

ICMSA Milk Quota Policy

ICMSA is strongly of the view that the EU milk sector – given the cost demanded of EU dairy farmers through compliance with environment and other regulations – imposes a higher cost of producing milk by comparison with other dairy-producing regions of the world. Furthermore, we argue that there is a need to continue with WTO protection in terms of restricted access to the EU market. If that is achieved, the EU milk price will be above the world milk price. This situation would demand a continuation of a Supply Management system that ensures a balance between supply and demand. It is only by matching supply and demand that prices can be reasonably maintained and huge and unforeseeable swings avoided in milk price.

We have all been victims of the recent sudden crash in milk price and this has further strengthened the ICMSA argument for the continuation of the quota system. It is not possible for Irish farmers to continue in an unregulated market that is susceptible to such troughs and peaks in milk price.

Therefore, ICMSA is fully in support of a continuation of the quota system, suitably modified, to bring in the necessary flexibility.

This flexibility would be within, and across, Member States to take account of increased demand for dairy products over time.

“Is dairy industry coming to agree with ICMSA’s Quota position?”

John Shirley, Farming Independent



Jackie Cahill above, addresses a European Milk Board, protest outside a recent Farm Council Meeting in Belgium

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- The supply management regime, modified where necessary, must continue beyond 31 March 2015 in order to ensure farmers receive a strong milk price.
- Increases in supply must be tightly linked to overall increased demand within the EU and profitable exports to non-EU markets.
- Within the supply management regime, an appropriate system of price supports is required to guarantee milk producers a reasonable minimum price in the event of a downturn in the marketplace.

The challenge for the Irish dairy industry and core ICMSA policy is to increase Irish dairy farmer incomes.

“We’ve been calling it right on quotas for two years”

Jackie Cahill, President.



Jackie Cahill above, President, ICMSA