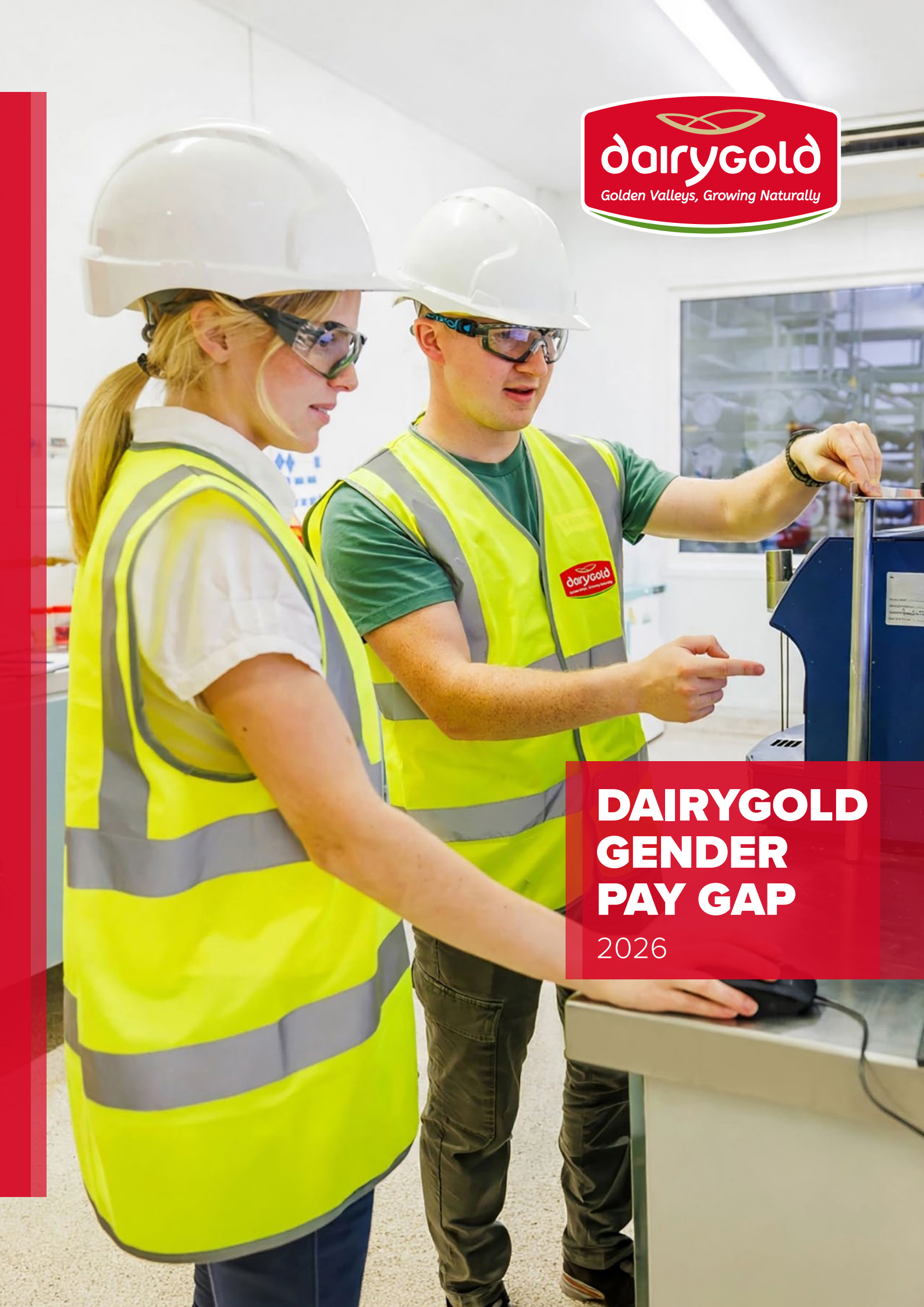

dairygold
Golden Valleys, Growing Naturally
DAIRYGOLD
GENDER
PAY GAP
2026



**Michael Harte**
*Chief Executive, Dairygold*

# Foreword from Michael Harte, Chief Executive

**At Dairygold, we recognise that investing in our people through learning, development and succession planning is fundamental to building a strong and sustainable organisation for the future.**

Creating an inclusive workplace where colleagues can learn, grow and realise their potential is central to our values and to our long-term success.

