1. Introduction

- In advance of EU milk quota abolition, the Irish government has decided to allocate ¼ of the annual 1% increase in milk quota between 2009 and 2015 on a permanent basis to new entrants to dairying.
- New management technologies are essential in developing more efficient, low cost production systems for the future Irish dairy industry (Dillon et al., 2006).
- Previous studies have shown that perceived usefulness and ease-of-use are critical factors influencing the rate of technology adoption by farmers (Davis, 1989; Flett et al., 2004).
- The aim of this study was to investigate the factors influencing technology adoption by new entrant dairy farmers.

2. Context & Methodology

- 90 new entrants surveyed twice; in the initial year of entering dairying (2011) and 18 months later (2013).
- Average new entrant: 36 years of age with a 43 ha land block available and intending to milk over 120 cows.
- Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework used to identify two key factors; perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease-of-use (PEOU) (Davis, 1989; Flett et al., 2004).
- Principle component and logistic analysis undertaken to identify the role of PU and PEOU to technology adoption.

3. Results & Discussion

- The overall adoption rate of the principal grassland, breeding and financial technologies is relatively high among new entrants in comparison to national uptake, and has increased between surveys.
- Farm financial accounts have a high level of uptake but are generally poorly understood, as demonstrated by the negative factor loadings for their PEOU factor in the table below.
- The TAM framework using PU and PEOU as indicators was obtained for each technology, although it was more suitable to grass budgeting than AI or farm accounts.

4. Implications

- PU and PEOU are important factors associated in the farmers decision-making process to adopt a technology. The results also indicate that, even where ease of use is low, farmers will adopt technologies that they perceive to be useful to their business needs.
- To increase uptake and improve farmer understanding of new research technologies, these results indicate that research and extension services should place greater emphasis on both the usefulness and the ease-of-use of new technologies within the existing farm business.