

# Price increases – EU gap narrows

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THE upward Irish pig price trend continues for September. The weighted average for the month is €1.49 per kg/dw. This compares with €1.47 for August and €1.45 for July. Edenderry top the league paying a good price of €1.50.

The Roscrea price comes in at €1.49. There are claims that they are paying €1.53 for welfare pigs. However, this appears to be problematic – available in some cases on a selective basis. Are some welfare pigs more equal to other welfare pigs when it comes to writing the cheque?

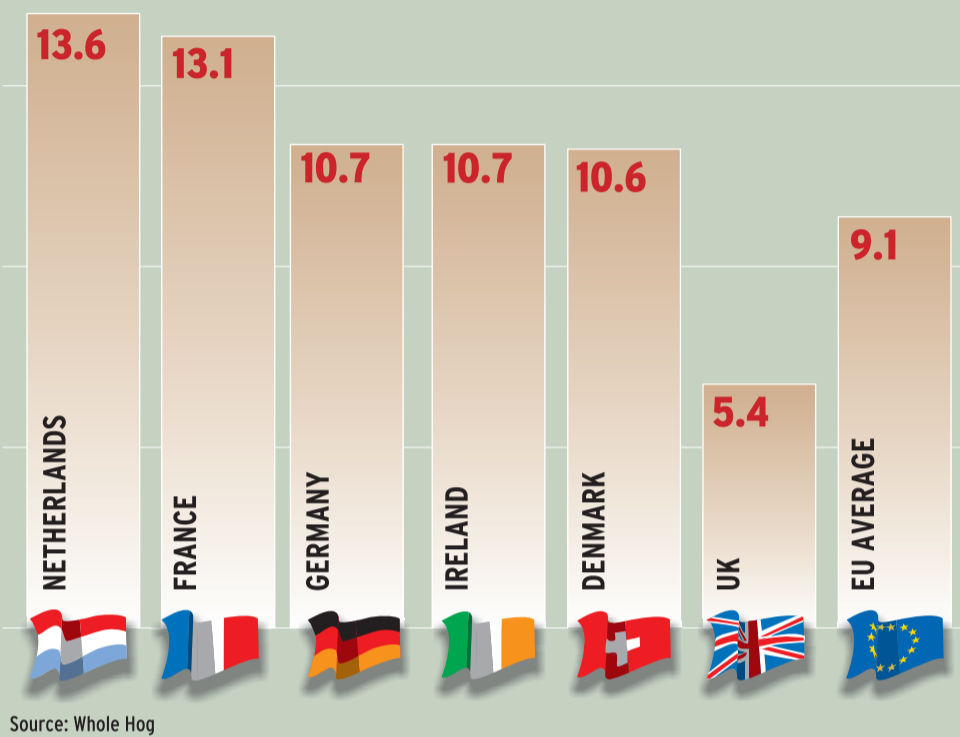
The increased Irish price is positively reflected in the gap between the Irish price and the EU average for September. It is now down to one of its lowest levels at €5.78 per 70kg carcass. This compares to €10.50 in August.

In the bad old days of 2001 this gap was €25 per carcass. As recently as 2003 the difference was €18. The reasons are a combination of scarce Irish supplies, increased efficiency and better selling for lesser numbers. The northern factories have also been a positive element in the performance.

The specialist Pig magazine "The Whole Hog" recently presented an interesting bar chart. It compared price levels in a number of EU countries covering the period September 2006 vs. September 2005 (see chart on this page).

The top performer was the Netherlands with a plus of 13.6%. They were followed by France at 13.1%. Ireland was not disgraced returning 10.7%. We were in the company of Germany 10.7%, Denmark 10.6%. The UK increase was only 5.4%. Ireland comfortably beat the EU average of 9.1%.

Annual percentage change in EU pig producer price, September '06 vs September '05



Source: Whole Hog

SEPT 2006 PIG MEAT PRICE LEAGUE TABLE

Factory	Sept 06 per kg dw	Aug 06 per kg dw	Jan 98 per kg dw	Sept 06 price as % of Jan 98	Est Share of National kill in Each Factory
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### Division No. 1 – €1.49 and Over

Edenderry	1.50	1.48	1.13	133%	15%
Roscrea	1.49	1.47	1.13	132%	30%

### Division No. 2 – Under €1.49

Dawn	1.48	1.46	1.17	127%	16%
McCarren	1.48	1.45	-	-	8%
Weighted Avg	1.49	1.47			
Northern Price					
Cullybackey	1.52	1.51			
Cookstown	1.52	1.50			
Grants	1.51	1.50			
Pork Prices					
Coyle	1.52	1.48			
Salter	1.52	1.48			
Corbally	1.51	1.48			



Amii Cahill

## A new IFA Pig Committee secretary

THE new secretary of the IFA Pig Committee is Amii Cahill from Windgap, Co Kilkenny. Indeed Tipperary could also lay strong claim to her ancestry. Amii Cahill is one of the Mullinahone Cahills – a legendary Gaelic footballing family for Mullinahone in Co Tipperary. Her grandfather was Walter Cahill who dominated many a game. While her granduncle, Mick Cahill, was very famous playing on the county team, he also represented Munster in the Railway Cup. All of this was before the arrival of John Leahy, who created today's hurling glory in the area.

