



# TASTE CORK

GROW, COOK, EAT, ENJOY  
IRELAND

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## TASTE CORK 2021

FOOD SUPPORT STRATEGY FOR CORK



# Foreword

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This strategy has been commissioned by the Cork Local Enterprise Offices, Cork County Council and Cork City Council.

Having observed the recent emergence of a strong culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among Cork food companies, we feel it is imperative to support and nurture this extremely important sector of our local economy.

In order to fully capitalise on Cork's position as a vibrant hub of quality food production, and to safeguard the continued growth of this sector, we believed that the creation of a comprehensive 'food strategy' is necessary.

Through the implementation of this strategy, we hope to support, promote and develop local food businesses and raise the profile of Cork as the Food Capital of Ireland. For the purpose of this strategy, all references to SMEs are representative of micro enterprises.



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# Executive Summary

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It is widely recognised that a strong, diverse and vibrant food business community exists across Cork.

In order to nurture and develop the sector and sustain its long term growth, the Local Enterprise Offices in Cork have collaborated with Cork County Council and Cork City Council to develop an integrated food strategy – **'Taste Cork 2021'**. The strategy will be informed and guided by industry partners.

This strategy highlights the following four areas as critical to the future success of the Cork food sector:

## **1. The Development of Strong Consumer Communications**

Through establishing a strong regional brand, the strategy aims to educate consumers within the Cork region to understand the importance of buying locally produced food, thus facilitating an economic model which will both contribute to the local economy and act as a job creation source. The development of the brand will facilitate the growth of local, national and international recognition for Cork's outstanding food sector.

## **2. The Provision of Supports for Cork's Food & Drink Sector**

Ensuring a comprehensive guide to all current supports for food businesses and artisan food producers in Cork is available. In conjunction with existing support agencies, Taste Cork will act as a regional information hub.

## **3. The Positioning of Cork as a Leading Food Tourism Destination**

Recognising the importance of food tourism, its contribution to Ireland's economic recovery and its prosperous effect on the foodservice sector. In conjunction with Failte Ireland and guided by the national tourism strategy for 2025, Taste Cork will support and promote Cork as the leading national destination for food.

## **4. The Development of Clear Routes to Market for Producers**

In conjunction with existing support agencies, the identification of local, national and international routes to market and the provision of support for producers to achieve success in relation to food distribution and exports. Eg. Expand the 'Food Academy' programme model. Critical to the successful implementation of this strategy is the input and support from all

agencies, both national and local, who are involved in Cork's diverse food industry.

A steering group involving all relevant agencies and industry representatives will be formed which will meet at regular intervals to give and receive feedback on the progress of this strategy. The steering group will be responsible for translating the Taste Cork 2021 strategy into a realistic and effective action plan, using the document as a means of inspiration rather than as a rigid work plan.

Fluidity within the strategy is key as the aims and objectives will evolve to compliment the food sector and national strategy developments. A full time Food Executive position will be required to implement and co-ordinate projects proposed within this strategy and to source the required funding to support the strategy.



# Background



## Vision of the Commissioning Body

Here in Cork, we are considered to have some of the best food and food-producing conditions in Ireland. Our thriving base of producers provide us with a particularly diverse range of excellent quality produce which is internationally recognised.

The unspoiled environment and the strong heritage of artisan food techniques, mean we are perfectly placed to produce food of outstanding quality and flavour. The region is blessed with aesthetical and cultural beauty which is wonderfully reflected in our local produce. There is also a very progressive sense of innovation among food entrepreneurs across Cork – while our region is known for traditional food-producing methods, we are also proud to be recognised for the ability of local food businesses to offer exciting new products. In fact, many food businesses throughout the Cork area are renowned for using traditional ingredients, yet offering contemporary added value products that appeal to the palate of the modern time conscious consumer. Over the past few years the craft drinks sector has thrived, etching into our region's history a reputation for highly creative and innovative approaches to the brewing and distilling processes.

The 2015 National Food Awards (Blas na hEireann) were a true celebration of Cork produce, proudly winning twenty gold, eighteen silver, and twenty-one bronze medals. The Great Taste Awards, run by the London-based Guild of Fine Food, have become the largest and most trusted accreditation scheme for speciality food and drink producers. Cork producers have been highly successful over the years with the likes of Ballyhoura Mountain Mushrooms and Ummera Smoked Products winning the Great Taste three star award.

Given the great diversity of Cork's Food & Drink Industry, the vision is to integrate our local strengths into a common approach that will benefit the entire sector, with primary focus on SMEs and artisan producers. Over the years, Cork has seen strong developments in the areas of research and innovation, and benefits greatly from strong markets leaders such as the Carbery group, Glanbia and Dairygold. The region's existing third level supports, the BIM Seafood Development Centre and Teagasc's Moorepark Research and Innovation Centre are strong examples of the region's success thus far in developing a world-class agri-food sector. The region's facilities and the expertise Cork's market leaders possess, provide unique opportunities for the growth and development of Cork's food SMEs.

Our strategy endeavours to build upon past achievements within the food sector. The Cork Kerry Food Forum, supported by the Cork Local Enterprise Offices, Cork City & County Councils, Kerry County Council and Bord Bia, has been a phenomenal success in showcasing local produce and offering producers unique exposure to retail buyers and the public market. 2016 marks its sixth year in operation and promises extended opening times for the public due to last year's outstanding turnout.

Over the past ten years the Local Enterprise Offices in Cork (previously the City and County Enterprise Boards) have been actively developing the sector through providing advanced food specific training programmes, mentoring and ongoing support for food and drink micro enterprises. The development of the annual 'Food Academy' programme, in collaboration with SuperValu and Bord Bia, has proven highly successful in nurturing small food businesses and bringing them to market. In 2015, Food Academy companies hit an impressive €13.1 million in sales and helped support over 900 jobs.

So far over forty Cork food producers have attended UK export trade shows to showcase their wares under the 'Taste Cork' umbrella. The 'Food Export Programme' has been developed specifically to prepare and thoroughly train selected companies for their presence at export trade shows such as the UK Food & Drink Expo in Birmingham and IFE London. A significant number of Cork companies also regularly attend international trade shows with Bord Bia, who target the leading trade shows throughout the year.



With so much to do and see, Cork county stands as one of the most vibrant areas in Ireland. Blessed with natural beauty and peppered with distinctive creativity, it has become a favourite among tourists. Queen Elizabeth II's visit to the English market in 2011 further enhanced the region's popularity, placing the English market, one of the oldest municipal markets in the world, and Cork firmly on the tourism map.

We aim to work with industry partners in building upon achievements to date and securing the future of this incredibly important sector of our local economy through a comprehensive support structure as outlined in the Taste Cork 2021 strategy. Our aim is to not only secure the sector's future, but to see it grow and flourish over the next decade.



# Introduction

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## About Us

**Taste Cork is a food initiative which endeavours to become a leading regional representative of the county's outstanding food producers, micro/SME food enterprises, retailers, foodservice operators and distributors.**

'Taste Cork 2021' is an integrated strategy led by business and underpinned by governmental and academic support. The all-encompassing aim is to drive forward the food sector in Cork over the next five years. The strategy has been developed in an effort to support and grow the industry within the region. This strategy exists as an inspiring starting point to guide all initial projects. The goals and objectives will evolve over time in order to sustain and support the industry.



## Strategy Objectives

- ✓ To create a strong regional food brand identity
- ✓ To create an integrated approach involving local and national agencies to ensure a comprehensive support structure is in place
- ✓ To create a food network for Cork's producers, retailers, foodservice outlets and hospitality outlets to encourage communication and collaboration
- ✓ To promote regional food products at home and abroad
- ✓ To increase the consumer profile of Cork food producers
- ✓ To attract additional food tourism to the Cork region
- ✓ To optimise routes to market for producers and food entrepreneurs
- ✓ To encourage and support market-led food entrepreneurship and the creation of new employment
- ✓ To develop regional support for the Cork food sector in the areas of education, training and upskilling
- ✓ To promote food innovation and commercial opportunities for primary food producers
- ✓ To quantify and benchmark local output from the region



## Methodology

### To date

- The appointment of a Food Executive to work on the ongoing development and implementation of the Taste Cork 2021 strategy
- Desk research on the regional, national and international food scene
- Desk research on existing food strategies in Ireland and the U.K.
- Desk research on national strategies
- Discussion meetings with key stakeholders
- Surveys to producers and stakeholders

### To be undertaken

- 'Best Practice' research visits to regional brand initiatives and farm shops in the UK and further afield, eg. Taste of the West (UK), Parma (Italy)
- Regular surveys and focus groups with producers, consumers, retailers and foodservice outlets



# Why Develop a Food Strategy?

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## 4.1 The Purpose of a Food Strategy

Cork already has a long history and reputation for excellent quality food production and for its wealth of artisan food producers. Already, many Cork based products and producers have gained both national and international recognition.

With its numerous Farmer's Markets, food festivals, critically acclaimed hotels, restaurants and artisan food producers, it is not surprising that the Cork region has gained recognition for its rich food culture and heritage.

Given the importance of the food sector within the county and its significant contribution to the local economy, the implementation of an integrated food strategy is essential in order to nurture and sustain growth and development of local SME food and drink businesses into the future, in line with national targets for 2025. With the agri-food sector positioned at the forefront of Ireland's economic growth, there has never been a better time to act and to embrace the region's strengths.

The strategy is guided by the **'Food Wise 2025'** report and primarily targets the SME sector in Cork and not the larger, well established, food businesses. The SME sector is in most need of such supports due to work resource limitations at micro and SME level.

An integrated approach is essential to the successful implementation of this strategy. Cork's Agri-Food & Strength Opportunities, a recent report published by the Cork Chamber of Commerce, identifies the global megatrends in consumer preferences and the compelling opportunities these present for Cork as a vital and leading player in Ireland's Agri-Economy. The report also places emphasis on implementing a co-ordinated regional marketing strategy to make Cork synonymous with agri-food:

*"Sharing the stories and successes of the region through a cohesive, 'joined up' branding campaign that illuminates Cork's agri-strengths and capabilities in a way that mirrors the successes of key international branding campaigns on regional strengths is vital to grow commercial awareness and augment the scale and type of investments that the region is capable of securing"*

Taste Cork will work together with all local and national development agencies with the shared goal of supporting local food producers and enhancing Cork's reputation as a home of good food. The strategy aims to coordinate all existing supports from the various food sector support bodies for maximum effect locally in Cork County, in order to grow the local food sector over the next decade.

Through this integrated approach, we will celebrate and promote the distinctiveness, the quality and the huge variety of food and drink that is produced in our county. Ultimately, Taste Cork endeavours to harness the power of the 'collective' in order to create a thriving food network for the region.

## 4.2 Artisan Food & Drink in Ireland

"Our wealth and potential as an Island begins in the earth beneath us and the sea around us. Agri-food is embedded in local communities across Ireland in ways that no other industry can match"

### - Food Wise 2025



**Food Wise 2025** describes the producers and small food businesses of Ireland as the "custodians of Ireland's natural landscapes and its environmental riches".

It goes without saying that the artisan producers are making an increasingly significant contribution to the overall success of the food industry in Ireland and are shaping up to become the exporters of the future.

According to Bord Bia figures published in the 2016 guide to **'Starting a Premium Drinks Business in Ireland'**, Ireland currently has over 70 new micro-breweries and 27 new branded spirits businesses in operation, planning or development. This makes for exciting evolution within the drinks industry over the coming years, with craft brewers and small-scale distillers moving from strength to strength.

In this regard, it has been recognised nationally that it is essential to support and nurture the SMEs within the food & drink sector in order to secure the future of Ireland's food industry.

An overview of Bord Bia's latest consumer research report, **PERIscope 2015**, supports a positive outlook for the success of the artisan food sector towards 2025 and beyond.

According to this report, 68% of consumers in Ireland say it is 'fairly' or 'very' important to buy local produce. The report highlights the importance of transparency and states that knowing the source of your food has emerged as a central trend in the food and drink industry. Results show that the importance of local produce peaked in 2011, at a time when concern about employment and the Irish economy was paramount. It is quite possible that the growth in the economy has weakened the direct connection between local and Irish consumers. The report suggests that we, as a nation, need to evolve our local message in order to keep interest alive and to further entice Irish shoppers to support local. Taste Cork aims to refresh the local message to ensure its continued relevancy to consumers.