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen our focus on leadership development, talent management and succession for the future. By identifying and enabling our talent, providing development opportunities and creating clear pathways for progression, we are building a stronger pipeline of future leaders across the organisation. This links into our Succession Management process which is a key strategic business priority for our Business. Importantly, we are committed to providing equal opportunities for all as we continue to improve gender balance within our leadership and development programmes.

Learning and development remains a key enabler of this ambition. Through initiatives including LinkedIn Learning, our Managers Essentials Programme, mentoring opportunities and support for the ICOS Women in Leadership Programme, we are helping colleagues build confidence, broaden their skills and prepare for future opportunities.

These programmes not only support personal development and individual career progression but also strengthen the resilience and capability of the organisation as a whole.

While our Gender Pay Gap reflects the profile of our workforce and the sectors in which we operate, we remain focused on addressing the factors that influence it over time. I am pleased to say that our 2026 GPG Report confirms a decrease in the gender pay gap, with a mean gap of 8.5% and a median gap of 9.5%, compared to 9.4% and 9.7% respectively in 2025. We will continue to strenghten the pipeline of women progressing into leadership and management roles.

Our participation in the Women in Leadership Programme reflects our commitment to developing women across the business. Designing and implementing the programme was a key achievement within our Learning and Development ambitions this year, and we remain committed to its continued support. With six participants from across the business taking part, we are putting this commitment into practice by investing in their leadership development.

I am proud of the progress we continue to make and of the commitment shown by colleagues across the Society to creating an inclusive and supportive workplace. By investing in our people and developing future leaders, we are helping to ensure Dairygold remains a place where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Michael Harte

**Michael Harte**
*Chief Executive*

**OUR VALUES**

WE CARE | WE GROW TOGETHER | WE ARE HONEST AND ACCOUNTABLE | WE FIND A BETTER WAY | WE FOCUS ON OUR CUSTOMERS

*Cover image: Technical Graduate Olivia Sheehan and Technical Officer Eoin Healy at the Dairygold Castlefarm Dairy Complex.*




*Sabrina Hickey, Lab Technician pictured in the Central Lab, Mitchelstown.*

## Understanding the Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap is the difference in the average hourly wage of men and women across a workforce, and it compares the pay of all working men and all working women across the workforce including basic pay, allowances, overtime, and performance related bonuses, regardless of role or level in the organisation.

From June 2022 the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 requires organisations to report on their hourly gender pay gap across a range of metrics.

## Definition of Key Terms

### What is the Mean Gender Pay Gap?

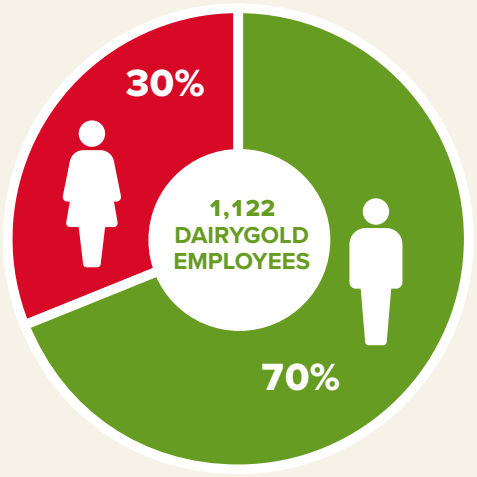
The difference between the average pay for men and women is calculated by adding all hourly pay rates for women and then dividing by the total number of women. This is repeated for men and subsequently compared to the average for women.

### What is the Median Gender Pay Gap?

The median gender pay gap is the difference between the middle points in hourly pay for men and women.

