



Stiofán Nutty

HIF Labour Force  
Recommendations





## **Content:**

- Background HIF
- Horticulture overview
- Background to the recommendations
- Recommendations

# HORTICULTURE INDUSTRY FORUM



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



**IFA**

- 15 producers representing 7 sectors on Forum
- Appointed HIF Coordinator in mid 2015
- 2017 “Vision Report” acts as the work plan
- Teagasc Labour Force Survey 2018

# Horticulture Overview

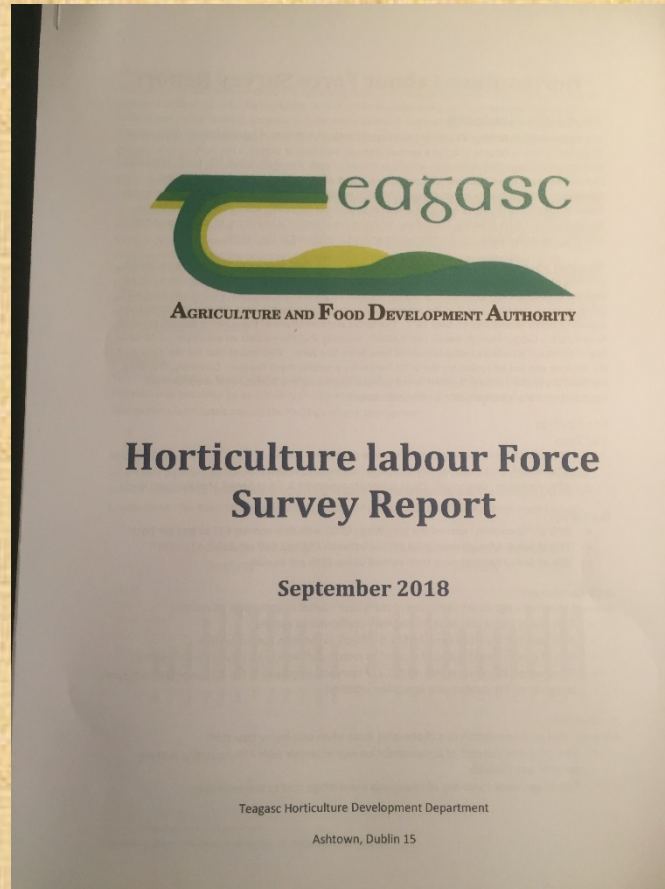
## *Rol Agriculture Output 2017*

- Dairy €2.6bn
- Cattle €2.4bn
- Pigs €516m
- ***Horticulture €433m***
- Sheep €263m
- Cereals €237m
- Poultry 163m

# Employment

- 7,500 employed full time (in primary production activity)
- A further 11,000 employed in value added and downstream businesses (not including the wholesale trade)
- Teagasc Labour Force Survey found
  - 87% of staff worked at "Operative" level
  - 7% Junior management level
  - 6% at Senior management level
- May 2018 14% vacancy rate
- Unemployment rate 5.3 % in December 2018

# Recommendations address the areas highlighted in the Teagasc Report





## Recommendation 1

Highlight to retailers the case to improve margins to enable growers to increase staff remuneration and work with retailers to achieve this

## Recommendation 2

The industry to work with growers to identify immediate ways to:

- a) Improve take up work permits under the DBEI 2018 Pilot Work Permit Scheme
- b) Improve recruitment strategies
- c) Better access suitable accommodation



## Recommendation 3

The industry to work with growers to identify immediate ways , including access to Lean and Lean funding, to reduce operating costs to facilitate increasing remuneration and improve working conditions:

- a) For staff currently working in the industry to improve retention rates
- b) To attract new staff who are best suited to the type of work required

# Recommendation 4

Learning from the operation of the current Pilot Scheme and drawing from recommendation 5.20 in the recently published report of the Review of Economic Migration Policy, work with DBEI to develop a Seasonal Work Permit Scheme that would replace the pilot scheme:

- Making provision for non-EEA agriculture students to come and work in Ireland for 9 months as part of their studies and linked to the Teagasc “Apprenticeships in Horticulture” scheme
- Providing for a 9-month permit for seasonal harvesters on a longer term basis

## Recommendation 5

The industry to communicate to producers the findings of the Labour Survey report and highlight the need for improvement in HR management and recruitment practices



## Recommendation 6

An industry Knowledge Transfer programme to be developed (by Teagasc, Bord Bia, IFA and Horticulture Industry Forum) to upskill producer capacity to achieve best practise with HR management, recruitment and retention

## Recommendation 7

Develop an industry policy on the sourcing and supply of quality accommodation for staff that would include, opportunity to apply for planning permission for suitable on-site modular accommodation and access to potential grant funding for such facilities

# Recommendation 8

Two new schemes to be developed by industry and government that could use a combination of tax incentives and access to grant funding to enable qualified new entrant's set-up a new business;

- A. “Horticulture Enterprise Scheme” to support qualified new growers to set up a new business
- B. A “Horticulture Business in Partnership Scheme” to support:
  - Qualified new growers to partner with an existing horticulture business for a defined period, which if successfully completed would facilitate transfer of the business under favourable conditions to the new grower
  - Qualified sibling or siblings, who have worked in the business for a defined period, to take over ownership of the business from their parent or parents under favourable conditions



## Recommendation 9

An industry model for best practise in relation to pay levels and working conditions to be developed through consultation across the industry. This model to be adaptable to each of the sectors in the industry.

## Recommendation 10

A programme to promote this model, which would also highlight the benefits of working in the horticulture industry to be developed. This would include generic promotion and physical promotional presence at career events

# Recommendation 11

A strategy to be developed to promote the adoption and use of labour efficiency technologies. This strategy would include:

- a) Development of appropriate education and training programmes for staff and potential staff
- b) A funding mechanism (possibly through the new NDP 2020 – 2026 for Horticulture programme) to support growers to invest in beneficial technologies



# Main HIF Recommendations

- Initiatives to improve the current supply of labour to the industry
- Development of a long-term non-EEA Worker Permit Scheme
- Knowledge Transfer programme to achieve best practise with HR management, recruitment and retention
- Development of an industry policy for the provision of quality accommodation for staff
- “New Horticulture Enterprise Scheme” that would use a combination of tax incentives and grant funding to enable qualified new entrants set-up a new business
- Strategy to promote the adaptation of labour efficiency technologies



The background of the slide is a photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a large field of harvested crops, likely corn, with a narrow dirt path leading through the center. The field extends to the horizon, where a small cluster of white buildings is visible. The sky is a clear, light blue with a few wispy clouds.

Go raibh maith  
agaibh