### In general, PERIscope figures continue to show promise for the local food sector:

- 77% state that quality of fresh food is more important than price
- Almost 7 in 10 ROI adults believe buying local produce is important
- Almost half of ROI adults claim to purchase locally produced food at least once a week
- Over 7 in 10 believing local food to be of higher quality, feel more confident in the safety of locally produced food and preferring to know the source of their food.
- Frequency of purchasing local produce has risen from 18% in 2009 to 23% in 2015
- 75% agree slightly or strongly that food produced locally results in higher quality products
- 71% like to know the area where their food comes from



## 4.3 Food Tourism

'Ireland will be recognised by visitors for memorable food experiences which evoke a unique sense of place, culture and hospitality'.

### - Failte Ireland

According to **'People, Place & Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025'**, the most recent strategy for tourism by The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, the total combined annual tourism revenue for the economy was estimated at around €5.7 billion. The tourism sector is reported to support 140,000 jobs in the accommodation and food sector alone, with 200,000 employed overall in tourism.

Failte Ireland reports that tourism has greatly influenced the upturn in the foodservice sector. Their research shows that both domestic and overseas visitors seek quality ingredients, local foods and look for a holistic, memorable food experience.

Cork, the Food Capital of Ireland, already contains a wealth of high quality and internationally renowned eateries who pride themselves on their use of local produce. Cork's exceptional reputation for food creates great potential for the food tourism sector. A strategic approach to the development of this sector should prove highly beneficial in promoting regional products at home and abroad.

## 4.4 International Benchmarks

The U.K. is home to a number of extremely successful food groups which coordinate a local food strategy for their specific region. As there is no national food agency in the UK similar to Bord Bia, these groups have been created to manage the food agenda on a regional basis rather than a national one. Many initiatives carried out by these groups offer excellent examples of what can be achieved locally when considering the implementation of the Taste Cork 2021 food strategy.

We see similar projects further afield, with many internationally structured as food clusters ([see 8.2](#)) but ultimately delivering the very same message – the importance of local and developing alliances within the region.



## CASE STUDY

The Regional Food Group for Yorkshire and Humber

[www.deliciouslyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.deliciouslyorkshire.co.uk)

**The Regional Food Group for Yorkshire and Humber champions the region's diverse food and drink sector and is the custodian of the Deliciouslyorkshire campaigning brand.**

The group was established in 2002 to promote, raise awareness and increase consumption of food and drink produced in Yorkshire and Humber. It is a membership organisation which pro-actively grows the sector through business development, improving competitiveness and increasing consumer awareness.

They represent anyone who shares their commitment to food and drink in the region including producers, food retailers, wholesalers and distributors, restaurants, caterers, hotels and the hospitality trade.

They act as a centralised hub for trade, consumer and media enquiries and also offer specialist guidance and support through a series of educational development programmes. They offer members dedicated help, advice and expertise in the fields of marketing, business advice and support, skills development support, as well as invaluable networking opportunities.

In order to enable members to capitalise on the demand for locally sourced food and drink, the group developed the 'Deliciouslyorkshire' brand for use on packaging, livery, POS and marketing materials.

## CASE STUDY

Food Northwest  
[www.foodnw.co.uk](http://www.foodnw.co.uk)

**The Northwest agri food and drink sector is worth more than £9.5 billion, employing over 450,000 people and provides more than 12% of the regional economy.**

The area has more local food manufacturing enterprises than any other UK region. It has significant strengths in a number of areas, including dairy production, red meat and cereal processing, speciality foods and regional food production. It is home to some of the food industry's biggest names, including Nestle, Halewood Foods, Fox's, Heinz, Kellogg's, Patak Foods and Vimto.

Food NorthWest was established in 2007 to simplify support for food and drink businesses in the region, providing a clear voice for the development of the sector and providing a focal point for the industry.

**The main objectives of the group include:**

- To develop higher value added activities to meet the changing consumer demands.
- To enhance collaboration with science and technology, education and training to increase the productivity of food businesses across the region .
- To improve the provision of and access to safe and healthier foods for all sections of society in the North West and to improve education and awareness of safe food and healthy diets .
- To develop more efficient, sustainable distribution systems .
- To promote a prosperous, sustainable farming and food sector that contributes to the environment and social well-being of the region.
- To promote a positive image of the Food and Drink sector and its contribution to the image of the Northwest as a location for businesses, visitors, investors and as a place to live.

## 4.5 Irish National Food Vision

According to FDII (Food & Drink Industry Ireland) reports, the food and drink manufacturing industry has an estimated output of almost €26 billion. The agri-food sector in Ireland accounts for over 8%GDP and employs, both directly and indirectly, approximately 230,000 people. It also provides a total payroll of €1.8 billion, more than any other manufacturing sector.

The publication of the 'Food Harvest 2020' report by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food subsequently inspired the development of numerous national and regional strategies to support, develop and grow the agri-food sector in a sustainable fashion. The most recent report published in 2015 by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, 'Food Wise 2025', stands as the current national blueprint for the agri-food industry.

*Food Wise 2025 "represents the shared voice of an industry striving to create a business and regulatory environment in which the extensive growth opportunities of the next 10 years can be fully capitalised".*

*Food Wise 2025 "reflects an industry with a far stronger sense of its own capacity and a clearer picture of where the opportunity ahead lies. [...] The vision of thriving primary producers and agri-food businesses at the heart of vibrant communities across the country is one everyone in the industry can share".*



<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/agri-foodindustry/foodwise2025/report/FoodWise2025.pdf>

**Key focus areas for 'Food Wise 2025' are:**

### **1.Opportunity**

The identification of significant growth opportunities across all sub-sectors of the Irish agri-food industry

### **2.Sustainability**

Recognising that a significant increase in food production cannot be considered in isolation from its environmental impact (depletion of natural resources and the potential impact on climate change)

### **3.Delivering Growth**

Identification of areas that require strategic action if the industry is to capitalise on, deliver and maximise the growth opportunities in the years to 2025

### **4.Human Capital**

Addressing the skills need within the industry

### **5.Innovation**

Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) are key drivers of competitiveness and central to maintaining competitiveness in the long term

**Updated growth projections for 2025, outlined by Food Wise, are as follows:**

- Increasing the value of agri-food exports by 85% to €19 billion
- Increasing the value added in the agri-food, fisheries and wood products sector by 70% to in excess of €13 billion
- Increasing the value of Primary Production by 65% to almost €10 billion
- The creation of an additional 23,000 direct jobs in the agri-food sector all along the supply chain from primary production to high value added product development.



# How Our Local Strategy Fits with National Strategy

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The goals and objectives outlined by Food Wise 2025, (section 4.5), shall be incorporated into the Taste Cork 2021 strategy and form part of the overall vision for Cork's food sector. To reach our regional potential it is imperative that we embrace a shared national vision. The following overview of most recent national reports and studies will guide the Taste Cork 2021 strategy development.

## 5.1 Bord Bia's Statement of Strategy 2016-2018: 'Making a World of Difference'

Bord Bia's latest strategy outlines their vision for the Irish food & drink industry:

*"The clear ambition behind the vision is for Irish food and drink to be recognised as world-class by consumers in Ireland and more widely. A key part of this is making sure that the qualities that help to make Irish food and drink unique are more front-of mind than they are now – for example the sustainable basis for food production and the high-quality, natural resources such as Ireland's water and grass, that are core to so much of its produce and ingredients. There is a clear opportunity for the industry to continue to build upon these strengths – and on the passion, skill and dedication of our producers. At the same time, we recognise that the food and drink industry faces huge challenges over the next decade. While the more extreme effects of climate change are unlikely to be seen in day-to-day weather for another two generations, there is increasing evidence that extreme weather events across the globe are already being intensified by climate change. The consequences for food production are profound, and the challenge for the industry is to transition to a model of production that fulfils our needs – within planetary limits. Passion and innovation are central to this mission, with the aim of demonstrating on a global stage the qualities that make food and drink from Ireland unique and sustainable"*

### **Bord Bia has three core expectations for Ireland in 2025:**

1. Customers internationally will recognise that Irish food and drink is world-class
2. Irish produce will be regarded as high-quality, distinctive, and unique
3. Irish producers will set the global standard in sustainable production

### **Bord Bia's Ireland 2025 will be:**

1. Informed by consumer insight
2. Enabled by valued people, talent and infrastructure
3. Underpinned by Origin Green
4. Realised by effective routes to market and business conversion
5. Supported by strong brand communications in the digital age



In relation to achieving their vision in the artisan SME sector, Bord Bia states the following:

*"The increased consumer demand for locally sourced food and shorter supply chains over the last number of years has created viable and alternative routes to market for players in these sectors. The combination of the entrepreneurial spirit of the owner managers with product innovation and differentiation and expansion via local, national and international markets will represent the pillars for the continued growth of these sectors at home and abroad."*

## 5.2 Action Plan for Jobs 2016

Since the publication of 'The Action Plan for Jobs', it has been one of the Government's leading instruments to support job creation.

Key objectives that relate to 'Taste Cork 2021' are as follows:

- National Clustering Initiative: *"The benefits of clustering are many and include increased productivity and company income, increased market share, greater innovation and knowledge transfer and enhanced capability."*
- Stimulating the domestic economy with direct focus on agri-food and tourism.
- Pinpointing new sources of growth: *"As a small open economy Ireland must be agile in responding to emerging global trends and the challenges and opportunities that they present"*

## 5.3 Action Plan for Jobs South-West Region 2015-2017

The publication of this document further supports national objectives, with the following being of greatest importance in the development of 'Taste Cork 2021':

### (i) Building Sectoral Opportunities, Clusters & Ecosystems

"Through linkages between SMEs/MNCs, academia and research centres, more collaborative benefits can be brought to job creation efforts through increased trade, innovation and research. There is a strong base of research in the region that can be applied to underpin the development and growth of the thematic clusters in the region to foster innovation, create employment opportunities and economic growth. The process of cluster development may also identify new innovative cluster opportunities for the region"

### (ii) Agri-Food & Drink Sector

"The key focus now is to ensure that the region develops the enterprise base, products and services that can maximise the value-added from the increased production at farm level, so as to drive exports and sustainable jobs over the long term [...] there is significant potential to develop an international cluster of scale in the region, combining strengths in agri-food and drink, tourism and agri-related engineering and technology solutions"

## 5.4 Dept. of Transport, Tourism & Sport: People, Place and Policy. Growing tourism to 2025

In 2015 The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport launched the Government's new tourism policy, setting out a range of aims and objectives for growth within the sector over the following decade.

### The Government's ambitions for tourism in 2025 are outlined as follows:

- Growth of overseas tourism revenue from 2013's recorded revenue of €3.3 billion to €5 billion in 2025
- For employment in the sector to reach 250,000
- To achieve 10 million overseas visits per year by 2025 (compared to 7.6 million in 2014)

### Three key segments with a higher likelihood to select Ireland as a destination:

1. "Culturally Curious": Travellers in the over 45 age group taking a holiday with their partner. They are out to broaden their minds and expand their experience by exploring new landscapes, history and culture
2. "Great Escapers": These tend to be younger and are specifically interested in rural holidays. Great Escapers are on holiday to take time out, and experience nature at close range.
3. "Social Energisers": Young visitors who like to holiday in groups or as couples. Friends or colleagues looking for an exciting trip to a new and vibrant destination.

The report further states: *"Ireland's tourism offering must appeal to the key market segments with relevant and targeted experience propositions. The Wild Atlantic Way is an example of an experience proposition that is already proving very successful."*

*"An emerging trend is the combining of tourism with other areas of economic activity, for example the food sector. This trend, known as convergence, may provide additional opportunities for revenue growth in the tourism sector and the wider economy."*

## 5.5 Failte Ireland, Growing Tourism in Cork: A Collective Strategy 2015-2020

**Growing Tourism in Cork emphasises the need for the Cork region to focus on its tourism sector over the coming years.**

*"A vibrant tourism sector is crucial for every major region in the world. It creates jobs and contributes significantly to the local economy. There has been an increase in visitor numbers across Ireland and Cork finds itself in an excellent position to capitalise on this upturn. Cork also sits within the experience brands, Ireland's Ancient East and the Wild Atlantic Way, which represents a massive opportunity as Cork can further benefit by leveraging their success. [...] Cork as a tourism proposition is, as yet, not fully known across many international markets and segments. Although there is some good work being developed, the lack of a consolidated plan means Cork will not be best placed to capitalise on the projected growth in visitor numbers of 21.3 percent or the projected increase in revenue of 27 percent for the period 2015-2020."*

Ger O'Mahony, Strategic Tourism Task Force, Foreword

### Key learning from strategy research:

- Potential visitors have a lack of understanding of what Cork city and county has to offer
- Once Cork is discovered there are many pleasant surprises:
  1. Soft, beautiful, peaceful coastline – making escaping more serene and easy.
  2. A strong artisanal and foodie culture, enabling discovery and multi-sensory experiences.
  3. Authentic, compact city, making it easy to connect and feel at home.
  4. Quirky place giving way to unexpected experiences.