## Dairygold – Our 2026 Gender Pay Gap

Data for 1,122 Dairygold employees was captured on June 6th 2026, to reflect the period from June 7th 2025 to June 6th 2026 for this report. The gender split of our workforce as at this date was 70% male and 30% female.



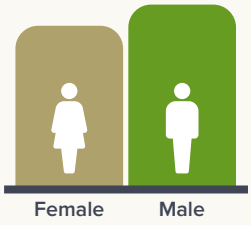
# Mean and Median Hourly Remuneration Gap

As a sector both Agriculture and Food Processing have traditionally attracted more males than females to roles, Dairygold has made positive improvements towards attracting greater diversity in our workplace. There are a number of factors behind the gender pay gap, including the higher number of men occupying senior roles and in addition, the higher number of men working in shift-based roles.

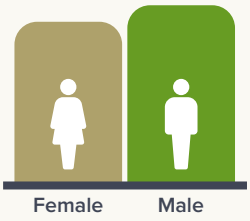
There is greater access within shift-based roles to additional pay elements such as overtime and shift allowances. Shift premium has a relatively large impact on the median pay gap and the inclusion of overtime increases the gaps further, improving the gender pay gap from 9.4% in 2025 to 8.5% in 2026 marks positive progress. Dairygold remains focused on delivering further progress throughout 2027.

In Dairygold there are **336 females** and **786 males**.

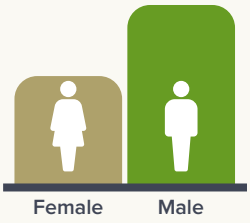
## Key Data:



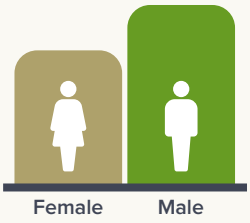

**8.5%**
**Mean Pay Gap**




**9.5%**
**Median Pay Gap**




**42.1%**
**Mean Bonus Gap**




**24.9%**
**Median Bonus Gap**

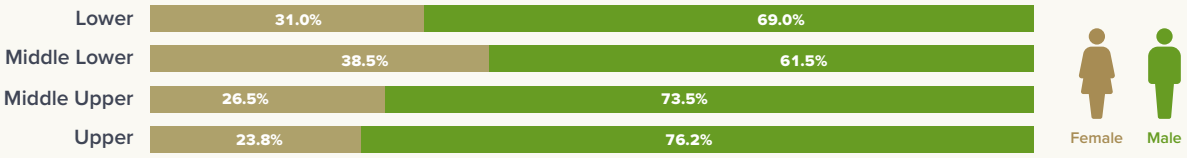
**46.1%**
**% of female employees** who were paid bonus

**33.2%**
**% of male employees** who were paid bonus

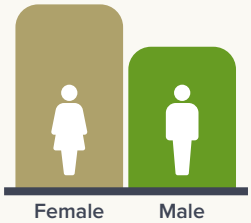
**88.7%**
**% of female employees** who received benefit in kind

**90.8%**
**% of male employees** who received benefit in kind

**% of male and female employees** in each quartile

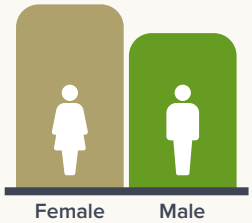



**Mean hourly remuneration gap** for part-time employees



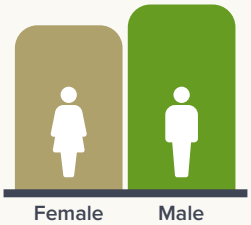

**-31.16%**
**Mean Pay Gap**

**Median hourly remuneration gap** for part-time employees



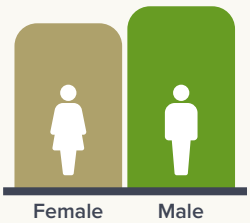

**-9.61%**
**Median Pay Gap**

**Mean hourly remuneration gap** for temporary contract employees




**0.99%**
**Mean Pay Gap**

**Median hourly remuneration gap** for temporary contract employees




**-1.37%**
**Median Pay Gap**




*Colleagues from the Lombardstown team pictured at a fundraising event for the Irish Cancer Society.*

# Overview of key initiatives

## Supporting greater equality and inclusion

In 2026, Dairygold conducted a company wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) survey to assess colleague awareness of existing DEI initiatives, understand the aspects of inclusion and equality most important to employees, and gather demographic insights to help inform future actions and priorities. The survey received 514 responses, representing approximately 40% of colleagues.

