



The Northern Ireland Agricultural Research & Development Council

EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO GET INVOLVED IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY

AgriSearch are in the process of recruiting dairy, beef and sheep farmers to join its sectoral advisory committees. The Beef, Dairy and Sheep Advisory Committees have an important role within AgriSearch, advising on the strategic direction of its research and knowledge exchange programmes.



Committee membership offers farmers an exciting and unique opportunity to build their knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing the Agri-Food sector and how research and innovation can address these emerging issues.

Committee members will be briefed by industry experts, receive training and participate in site visits, farm walks and study tours. This training will enable you to take a helicopter view of the Northern Ireland industry and to think strategically about its development.

- Job Title:** Advisory Committee Member (Independent Farmer)
Positions open on Dairy, Beef and Sheep Advisory Committees
- Remuneration:** The role of Advisory committee member is unpaid, although reasonable expenses for travel may be claimed.
- Time Commitment:** Up to 4 committee meetings / visits per year
- Term:** Advisory Committee Members are elected for a three-year term and may serve no more than three consecutive terms

About the organisation

AgriSearch (The Northern Ireland Agricultural Research and Development Council) is an independent charity incorporated as a company limited by guarantee.

AgriSearch was formed in 1997 to help dairy, beef and sheep farmers become directly involved with production-oriented research. The funds contributed by farmers to AgriSearch (through a voluntary levy collected by Dairy and Red Meat Processors) are used to commission research that will improve and develop beef, sheep and dairy farming in Northern Ireland.

In recent years AgriSearch's role has grown from merely being a co-funder of research to taking a much more active role in leading projects and acting as a liaison between researchers, advisors and the industry. It now has a pivotal role within the research and knowledge exchange functions for Northern Ireland's ruminant livestock sector.

Introduction

The role is a good opportunity to get involved in shaping the future of our industry. The role involves a commitment to attend up to four meetings or visits per year, as well as the review and provision of commentary on proposed research projects.

The research committees require forward looking farmers with a track record of implementing best practice on their farm.

Currently AgriSearch's advisory committees have an under-representation of women, so applications are particularly welcomed from this group.

The Role & What is Expected

Purpose of the Committees

- 1) To take a helicopter view of the Northern Ireland industry and to think strategically about its development.
- 2) To identify key challenges in the Northern Ireland agricultural industry.
- 3) To identify scientific projects which can address key problems
- 4) To prioritise scientific proposals for funding by AgriSearch
- 5) To review progress of on-going research
- 6) To monitor and advise AgriSearch on its knowledge exchange activities

Meetings

The committee meetings will take different forms and be held in different locations (hotels, farms, production sites, research centres). Some of the meetings will be committee style, other meetings will be practical visits to build the knowledge of the committee and to help with decision making.

Meetings will typically include the following:

- 1) Presentation from a key industry expert
- 2) Presentations on proposed projects proposals
- 3) Discussion of research proposals, prioritisation and decision making on funding
- 4) Update on ongoing research projects and knowledge exchange activities

Some meetings will include tours of production sites, farms or research centres.

Training

Training for committee members will be provided. This training will include the following

- 1) Industry context and challenges
 - a. Local and international
 - b. Understanding of the principle of “first limiting” factors
 - c. Specific sectoral challenges
 - d. Specific research challenges
- 2) The potential future of agriculture (2030, 2040, 2050)
 - a. Role of technology
 - b. Consumer behaviour
 - c. Regulatory framework
 - d. Livestock farming systems
 - e. Delivery of public goods / ecosystems services
- 3) The research landscape in Northern Ireland, UK, Ireland, Europe and Globally.
- 4) Techniques for understanding and analysing research papers
- 5) Techniques for prioritisation
- 6) Strategic planning – how to plan and act strategically

Visits

- Processor – challenges faced by the processor
- Retailer – challenges and pressures on the retailer
- Farm – economics, business planning, finance, measurement
- Strategic planning – how to plan and act strategically

Benefits

- 1) Industry benefit:
 - a. Informed decision making on research proposals and support for high value projects
 - b. Development of a range of leading farmers with a well-informed view of the whole industry.
 - c. Farmers who are effective advocates for best practice leading to improved uptake of best practice on-farm in Northern Ireland.
- 2) Personal Benefits
 - a. A wide understanding of the local and global agricultural industry, with sector specific knowledge.

- b. The building of a range of key contacts and networks
- c. Exposure to a wide range of best practice and future technology, allowing you to plan your farm management more effectively.
- d. A strong understanding of future regulatory and consumer demands.
- e. Insight into the whole agri-food chain, with committee members being able to visit farms, factories, retail facilities and research centres, which will build your personal understanding and improving business performance.

Person Specification

Personal Characteristics

- Positive attitude
- Forward thinking
- Problem solving outlook
- Constant drive to improve

Personal Experience

- Minimum of 5 years' experience of the agricultural industry
- Track record of innovative, successful farming
- Ideally educated in agriculture and / or evidence of continual professional development
- Track record of uptake of best practice / scientific findings at farm level

Application forms can be downloaded from the AgriSearch website:

<https://www.agrisearch.org/publications/miscellaneous/advisory-committee-member-application-form>

The closing date for applications is 12 Noon on Tuesday 28th May 2019. An information day for shortlisted applicants will be held on Wednesday 5th June 2019 from 11am to 2pm in a central location. Applicants should endeavour to keep this date free.

Completed forms should be sent to:

Jason Rankin
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Innovation Centre
Large Park
Hillsborough
County Down
BT26 6DR

Or emailed to: jason@agrisearch.org