### Strategy goals:

1. Increase visitor numbers and duration of stay, and extend seasonal patterns where possible
2. Increase the revenue value of visits to Cork
3. Increase visitor traffic throughout Cork
4. Encourage repeat visits by leveraging Ireland's Ancient East and the Wild Atlantic Way

### Goal enablers:

1. Develop a compelling proposition for Cork to position it as an irresistible tourism destination that encompasses existing offerings. This will position it as a compelling and 'must see' element of the Ireland offering.
2. Develop a visitor-centric tourism offering that is sustainable in and beneficial to the local economy and deliver visitor-led experiences
3. Generate awareness and motivate tourists to consider Cork
4. Facilitate and enrich the consumer journey with integrated experience enablers.

The full strategy can be viewed here:

<http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/Publications/Growing-tourism-in-Cork-a-collective-strategy.pdf?ext=.pdf>

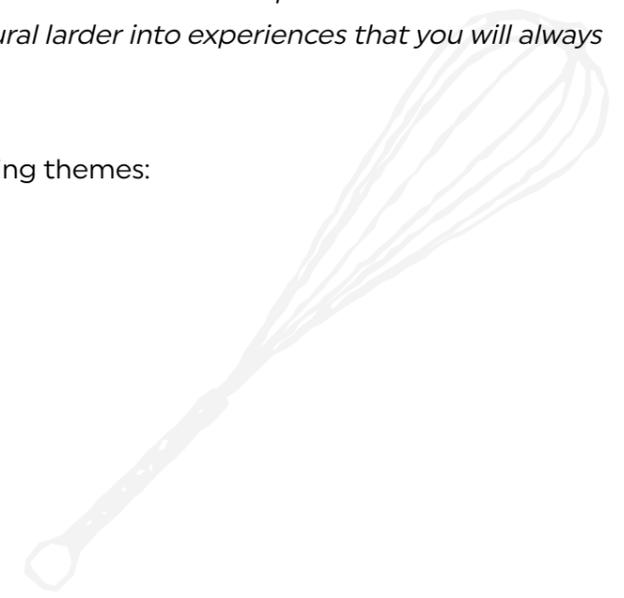
## 5.6 Failte Ireland's Food Story Toolkit

Failte Ireland has created a story and a guide to creating memorable food experiences:

*"There's something very rooted yet very now about Ireland's natural approach to food and easy-going, warm style. On this small island, local rules. You'll find some of the best raw ingredients in the world, expertly prepared then served simply and fresh as can be ... it's as if you can really taste the place. And good food is just the start. You'll shake the hand that feeds you too. For we believe in small, we believe in local and we believe in personal. And it's the warm and welcoming people that turn this great natural larder into experiences that you will always remember."*

Failte Ireland's Food Story embraces the following themes:

1. Simple, fresh
2. Strong sense of place
3. Local rules
4. Warm people
5. New news - the 21st century food story
6. Experiences that make memories





**For the full Food Story toolkit please visit:**

<http://www.failteireland.ie/Supports/Food-Tourism-in-Ireland/Telling-Ireland-s-food-story/The-food-story.aspx>

## 5.7 An overview of Ireland's Agri-Food export success thus far

According to Food Wise 2025 "Irish food and drink exports grew strongly in the years 2010 to 2014, and against the context of domestic and global recession, the sector's achievements were striking. Agri-food is now firmly positioned at the heart of Ireland's journey to economic recovery".

According to Bord Bia figures, Irish food and drink exports rose by more than 3% to a record high of €10.8 billion in 2015 marking the sixth consecutive year of export growth.

In relation to 2014 export figures, Bord Bia highlights the following statistics for 2015 in most recent export report, 'Export Performance and Prospects':

- Exports of beverages increased by 10 per cent in 2015
- Irish Whiskey recorded an 18 per cent increase
- Exports of beef and seafood rose 6 per cent and 4 per cent respectively
- Exports of dairy products increased by 4 per cent
- Pigmeat export volumes rose by 6 per cent
- Sheepmeat & poultry exports increased by 3 per cent
- Exports of prepared consumer food rose by 7 per cent to €2.5 billion making it the second largest export category after dairy
- Exports to the US, Ireland's second largest market for food and drink exports after the UK, increased by 40 per cent to €755 last year
- Exports to China, the country's fifth most important market and the second largest for dairy and pork, were up 16 per cent
- Exports to the Middle East grew 12 per cent but were weak in Russia and the African region

In relation to this report, Bord Bia chief executive Aidan Cotter commented that "Irish food exporters registered record growth, increasing exports by some €355 million in a period when global food commodity prices declined by approximately 19 per cent, the Russian market was effectively closed to EU food exports, and consumer sentiment remained sluggish across the euro zone. This year will present further opportunities for growth in most sectors notwithstanding challenges from continued global dairy price pressures through the early months of 2016".

In light of this recent success and positive 2015 figures, the export platform for small food businesses is showing huge potential for the coming years.



## 5.8 Agribusiness: An Irish Farmers Journal Report in Association with KPMG Summer 2015

The most recent Irish Farmers Journal Agribusiness report, published in association with KPMG, looks at how people are changing and analyses the key macro-trends that affect Irish agribusinesses. With 55% of our exports going to the UK, the report highlights that the greatest opportunity of all for Irish agribusinesses may be on our very doorstep.

It also sheds light on the growth in population in the East by 2050, suggesting that this will *"increase the East's ability to absorb dairy and beef products from countries such as NZ and Argentina, therefore reducing the share exported by those countries to the EU. This will present local opportunities to Irish agri-food businesses"*.

The following list summarises the report's macro-trends and global influences that they predict will shape the political, social, environmental and economic outcomes for the global communities for the next 20-30 years:

- The rise in Eastern momentum
- Backlash against globalisation – "local is the new global"
- Global population of nine billion by 2050
- Millennials – the consumers of tomorrow
- The changing family unit
- The ageing generations
- Global widening of middle-class wealth
- Global meat demand growing and evolving
- Busier lifestyle of the modern consumer
- The rise of the foodie
- Traceability – questioning of the food chain



Research



## Surveys & Focus Groups

Due to the evolving nature of the Taste Cork 2021 strategy, surveys and focus groups will be ongoing and will ensure regular communication with the food sector.

To date these are the main findings from producer surveys:

- **Greatest challenges in running a food business are:**
  - Distribution & related costs
  - Cash flow/finance
  - Delayed payments of invoices
  - Finding & keeping great staff
  - Attracting target market
  - Widening customer base
  - Regulation
  - Time
  - Keeping up with paperwork
  - Macro breweries power & influence over publicans
  - Market competition with cheaper products
  - Increasing production without over-investing
  - Supply of goods
  - Knowing the next step in business development
- **The most effective way to access information on training and funding is through the web**
- **All would support and engage with a regional food brand**
- **The majority of producers recognise the importance of food tourism for the region and would be willing to engage with it.**
- **Cork food and drink producers would most likely attend workshops/seminars and networking events in the morning time.**
- **Most popular seminar topics:**
  - Online Marketing, PR & Social Media
  - Growing Your Business
  - Consumer Insight & Food Trends
- **Through clustering, producers would like to experience benefits within group purchasing, distribution, research & development, infrastructural development and sales.**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a cooked sea urchin (uni) over a bowl of food. The sea urchin is open, revealing its bright orange and yellow roe. The background is blurred, showing a bowl of food with various ingredients like onions and tomatoes.

# Cork Food Sector Overview 2016



## 7.1 Food Industry in Cork

The artisan and speciality sector has a deep-rooted history in Cork, particularly noteworthy is the growth and establishment of farmhouse cheeses such as Gubbeen, Milleens and Durrus in West Cork in the late 1970s. Each of these businesses grew from a sense of innovation and experimentation at a time where quality produce was difficult to find and farm incomes needed to be supplemented. Each producer used the resources available to them on-farm to produce superior quality cheeses each with their own unique character. From small beginnings, they have blazed the trail for the development of an internationally recognised selection of Irish Farmhouse cheeses which can now be found on cheeseboards across the world.

Significant work has already been undertaken to promote and support the industry in the region through the Cork Local Enterprise Offices, Rural Development Agencies and Cork County & City Council. Food Festivals such as 'A Taste of West Cork' and 'Midleton Food and Drink Festival' are by now well-established on the national event calendar and provide excellent opportunity to local producers to showcase the high quality, innovative produce available in the area. 'Cork Summer Show', featuring cookery demonstrations and a bustling artisan food market, has been a highlight in Cork for over 200 years and is one of the largest events of its kind in Ireland. It serves as a fantastic opportunity to sample the best of what Ireland's food capital has to offer.

### Cork's Artisan Producers

- There is a large focus on 'added value' and the creation of high-quality prepared foods in the area. The region contains artisan producers of foods such as ready-meals, desserts, soups, sandwiches, pizzas, croquettes, sushi, sauces, frozen meals, pies, pasties, pasta, tarts, pate, terrines, salads, gluten free, crepes, etc. This sector reflects a strong sense of innovation. This is particularly evident through the wide variety of excellent quality meals and produce available and unique products such as crushed garlic, free range roast duck and seaweed salads.
- Cork's artisan bakers create a range of products including breads, cakes, tarts, cookies, gluten-free, celebration cakes, par-baked breads, home baking goods, luxury desserts, etc. There is an extensive range of fresh, handmade breads available including traditional, continental breads, seeded, spelt, soda, yeast-free, dairy-free, pitta, naan, low GI, sourdough, bagels, to name a few.

- There is a strong community of cheese producers in the area producing a range of award winning cheeses including farmhouse cows and goats cheeses, soft cheese, smoked cheese, blue cheese and flavoured cheddars. The extremely high quality of many of these cheeses is internationally recognised and they can be found in delicatessens all over the world.
- In addition to the superb selection of cheeses available in the area, the dairy sector also produces a wide range of milk, yoghurts, butter, desserts, ice-cream, custards, cream, desserts, sauces.



- Many seafood businesses operate throughout the county supplying a range of fish and shellfish including sushi, organic smoked salmon and sea urchins.
- Cork has developed an international reputation for its smoked foods and superior quality producers of smoked salmon, trout, seafood, meats and poultry.
- The organic sector is extremely strong in the area with producers of organic beef, poultry, eggs, cereals, vegetables, smoked salmon, salads, oatmeal, flour, burgers, fruit, nuts, soups, sauces, beer, bread, cake mixes, etc.
- Due to the exceptional farmland in the region, we have a truly thriving meat sector, including producers of beef, lamb, buffalo, pork, venison, breakfast meats, poultry, bacon and wild fowl.



## 7.2 Cork's English Market

Situated in the heart of Cork City, the English Market is a roofed food market and has been trading since 1788. Developed and still owned by Cork City Council, the Market is one of the oldest municipal markets of its kind in the world. The trading stalls are held under 21 year leases from the City Council. The City Council organizes administration matters for the Market through its Property Department.

Trading as a market since 1788, it pre-dates most of the other markets like it. Indeed, Barcelona's famous Boqueria market did not start until 80 years after The English Market first started to serve the people of Cork. It has survived the Famine, revolutions, wars, fire and economic decline. The Market has adapted down through the years and now offers a larger range of produce than it did in times past. In times past, most of the shoppers were shopping on a cheaper budget or haggling with the stall owners in hopes of even better deals!

Today it has become a civic space, a meeting place, a thoroughfare and a bustling social hub of the city. It is a tourist destination in itself, famously attracting a visit from Queen Elizabeth in 2011. With its variety of food products, the pride of place accorded to small traders, the personalised service, the growing emphasis on organic products and reliance on small-scale producers, it is forever popular.

- There are numerous producers of fresh fruit, vegetables, herbs, seeds, salads and superfoods.
- A wide range of quality marmalades, honey, jams, oils, relishes, sauces, pestos, jellies, pickles, chutneys, salsas on offer locally.
- A wide range of artisan beverage producers including producers of roast coffee, fruit juices, craft beer, ale, whiskey, tea, apple brandy.
- In recent years there has been huge growth in the number of craft beer producers and distillers in the region. The craft drinks industry in Cork is rapidly evolving and becoming a competitive hub of creativity
- Producers of handmade chocolates, fudge, toffee and sweets including organic, gluten-free and diabetic chocolates

Standout Cork producers such as Follain, Glenilen Farm, Frank Hederman, Ballymaloe Country Relish, 8 Degrees Brewing, Green Saffron, Coolea Farmhouse Cheese and Cully & Sully are just some of our region's inspiring success stories.

