

Food, Agriculture & Beverage

Why Ireland?

Ireland is renowned as a producer of the highest quality food and drink for global markets and has been chosen as a strategic base for European business by major companies. Agri-food has been one of the best performing economic industries in Ireland in recent years, with an established reputation for growth.

The Irish government's Food Wise 2025 and Food Harvest 2020 strategies set out a cohesive roadmap for the agri-food industry to adapt to challenges and avail of opportunities in the forthcoming years, including consumer demands for new and innovative food solutions.

The Origin Green programme is proof of the commitment of Irish food and drink producers to maintaining its established green reputation. This world-leading, nationwide sustainability programme measures the green credentials of all Irish food and drink producers.

With food security now a high priority globally, Ireland's food safety systems have been acknowledged as having one of the highest standards of traceability worldwide.

Growth in Exports

Ireland's economic recovery has been led by its exports, in which agri-food has played a key role. Exports in this sector have increased by 45% since 2009. In 2015, Irish agri-food and drink exports increased by 3% to approximately €10.8 billion. Beverages such as whiskey, Baileys and Guinness are sold in 200 countries worldwide.

Dairy and Beef

Ireland enjoys a comparative advantage in the production of milk and beef within the EU, commanding a 5% premium against the EU average sales price in the beef industry alone. The dairy and beef herd are predominantly grass fed which has a number of distinctive qualities and is also highly sustainable and environmentally friendly.

The dairy industry is renowned both for its high productivity and for being an early adopter of new technologies at producer level. Additionally, the removal of milk quotas in 2015 presented an historic opportunity for expansion in the dairy sector.

Technology

Ireland has evolved from exporting agri-food to adding further value to food products through the use of technology.

The agricultural sector is currently experiencing a revolution powered by technology. Technology is being introduced in every aspect of farming, from animal reproduction to product distribution. "Agtech" is now being promoted as the next big area for investment firms.

At the consumer end, investment in prepared consumer foods, and support of artisan goods, show strong signs of growth. A partnership was recently signed between Bord Bia and SF Best, one of China's leading e-commerce platforms for imported food, tapping into the valuable Chinese online shopping market

What We Can Do For You

Our Food, Agriculture and Beverage Law team advises domestic and international companies, from indigenous start-ups to some of the largest food organisations in Ireland. We also advise retailers, restaurants, caterers and suppliers to the sector.

Our clients access the advice they need, when they need it, on product development, contract negotiations, securing investment, protecting their brands and know-how, entering overseas markets, complying with food law regulation and product liability claims. We also actively advise on a range of acquisitions and joint ventures, particularly overseas investments.

Our team have worked with major operators in the food and beverage sector, and we hold significant expertise in this area. Wendy Hederman leads the team and she has unique experience of the sector, having spent 7 years as legal counsel at Diageo, one of the world's largest beverage companies.

We Advise On

- Commercial contracts – all contracts affecting food and beverages from “farm to fork” including R&D, manufacture, distribution, supply, logistics, and sales agreements
- Intellectual Property – IP protection, licensing and defence
- Taxation – maximising taxation efficiencies of any developed IP
- Corporate – investment, partnership, acquisitions, and joint ventures
- Regulatory – food labelling and advertising
- Product liability and recalls – advice on product liability claims, traceability and recall obligations
- EU & Competition – engaging with Competition Authorities, advising on anti-competitive restraints and on competition compliance programs
- Customs & Trade – exports, imports and entering new markets

Our Team



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