### What did our colleagues tell us?

**54%**
**of colleagues feel DEI is valued by Dairygold**

**75%**
**of colleagues feel psychologically safe**

**77%**
**feel comfortable being themselves**

Awareness of our initiatives was strong, particularly for our training programmes and events, including International Women's Day, Pride and International Men's Day.

The findings identified flexible working and family support, mental health and wellbeing and age diversity as the top three areas of most importance to the workforce.

In response to this feedback, Dairygold is committed to progressing its DEI agenda through a programme of policy, training and awareness initiatives. Our commitments include increasing awareness of available supports, and assessing the introduction of additional policies. We have also created an Employee Resource Group for Mental Health and Wellbeing and plan to introduce a suite of supports for all colleagues.

## Supporting our people

Dairygold introduced a Menopause and Pregnancy Loss Policy to support our colleagues and to provide guidance to managers. Keeping our policies and procedures up to date is essential to ensuring they remain relevant, practical and aligned with the needs of our colleagues and our business.

> ***"Since June 2025, fifteen policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated in Dairygold, helping to strengthen the guidance and support available to colleagues across the organisation."***

## Recruitment and Selection

Our recruitment and selection practices continue to evolve to support fairness, consistency, and inclusion across the organisation. This includes the use of gender-neutral role descriptions, diverse interview panels and inclusive workplace policies.

We remain committed to strengthening female representation in leadership and management positions, while continuing to build diverse succession pipelines across the business.

## Succession Management and Learning and Development – Moving the Dial

Succession Management is a key priority focus area for the Senior Leadership team in Dairygold, ensuring that the organisation has the right people, with the right skills and experience, ready to step into critical roles when needed.

Our succession planning approach supports business continuity, reduces organisational risk and provides employees with clear opportunities for growth and career progression. By identifying and developing talent from within, Dairygold can continue to build strong leadership capability, retain valuable knowledge, and ensure the business is well placed to meet future challenges and opportunities.

Gender balance and inclusion are key considerations within our succession planning approach, ensuring that future talent development supports a more diverse leadership pipeline and strengthens the Co-Op for the future.



*Electrician Maurice O'Callaghan working with Padraig Bradshaw, Apprentice Electrician in the Dairygold Cheddar Plant in Clonmel Road, Mitchelstown.*

## Supporting Women to lead across the Co-Operative sector

SPOT LIGHT

The ICOS Women in Leadership Programme supports women across Ireland's co-operative sector to prepare for broader, more strategic leadership roles. Our support for the programme demonstrates our commitment to developing women across the business and building a stronger leadership pipeline for Dairygold.

Delivered over an eight-month period, the programme combines in-person learning, psychometric insights, one-to-one coaching and peer circles. Participants gain a deeper understanding of their leadership style, build on their strengths and address confidence barriers, helping them develop the skills, presence and influence needed for greater leadership responsibility.

Six women from across Dairygold are taking part, putting our commitment into practice through targeted investment in their development. By supporting female talent at middle and senior management level, the programme will help broaden the pool of colleagues prepared for future leadership opportunities and strengthen succession planning across the business.

Dedicated time for reflection, coaching and practical learning will help participants strengthen their communication and executive presence, equipping them to contribute with greater confidence and apply their learning in their day-to-day roles.

Coaching and peer circles also create valuable networks across the co-operative sector, providing support beyond the programme. As participants develop and progress, they can become visible role models, encouraging others to pursue leadership opportunities. The programme's longer-term impact will be reflected in how participants apply their skills, take on greater responsibility and progress within the business, helping to build a more inclusive and sustainable leadership pipeline.