### Cork's Foodservice & Hospitality Sector

Cork is home to numerous outstanding cafes, pubs, restaurants, country houses and hotels who are devoted to supporting their local producers. The Farmgate, The Good Things Café, Ballymaloe House, Nash 19, Fenn's Quay, The Crawford Gallery Café, Café Paradiso, Sage, URRU and On The Pig's Back are just a flavour of what Cork's foodservice sector has to offer.



A mix of traditional Cork fare and exciting new foods from afar, along with long standing family-run stalls and newcomers from outside, all contribute to its unique appeal, which is celebrated widely, especially by visitors to the city. Foods from all over the world as well as

traditional local Cork Artisan Cork foods can be purchased. Meat eats, fish, breads, organic fruit & vegetables, you'll also find as hot buttered eggs, cheese, olives, crubeens (pigs' feet), and the Cork favourite Tripe & Drisheen.

Re-development of the former Capitol Cinema promises to be an exciting game changer for the English Market and Cork city centre from 2016 onwards. Plans for the 85,000 sq. ft site include direct linkage to the English Market and development of a food innovation centre alongside retail and office space.

<http://www.englishmarket.ie>

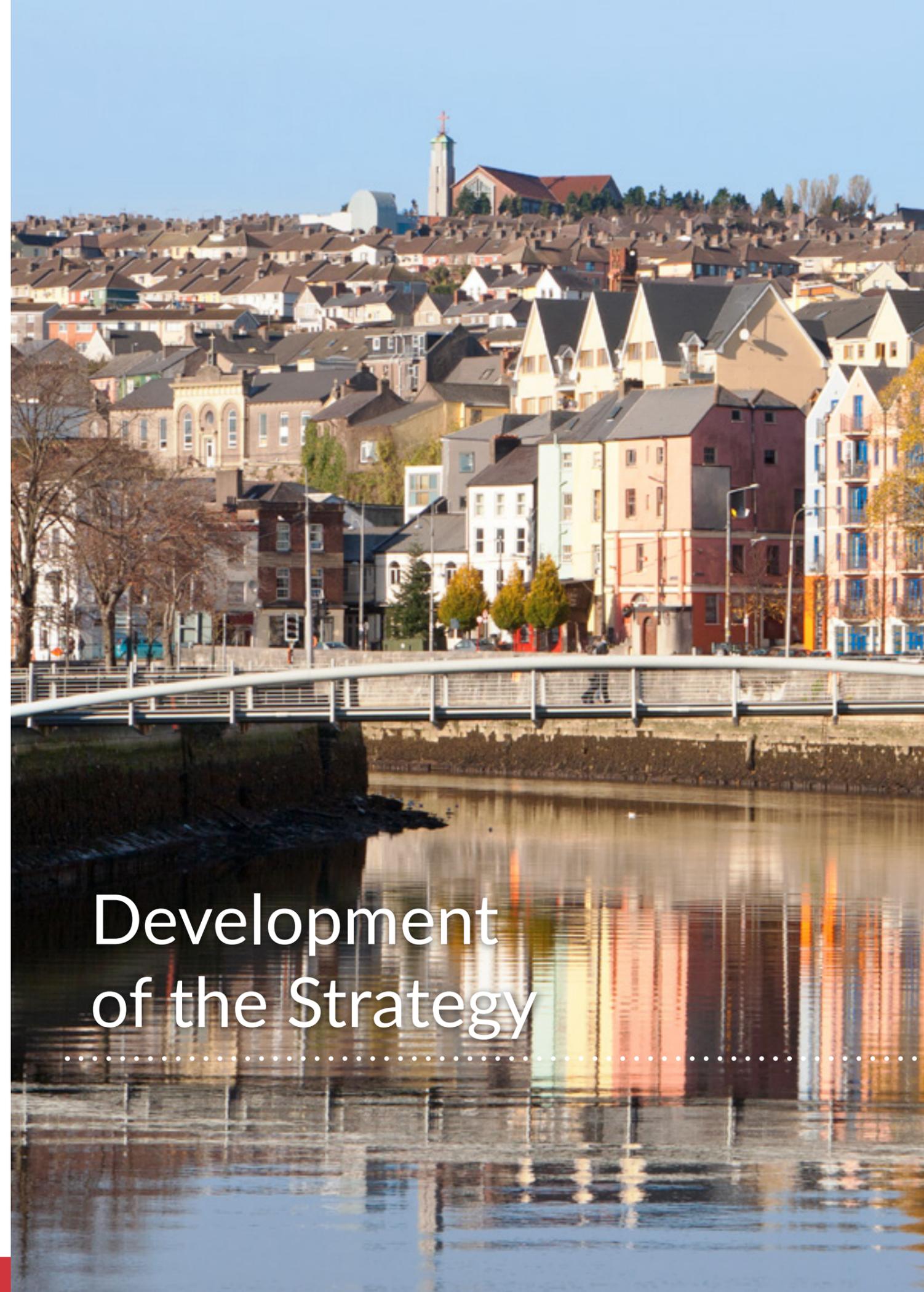
### 7.3 The Cork Butter Exchange

In 1730 the Cork Butter Exchange began, which established itself as an important commercial centre for the city during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. At its trading peak in the 1880s it was handling 500,000 casks per year valued at £1.5 million and was classed as the largest butter market in the world.

Cork Butter Museum was opened in 1997 to showcase the origins of dairying in Ireland and to share the history of the Cork Butter Exchange. Given the county's history, Cork has continued to develop a rich and diverse food culture which fosters a wealth of innovative producers from dairy and meat production, to beverages, bakery and seafood.

### 7.4 Cork's Food Sector Support Agencies & Bodies

Please see [section 9](#) for full comprehensive list of support bodies and agencies.



# Development of the Strategy

## 1. The Development of Strong Consumer Communications

- A. The Creation of a Marketing & PR Strategy
- B. Creation of a Local Cork Artisan Food Brand Logo
- C. Development of Online Directories for Cork Food & Drink Producers, Retailers & Foodservice Outlets
- D. Linking of Cork Cookery Schools to Producers and to Consumers
- E. Communication through Existing Food Festivals

## 2. The Provision of Supports for Cork's Food & Drink Sector

- A. Work Closely with all State Agencies & Food Bodies
- B. The Creation of a Food Network
- C. Online Provision of an Information Hub for the Food & Drink Sector
- D. The Development of a Strategy to Encourage Food Start-ups
- E. Support for Infrastructural Developments within the Region
- F. Enable Producers to Embrace Lean Manufacturing and to 'Think Green'
- G. Support the Development of Regional Clusters

## 3. The Positioning of Cork as a Leading Food Tourism Destination

- A. Development of Cork's Food Story
- B. Education of Producers, Foodservice Outlets & Cork's Hospitality Sector
- C. Development of Taste Cork Food and Drink Trails
- D. Creation of Promotional Material for the Cork Food & Drink Sector
- E. The Development of an Annual Taste Cork Summer Food Festival

## 4. The Development of Clear Routes to Market for Producers

- A. Develop Direct Selling Routes to Market
- B. Create Export Sales Opportunities
- C. Develop a Farmers Market Support Strategy
- D. Create a Retail & Foodservice Affiliate Programme
- E. Identify local Cork Retailer Routes to Market

## 8.1 The Development of Strong Consumer Communications

Ultimately, it is the consumer who will determine the future success of Cork's food industry. In order to ensure that local consumers are aware of their important role, they must be educated on the benefits of 'buying local' and encouraged to support Cork food producers.

### A. The Creation of a Marketing & PR Strategy

A long-term marketing and PR strategy will be implemented in order to promote the importance of supporting local Cork food producers. This will involve a high cost implication if it is to achieve its full potential however it is an essential tool for informing consumers. Relationships will be built with local and national editors and journalists, in particular food journalists, in order to maximise editorial opportunities. A media database will be maintained and journalists updated with 'news' items and events.

The on-going marketing and PR strategy shall include:

- An official 'launch' of the 'Taste Cork 2021' strategy
- Paid for advertising in local and national media
- Use of [www.tastecork.com](http://www.tastecork.com) as an informative tool
- E-marketing
- Possible PR opportunities
- Direct mail campaigns
- Creation of a consumer database for 'updates and news' on products
- School competitions

Information visits to local schools, colleges, community groups, etc. will also be developed and should include the opportunity to meet producers. This would also create excellent PR opportunities and may form part of the overall educational strategy.

A series of 'Taste Cork' food awards will be developed in order to celebrate and acknowledge the achievement of local food producers. This will include awards for achievements such as:

- New product Development & Innovation
- Environmental Contribution
- Food Industry 'Rising Star'
- Exporter of the year
- Sensory Award

These awards will also represent an excellent PR opportunity for local producers and the role of the Taste Cork strategy.

## B. The Creation of a Local Artisan Food Brand Logo

Following successful establishment of the Taste Cork food network, the possibility of developing a TASTE CORK product logo will be explored. It is crucial to note that this would require significant investment in order to ensure the logo effectively represents quality and provenance.

Ultimately the Taste Cork logo would represent the following:

- A commitment to supporting the local food system
- A commitment to maximising local sourcing
- A commitment to reducing food miles and packaging
- A commitment to supporting the community spirit

The purpose of the logo will also serve to build trust chains.

*"Repeated high profile food scares and scandals worldwide have led to decreased trust in producers and an awareness of the dangers of complex supply chains. To rebuild this trust, consumers look for ways to ensure quality and value for all involved in the process using transparency and traceability"*

Food Wise 2025

## C. The Development of Online Directories for Cork Food & Drink Producers, Retailers and Foodservice Outlets

The website, [www.tastecork.com](http://www.tastecork.com), will be developed as an important tool in the implementation and promotion of the food strategy. This website will help to keep both producers and consumers up to date with local opportunities and developments within the industry and should be updated daily.

A comprehensive directory of food producers and related businesses shall be listed on the website and updated regularly under 'where to buy' and 'where to eat' pages. This will be presented as an interactive map where producers/retailers/restaurants can be searched for by location or product. Once the directories are fully functioning, Taste Cork will consider the development of a 'Taste Cork' app which will offer all relevant information for on-the-go browsers.

Members will feature on the website with a more detailed profile. For example [https://www.goodfoodireland.ie/places/county/cork/placetype/food\\_producers](https://www.goodfoodireland.ie/places/county/cork/placetype/food_producers)

The website will also include a 'recipes' section where consumers can find ways in which to use local produce or recreate dishes found in restaurants which support local producers.

In addition to the development of the website, social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter will also be embraced as a key method for developing producer to consumer relations. Competitions will be run to encourage social media interaction and to raise awareness of Taste Cork's goals and initiatives.

## D. Linking of Cork Cookery Schools to Producers and to Consumers

The fact that some of the top cookery schools in Europe are located in Cork certainly contributes strongly to the recognition of the area as a 'food haven'. Many of these schools already actively promote the quality and excellence of our local produce.

The owners and teachers at cookery schools will be made aware of the food strategy and the supports that are available to new and existing producers. They shall also be encouraged to educate all participants on the benefits of supporting local producers and using local produce in their everyday lives. The appointment of 'Food Ambassadors' for the region will also be explored to further push through this message.

Cookery school owners will be invited to get involved in Taste Cork activities given their practical knowledge of the issues and challenges facing potential entrepreneurs.

## E. Communication through Existing Food Festivals

A number of well-established food festivals take place in Cork annually, many of which attract both local and international visitors. These festivals offer an excellent platform to communicate to consumers the importance of supporting local producers and to create a 'buzz' about the role which they play in the community. All promotion and advertising for these events will focus on the 'buy local' message and the quality, good value produce which is available on the door-step.

The promotion of local produce will also be incorporated into other major festivals in the region through the creation of 'food zones' dedicated to local producers. Festival organising committees will be approached and offered support with organising this element of their events. Taste Cork will work with Cork City and County Council to explore the possibility of specific food festival funding in order to entice more festivals to incorporate and develop a thriving artisan food and drink element.

## Cork's Leading Food Festivals & Events

### The Cork Kerry Food Forum:

The largest Artisan Food Market in the region.

### Cork Summer Show:

Cork's oldest and largest agricultural, food and family event which has been running for over 200 years.

### Cork Midsummer Festival:

Annual city wide summer celebration of contemporary arts and culture.

### The Kerrygold Ballymaloe Literary Festival of Food & Wine:

Only festival of its kind in Ireland, enticing worldwide food and drink enthusiasts to the East Cork countryside.

### Sounds of a Safe Harbour:

A festival of music, art, food and conversation.

### Taste of West Cork Food Festival:

A unique mix of food markets, demonstrations, tastings, talks and much more.