The Cahill footballers were famous for not retreating.

This important gene could be very useful to the new secretary of the Pig Committee. However, this person has more than about a noble family heritage.

Amii Cahill has had an outstanding academic career. She holds an honours B.Ag Degree from UCD. Recently she was awarded a Master of Science for her thesis entitled "Factors Affecting Production of Grower and Finisher Pigs in Commercial Farming". This meant visiting and involvement in a total of 22 of the best commercial pig operations in Ireland. What appropriate training for a person holding this key post in Irish agriculture.

## Top 10 control 39% of US sows

THOSE who think that Irish pig production is highly concentrated should look at the recently published US figures.

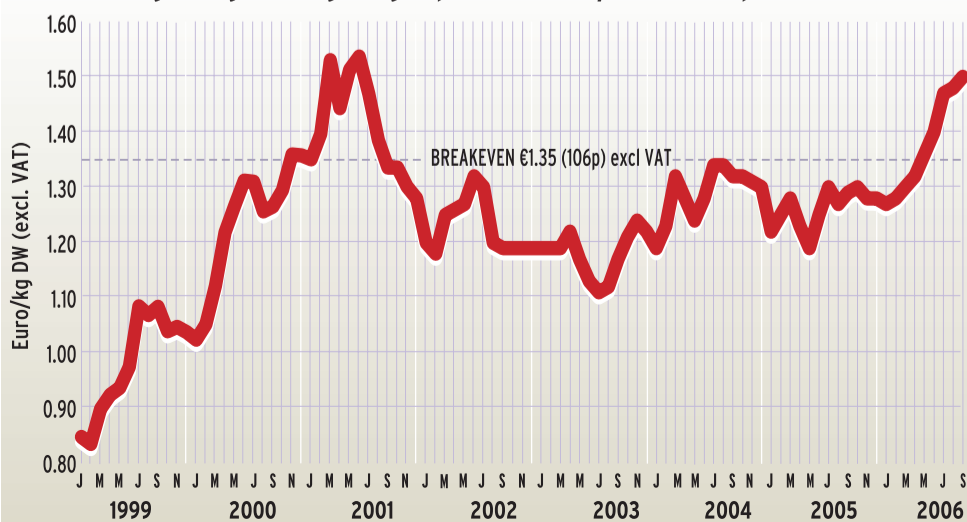
In the US, concentration is growing. In 1997 the top 10 US producers controlled 19% of the total breeding herd. Today the 10 leading producers control 39% of all US sows.

The top US ranked company, Smithfield Foods,

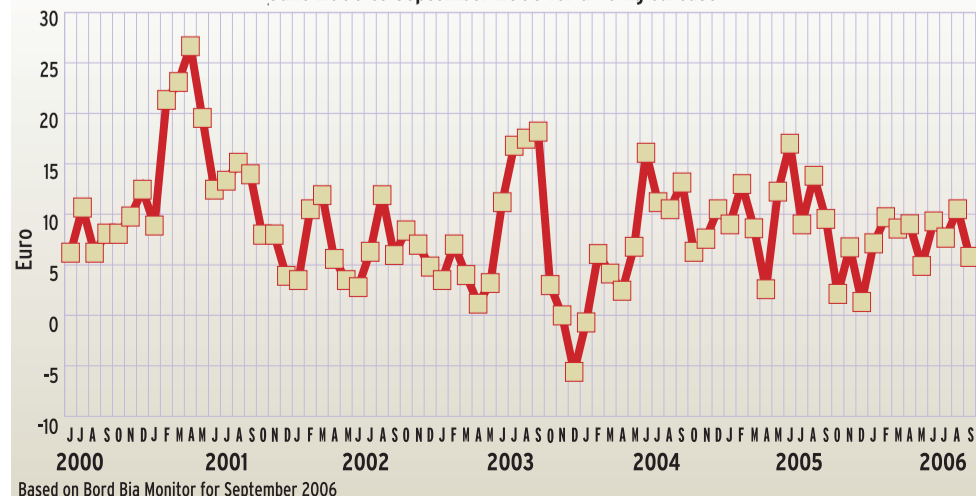
have virtually 1m sows and growing. This is just seven times the number of sows in the Republic. The forecasts are that US pig numbers will increase further.

Most of the growth in sow places are into existing large units. It is anticipated by some industry sources that over the next 10 years 50% of all US production will be owned by the top ten companies.

Average weighted Pig League price, January 1999 to September 2006



Irish pig price gap compared to EU average June 2000 to September 2006 for a 70 kg carcass



Based on Bord Bia Monitor for September 2006