

## TEAGASC PHD WALSH SCHOLARS OPPORTUNITY

**Dairy Farming and Sustainability: Perceptions of what farming was, is and will be through the eyes of producers and consumers**

Walsh Scholars Ref Number 2024219

### Background

Dairy farming is at the heart of Ireland's food system, representing over half of the nation's agricultural investments. Yet, it faces significant challenges, from environmental impacts such as greenhouse gas emissions and water quality to social concerns like animal welfare and labour shortages. With a global, EU and national focus on sustainability, this PhD investigates how perceptions of dairy farming – past, present and future - shape and are shaped by producers and consumers. The outcome will be a shared vision of 'good' dairy farming practices that resonate with consumers, citizens, and producers alike. The work will also inform targeted communication, advisory, and education campaigns, influence policy development, and guide industry-led programmes to enhance sustainability on Irish dairy farms. Thus, the study offers the successful candidate the chance to contribute to shaping the future of dairy farming, making it more environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and socially responsible.

### Research Study

This study uses a mixed methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative techniques. It will analyse the perspectives of consumers and dairy farmers on sustainable farming, identifying and informing the design of market-based and policy interventions to support adoption of sustainable farming practices. Research will focus on the Carbery catchment area in Cork while drawing national-level insights. It will involve literature reviews, expert and stakeholder interviews, in-depth interviews with consumers and farmers, and co-design stakeholder workshops. Access to Teagasc, UCC, BiOrbic and Carbery's facilities and networks will be support this work. Links to the Farm Zero C project will also be supported.

### Requirements

We are seeking a passionate and motivated individual with a strong academic background and good interpersonal skills. You should hold at least an honours degree in a relevant discipline relating to psychology, sociology, marketing, food policy, or agriculture. A Masters award in an appropriate discipline is highly desirable as is an aptitude for both qualitative and quantitative research methods. If English is not your first language you will need to satisfy the [English language requirement](#):

- IELTS: 6.5 - with no individual section lower than 6.0
- TOEFL: 90 - with minimum scores as follows: Listening - 20; Reading - 19; Speaking - 21; Writing – 20

### Award

This prestigious four-year PhD Scholarship offers a generous annual stipend of €25,000, along with a fee contribution of €5,500 per annum. This funding is provided as part of the BiOrbic

Research Ireland Centre for Bioeconomy, in collaboration with UCC and Teagasc. The scholarship will start in October 2025.

### Further Information

For more details about this exciting opportunity, please contact:

- **Prof. Maeve Henchion**, Dept. of Agrifood Business and Spatial Analysis, Teagasc, Ashtown, Dublin 15  
Phone: +353 (0)1 8059515 Email: [maeve.henchion@teagasc.ie](mailto:maeve.henchion@teagasc.ie)
- **Prof. Mary McCarthy**, Department of Marketing & Management, Cork University Business School, UCC  
Email: [m.mccarthy@ucc.ie](mailto:m.mccarthy@ucc.ie)
- **Dr. Claire O'Neill**, Department of Marketing & Management, Cork University Business School, UCC Email [claireoneill@ucc.ie](mailto:claireoneill@ucc.ie)

### Applications

**Candidates are requested to submit the following information:**

- 1) Curriculum Vitae (CV) A concise CV, not exceeding two pages, highlighting your academic background, research experience, relevant skills, and any publications or presentations.
- 2) Proof of English Language Proficiency. If English is not your first language, please provide evidence of meeting the English language requirements, such as standardized test scores or equivalent certifications.
- 3) Research Proposal (500 words) The proposal should briefly outline the research aims within the scope of the project, clearly state the central research question(s), demonstrate how existing literature informs both the proposal and its theoretical framework, and explain its contribution to existing knowledge.
- 4) Research Design and Methodology (500 words) Applicants should also outline their proposed research design and methodology and overall research plan.
- 5) Personal Statement: Include a short personal statement detailing your personal development objectives and motivation for pursuing a PhD.

**Submit your application via link below by 5:00 PM (Irish Standard Time) on July 11th, 2025**

[APPLICATION SUBMISSION](#)

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview shortly thereafter.