### Mallow Home & Garden Festival:

A three day home and garden extravaganza featuring an Artisan food market.

### Macroom Food Festival:

An annual festival celebrating local food and drink producers.

### Middleton Food & Drink Festival:

An annual festival celebrating local food and drink producers.

### Cork Guinness Jazz Festival:

Ireland's biggest jazz festival attracting hundreds of musicians and thousands of fans each year.

## 8.2 The Provision of Supports for Cork's Food & Drink Sector

### A. Work closely with all State Food Bodies

As noted throughout this strategy, a number of agencies and bodies are involved in the support and education of food enterprises. These agencies are listed in section 9. Contact details of each of these agencies will be included on the Taste Cork website and local contacts will be established on behalf of producers. Food businesses will be directed to all available supports where appropriate. A working group of representatives from each agency will be formed in order to ensure its members are kept up to date with supports available.

### B. The Creation of a Cork Food Network

An all-encompassing food network will be formed whose objective is to harness the power of the collective and promote the distinctiveness, the quality and the huge variety of food and drink that is produced in our county. The network will represent all involved in Cork's food sector who are passionate about supporting local food businesses and artisan food producers.

The website for this group, [www.tastecork.com](http://www.tastecork.com), will be re-designed in order to act as a central hub and a one-stop-shop for the food industry in Cork. This will serve as a central reference point for producers and consumers as well as a forum for discussion, news and business support.

### C. Online Provision of an Information Hub for all in the Food & Drink Sector

Education and training are key to ensuring the success of Cork's food industry in the future. In order to maintain a competitive and innovative edge, it is crucial that food entrepreneurs keep up to date with new market trends, techniques and initiatives. International technology and knowledge transfer to industry, as well as from Irish third level institutes, is vital in the development of an education strategy. It's also crucially important that food producers gain a sense of perspective with regard to how buyers within the retail and foodservice sectors perceive their product.

Without a strong knowledge of the marketplace and an insight into key buyer trends, food SMEs can remain out of touch with industry requirements. For this reason, Taste Cork will provide an online information hub in order to signpost the supports and facilities available both regionally and nationally.



There are a number of agencies involved in offering different supports to the food sector on a national and local level. We will work closely with agencies such as Bord Bia to identify supports available (e.g. [www.bordbiavantage.ie](http://www.bordbiavantage.ie)) and refer local food businesses to the relevant support agencies. A list of all relevant agencies shall be provided on the Taste Cork website with a clear explanation of each of their responsibilities. This will also include contact details and links to each agency's website where further information can be located.

For full details on the range of Government supports for start-ups and small businesses, the Taste Cork website will link directing to the Action Plan for Jobs Supporting SME support filter tool, [www.supportingsmes.ie](http://www.supportingsmes.ie), which allows food and drink SMEs to gain an overview of supports available in within their sector. This online guide is part of the Government's Supporting SMEs campaign.

The news and events section of the website shall be utilised to inform producers of all new support schemes available from relevant agencies/bodies.

A quarterly e-mail newsletter will be produced and forwarded to producers who are registered with the website. This will include news on events, schemes, funding, individual group plans, recent events and activities etc.

#### **D. The Development of a Strategy to Encourage Food Start-ups**

In order to sustain Cork's booming food industry, it is essential to encourage potential new food entrepreneurs, members of the agricultural community, students and the general public to view the food industry as an attractive industry to work in.

The Taste Cork website, [www.tastecork.com](http://www.tastecork.com), will form a fundamental part of the campaign as it will offer support, referrals and guidance for individuals considering starting a food business as well as a forum for discussion and advice.

The agriculture sector shall be targeted within this campaign as many farm households are in prime position to develop small artisan produce utilising raw materials produced on their farms. Many farm families need to supplement the farm income in order to make their farm sustainable and small-scale artisan food production is an excellent solution.

Educational institutions, such as UCC, offering training relative to the food industry will also be encouraged to offer training on starting a business and to refer students to supports available via the Taste Cork website.

A flow chart shall be created to demonstrate how start-up businesses can utilize the supports and services of existing agencies. This exercise shall also identify gaps in the existing support structure and address possible solutions.

A series of Start Your Own Food Business courses will also be included within the education programme to assist and support budding food entrepreneurs.

A PR campaign shall be developed to encourage potential food entrepreneurs.

Some sample activities include:

- Media and advertising campaign highlighting successful businesses and supports which they have availed of
- Usage of social media to target groups and individuals with an interest in food and food production
- Information events at educational institutions which focus on food qualifications
- Extensive advertising of training programmes available to potential food businesses, in particular Start your Own Food Business courses which should form part of Taste Cork educational programme
- Encourage existing producers to support and nurture new start-ups in a forum setting
- Organisation of information events which should be attended by representatives from each of the supporting agencies
- Development of an Experts Panel to review potential products

#### **E. Support for Infrastructural Developments within the Region**

Taste Cork will support and encourage all infrastructural developments catering for and benefiting the food sector, with focus on food retail units, indoor food markets, food incubation units and community kitchens.

An exciting opportunity has recently arisen in the English Market, with the launch of a **'Start-Up Stall'** offering local food businesses the opportunity to trade in this internationally renowned market space. Each successful applicant will be assigned a 4-6 week lease to test the market and gain invaluable exposure to the public.

Furthermore, the current redevelopment of the Capitol cinema in Cork offers brilliant potential for a local food centre. Cork City Council have commissioned a team of experts to undertake a feasibility study for the development of the centre as this will require considerable investment over the coming years. This development will involve significant input from both Local Authorities and Local Development Groups.

Examples of successful Food Centre initiatives include:

<b>Shropshire Food Enterprise Centre</b>	<a href="http://www.shropshirefoodcentre.co.uk/">http://www.shropshirefoodcentre.co.uk/</a>
<b>Food Centre Wales</b>	<a href="http://www.foodcentrewales.org.uk">www.foodcentrewales.org.uk</a>
<b>Rutgers Food Innovation Centre</b>	<a href="http://www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu">www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu</a>
<b>Franklin County CDC</b>	<a href="http://www.fccdc.org">www.fccdc.org</a>
<b>North Tipperary Food Works</b>	<a href="http://www.northtippfoodworks.ie">www.northtippfoodworks.ie</a>

### Existing Food Incubation Unit Locations in Cork

- Innishmore, Ballincollig – four food units
- Carrigaline Industrial Park – four food units
- Cloughmacsimon, Bandon – four food units
- Fermoy – one food unit
- Skibbereen – two food units
- Schull – one food unit
- Mitchelstown – one food unit

### Dunmanway Enterprise Centre

Dunmanway Enterprise Centre is currently being developed by Cork County Council, Enterprise Ireland and Dunmanway Enterprise Network.

The 10,000 sq. ft. building will comprise three commercial units each measuring 2,500 sq. ft. in addition to a 2,500 sq. ft. enterprise unit which will incorporate a hot-desk area providing space to local organisations and businesses for meetings, presentations, lectures and training courses.

### BIM Seafood Development Centre, Clonakilty

BIM have successfully developed a Seafood Development Centre, targeting seafood companies to help bring their innovative products to life.

The centre has an overall space of 768 sqm, and includes the following facilities:

- Product processing
- Product development kitchen
- Innovation & product concept room
- Two business incubation units
- Reception and administration

Services include market research, product development, process development and industry scale-up.

For further information:

<http://www.bim.ie/our-services/seafood-development-centre/>

### Teagasc Research Centre, Moorepark

Teagasc, Ireland's agriculture and food development authority, supports science-based innovation in the agri-food sector and the broader bioeconomy in order to underpin profitability, competitiveness and sustainability.

Their three core areas of focus are Research & Innovation, Knowledge Transfer and Education & Training. Teagasc, Bord Bia and Enterprise Ireland currently run 'The Food Works Programme' which aims to support, drive, challenge and accelerate start-up businesses.

The Teagasc Research Centre, Moorepark, Fermoy, is one of the world's leading dairy research centres and has played a pivotal role in the development of the Irish dairy industry. Moorepark contains two research centres and a pilot plant and is responsible for all aspects of dairy production research. It also hosts twelve companies on-site.

The pilot plant, Moorepark Technology Limited (MTL), is a joint venture company established by Teagasc with shareholders from the Irish Dairy Industry. It provides a commercial pilot plant & research services for food industry customers and is a key constituent of the research centre in the process of knowledge and technology transfer. It is important to note that co-locating alongside the research centre has underpinned the success of the pilot plant, and as a result is an exemplary model for future endeavours.

Moorepark are currently developing a 'Food Innovation Hub' which will connect with both the research centres and MTL in order to accommodate and nurture their rapidly increasing customer base. The Hub will allow for companies to operate within their own unit but still have all direct access to facilities, expertise and support. Taste Cork endeavours to work with Teagasc in exploring the possibility of an SME facility within the Hub. A unit offering a short-term lease or existing as a shared space for SMEs would be of immeasurable value to the development and growth of Cork's food and drink SMEs.

### **Cork Incubator Kitchens, Carrigaline Business Park**

Cork's first community kitchens are an initiative of the Cork County Council to assist emerging and existing food ventures to start, grow and expand their business. Consisting of two fully equipped kitchen units, they are ready to cater for all operational needs. Available to rent in six hour increments.

The Bakery Kitchen provides weighing scales, Zanolli deck oven, tilting bratt pan, blast chiller and spiral mixer.

The Catering Kitchen provides a four ring gas cooker, a combi oven, a vacuum packer and a sealing machine.

[www.corkincubatorkitchens.ie](http://www.corkincubatorkitchens.ie)

## **F. Enable producers to embrace lean manufacturing & to 'Think Green'**

*"Irish producers are playing, and must continue to play, a vital and positive role in the protection and the potential further enhancement of Ireland's landscapes, waterways, biodiversity and air quality"*

### **Food Wise 2025**

Traditionally, many Irish food businesses start out as small 'home' businesses until they grow to the stage where they require specialist food units to keep up with market demand. Many of these businesses tend to develop 'bad habits' which mean that they do not embrace new technology and innovative solutions which may enable them to operate more efficiently.

Taste Cork's online information hub will include training and advice to all businesses on 'lean manufacturing' but should particularly target start-ups and businesses in their infancy. Information on Enterprise Ireland's 'Lean Start' programme and their guide 'First Steps to Green Competitiveness' will also be available on [www.tastecork.com](http://www.tastecork.com).

The Local Enterprise Offices and Enterprise Ireland launched the 'Lean for Micro' pilot programme in 2015 which was highly successful. Taste Cork will form links with third level institutions such as UCC and CIT and also promote Bord Bia's 'Origin Green' initiative, in providing regional support in the development of a 'Green Ireland'.

## **G. Support the Development of Regional Clusters**

Cork's food strategy will focus largely on the development of cluster initiatives as drivers of growth. Taste Cork will work with national food bodies in order to develop and encourage the formation of a regional cluster. Producers and SMEs within the food sector will be given the opportunity to steer said cluster, focusing on areas where a collective approach would prove highly beneficial.

Ifor Ffowcs-Williams, a world leading expert on clustering, has developed an insightful guide to cluster development, placing emphasis on building competitiveness through Smart specialisation.

Ifor Ffowcs-Williams clearly states that "Today's economy is about speed, flexibility and connectivity in an environment where innovation and economic growth are geographically concentrated. Clusters and their smart specialisations are cornerstones of this reality."

Ffowcs-Williams outlines three common Cluster elements :

1. Deep specialisation
2. Local buzz and dense networking
3. Global pipelines – developing connections beyond the region

Europe has experienced significant success in the area of clustering. A cooperation entitled CLOE (Clusters Linked Over Europe) has been supported by European Union Interreg III C programme, and has proved to be highly successful.

*“Cluster initiatives are an effective instrument to concentrate resources and means for getting a critical mass and to accelerate the transfer of knowledge and know-how. The initiation and co-ordination of cluster initiatives and networks has become an important tool for regional governments to support and foster economic growth in high-tech as well as low-tech sectors.”*

**Rene Tonnisson, Clusters Linked Over Europe**

[http://www.iapmei.pt/resources/download/ReneTonnisson\\_CLOE.pdf](http://www.iapmei.pt/resources/download/ReneTonnisson_CLOE.pdf)



Taste Cork envisions a food cluster focusing on three core elements:

**(i) R&D Networks**

*“We will support enterprise-led cluster initiatives to build world-class clusters in key sectors of opportunity in the regions in areas such as agri-food, engineering, ICT and life sciences, and will support clusters of scale that can drive innovation, collaboration, productivity and resilience. The clustering approach will invite industry, research institutions and other relevant stakeholders to collaboratively engage in identifying challenges and developing solutions.”*

**National Clustering Initiative, Action Plan for Jobs 2016**

Research has shown that the most successful collaborations or ‘clusters’ focus heavily on R&D, innovation and technology transfer mechanisms. R&D is critical to the future success of the food industry and the possibility of creating a R&D food network/cluster, similar to the Food Valley in the Netherlands, shall be explored.

