excludes rough grazing.

²Northern Ireland figures exclude set-aside land and rough grazing.

³Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Table 9.4 Livestock numbers for selected categories

	<i>Thousands</i>						
Output	1996	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Republic of Ireland							
Livestock							
Cattle	7,314	7,050	6,992	7,000	7,016	6,983	6,916
Sheep	7,888	7,330	7,210	6,849	6,777	6,392	5,973
Pigs	1,621	1,743	1,785	1,726	1,653	1,688	1,643
Poultry	..	..	..	13,012	..	11,817	..
Horses and ponies ¹	70	71	73	70	73	80	87
Goats	15	8	8	8	8	7	7
Northern Ireland							
Livestock							
Cattle	1,759	1,679	1,685	1,685	1,678	1,666	1,636
Sheep	2,753	2,526	2,324	2,241	2,225	2,145	2,071
Pigs	638	386	388	434	424	405	387
Poultry	15,900	14,348	16,862	18,525	20,509	17,614	18,411
Horses and ponies ¹	10	10	10	10	9	9	10
Goats	4	3	3	3	3	2	3

Sources Republic of Ireland: June Crops and Livestock Survey, Central Statistics Office; Farm Structure Survey, CSO
Northern Ireland: The Agricultural Census in Northern Ireland, DARD

¹Horses not attached to agricultural holding are not included.

The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland have recorded a decline in their sheep population of 24 per cent and 25 per cent respectively in the period 1996-2006. The recorded total for sheep, in 2006, was actually the lowest number of sheep in the Republic of Ireland since 1987. In Northern Ireland, the figures show a similar trend with ewe numbers also at their lowest level since 1986.

The size of the Northern Ireland pig herd contracted significantly between 1996 and 2001 when pig numbers fell by almost 40 per cent. This has not been replicated in the Republic of Ireland, where the 2006 total number of pigs is similar to the level in 1996.

Table 9.5 (a) Agricultural labour force in the Republic of Ireland

Description	Thousands						
	1991	1993	1995	1997	2000	2003	2005
Holder	169.9	158.9	153.0	147.6	141.3	132.2	130.4
Spouse	72.1	73.4	59.0	54.4	45.1	44.4	45.3
Other family workers	57.3	72.9	66.0	66.0	57.2	56.9	57.9
All family workers	299.3	305.2	277.9	268.0	243.6	233.5	233.7
Regular non-family workers	13.4	15.1	15.5	13.9	14.4	13.8	14.0
Total agricultural labour force^{1, 2}	312.7	320.3	293.3	281.9	257.9	247.3	247.7

Source Republic of Ireland: Farm Structure Survey, CSO

¹These figures do not include a number of casual/non-regular workers.

²Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Table 9.5 (b) Agricultural labour force in Northern Ireland

Description	Thousands						
	1991	1993	1995	1997	2000	2003	2005
Farmers and partners							
Full-time	22.7	20.2	19.7	19.3	18.3	18.2	18.0
Part-time	17.2	15.8	14.8	14.7	15.0	14.3	14.0
All farmers and partners	40.0	36.0	34.5	34.0	33.3	32.5	32.0
Spouses of farmers	6.8	6.5	6.2	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.3
All other workers ¹	15.8	13.9	13.5	14.1	13.7	12.4	11.7
Total agricultural labour force²	62.5	56.4	54.3	54.5	53.3	51.1	50.0

Source Northern Ireland: The Agricultural Census in Northern Ireland, DARD

¹These figures do not include a number of casual/non-regular workers.

²Figures may not sum due to rounding.

The total number of people employed in agriculture, in both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland, has decreased over the period 1991-2005 by 21 per cent and 20 per cent respectively.

In the Republic of Ireland, this decrease was largely attributed to the fall in the number of farm holders, or owners, along with their spouses who no longer participated in any type of farm work. This was offset slightly by small increases in other family and regular non-family workers. The decrease in the agriculture labour force in Northern Ireland, was primarily due to the falls in the number of full-time and part-time farmers. However, Northern Ireland also recorded decreases in the number of farm spouses working on farms as well as the number of other workers in the agriculture labour force.

