



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority

Farmers in Their Own Right: Women and Property Ownership in Ireland

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Overview



1. Introduction

- Property ownership trends & issues
- Importance of property ownership

2. Findings

- Different outcomes for farmwomen

3. Conclusion

- Summary

INTRODUCTION

Women's Roles in Agriculture

Agriculture in Ireland

- Patriarchal, despite changes in other occupational spheres

Annual Work Units

- Spouses work longer hours than all other family farm workers except holders

Gendered division of Labour

- Lack of visibility

Farm family survival

- Sustainability: family farming needs women

Property Ownership



Traditional agriculture – patrilineal system of inheritance

- Succession to male heirs: culturally accepted norm

Attitudes

- Both women and men are likely to choose a male successor to the farm

Change

- Women recognised as potential heirs by their families

Farm family business partnerships

- Alternative or diversified farm enterprises

What do women own?

- 12% of farms (COA 2010)
 - 10% of farm land (Derwin 2013)

Who are they?

- 62% are aged 55+
- 36% female holders 65+

What do they do with it?

- 47% work full-time on the farm
- 40% farming as subsidiary occupation

Ownership Comparison

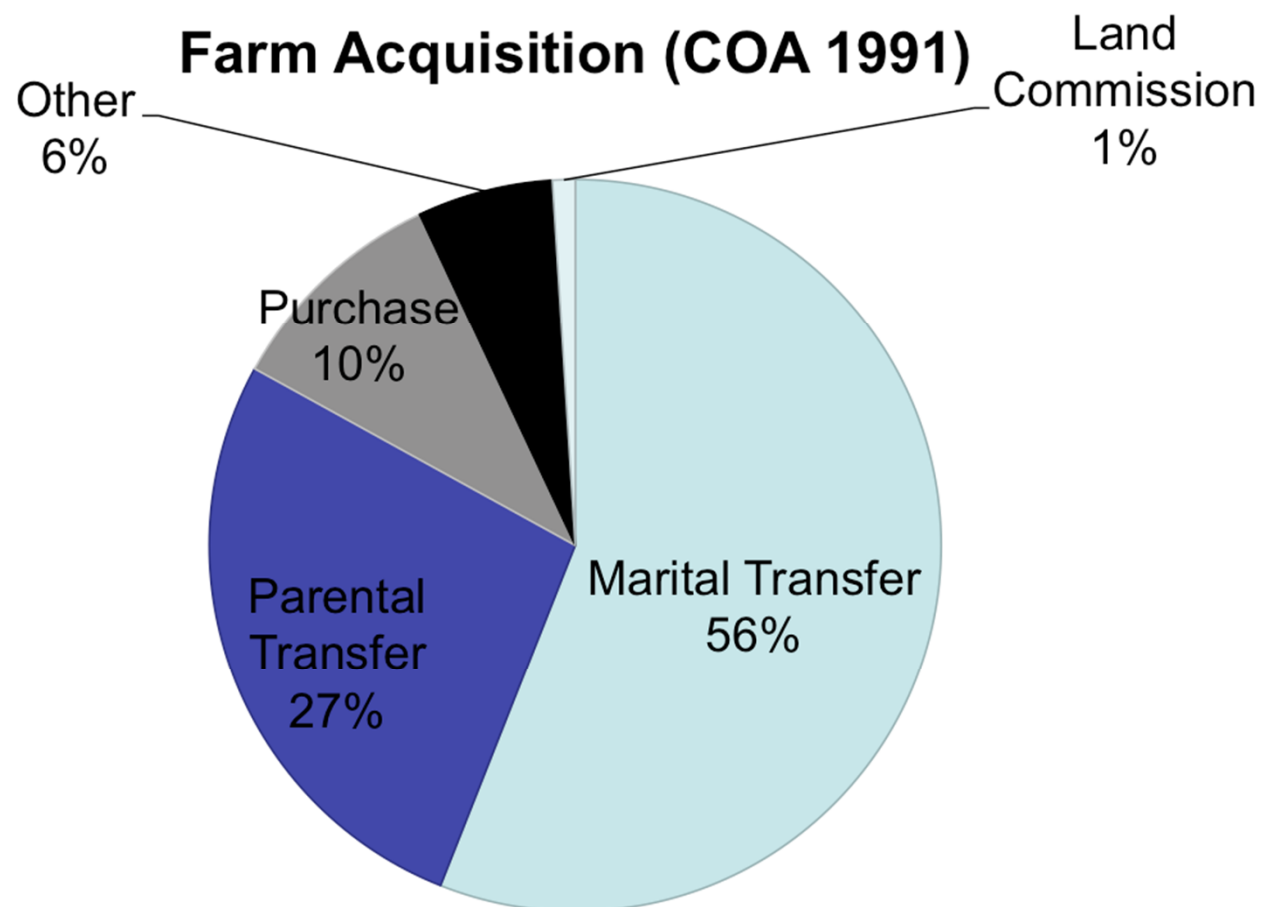


NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

Female Holders	Ireland	Austria
Farm owners	12%	33%
Under 35	4%	10%
35-44	13%	30%
45-54	22%	34%
55-64	26%	17%
65+	36%	9%
Full time farmer	47%	43%