Taste Cork shall investigate the potential development of a similar R&D cluster which will aim to provide comprehensive support to the various stages of research from pre-commercial through to implementation. This will form part of a longer-term vision and will require significant funding, support and commitment from both government agencies and larger players in the food industry.



## CASE STUDY

### Holland's 'Food Valley'

<http://www.foodvalley.nl/eng/>

Set up in 2004, it provides a one-stop shop for research and innovation. It aims to be one of the top three food cluster organisations in Europe. It was originally established by Wageningen University and now has 150 member companies, mostly SMEs, from within the Netherlands and larger international corporations.

The first phase of the initiative focuses on fundamental, pre-competitive research with leading companies as partners. Research findings are shared and involvement allows partners to multiply the research assets invested in projects and deliver greater returns than they would achieve individually.

The second phase focuses on the application and commercialisation of research findings and mainly targets SMEs. Food Valley is co-funded through government funding and industry contributions.

Learn more about the way Food Valley NL operates:

<http://www.foodvalley.nl/eng/>

### **(ii) Group purchasing / group buying schemes**

As part of this strategy, new research will be carried out in order to investigate the potential of developing group purchasing schemes for services such as electricity, telecoms, insurance and packaging.

### **(iii) The Creation of an artisan food distribution strategy.**

A Cork 'food hub' will be explored to assist producers to distribute their products to a larger market in a more cost-effective manner. Group distribution networks not only benefit food producers, but also have advantages for distributors, agents and retailers. Particularly in the UK, it's noticeable that food SMEs are creating regional alliances whereby they share sales contacts and distribution channels to local and foreign markets.

The distribution strategy shall focus on:

- 1) Reducing transport costs through shared distribution systems
- 2) Pooling information on markets in order to identify new markets for participants
- 3) Acquiring recognition and support of distributors for scheme
- 4) Exchange of ideas and information in order to reduce distribution costs
- 5) Options to take on bigger markets eg. China (see following case study)



## **CASE STUDY**

### **Food & Drink Wales**

<http://businesswales.gov.wales/foodanddrink/>

Food & Drink Wales is a Welsh Government initiative to support growth and inward investment to the industry in Wales. The initiative is led by an industry-driven Board which was set up to deliver a new era of growth and success.

The Board serves as the voice of the food and drink industry in Wales, providing direction, encouraging networking and sharing vital information. It aims to take shared ownership with Welsh Government of their food strategy, 'Towards Sustainable Growth: An Action Plan for the Food and Drink Industry 2014-2020'. The vision for the initiative is that, in time, it may be able to run independent of government.

The initiative works with many Welsh food companies and conducts various training programmes, events and International trips, placing significant emphasis on increasing trading opportunities and exploring export markets.

For further information visit

<http://businesswales.gov.wales/foodanddrink/>



## **CASE STUDY**

### **Primary Collaboration New Zealand (PCNZ)**

PCNZ is an example of a truly successful cluster. The group consists of New Zealand based primary producers in the horticulture, seafood, and farming sectors who joined forces in order to establish a marketing beach head in Shanghai, China.

PCNZ is backed by six of the founding shareholders, Sealord, Silver Fern Farms, Synlait Milk, Villa Maria Estate, Kono NZ and Pacific Pace.

PCNZ defines itself as an innovative business model for China designed to deliver value beyond what members could achieve individually.

Interestingly, Pacific Pace is itself a collaboration between three apple producers, Mr Apple, Crasbom Group and J M Bostock Group. The three producers, who are competitors in the New Zealand market, joined forces to create the Diva brand in order to successfully penetrate China's market.

### 8.3 The Positioning of Cork as a Leading Food Tourism Destination

Cork offers boundless potential through its network of quality culinary experiences, from farmers markets and food trails to high end dining experiences.

With such strong national and global emphasis placed upon food tourism as of late, it is pertinent to support the development of Cork's food tourism sector and promote the region as a leading food destination. The region is already home to some highly successful tourism spots such as the English Market, Midleton Distillery, Kinsale town and Ballymaloe House with food personalities such as Darina Allen, Rachel Allen, Lilly Higgins and Rory O'Connell putting Cork well and truly on the map.

We are incredibly fortunate to have such a culturally enriched region and aim to harness and build upon these qualities through the development of Cork's food tourism sector.

#### A. The Development of Cork's Food Story

Fáilte Ireland has created a suite of guidelines and supports for the tourism and hospitality industry to assist them in providing a more 'memorable food experience' for the consumer, and in collectively shaping their regional and national food story.

Taste Cork endeavours to work closely with Failte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Bord Bia in creating our food story and developing Cork's food tourism sector.

The Failte Ireland National Food Tourism Implementation Framework notes that *'the development of local and regional food destinations is also a growing trend globally, whereby food-related activities and events comprise a key feature of attracting increased numbers of visitors to particular localities'*. The report also states that *'one of the more important practical challenges identified is the need to increase the accessibility of locally produced food for visitors, so that they may enjoy the best food that Ireland has to offer as part of their wider holiday experience. At present, for a variety of reasons, such as the perceived higher cost of using local produce, it can be difficult for visitors to easily and regularly find locally produced food on menus in hotels, restaurants, bars and other food outlets.'*

As explained in 5.5, Failte Ireland's Food Story toolkit will act as a guideline for Cork in the creation and promotion of its unique and enticing food story. The story will be developed to define Cork as a region representing fresh and local food, authenticity, and warmth.

#### B. Training & Supports for Cork's Producers, Foodservice Outlets & Hospitality Sector

In order to maximise food tourism potential in the area, the use of local ingredients must be promoted in as many food outlets as possible. Produce must be made more easily available to visitors to the area and the 'story' behind their origin must be used in their promotion (e.g. on restaurant menus, advertising, etc.). Tourism providers will also need to ensure variety, quality and perceived value for money is forefront to their 'food experience'.

The Taste Cork logo will act as a guide for tourists in locating businesses with a commitment to authenticity and supporting local. The development of a Taste Cork app would be an effective tool in providing such guides to tourists and consumers.

A representative from Failte Ireland shall also contribute to the education strategy and provide information on Food Tourism workshops, sources of funding and other supports available to producers and tourism providers.



#### C. The Development of Taste Cork Food & Drink Trails

Taste Cork will work with producers, retailers and foodservice outlets in order to create sustainable, successful food trails. A tourism brochure will be developed which informs visitors of the high quality local food produce available and where it may be purchased/ sampled on menus in the area. This will be distributed in all tourist offices, ferry ports, hotels, tourist attractions etc.

The possibility of incorporating a virtual food tour into the Taste Cork app will be explored, taking inspiration from the 'Dublin Discovery Trails' available through [www.visitdublin.com](http://www.visitdublin.com). The app will allow users to explore Cork food at their leisure, wander off the beaten track a little and tailor the route according to their personal interests and tastes.

A full directory of food tourism experiences will be developed and made available on the Taste Cork website. Local Failte Ireland representatives and representatives from local tourist groups such as South and East Cork Tourism and West Cork Tourism shall be consulted in this process.

#### D. Promotional Material for Cork's Food Tourism Sector

Taste Cork will work with local food businesses, producers, retailers and foodservice outlets in the creation of videos to promote the region. A suite of promotional media material will be built in order for the producers and businesses of Cork to share their story and promote our outstanding food sectors.

#### E. The Development of an Annual Taste Cork Summer Food Festival

Taste Cork will explore the potential of hosting an annual Taste Cork food festival to celebrate local produce and to offer consumers and visitors a snapshot of all that Cork has to offer.

### 8.4 The Development of Clear Routes to Market for Producers:

Route to market planning is a key element of the Taste Cork 2021 strategy. Producers will be made aware of the routes available to them and assisted in making the decision as to which market is best for their product.

#### A. Develop Direct Selling Routes to Market.

The majority of small food producers prefer to sell directly to their customer in order to preserve some of their unique 'personality' and also to retain control of their product. This is traditionally done through farmers markets, farm shops, box schemes etc. and these routes should be supported through the implementation of this strategy. We will work closely with Bord Bia to utilise existing resources and information available.

Cork has an extremely strong network of Farmer's Markets which offer excellent opportunities for new businesses to enter the market. An extensive list of Cork's Farmer's Markets and contact details shall be provided on the Taste Cork website.

Bord Bia have created an information leaflet entitled '[Selling Through Farmers' Markets, Farm Shops and Box Schemes](#)' which will also be made available to producers through the Taste Cork website. Direct selling methods shall also be included in all 'Start Your own Food Business' courses to assist those just entering the industry.



#### B. Create Export Sales Opportunities

*"The food and drink industry has been a driving force in our economic recovery since 2009, delivering cumulative export growth of 51%. Irish producers and companies have yet again demonstrated in 2015 their ambition, innovativeness and ability to meet buyer and consumer needs in highly competitive and complex trading environments".*

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2015**

For continued growth, it is crucial for exporting to be deemed an achievable and realistic goal by SMEs and food producers in the agri-food sector. Taste Cork strives to ensure that training and support is provided and that export ready businesses are encouraged to make that first step into the international market.

With global demand for food expected to increase by 70% over the next 40 years, it's unsurprising that numerous government departments and government bodies are determined to promote policies that will help Irish food SMEs exploit the export opportunities that clearly exist within Europe and further afield.

A number of Taste Cork food export trade events shall be executed on an annual basis, in target food export countries such as the UK, Germany, France and the USA. Furthermore, Taste Cork will work towards building links and developing supports with relevant food bodies such as the Irish Exporters Association and Enterprise Ireland.

The TASTE CORK network shall target these shows on an annual basis offering its member base the opportunity to increase their export sales.

Inspirational study tours and walk-throughs of these shows will also be co-ordinated for Cork producers. Bord Bia already host several study tours throughout the year, therefore Taste Cork will work with Bord Bia where possible to encourage Cork producers to participate and encourage the development of itineraries that will accommodate flights from both Dublin and Cork.

### **C. Develop a Farmers Market Support Strategy**

Cork prides itself on its wealth of successful farmer and country markets which have been the 'launch pad' of many well recognized food brands. Due to the prestigious nature of many of these markets and the strong artisan food culture in Cork, many new producers already view farmer's markets as a credible first route to market where they can sell alongside many other well-known, established producers.

While many well-established markets are currently thriving, a number of the smaller markets, many of which are still in their infancy, require support and assistance to move them forward to a sustainable future. These groups shall be encouraged to develop individual business plans and charters in order to provide them with a clear development strategy and vision for the future. Training will also be provided for committees in order to bring them up to date on market organization and best practices. Markets that meet this criteria could potentially be branded and marketed as Taste Cork approved markets.

A Farmers Market training and support programme will be explored in conjunction with Bord Bia to ensure compliance with Code of Good Practice. The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) and local authorities would also have a strong role here.

A list of existing markets and contact details for market co-ordinators shall be made available to producers. A section of the [www.tastecork.com](http://www.tastecork.com) site will also be dedicated to Farmer's Markets and will provide advice and assistance to producers interested in entering this market.

The idea of developing a Taste Cork stand at markets to act as a 'collection' type service will be explored. This would facilitate the availability of certain products at specific markets where the producer is not in the position to man a stand of their own.

### **D. Create a Retail & Foodservice Affiliate Programme**

In order to relay the message of this strategy to consumers, the participation of the retail and foodservice industries is critical. As intermediaries, their support is crucial to the promotion of local produce to the general public.

A series of information events will be held where local businesses are invited to learn about the main points of this strategy and are given the opportunity to meet producers and sample their products. These events will be held regularly and in different locations throughout the region.

As part of this programme, retailers and foodservice providers shall be encouraged to:

- Stock as many local products as possible
- Assist in the promotion of local products
- Assist small producers with the listing process and getting their product to market
- Facilitate opportunities for consumers to meet producers (e.g tastings)
- Make product recommendations to other retailers and foodservice providers
- Involve local producers in advertising and promotion campaigns
- Ensure swift payment for small producers
- Support group distribution schemes to ensure efficient supplies

Regular 'Meet the Buyer' and networking opportunities for producers will also form part of this programme.

### **E. Identify Cork Retailer Routes to Market**

As part of this strategy, a retailer audit will be conducted in order to create a Cork food retailer and food hospitality user database of all stores, hotels, restaurants, bars, caterers etc.

This information will be available online through the Taste Cork website.

