

1. HISTORICAL OUTLINE

Ireland participated in all WCA rounds. Agricultural censuses were conducted annually between 1847 and 1953, and every five years from 1960 to 1980. The 1985 Census of Agriculture (CA) was cancelled on budgetary grounds and the next censuses were undertaken in 1991 and 2000. This metadata review refers to the last CA, carried out in 2010.

2. LEGAL BASIS AND ORGANIZATION

Legal framework

The legal basis for the CA 2010 was provided by:

- the Statistics Act 1993 (No. 21 of 1993);
- the Statistics Order on the Census of Agriculture, 2010 (S.I. No. 181 of 2010); and
- EU legislation on farm structure surveys.

Institutional framework and international collaboration

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) was the governmental agency responsible for the organization and implementation of the CA 2010, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

Census staff

In the CA 2010, 12 members of the permanent agriculture staff and 23 temporary agriculture staff were involved. There were also nine other permanent non-agriculture staff who worked on scanning and printing in the lead-up to data collection.

3. REFERENCE DATE AND PERIOD

Reference day: 1 June 2010, for inventory items, such as livestock characteristics.

Reference periods:

- agricultural marketing year 2009/2010 (from 1 November 2009 to 31 October 2010), for information on land use, agricultural production methods, other gainful activities, etc.;
- the 12 months preceding 1 June 2010, for labour force characteristics;
- a three-year period (between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2010), for rural development measures.

4. ENUMERATION PERIOD

The data collection for the CA took place between June 2010 and September 2010, and for the SAPM, from September to October 2010.

5. SCOPE OF THE CENSUS AND DEFINITION OF THE STATISTICAL UNIT

The **census scope** covered agricultural activities (crop and livestock production).

The **statistical unit** is the agricultural holding, defined as a single unit, both technically and economically, which has a single management and which undertakes the following agricultural activities within the economic territory of the EU (either as its primary or secondary activity): (i) growing of non-perennial crops; (ii) growing of perennial crops; (iii) plant propagation; (iv) animal production; (v) mixed farming; or (vi) support activities to agriculture and post-harvest crop activities.

6. GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The CA 2010 covered the entire country.

7. CUT-OFF THRESHOLD AND OTHER EXCLUSIONS

No threshold was used in the CA 2010.

8. METHODOLOGY

The classical approach was used in the CA. Some census data were collected directly from administrative registers.

Frame

The Farm Register (FR) held by the CSO was used as a census frame. The FR contains all farms, including all identified specialized, farms and is updated from registers maintained by the DAFM.

Complete and/or sample enumeration method(s)

The CA was based on a complete enumeration. The SAPM was a sample survey.

Sample design (if sampling was used)

Sample units for the SAPM were selected using stratified random sampling.¹

¹ A large sample of 40 000 farms for the SAPM was needed to address the EU's precision requirements. Sixteen strata were used. These comprised two NUTS2 regions crossed with five sizes of holding categories, and three separate strata (specialized pig units, specialized poultry units, and units greater than 100 ha).

Data collection methods

The CA was conducted entirely by post (mail-out/mail-back). Each census questionnaire issued included a pre-addressed freepost reply envelope. The CA 2010 was the first census to use a combination of administrative records and completed paper questionnaires. Information on cattle numbers and the area under cereals and certain crops were obtained from administrative records.²

Questionnaire(s)

An eight-page A4-sized questionnaire was issued to all holdings in the week prior to 1 June 2010, accompanied by an information booklet with detailed notes on each section of the questionnaire. A separate two-page A4-sized questionnaire was also issued to all specialist pig producers ("Pig questionnaire"). The SAPM was issued in late September 2010. This took the form of a four-page A4 questionnaire, also accompanied by an information leaflet.

The census covered all 16 core items recommended in the WCA 2010.

9. USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Some census data were collected directly from administrative registers. OCR was used for data capture. Online data dissemination was applied to publish the census results.

10. DATA PROCESSING AND ARCHIVING

OCR scanning captured the respondent's reply to every question on the form. Where the OCR software could not clearly identify a character, the questionnaire was 'held' for review by a member of staff. Once this verification process was completed, the data on the questionnaire were written to a flat file for importing into the CSO's database. Data entry, verification and editing were carried out by the census processing staff in the CSO (temporary staff and more experienced supervisory staff). SAS Enterprise Guide was used to perform the sample selection for the SAPM, which was a stratified random sampling using the Neymann allocation.

11. CENSUS DATA QUALITY

Necessary steps were taken to ensure full coverage of the census population. Wherever possible, census data were also compared with other sources, including administrative registers.³

12. DATA DISSEMINATION

Preliminary results from the CA 2010 were published in February 2012. A special report on agricultural labour input was published in October 2012. A final detailed publication of the CA results was released in December 2012. The census results are available on the CSO website.⁴

13. DATA SOURCES

Central Statistics Office. 2012a. *Census of Agriculture – Final Results*. Dublin, Ireland. (also available at <https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/agriculture/2010/full2010.pdf>).