Table 9.6 Employment in agriculture as a proportion of total employment

Description	Percentages					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Republic of Ireland						
Agriculture as a proportion of total employment	6	6	5	5	5	5
Northern Ireland						
Agriculture as a proportion of total employment ¹	4	5	4	4	4	3

Sources Republic of Ireland: Quarterly National Household Survey, CSO
Northern Ireland: Labour Force Survey, DETI

¹Figures refer to the Spring period and exclude persons on government training schemes.

Table 9.7 Number and percentage of farms by size in hectares

Numbers and percentages

Size (hectares)	Republic of Ireland				Northern Ireland			
	1995		2005		1995		2005	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Under 5	14,800	10	9,200	7	1,375	5	2,183	8
5-9.9	20,500	13	18,500	14	3,761	13	3,230	12
10-19.9	40,600	26	30,100	23	6,701	24	6,025	22
20-49.9	57,200	37	51,200	39	10,154	36	9,326	34
50-99.9	16,100	10	19,600	15	4,435	16	4,505	17
100 and over	4,100	3	4,000	3	1,511	5	1,795	7
Total	153,400	100	132,700	100	27,937	100	27,064	100

Thousand hectares

Total utilised agricultural area	4,324.7		4,219.9		1,067.8		1,029.5	
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Sources Republic of Ireland: Farm Structure Survey, CSO
Northern Ireland: The Agricultural Census in Northern Ireland, DARD

The proportions of farms in each size band are very similar in both areas. In both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, the majority of farms are between 10 and 50 hectares in size.

Table 9.8 Age of farmers

Numbers and percentages

Age	Republic of Ireland				Northern Ireland			
	1995		2005		1995		2005	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Under 35	20,900	14	10,700	8	2,056	9	1,571	7
35-44	29,800	19	24,900	19	4,089	17	4,321	18
45-54	34,500	23	32,600	25	5,838	24	5,831	24
55-64	35,300	23	31,600	24	6,241	25	5,951	25
65 & over	32,500	21	30,600	23	6,553	26	6,196	26
Total Farmers	153,000	100	130,400	100	24,777	100	23,870	100

Sources Republic of Ireland: Farm Structure Survey, CSO
Northern Ireland: EU Farm Structure Survey for Northern Ireland, DARD

The age profile of farmers in Northern Ireland in 2005 was relatively similar to that in 1995. In the Republic of Ireland the 2005 age profile was somewhat older with only 8 per cent of farmers aged under 35 compared with 14 per cent in 1995.

Table 9.9 Farmers and farms engaged in other gainful activity or diversification*Numbers and percentages*

Age	Republic of Ireland						Northern Ireland					
	1995			2005			1995			2005		
	No.	Total	%	No.	Total	%	No.	Total	%	No.	Total	%
Farmers engaged in other gainful activity ¹	52,800	153,000	35	58,900	132,500	44	5,211	24,777	21	8,941	23,870	37
Farms with a diversification ² activity	..	..	..	5,900	132,700	4	..	..	..	2,517	27,064	9

Sources Republic of Ireland: Farm Structure Survey, CSO
Northern Ireland: EU Farm Structure Survey for Northern Ireland, DARD

¹Family farms only. Includes farm holders not engaged in farm work.

²Non-agricultural activity on farm including agricultural contracting and haulage.

The increase in the percentage of farmers, both in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland, who have engaged in other gainful activities, reflects the decline in agriculture as seen through the data presented in the previous tables in this chapter. This is witnessed through events such as a fall in the area of agricultural land in the region, falling livestock numbers and a decrease in the agricultural labour force in both areas.

Table 9.10 (a) Sea fish landings by species, Republic of Ireland¹

Species	2002		2003		2004	
	Tonnes	Value	Tonnes	Value	Tonnes	Value
Demersal	32,089	61,105	29,419	50,600	27,645	48,941
Pelagic	173,085	63,973	197,660	60,734	243,935	66,125
Shellfish	32,087	67,228	33,859	57,483	34,803	62,195
Deepwater	7,905	17,577	3,442	11,512	2,949	3,646
Total fish landed	245,165	209,883	264,381	180,330	309,332	180,907

Tonnes and €000

Source Republic of Ireland: Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and CSO

¹Values are in current prices, i.e. figures express the value of receipts in terms of the prices that existed in the year of measurement.