### **F. Development of an Online Shop**

Online sales are growing rapidly and this will be presented to all producers as an extremely viable option for selling directly to the consumer.

This strategy supports the development of online retail channels for the retail of local foods. A number of individuals are currently developing similar projects and the strategy will work with them to support their development. The aim is that a central 'one-stop-shop' will be developed which will offer consumers excellent quality, fresh local produce all sourced from Cork. A local distributor will be identified to distribute local foods throughout the county.



To enhance the online trading presence of Cork food and drink SMEs, Trading Online Vouchers will also be directly promoted to them.

### **Short Term & Long Term Action Plan:**

In order to ensure successful implementation of this strategy, a working group involving key stakeholders and industry partners will be established. The purpose of this group will be to network, work together and give feedback on how the strategy is working on the ground.

**Food Harvest 2020** and **Food Wise 2025** will, at all times, remain at the heart of all strategy endeavours.



## **SHORT TERM ACTIONS**

- Develop and promote the regional Taste Cork brand
- Work closely with all food agencies and bodies
- Create a food network
- Develop a Taste Cork calendar of activities
- Create a local food producer directory
- Create a local speciality retailer directory
- Create a local foodservice directory
- Development of the Taste Cork website
- Building Taste Cork membership to represent the entire Cork food chain
- Creation of an online information hub
- The development of food trails
- Creating links with Cork cookery schools
- Creation of PR linkages to local media
- Ensuring Taste Cork support and involvement in local festivals where appropriate
- Inspirational study tours to International food and drink trade shows
- Taste Cork participation in key trade shows

## **LONG TERM ACTIONS**

- Supporting the development of regional clusters
- Create a retail and food service affiliate programme
- Supporting the development of food retail units and indoor food markets
- Supporting the development of food incubation units and community kitchens
- Education on lean manufacturing and the 'Origin Green' initiative
- The development of clear routes to market for producers
- Development of Cork's 'food story' and food tourism sector
- Creation of a promotional material for Cork's food tourism sector
- Creation of an annual Taste Cork food festival
- Development of a Taste Cork packaging logo
- Develop a farmers' market support strategy
- Develop an online shop for local produce

# Food Sector Support Agencies/Bodies

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## Cork's Food Sector Support Agencies & Bodies

### Bord Bia

<http://www.bordbia.ie/Pages/Default.aspx>

The role of Bord Bia, the Irish Food Board, is to act as a link between Irish Food, Drink & Horticulture suppliers and existing and potential customers throughout the world. This is achieved through core services delivered to the customer, the trade buyer, and to Irish food & drink companies themselves. Services include promotional programmes to support marketing activities, participation at major trade exhibitions, information services and development programmes.

### Enterprise Ireland

[www.enterprise-ireland.com](http://www.enterprise-ireland.com)

Enterprise Ireland is the government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. The organisation works in partnership with Irish enterprises to help them start, grow, innovate and win export sales on global markets. Services include funding supports, export assistance, supports to develop competitiveness, incentives to stimulate R&D, connections and introductions to overseas contacts.

### Local Enterprise Offices Cork

[www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)

The Local Enterprise Offices promote and encourage local enterprise development in Cork County & City. The LEOs act as a First Stop Shop for anyone seeking information and support on starting or growing a business within their catchment areas. Their services include:

- Business Information and Advice
- Mentoring
- Training
- Networking Programmes
- Exhibition Opportunities
- Start Your Own Business Advice
- New Business Grants and Business Expansion Grants

### Cork County Council

[www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie)

The Property Management/Development Section of Cork County Council supports the development of the industrial and commercial infrastructure of Cork County. They provide fully serviced industrial sites and business parks, and offer strategic sites for large-scale multinational investment. They let and manage incubator units and develop environmental industrial parks to

encourage and assist in the highest environmental standards and practices in industry. The Council also organises EU activities, such as trade events for indigenous companies in order to assist businesses to gain marketing exposure, support them in the pursuit of contract opportunities, and have access to exchange of knowledge and expertise in a European dimension.

## **Cork City Council**

[www.corkcity.ie](http://www.corkcity.ie)

Cork City Council is a public service organisation that is responsible for providing a diverse range of services to the people of Cork City. The Council works with appropriate agencies in order to maximize the sustainable economic development of Cork City and to promote the City locally and internationally.

## **TEAGASC**

[www.teagasc.ie](http://www.teagasc.ie) <http://www.relayresearch.ie/>

Teagasc is the agriculture and food development authority in Ireland. Its mission is to support science-based innovation in the agri-food sector and the broader bioeconomy that will underpin profitability, competitiveness and sustainability. It provides integrated research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry and rural communities. Teagasc has a Development Centre, Food Research Centre, Agricultural Research Centre and local advisory offices located in Cork County.

## **Cork CIT - Cork Institute of Technology**

<http://www.cit.ie/>

CIT has a number of regional initiatives to promote entrepreneurship and innovation in the region. CIT is home to the country's first student accelerator programme, Student Inc. and runs a number of entrepreneurship programmes through the Rubicon Centre. These include New Frontiers and Exxcel, which provide hands-on practical training and mentoring to the participants, and in some cases seed funding of up to €20,000. The Rubicon Centre receives approximately 350 enquiries a year from entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs looking to take the first or next step on their entrepreneurial journey. To date the Rubicon Centre has in excess of 400 alumni companies which have raised over €110m in equity, both public and private.

The Culinary Arts & Culinary Studies programmes in CIT make a significant contribution to the regional, national and international hospitality and tourism industries through its graduates. These graduates go on to become restaurateurs, chefs, food critics, food journalists and many become entrepreneurs by setting up their own business in the food industry.

## **Failte Ireland**

<http://www.failteireland.ie/>

Failte Ireland is the National Tourism Development Authority. They provide strategic and practical support to develop and sustain Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourist destination. They work with the tourism industry in areas including business support, enterprise development, training and education, research, marketing and regional development. Fáilte Ireland works in partnership with Tourism Ireland (who promote Ireland as a holiday destination to overseas markets) and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (responsible for tourism development and marketing in Northern Ireland). They also lead an extensive domestic holiday campaign via [www.DiscoverIreland.ie](http://www.DiscoverIreland.ie), which features comprehensive information and listings for Irish accommodation, activities, events, tourist attractions and Irish holiday special offers. Both Failte Ireland and Tourism Ireland are involved in the development of Food Tourism and Food Trails.

## **Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)**

[www.bim.ie](http://www.bim.ie)

BIM, established under the Sea Fisheries Act 1952, is the Irish State agency responsible for developing the Irish seafood industry. BIM's mission is to develop the Irish seafood sector by adding value, driving growth, increasing competitiveness and creating jobs. The agency provides technical expertise, business support, funding and training and promotes responsible environmental practices. Technology experts advise on new fishing and fish farming opportunities using technical innovation. Business development advisors assist with product development, improving processes efficiency, adding value through product labelling and setting up food safety systems. Training is also provided in fishing, fish farming, seafood processing and safety courses necessary for obtaining a Basic Safety Training card.

## **BIM - Seafood Development Centre**

<http://www.bim.ie/our-services/seafood-development-centre/>

BIM's Seafood Development Centre (SDC) offers seafood businesses the opportunity to test and trial innovative product and process ideas before committing to full commercialisation and capital investment costs. The SDC is integrated with BIM's business planning services to ensure Irish seafood companies are provided with all necessary business development and innovation services. Facilities at the state-of-the-art centre include product processing, graduate area, product development kitchen, innovation & product concept room, two business incubation units, reception and administration. Assistance is given with developing and testing the new product, costing, packaging, processing methods and product preparation, business and market planning, identifying the best route to market and advice on grants and schemes. The SDC also runs a specialist seafood graduate programme, connecting final year students of food technology and related disciplines, with seafood companies developing new products.

## University College Cork

[www.ucc.ie](http://www.ucc.ie)

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/fitu/>

The School of Food and Nutritional Sciences is internationally recognized for its leadership in teaching and research. The Department offers a range of food-related Undergraduate and Post-Graduate programmes along with an extensive research programme. In recognition of the growing importance of continuing professional education and training in the food and related industries University College Cork established a Food Industry Training Unit (FITU) in the Faculty of Food Science and Technology in 1993. The objective of FITU is to coordinate policy and activities associated with the research, training, continuing education and professional development needs of those at work in the food industry. The Food Industry Training Unit works in close association with FÁS, Enterprise Ireland, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the Food Safety Promotion Board, CAIS, the Local Authority Veterinary Service, the Irish Co-operative Organisation Society, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Teagasc.

## Cork Chamber of Commerce

[www.corkchamber.ie](http://www.corkchamber.ie)

Cork Chamber is the leading business organisation for the promotion, development and expansion of economic and commercial activity in the Cork Region. The Chamber represents over 1,100 companies employing more than 100,000 people in the region. Cork Chamber is a membership organisation which provides PR, marketing and networking opportunities to its members. The Chamber also hosts the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), an EC funded support network for SMEs that are looking to innovate and internationalise. As part of this project, the EEN has run a number of information events and networking activities for SMEs in the food sector. In addition, the Chamber represents member businesses on critical business issues through a collective lobbying voice and continues to develop and promote policy recommendations that create an enabling and facilitative business environment for its members. In 2014 the Chamber produced a report on Cork's Agri-Food and Drinks Opportunities, highlighting key recommendations for the further development of the sector in Cork.

## Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)

[www.fsai.ie](http://www.fsai.ie)

The principal function of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) is to take all reasonable steps to ensure that food produced, distributed or marketed in the State meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene reasonably available. The FSAI aims to ensure that food complies with legal requirements, or where appropriate with recognised codes of good practice.

Key functions of the Authority include:

- Putting consumer interests first and foremost
- Providing advice to Ministers, regulators, the food industry and consumers on food safety issues
- Ensuring the co-ordinated and seamless delivery of food safety services to an agreed high standard by the various state agencies involved
- Ensuring that food complies with legal requirements, or where appropriate, with recognised codes of good practice
- Working with the food industry to gain their commitment in the production of safe food
- Setting food standards based on sound science and risk assessment
- Risk management in association with frontline agencies and the food sector, and communicating risks to consumers, public health professionals and the food industry.

FSAI provides a range of Food Safety training programmes and advice to new and established food businesses on areas such as legislation, nutrition, science and health.

## UCC IGNITE

<http://ignite.ucc.ie/>

IGNITE is an incubation initiative based in University College Cork sponsored by the Cork Local Enterprise Offices, Cork County Council, Cork City Council, Bank of Ireland and University College Cork.

IGNITE is a 9-month programme which offers graduates of any discipline including the Arts & Humanities, Food Science, Engineering, Life Sciences, Computer Science, etc, from any 3rd level institution the opportunity to turn innovative ideas into new products and services. IGNITE provides:

- Business incubation space in state of the art facility for 9 months
- A comprehensive Start Your Own Business programme
- Business Planning, Finance, Legal, Marketing, Sales, People Management, Product Development and Venture Capital training
- Business Mentoring
- Access to entrepreneurial "Coaches on Campus"
- Regular networking events
- Enterprise support and advice through a series of half-day clinic
- Access to UCC's academic, research and commercialisation expertise
- Location in a multidisciplinary campus with access to the university's information resources and library

Membership of Cork Chamber

## Cork LEADER Groups

## Udaras Na Gaeltachta

[www.udaras.ie](http://www.udaras.ie)

Udaras na Gaeltachta is the regional development agency responsible for the economic, social and cultural development of the Gaeltacht. Services include business start-up support, training, financial assistance, premises location assistance, research and development grants, employment grants and marketing grants.

## Good Food Ireland

[www.goodfoodireland.ie](http://www.goodfoodireland.ie)

Good Food Ireland is an organization which drives and promotes the Irish Food Tourism Industry in particular artisan and local food of the highest quality. It is the only industry group with an all-island food tourism strategy. Good Food Ireland provides business benefit for the membership through its framework which allows them to penetrate from local community to the global market and vice versa. It co-operatively markets its membership network and the people behind the food to the international and domestic tourist so as to drive Ireland forward as a food tourism destination. Services include co-operative marketing, annual awards, conferences and networking opportunities.

## IBEC

[www.ibec.ie](http://www.ibec.ie)

IBEC is the national voice of business and employers and is the umbrella body for Ireland's leading sector groups and associations. IBEC dedicates itself to promoting and encouraging leadership, innovation, research, excellence and professionalism in carrying out its role as the representative voice of business, and in the delivery of member services. IBEC also provides a number of employer services and business training, events, networking opportunities and conferences. Food and Drink Industry Ireland is the main food related association which comes under the umbrella of IBEC.

