



Walsh PhD Fellowship Opportunity in Agri-Food Economics

Implications of EU Milk Quota Abolition for the Agri-Food Sector

Walsh Fellowship: 2013070

Background

Milk production quotas were introduced to the European Union in 1984 with the aim of controlling total milk production thus avoiding the accumulation of dairy products in excess of market demands. Each member state had a national production quota and individual quotas in turn were allocated to milk producers. This system was broadly successful in restricting the overall level of milk production in the EU. In 2009 the EU decided to phase out the milk quota system with final abolition to take place on 31st March 2015. Individual member states had some discretion in the internal management of their national quota. The UK for example operated a relatively free internal market in quota trading, allowing supply and demand to facilitate quota trade between UK regions, whereas the Republic of Ireland imposed tighter control on the internal movement of quotas. Since then UK milk production has fallen below quota, whilst the milk quota in the Republic of Ireland remains binding.

As a consequence the two member states have experienced different dynamics in the development of their dairy sectors during the quota period. Thus there is considerable uncertainty as to how the removal of quotas in 2015 will affect the future development of the dairy sector within the island of Ireland as a whole, where two different systems of quota management have been in operation i.e. the relatively restrictive model in the Republic of Ireland and the more open approach in Northern Ireland which benefitted from the flexibility in the management of the UK quota system.

The study, therefore, will analyse the economic implications of milk quota removal in 2015 for agriculture and the food industries within the island of Ireland and will develop and apply appropriate quantitative and qualitative modelling approaches in pursuit of this goal. In carrying out this work the award holder will be expected to liaise with stakeholders in the dairy sector and will be supported by a small supervisory team and a wider advisory group. The award holder will be registered in Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and located in the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI). It may be necessary also to spend some time in Teagasc as required.

Requirements

Applicants should have at least a II.I honours degree in Agricultural Economics, Economics or an equivalent qualification. A Masters degree in Agricultural Economics, Economics or an equivalent qualification is desirable. The successful candidate must be highly self-motivated and be and capable of extended periods of self-directed independent work. A full EU driving licence is desirable.

Award

The PhD Fellowship is a joint project between AFBI, QUB and Teagasc. The student will be based in AFBI-Economics with support from a supervisory team led by Professor John Davis with representatives from AFBI, QUB and Teagasc. Wider ad-hoc support from external advisors will also be available. The Fellowship will commence as soon as possible but not later than 1st October 2014. The fellowship rate is currently €21,000 per annum (or sterling equivalent) to cover postgraduate stipend and all fees. The fellowship is tenable for 4 years.

Applications

Please submit an electronic copy of Curriculum Vitae and a cover letter of interest to:
Professor John Davis: john.davis@qub.ac.uk

Closing date: 30th April 2014.