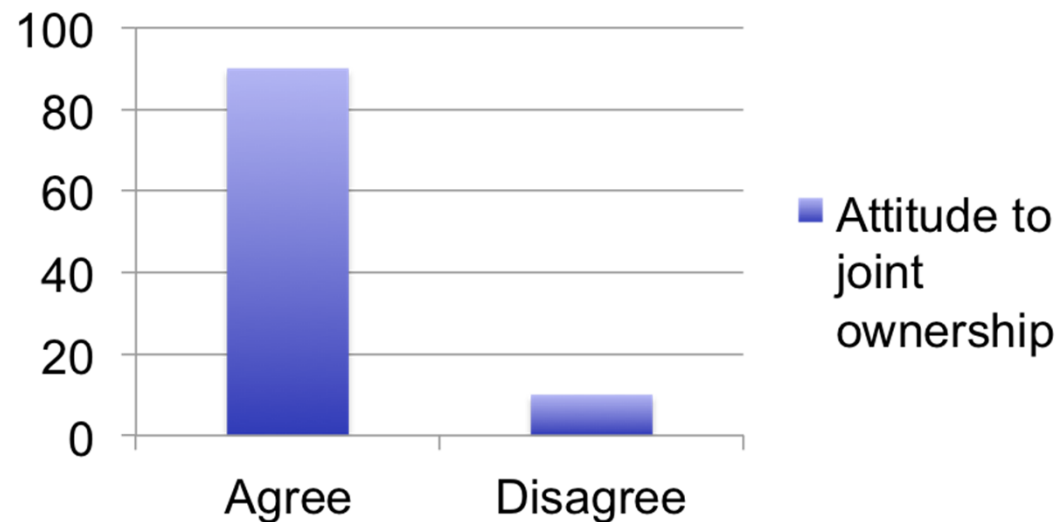
Farm Acquisition (COA 1991)



Spousal Joint Ownership

- 2% of registered herds jointly owned
- 17% were owned by 'self and spouse' (GEU, 2004)

Attitude to joint ownership



Lessons from international research: What does owning property mean for women?

Status and Political power

Economic Security – access to credit

Protection from Violence

Property Ownership



Supporting women's interests

- Agricultural education programmes
 - Excluding women?
 - Low enrolment – gender imbalance
- Make career farming more accessible for women
 - Targeted support
 - 'positive discrimination'

What does women's property ownership mean for agriculture?

Untapped potential

- Women's participation benefits agriculture
- EU policies and initiatives:
 - COPA's European 'Innovation Prize for Women Farmers'
- Household has higher income with joint ownership in USA

The Irish Context

Research Question:

- What are women's experiences of property ownership on farms in Ireland?

FINDINGS

Overview



1. Pathways into Farming
2. Barriers to Ownership
3. Strategies
4. Gender Equality on the Farm
5. Strengthening Farm Women's Roles

1. Pathways into Farming



Family support – interest & involvement in farming

“Anytime I went to the mart, I always went with my father and it was something that we always did together down through the years. I just got involved that way.”

Education & training in agriculture

“I definitely wanted to go farming and I definitely wanted to go to Ag College, because...it was kind of from secondary school onwards actually, I used to go to the mart with my father.”

2. Barriers to Ownership

“a woman in a man’s world”

“my mother, farming over the years with my father, she kind of had no rights, she had no pension, she had nothing.”

3. Strategies



Blending in

"I was kind of nearly considered one of the lads. And I suppose it has impacted my way of thinking."

Stepping up

"I fought for my transfer with my father"

Standing out

"I wanted my own independence and that was by keeping my name really, because I mean, it was my farm..."

Adapting & Working Around Barriers

"I had bought the rest of my stock through farms, which was a lot easier"

4. Gender Equality on the Farm



Marital relationships

“It was like two partners, we were partners...there were two people in it. And, equally so when it came to then getting me to having a separate quota, we became more partners.”

Farming Community

“I suppose in a way men were, kind of, have more respect for me. In a funny kind of way. They would listen to you a little bit more.”

Farm Family

“I want him [my son] to recognise me as... not a housewife. I’m a farmer in my own right and my husband is a farmer in his own right.”

5. Strengthening Farm Women's Roles



Formal Recognition

"you feel a certain level of pride like, and that you belong you know"

"I was accepted as... you know, a farmer"

Opportunities and advantages of ownership

"Owning property became a big advantage... because I entered as a new entrant. I applied for my own herd number... it had its own cattle handling facilities and I applied for a new quota."

"I became a farmer in my own right"

CONCLUSION

Summary



- Authority and recognition of women in farming
- Attracting more women into farming
- Rural sustainability

Does owning property improve women's options?

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