*Women in Leadership Programme participants: back row (L–R), Jill Power, Laura O'Sullivan, Katie Sheehan and Elaine Hayes; front row, Rebecca Fennessey and Orla O'Connor. Also pictured: Adrian Beatty, Head of Human Resources; Pat Laffan, General Manager, Dairy Ireland; Caroline Browne, Human Resources Manager; and Deirdre McCarthy, Head of Strategic Change and Transformation.*



*Colleagues Nadia O'Rourke and Eddie O'Brien, pictured at Dairygold's headquarters on Clonmel Road.*

## Learning and Development

Learning and Development is central to strengthening the Society's leadership and talent pipeline, equipping people to lead with confidence, progress their careers and access meaningful growth opportunities fairly.

A strong, sustainable pipeline depends on identifying and developing talent from across the Society. To advance this priority, the Management Development Programme continued to roll out using the revised participant selection process, broadening access and promoting greater gender balance. Women now account for 40% of this year's programme.

The Society remains committed to achieving a 50/50 gender split across all development programmes, ensuring the future leadership pipeline draws on the widest possible pool of talent.

Continuous development is supported through:

- the company-wide access to LinkedIn Learning launch;
- revised Personal Development Planning process;
- the reintroduction of an Advanced Leadership Programme in early 2027;
- introduction of our Emerging Talent Programme in Quarter 1, 2027 to enable the development of our recently recruited graduates; and
- support for the ICOS Women in Leadership Programme.

## Developing our talent pipeline

Dairygold's Mentoring Programme connects colleagues on the Emerging Talent Programme with members of the Senior Leadership Team. Through these relationships, senior leaders share their knowledge and experience to support participants' learning and practical development. For mentees, the programme provides guidance from experienced leaders, helping them build their skills, broaden their understanding of the business and apply their learning in their roles. By connecting individual development with business needs, the programme supports colleagues' growth and strengthens capability across the organisation.

## LinkedIn Learning - Opening up flexible development options

SPOT LIGHT

Launched in November 2025, LinkedIn Learning gives Dairygold colleagues flexible access to development opportunities at a time and place that suits them.

More than 18,000 expert-led courses are available on desktop and mobile, making learning easier to fit around work and personal commitments.

This flexibility supports colleagues makes upskilling more accessible and inclusive.

Since launch, more than 40% of colleagues have registered, reflecting strong interest in continuous development.

By providing easy access to learning, the platform helps colleagues build skills, broaden their knowledge and take ownership of their development.

The platform supports self-paced learning and promotes flexibility and accessibility allowing users to complete courses in small, manageable sections and progress at a speed that works for them. This can help make professional development more accessible to those balancing work, family life, caring duties or other personal responsibilities.

This creates greater access to learning and development opportunities for a broader range of employees.

# Progression in Practice - Celebrating our People

## Anne O'Neill | *Head of Quality, Dairy Ireland*



**Anne O'Neill is Head of Quality for Dairy Ireland, a senior role that reflects her depth of technical expertise, leadership experience and long-standing commitment to quality across Dairygold. Her career journey began with a summer role in the Mogeely laboratory, where an early opportunity opened the door to a rewarding career in the business.**

*"Having completed my B.SC studies, I successfully applied for a lab technician role at Mogeely.*

*That early opportunity shaped my career path, and having completed a higher Diploma in management and leadership, I successfully moved into various management roles within the quality function.*

*As quality systems and accreditation became increasingly important, I was encouraged to take on new responsibilities and complete further training. This helped me build my skills, contribute to change and grow in confidence.*

*Those early experiences taught me the value of staying curious, embracing challenges and taking ownership. Each opportunity helped me keep learning, developing and progressing in my career."*

## Caroline O'Connell | *Credit Control & Accounts Receivable Lead Dairy Ireland, UK, Europe & Property*



**Caroline O'Connell is Credit Control and Accounts Receivable Lead for Dairy Ireland, UK, Europe and Property, a role that reflects her growing responsibility, business knowledge and leadership development since joining Dairygold.**

