

Opportunities for Share Milking

With milk quotas gone from next year and enthusiasm from milk processors for extra milk real opportunities are emerging for Share Milking in Ireland.

The farms where Share Milking is most likely to work are

- a) An established dairy farm where an identified farming successor is not in place and the farm owner wants to step back.
- b) An established dairy farm where the scale and facilities exist to expand, having previously being held back by quota, but will require labour.
- c) An expanding operator who is taking on an additional unit, either through purchase, lease or partnership. This farm will require labour and/or management.

Instead of a young trained farmer joining one of these farms as an employee or assistant manager, why not come in on an equity basis ?. The Shared Milker gets a guaranteed minimum income plus a share of the milk cheque and pays a share of the variable costs. He/She is a farmer in their own right, farming in conjunction with the land owner. The Share Farmers income and advancement will be driven by the performance of the farm, something they have a direct say in, the better and more efficiently they operate the farm the more they get out of it. The flip side is that the land owner will also benefit. Both parties are separate farmers, working together, but submitting their own tax returns etc.

With Lower Order Share Milking minimal equity is required, just a bank facility to be able to pay some variable costs. In Higher Order Share Milking the Share Milker will invariable own cows which will require more equity or could be as a result of equity build up over time through Lower Oder Share Milking.

Share Milking provides an excellent entry into farming for any one with training and/or experience including

- a) Farm managers, assistant managers, herd persons.
- b) Young Trained Farmers with no or insufficient land of their own.
- c) Irish people working on or operating dairy farms outside the country (UK, NZ, Aus, etc)
- d) Second sons or daughters who want to farm.
- e) Those who will in time take over the home farm, but the farm is not available to them yet.

Teagasc are developing agreements, templates and budgets for dairy share farming. A pilot programme is being formulated between Teagasc and Macra's Land Mobility Service. The Land Mobility Service has identified dairy farms that are open to working with a Share Milker. A panel of potential share milkers is being formulated. Anyone interested please contact the service, any contact is confidential and without obligation, but well worth exploring. info@landmobility.ie or 086 2541425 Austin Finn.