

# Supplementary Materials

## Section S1: Interview Guide

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### Interview Guide

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**Moderator: Asking questions and facilitating group discussion**

**Note-taker: Recording observations/themes and keeping track of time in each ⌚ section**

#### i. Introduction ⌚ 5 minutes

[Introduction of facilitator and note-taker]

We are running a series of focus groups with food consumers all around Ireland. The aim of these focus groups is to understand public perceptions and questions about farming in Ireland.

[Ethics overview and recording—go through information sheet again]

#### ii. One Word Game Icebreaker ⌚ 5 minutes

We would have liked to have been able to meet you face-to-face today but for today, we will be making the most of Zoom.

So just to make sure everyone's sound is working ok and to make sure you are all ready to talk there—we will do a quick introduction.

One of the advantages of zoom is that we are all able to dial in from different places—I want everyone to look outside and come up with one word to describe the weather where you are today! So we will go around each of you, tell us your name, where you are dialling in from and give us a quick weather update from where you are!

#### iii. Current perceptions of Irish ⌚ farming 10 minutes

- ☐ Ok, now today's focus group is all about farming; what is the *first thing* that comes to your minds when you think about Irish farming?

*Have a think for a second there and start throwing out some words to me there.*

*Go around the group until everyone has contributed a word, or some thoughts.*

- ☐ How familiar do ye feel ye are with how farming is carried out in Ireland?  
*Prompt: How much do you think you know about Irish farming? A lot or a little?*

- ☐ What, if anything, comes to mind that you really *like* about Irish farming *currently*?  
*Probe: Why is that important to you? Do others agree or disagree with that?*

- ☐ What, if anything, comes to mind that you really *dislike* about Irish farming *currently*?  
*Probe: Why are you concerned by that? Do others agree or disagree with that?*

#### iv. Future of Irish ⌚ farming 10 minutes

- ☐ Think about Irish farming in 10 years time—what, if anything, would you like to see change?  
*Probe: Why would you like that to change? Do others agree or disagree with that?*

- ☐ Think again about Irish farming in 10 years time—what, if anything, would you like to remain the same?  
*Probe: Why would you like that to change? Do others agree or disagree with that?*

#### v. Farmer Videos ⌚ 30 minutes

I want to talk to you about a group of Irish farmers that have come together and want to engage with the public about Irish farming.

One of the main aims of these focus groups is to find out on behalf of this group of farmers—What do you think about Irish farming? What are you interested in hearing more about? What questions do you have that you would like answered by Irish farmers?

With that in mind, we are going to hear from a number of real Irish farmers through videos—they are going to tell you a little about their farms. As you watch the videos, keep track of any thoughts or questions that you have and have a think about what it is you would like to hear more about when it comes to Irish farming. There's four videos in total, each video is only about one minute long. After each video, we will stop and have a short group discussion.

**The first farmer is XXX. XXX is a dairy farmer. We are going to hear from XXX now.**

**Moderator: Play video 1 (Dairy farmer)**

Now after listening to XXX, what kind of questions would you like to ask XXX about their farm—or about Irish dairy farms in general? **[7 minutes]**

- *Probe all participants to ask a question*
- *Follow-up: why would you like to ask that question?*

**The second farmer is XXX. XXX is a beef farmer. Let's watch.**

**Moderator: Play video 2 (Beef farmer)**

Now after listening to XXX, what kind of questions would you like to ask XXX about their farm—or about Irish beef farms in general? **[7 minutes]**

- *Probe all participants to ask a question*
- *Follow-up: why would you like to ask that question?*

**The third farmer is XXX. XXX is a sheep farmer.**

**Moderator: Play video 3 (Sheep Farmer)**

Now after listening to XXX, what kind of questions would you like to ask XXX about their farm—or about Irish sheep farms in general? **[7 minutes]**

- *Probe all participants to ask a question*
- *Follow-up: why would you like to ask that question?*

**The fourth and final farmer is XXX. XXX is a tillage farmer.**

**Moderator: Play video 4 (Tillage Farmer)**

Now after listening to XXX, what kind of questions would you like to ask XXX about their farm—or about Irish tillage farms in general? **[7 minutes]**

- *Probe all participants to ask a question*
- *Follow-up: why would you like to ask that question?*

#### **v. Communication Preferences 🕒 15 minutes**

Ok, so going back to the group of Irish farmers I mentioned earlier—their aims are to increase public knowledge of Irish farming and address any questions or concerns that the public might have.