Table 9.10 (b) Sea fish landings by species, Northern Ireland¹

Species	2004		2005		2006	
	Tonnes	Value	Tonnes	Value	Tonnes	Value
Demersal	4,280	4,823	3,436	3,671	2,579	3,360
Pelagic	3,201	602	5,520	1,935	6,462	3,002
Shellfish	6,189	8,753	5,991	9,212	8,109	13,184
Total fish landed	13,670	14,178	14,947	14,818	17,150	19,546

Tonnes and £000

Source Northern Ireland: Fisheries and Rural Policy, DARD

¹Values are in current prices, i.e. figures express the value of receipts in terms of the prices that existed in the year of measurement.

Table 9.11 Number and percentage of farms in EU countries, by size of agriculture area, 2005

Numbers and percentages

	Total	Less than 5 hectares	5-10 hectares	10-20 hectares	20-30 hectares	30-50 hectares	50+ hectares
Austria	170,640	32	19	23	11	9	6
Belgium	51,540	27	13	16	12	16	17
Bulgaria	534,610	96	2	1	0	0	1
Cyprus	45,170	87	7	3	1	1	1
Czech Republic	42,250	53	11	10	5	5	15
Denmark	51,680	3	18	21	12	14	32
Estonia	27,750	45	20	16		5	8
Finland	70,620	9	12	23	17	20	19
France	567,140	26	9	10	7	12	35
Germany	389,880	23	14	19	10	13	22
Greece	833,590	76	13	6	2	1	1
Hungary	714,790	90	4	3	1	1	2
Ireland	132,670	7	14	23	17	22	18
Italy	1,728,530	74	12	8	3	2	2
Latvia	128,670	47	24	17	5	3	3
Lithuania	252,950	51	26	14	4	2	2
Malta	11,070	98	2	0	0	0	0
Netherlands	81,830	29	14	16	11	17	13
Poland	2,476,470	71	15	10	3	1	1
Portugal	323,920	75	11	7	2	2	3
Romania	4,256,150	91	7	2	0	0	0
Slovenia	77,170	59	26	11	2	1	0
Slovakia	68,490	90	3	2	1	1	4
Spain	1,079,420	53	15	12	5	5	9
Sweden	75,810	15	18	19	11	12	25
United Kingdom	286,750	37	10	11	7	9	26
Northern Ireland	27,060	8	12	22	16	19	23

Source Eurostat

Technical Notes

Tables 9.1 (a) & (b) and 9.2 (a) & (b)

Single Farm Payment is a decoupled subsidy scheme paid under the Common Agricultural Policy. Payment is conditional on farmers keeping a stated number of hectares in good agricultural and environmental condition and abiding by other cross-compliance requirements. It was introduced in 2005 and replaced a number of coupled subsidy schemes in the beef, sheep, arable and dairy sectors. As the Single Farm Payment is not linked to production, it cannot be attributed to any single livestock sector. Therefore it is no longer classified as a subsidy on product which is in accordance with an accounting principle agreed by all EU member states and emanating from Eurostat.

In the Republic of Ireland, value data are derived from the annual compilation by the CSO of Agricultural Accounts following EU national accounting practice. These are compiled mainly from data from CSO surveys, data from Teagasc surveys and administrative data from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

In Northern Ireland, agricultural output represents the estimated value of home produced sales, including intra farm transfers and on farm use. They are generated by a combination of DARD survey and farm account data, as well as administrative information where applicable.

Tables 9.3 and 9.4

Republic of Ireland data are derived from the June Crops and Livestock Survey. This is an annual sample survey of about 20,000 farms stratified by size.

Tables 9.5 (a) and (b), 9.7, 9.8 and 9.9

Every second or third year, as part of the EU Farm Structure Survey process, the June Crops and Livestock Survey sample is increased to provide returns for some 55,000 farms in the Republic of Ireland. This allows the compilation of additional structural data for those years. In 2000, a full Census of Agriculture was conducted.

A farmer is someone who has legal and financial responsibility for the farm.

Table 9.10 (a) and (b)

Demersal fish feed in deep water or on the seabed. Examples of such fish are cod, haddock, plaice, whiting, sole, coley and monkfish. Their meat tends to be white and relatively low in fats.

Pelagic fish feed near the surface and have higher levels of lipid in their flesh giving them a non-white colour, they are often referred to as 'fatty', 'oily' or 'oil-rich' fish. Examples of pelagic species are sprats, pilchard, tuna, herring and mackerel.

In the Republic of Ireland, sea fish landings are derived from administrative sources – for the years shown the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

