

Irish Mushroom Industry Labour Survey

Executive summary

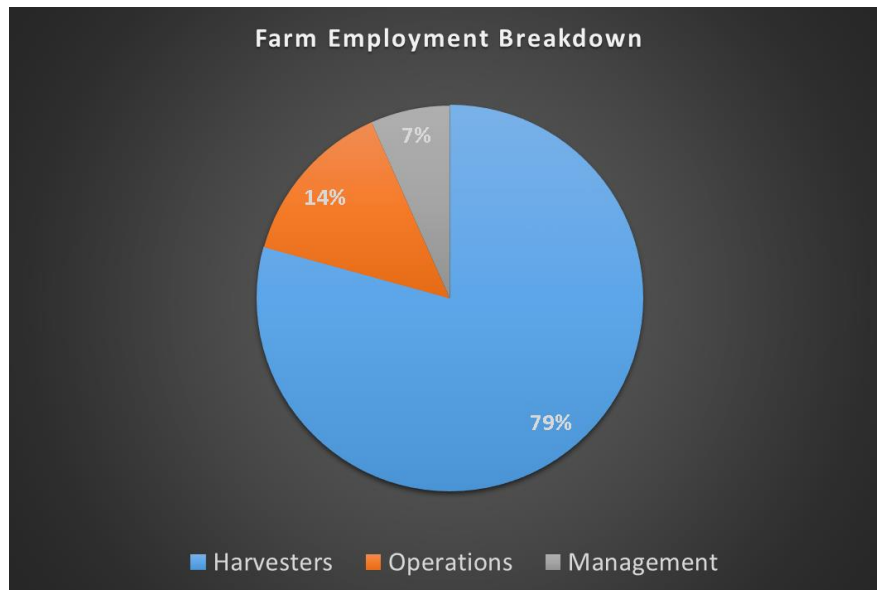
- Irish Mushroom Industry Farm Gate Value is €119 million.
- 85% of all mushrooms produced in Republic of Ireland is exported to the UK.
- Total Direct Employment in the Irish Mushroom Sector is 3,221.
- 95% of total employment is full time, 5% is part time.
- 2,225 people are working directly on mushroom farms - 79% employed in Harvesting, 14% employed in Operations, 7% employed in Management.
- 262 vacancies currently on Irish mushroom units – 90% of these vacancies are harvester positions, 8% of the vacancies are operational positions and 2% of the vacancies are in management positions.
- 1,195 new hires are required on mushroom farms in 2021.

Introduction

The Irish mushroom industry is the largest horticultural sector in Ireland. It has a farm gate value of €119million, of which approximately 85% is exported to the UK. Teagasc recently conducted a survey to identify the total employment in the Irish mushroom sector. This survey highlights total employment on grower's production units, mushroom compost production facilities, packhouses, mushroom casing suppliers and all other companies supplying goods and services to the sector.

Farm employment:

Labour is a very significant cost of production as all mushrooms produced in Ireland are handpicked. Mushroom farms are located in rural areas and generate employment in these remote locations. There are 39 mushroom units in Ireland employing 2,225 people. 2% of these people work part-time with the remaining 98% working full time. The chart below shows the breakdown of staff within mushroom farms:



It was identified that there are 262 vacancies on mushroom farms with 90% of these vacancies being harvester positions. The survey indicates that an estimated 1,195 new hires are required on mushroom farms in 2021.

Total Industry employment:

The mushroom sector provides a wide range employment in areas such as compost production, packaging, mushroom casing, packing, transport/haulage, HR and R&D. Some of these companies are based in the UK however employment is generated from mushroom production in ROI. This is accounted for in this survey. There are also some Irish mushroom companies who are servicing UK mushroom production and this is also accounted for by deducting any UK based employment from these companies. From this survey, it is estimated that an addition 996 jobs are directly employed in the Irish mushroom sector along with employment on farms. This results in the total employment in the Irish mushroom sector to be 3,221.

Survey Methodology

The Mushroom Industry Labour Survey was conducted between 1st February 2021 and 25th February 2021. Donal Gernon (Teagasc Mushroom Advisor) carried out the survey by contacting each company. The relevant data was collected through direct phone and email correspondence. Once all the data was compiled, the total employment figure was then generated.

Further information

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