



Press release

June 25th 2013

European Dairy Farmers (EDF) are proud to be dairy farmers

Snapshot study shows EDF members between personal preferences and traditional values

80% of the participating EDF members are proud to be dairy farmers. The majority would again decide for dairy production even in difficult times. Latest results from the club-intern Snapshot study show that the members became dairy farmers because of their sense for traditional values and personal preferences. Profit orientation was named at the third rank. Joining Farmers see advantages for dairy production regarding liquidity, social and regional responsibility and regarding the image in the society. On the other hand dairy production requires more labor and capital input than other agricultural branches without resulting into a higher profit.

Looking back, already half of the participants wanted to become dairy farmer when they were kids. In total, only 30 percent dreamt of a none-farm job. Reasons to become a farmer were diverse but personal preferences and profit orientation were key factors. Looking at dairy farming in particular, profit orientation slightly lost importance for the benefit of personal preferences and traditional values. Half of the survey participants got the farm from their families. The other half had to buy the farm. Regional differences became obvious in this question: only in Ireland, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom and Germany the majority of the farms was handed down. In Eastern Europe, but also in the Netherlands, France, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden, farmers have to buy the farms either from their families or others. Farmers who had to buy the farm were slightly more profit-oriented and saw more benefits of dairy production compared to other agricultural enterprises than farmers who inherited the farm.

Looking ahead: Quota exit has different influences on the motivation of dairy farmers. About one third is worried about the future development after 2015. On the contrary also one third sees more opportunities than difficulties. Among the participating club members there are regional differences: EDF-farmers from southern and eastern Europe are more worried and see more uncertainties for their farms than EDF-members from western European countries. The differences in expectation result in different strategies. Farmers who worry about the time after 2015 rather stop growing their herd. On the contrary optimistic EDF-members intend to grow by 60 cows on average within the next 5 years (from 200 to 260 cows).

216 dairy farmers participated this year in the EDF-agri benchmark Snapshot survey answering the question: "What motivates us to keep on dairy farming?". The survey was only offered to EDF members and farmers joining the Cost of Production project. Only in Czech Republic and Poland also other farmers were allowed to join in. The results are in no case representative for the different regions. The majority of the participants work full-time on the farm and about 60% of the farms depend on farm-income only. Especially in the French, Dutch and German EDF group more farms benefit also from a non-farm-income.

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European Dairy Farmers (EDF) is a club of modern dairy farmers from all over Europe. Farmers meet to exchange experiences and knowledge on all dairy related topics. Regular benchmarking is an important topic within EDF. EDF farmers benchmark both: their economic performance and future perspectives. EDF is impartial, non- political and independent. Annual highlight is the EDF Congress which takes place in a different member state each year. Up to 350 dairy farmers and agribusiness partner join the event. Club language is English. President of EDF is Jean Francois Verdenal, dairy farmer from France.

Further information for journalists:

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What motivates us to (keep on) dairy farming?
EDF-agri benchmark Snapshot survey 2013

EDF Congress, Falkenberg, Sweden
June 28th 2013

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