- ☐ How interested would you be in finding out more about Irish farming?
- ☐ Can you quickly list, what priority areas do you think the public need to know more about when it comes to Irish farming?
- ☐ How do you think information about Irish farming could be best provided to the public?
- ☐ How important is it that you are given the opportunity to voice your opinion? And that these opinions are fed back to the farmers?

That's all of our questions. Has anyone anything they would like to add?

## **Section S2: Farmer video transcripts**

### **Dairy Farmer Video Transcript**

Hi, my name is []. I live in [], with my wife, [name], and my children, and I am a dairy farmer. And these are some of my cows here, eating grass, we have around 250 cows. The cows calve between February and April. Once they calve, we separate the calves from the cows because we milk the cows. The calves are reared in batches of 10 to 20 calves each. We milk the cows twice a day, in the morning at 7 a.m. and also in the evening, at half three. It takes us about two hours to milk the cows in the morning and two hours in the evening. We store the milk in a large cool tank, and it's collected then every two days by a company called Glanbia. They then process our milk and it can then be turned into either milk, which you find on your shelves, cheese products, or infant formula, or even into protein products. Yeah, that's a basic sum of what we do. Thanks very much for your interest.

### **Beef Farmer Video Transcript**

Hi, my name is [], I'm a beef farmer based in []. I'm involved in a farm partnership with my parents and we run a suckler herd which basically, beef cows and they rear their calves until the calves are, anywhere from 7 to 10/11 months at which time they're weaned. All of the animals we have that are born on the farm are reared through to beef and are subsequently sold for slaughter to either Kepak or Dawn Meats and Kepak would be selling into Musgraves such as Centra, SuperValu. And there's some of that would go for exports and Dawn Meats would, beef from there would go to McDonald's among other outlets. And that's pretty much it.

### **Sheep Farmer Video Transcript**

Hi, [] here, I'm a sheep farmer from []. I live here with my wife and my kids. This year, we're going to lamb 900 ewes. They'll lamb down between the end of February and the start of April. During this period, we'll have 24 hour supervision as they lamb down. Once they lamb down, they'll move out to grass fields, where they'll stay and graze grass. At 12 to 14 weeks, they'll be weaned from their mothers. And as they become fit, they'll go to the factory. The factory then will distribute lamb throughout the Irish retail market and European retail markets. We also shear the ewe's once a year and the wool goes on to be graded by a local merchant for either going into the garment industry or to make the likes of carpets. Thank you.

### **Tillage Farmer Video Transcript**

Hey, my name is []. I farm here in [] with my dad [name]; we have a tillage farm. And we grow a mixture of barley, wheat, oats and oilseed rape. We sow some of our crops in the autumn time, so September/October time, and then the remainder is sowed in the spring, so somewhere around March/early April. I'm currently just standing in a field that has just been plowed. And we're harrowing it today. We're preparing this ground for sowing spring barley in the next couple of days. We follow a fertilizer program tailored to soil analysis that we carry out. And likewise, we have a specified pesticide control program for controlling diseases and weeds that are specific problems to the field. Most of our crops are harvested from July onwards, with the majority being cut in August. We supply a local feed merchant, an animal feed merchant, with most of our grain, some of it going towards animal feed, some of the barley goes towards malting or distilling and the oil seed rape can go for pressing for rapeseed oil that you find in the supermarket shelves. We have a milling wheat contract as well. The milling wheat will ultimately be made into flour for baking. And the straw that we produce, what's remained after when you cut the grain, the straw is sold to local farmers, local livestock farmers for bedding and for feeding during the wintertime. So that's ultimately what we do. Thank you.