## Food & Drink Industry Ireland

<http://www.fdi.ie/Sectors/FDII/FDII.nsf/vPages/Home?OpenDocument>

Food and Drink Industry Ireland (FDII) is the main trade association for the food and drink industry in Ireland. It represents the interests of over 150 food, drink and non-food grocery manufacturers and suppliers in three main categories: Consumer Foods, Dairy and Meat. FDII provides leadership and direction on a number of key strategic issues, including the economic importance of the sector, competitiveness, research & development, trade, skills and education.

## SFA – Small Firms Association

[www.sfa.ie](http://www.sfa.ie)

The Small Firms Association (SFA) is the national organisation representing small enterprises (i.e. those employing less than 50 employees) in Ireland. The SFA is funded directly through subscription fees from its 8,000 member companies. It directly meets government at the table and interacts with key decision-makers at all levels to ensure that the economic environment is conducive to small business establishment and development. The SFA provides dedicated professional support and a range of services including economic, commercial, employee relations and social affairs advice and assistance. It also provides training, seminars, networking opportunities and access to research and industry information.

## Cork BIC

[www.corkbic.com](http://www.corkbic.com)

CORKBIC is a leading interdisciplinary venture consultancy in the South West of Ireland. The company provides an integrated process for incubating and growing high potential technology driven companies. CORKBIC identifies, selects and develops about 12 higher potential startups per year and works as a hands-on catalyst or project developer in infrastructure gap initiatives. Services also include business planning and marketing assistance, Market Research, Financial Engineering, Strategy Development, Business Skills Development, FastTrack to Market Program and IT/Electronics expertise.

## BIZNET CORK Skillnet

<http://www.skillnets.ie/network/biznetcork-skillnet-0>

BizNet Cork Skillnet, the Cork Chamber Business School, is a training network funded by Skillnets Ltd and the National Training Fund through the Department of Education and Skills.

## Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/>

The primary role of the Department of Agriculture Food and Forestry is the development of a competitive innovative and market orientated agriculture and food industry based on the production of top quality wholesome products. The Department is also committed to the expansion of the forestry industry and to the creation of an enterprise culture in rural areas. The Department's primary functions include:

- Policy advice and development on all areas of Departmental responsibility.
- Representation in international especially EU and national negotiations.

- Development and implementation of national and EU schemes in support of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, Forestry and Rural Environment.
- Monitoring and controlling aspects of Food Safety.
- Control and audit of public expenditure under its control.
- Regulation of the agriculture, fisheries, and food industries through national and EU legislation.
- Monitoring and controlling animal and plant health and animal welfare.
- Monitoring and direction of State Bodies engaged in the following areas - research training and advice - market development and promotion- industry regulation and development- commercial activities.
- Direct provision of support services to Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Forestry.

## InterTrade Ireland

[www.intertradeireland.com](http://www.intertradeireland.com)

InterTradeIreland is the only organisation which supports SMEs across the island to develop North/South trade and business development opportunities for the mutual benefit of both economies. They encourage better use of collective resources to accelerate trade and business growth across the island and create an environment where it is easier to do business. This is achieved through co-operative business, policy and research programmes, partnerships and networks.

Programmes available offer companies funding and expertise to help them export North/South and develop their products, processes, services and markets and raise venture capital. The organisation conducts research to identify barriers to doing business across the island and identifies solutions to obstacles in cross-border infrastructure, planning, transport, energy, skills and regulation – making recommendations to both Governments on how they can be overcome.

## SLOW FOOD IRELAND

[www.slowfoodireland.com/](http://www.slowfoodireland.com/)

Slow Food is a non-profit, eco-gastronomic member-supported organization that was founded in 1989 to counteract fast food and fast life, the disappearance of local food traditions and people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from, how it tastes and how food choices affect the rest of the world. The organisation is founded upon the concept of eco-gastronomy – a recognition of the strong connections between plate and planet. Slow Food is organised by local groups called Convivia. It is an entirely voluntary umbrella group that co-ordinates such things as the provision of information, membership campaigns and publicity, as well as supporting a number of nationwide initiatives, such as Edible School Gardens. Slow Food provides information about local food, access to local food and opportunities to enjoy local food in the company of others who share their concern.

## The Irish Hotels Federation

<http://www.ihf.ie/>

Founded in 1937, the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) is the national organisation of the hotel and guesthouse industry in Ireland. The primary functions of the Federation are to promote and defend the interests of its members. The IHF represents almost 1,000 hotels and guesthouses nationwide, employing over 57,000 people and is a key stakeholder in the Irish tourism sector.

## Euro-toques Ireland

<http://www.euro-toques.ie/>

Euro-toques, the European Community of Cooks, is a pan-European organisation representing over 3,500 chefs and cooks, with national branches in many European countries. The initiative stemmed from concerns about a potential threat to culinary traditions and food quality in the face of increasing European legislation and open markets.

Euro-toques Ireland was established in 1986, by Myrtle Allen of Ballymaloe House in Cork. Today the membership is made up of about 180 chefs; most of them active in restaurant kitchens, some in catering and consultancy, others engaged in teaching; who support the philosophy of sourcing top quality local and seasonal food ingredients to serve to their customers, therefore delivering foods of flavour, authenticity and provenance. Euro-toques Ireland is a non-profit organisation, financed by membership subscriptions and sponsorship from a number of selected companies and related bodies.

Central to their activities is education, in particular at Primary school level, to inspire passion for food in children and encourage healthy eating, and with both trainee and industry chefs to promote quality food sourcing and encourage high standards in the industry. The group's policy and lobbying activities centre on protecting and promoting quality food producers, in particular small, local, artisan and traditional producers.

## Tourism Ireland

<http://tourismireland.com/>

Tourism Ireland was established under the framework of the Belfast Agreement of Good Friday 1998. They are jointly funded by the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive on a two to one ratio, and operate under the auspices of the North/South Ministerial Council through the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in Northern Ireland and the Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport in the South. Tourism Ireland works with the two tourist boards on the island, Fáilte Ireland and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, who are responsible for product and enterprise development and marketing to tourism consumers within the island of Ireland. Tourism Ireland's role is to grow overseas tourism revenue and visitor numbers to the island of Ireland, and to help Northern Ireland to realise its tourism potential. It devises and delivers world-class marketing programmes in over 20 markets across the world and works in

close co-operation with industry partners on the island of Ireland as well as with the travel trade, online operators, media, air and sea carriers overseas. They also help to influence product development on the island, by sharing insights on global tourism trends and the changing need of overseas consumers with other tourism agencies, particularly with Fáilte Ireland and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and with industry partners.

## Irish Farmer's Association

[www.ifa.ie](http://www.ifa.ie)

The Irish Farmer's Association is a membership organization representing Irish Farmers on a national and international level. The IFA has a mass membership with over 87,000 farmers contributing to the Association.

The IFA identifies issues facing farmers and formulates policy and strategy to deal with challenges. There are 11 Commodity Committees charged with the responsibility of pursuing the interests of farmers in each sector, namely Livestock, Dairy, Liquid Milk, Sheep, Pigs, Poultry, Grain, Potato, Farm Forestry, Horticulture and Mushrooms. Each Commodity Committee constantly monitors all relevant markets to ensure that producers are equipped with the best market intelligence to bargain with processors and maximise product returns.

IFA also has 4 Cross-Sectoral Committees - Rural Development & Less Favoured Areas, Environment, Farm Business, and Farm Family & Social Affairs - which are responsible for advancing and protecting farmers' interests in the major non-commodity areas such as farm investment grants, REPS/AEOS, environmental regulations, taxation, credit, farm safety, spouses' pensions, etc.

## Irish Exporters Association

<http://www.irishexporters.ie/>

The IEA represents businesses within the export industry to ensure that the necessary conditions are created and the necessary support is provided to assist companies to maximise their export sales. The IEA draws its membership from every exporting sector, ensuring that the interests of all industries are represented and promoted at the highest level. The Association provides

- Export Advice & Assistance
- Visa & Legalisation Services
- Regular Export Related Information
- Representation of members by lobbying Government
- Promoting members through IEA publications & Studies
- "First Query Legal Advice" Service
- Consultancy Programmes & Support for Developing Business

## Safe Food

[www.safefood.eu](http://www.safefood.eu)

Safe Food is an all-island implementation body set up under the British-Irish Agreement with a general remit to promote awareness and knowledge of food safety and nutrition issues on the island of Ireland.

Activities include:

- Promotion of food safety
- Research into food safety
- Communication of nutritional advice
- Promotion of scientific co-operation and laboratory linkages
- Provide independent scientific advice
- Deliver consumer focused review

## Restaurants Association of Ireland

[www.rai.ie](http://www.rai.ie)

The Restaurants Association of Ireland was formed in 1970 with the initial goal of forming a strong lobby that would represent the industry at Government level on issues of importance to the Irish restaurant industry.

Nine branches were formed around the country, all of which still exist today. The RAI now represents in excess of 1,400 members, with establishments representing full service restaurants, coffees shops, hotel restaurants, gastropubs, golf clubs and cookery schools. The RAI organise and promote the annual Irish Restaurant Awards.

## Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association

[www.icmsa.ie](http://www.icmsa.ie)

The ICMSA represents all farmers, particularly dairy and livestock farmers, by lobbying at local, national and EU levels. It places special emphasis on preserving the family farm structure and defending the rights and incomes of farm families.

ICMSA represents farmers' interests on many Committees and bodies, some of the main ones which are listed as follows: Teagasc, Irish Dairy Board, An Bord Bia, National Dairy Council, National Economic and Social Committee, Milk Quota Review Group, Milk Quota Appeals Tribunal, Employment Appeals Tribunal, Monitoring Committees on Rural Development.

## Solas

[www.solas.ie](http://www.solas.ie)

Solas is a state organisation with responsibility for funding, planning and co-ordinating Further Education and Training (FET) in Ireland. The mission of Solas is to fund, co-ordinate and monitor a range of FET provision to ensure economic and social wellbeing and to play a part in progressing, influencing and supporting the development of a FET sector that is more responsive to the needs of learners and employers, is innovative, flexible and demand-led.

## Taste Council of Ireland

[www.tastecouncilofireland.com](http://www.tastecouncilofireland.com)

The TASTE Council is a voluntary representative group of the smaller food business sector made up largely of local, artisan and speciality food producers and formally established in October 2003. The members of the TASTE Council work towards addressing issues that affect the speciality foods sector and to provide national and international expertise to enable the Irish speciality food sector to maximise its potential contribution to Ireland's economy, environment, culture and society.

## Glossary of Terms

### 'Artisan/Artisanal'

The terms 'artisan' or 'artisanal' or similar descriptions using these terms should only be used on foods or in advertising of foods that can legitimately claim to meet all of the following criteria:

1. The food is made in limited quantities<sup>5</sup> by skilled craftspeople
2. The processing method is not fully mechanised and follows a traditional method
3. The food is made in a micro-enterprise<sup>8</sup> at a single location
4. The characteristic ingredient used in the food are grown or produced locally where seasonally available and practical

'**Cluster**' - a group of companies situated close to each other by choice and working on a strategic level with other companies, public authorities and knowledge institutions because it renders competitive advantages, which the individual company cannot obtain on its own

'**Craft brewery/Micro-brewery**' - an independent brewery producing less than 20,000 HL per year through small batch brewing

'**Ecosystem**' - a system, or a group of interconnected elements, formed by the interaction of a community of organisms with their environment

'**FARMA**' - a not-for-profit association of the best real farm shops and genuine farmers markets from across the UK

'**FDII**' - Food & Drink Industry Ireland

'**Micro enterprise**' - fewer than 10 employees with an annual turnover of less than €2 million

'**MNC**' - a multi-national company

'**Origin Green**' - the national sustainability programme for Ireland's food and drink sector, which aims to ensure that we play our part in addressing the global sustainability challenge.

'**PERIscope**' - Bord Bia's biennial study which explores consumer attitudes towards topics such as eating at home, cooking, local food, sustainability and health and wellbeing

'**R&D**' - Research & Development

'**RDI**' - Research, Development & Innovation

'**Smart Specialisation**' - a strategic approach to economic development through targeted support to Research and Innovation

'**SME**' - the category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million euro.

'**Speciality food**' - unique and high-value food items made in small quantities from high-quality ingredients

'**Trading Online Voucher**' - a governmental scheme to encourage more Irish SMEs to begin trading online

'**Small enterprise**' - fewer than 50 employees and an annual turnover below €10 million

'**Medium sized enterprise**' - fewer than 250 employees and annual turnover below €43 million

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# TASTE CORK

GROW, COOK, EAT, ENJOY

IRELAND