Central Statistics Office. 2012b. *Farm Structure Survey 2009/2010. Survey on Agricultural Production Methods (SAPM) 2009/2010*. National Methodological Report, Eurostat. (also available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/749240/749313/IE_NMR_FSS_2010.pdf/8c218000-7700-4d1e-8ced-9fb253d210db).

Eurostat. 2019a. *Archive: Agricultural census in Ireland*. In: *European Commission: Eurostat* [online]. Luxembourg. [Cited 26 August 2019]. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Archive:Agricultural_census_in_Ireland

Eurostat. 2019b. Database, Agriculture, forestry and fisheries. In: *European Commission: Eurostat* [online]. Luxembourg. [Cited 26 August 2019]. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

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² Data on cereals and potatoes were obtained from the DAFM Single Payment Scheme (Council Regulation No. 1782/2003) while all data on cattle were obtained from the DAFM Animal Identification and Movement system (Council Regulation No. 1760/2000).

³ However, such comparisons were made difficult by differences in definitions and/or reference periods and as such were of limited use. The extensive substitution of administrative data for statistics that had been collected in the past directly from respondents using questionnaires also placed limits on the use of administrative data for validation and verification of the census results. Active responses were scrutinized to check for the legibility of the data returned and obvious omissions or errors, scanned using an OCR scanner to capture the data on the questionnaire. A limited number of non-respondents were phoned. These consisted almost entirely of specialized pig holdings.

⁴ <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/agriculture/censusofagriculture2010/>

IRELAND – CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE 2010 – MAIN RESULTS¹

NUMBER OF HOLDINGS AND AREA, BY LEGAL STATUS		
	Holdings	Area (ha)
Total	139 890	5 317 860
Civil persons	139 560	4 873 190
An individual (sole holder holdings) ²	139 560	4 873 190
Juridical persons (legal entities)	330	444 670

LAND TENURE		
	Holdings	UAA (ha)
Total	139 890	4 991 350
Legal ownership and owner-like possession (owned land)	134 650	3 784 560
Rented from others (land rented)	41 440	784 380
Other form of tenure (shared farming or other modes)	30	422 410

DISTRIBUTION OF UAA, BY LAND SIZE CLASSES		
	Holdings	UAA (ha)
Total	139 890	4 991 350
Holdings without UAA	130	
Holdings with UAA	139 760	4 991 350
Less than 2 ha	2 210	2 520
2–4.99 ha	7 380	26 620
5–9.99 ha	15 750	119 420
10–19.99 ha	33 580	500 780
20–29.99 ha	24 690	610 160
30–49.99 ha	30 670	1 192 450
50–99.99 ha	20 760	1 389 390
100 ha and over	4 720	1 150 010

LAND USE		
	Holdings	Area (ha)
Total	139 890	5 317 860
UAA	139 760	4 991 350
Arable land	65 890	1 011 700
Land temporarily fallow	750	4 610
Land under permanent crops	970	970
Permanent meadows and pastures	132 630	3 978 530
Kitchen garden	1 000	150
Other land	67 630	326 500
Wooded area	16 400	149 850
Unutilised agricultural land and other areas	64 240	176 650

MANAGERS BY SEX ³		
	Number	UAA operated (ha)
Total	139 890	4 991 350
Male	123 770	4 591 340
Female	16 120	400 010

MEMBERS OF HOLDER'S HOUSEHOLD, BY SEX ⁴	
	Number
Total engaged in agricultural activities on the holding	116 080
Male	61 490
Female	54 590

LABOUR FORCE OF THE HOLDING	
	Number
Total	272 040
Male	197 950
Female	74 090
Family labour force	255 640
Male	183 700
Female	71 940
Regular non-family labour force	16 410
Male	14 250
Female	2 160

MANAGERS BY SEX AND AGE ³	
	Number
Total	139 890
Male	123 770
Female	16 120
Less than 35 years	9 450
Male	8 760
Female	690
35–44 years	25 150
Male	23 040
Female	2 110
45–54 years	34 920
Male	31 380
Female	3 540
55–64 years	35 000
Male	30 820
Female	4 180
65 years and over	35 370
Male	29 770
Female	5 600

LIVESTOCK		
	Holdings	Head
Total holdings with livestock	127 140	
Cattle	111 000	6 606 590
Sheep	32 110	4 745 420
Goats	1 200	10 520
Pigs/swine	1 210	1 516 290
Equines (Equidae)	17 340	106 020
Poultry (1 000 head)	n.a	n.a
Broilers	550	7 840
Laying hens	7 720	2 700
Others	3 310	390
Other	230	

¹ Data source – Eurostat database, available at:
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/agriculture/data/database>

² The categories in brackets are presented as indicated in the Eurostat database (if different from the WCA 2010).

³ According to Eurostat, managers include holders that manage the holding themselves, and managers that are not holders, including of legal units

⁴ Data are presented without holders.