*"I joined Dairygold in 2022 as a Junior Credit Controller in Agri Business.*

*In 2024, my role expanded to include DFI and Property credit control, giving me valuable exposure to different areas of the business. In August 2025, I was promoted to Credit Control and Accounts Receivable Lead for Dairy Ireland, UK, Europe and Property*

*Each stage of my career has brought new challenges, learning opportunities and the chance to work with colleagues across different functions. Having come from a smaller co-operative, I have valued the scale of Dairygold and the trust placed in me to take ownership of projects, build knowledge and develop new skills.*

*The Emerging Talent Programme was an important milestone in my development. It helped me build connections with colleagues across the organisation, learn from peers and work closely with a Senior Leadership Team mentor. As I moved into my first people management role, that support helped me build the confidence and capability to lead a team. For me, Dairygold is a place where people are encouraged to keep learning, take on new responsibilities and be ready for new opportunities."*

## Geraldine Cremin | *Agri Manager, Mallow Store*



**Geraldine Cremin is Agri Manager in Dairygold's Mallow Store, a role she has grown into through determination, hard work and a willingness to learn from the ground up.**

*"I began my career with Dairygold in 2004 as a Retail Assistant in the Mallow Store. Coming from outside a farming background, the Agri side of the business was completely new to me. I had a lot to learn, but I kept asking questions, listening to colleagues and customers, and building my confidence one step at a time.*

*Over the years, I took on every opportunity to grow. There were challenges along the way, but each one helped me become more resilient, more knowledgeable and more confident in my ability to lead.*

*Dairygold supported my development through hands-on learning, training and the guidance of experienced people across the business. That support, combined with my own determination, helped me progress into my current role as Agri Manager in Mallow Store.*

*For me, resilience means staying open, getting involved and not being afraid to try, even when something feels unfamiliar. My advice to others is simple: take the opportunity, ask the questions and believe in your ability to grow."*

# Community Engagement

Community engagement is central to Dairygold's Co-Op ethos. It reflects our We Care and We Grow Together values. In 2025, we supported initiatives that strengthened local connections and created opportunities for our Members, colleagues, families and communities.

Key initiatives included:

- Continuing to partner with local schools to provide STEM insights, interview skills and workshops, and site visits for students.
- Supporting, attending and promoting Dairy Women Ireland events.
- Continuing to award bursaries to graduates as part of our established UCC Student Bursaries Awards.
- Participation in UCC Agricultural Science Career Insights evenings.

These partnerships help nurture local talent and support the communities we are proud to be part of.



*Marking International Women's Day at Co-Op Superstores Carrigaline are colleagues Julia O'Neill, Margaret Shanahan, Aisling Murphy, Debi Megyesi and Mary Turtle.*

# Diverse and Inclusive participation

As a Co-Operative, Dairygold's focus on diversity and inclusion also extends to our Members. In recent years Dairygold has also encouraged more diverse and inclusive participation in its annual Member Upskilling Programme by encouraging the family members of Dairygold shareholders to participate. This initiative continues to lead to increased female participation and increased younger male and female participation, which is also important from a succession planning perspective.

Dairygold has also launched the Pathways Farm Succession Programme and actively encourages greater gender and age diversity in the Society's membership base through its various Membership, Joint Shareholding and Young Farmer Membership Policies.

In addition, Dairygold has taken further steps to strengthen the diversity of its elected Representative Structure. Following the Rules Review in 2024, 18 new Designated Regional Committee seats were introduced to broaden participation, bring new perspectives, enhance gender and age balance and ensure that a more diverse group of Members has a voice at representative level on the future success and direction of the Society. Since their introduction, 13 of the 18 Designated Regional Committee seats have now been filled, with 30% of these seats held by female Members.

# Future Plans 2027

Looking ahead to 2027, we will continue to review and refine our suite of Employee policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose, easy to access and responsive to changes in our workplace, our people and the wider environment.

By continually improving these documents, we can provide clear, consistent and timely support to colleagues when they need it most, while building a strong foundation for future decision-making, inclusion and employee wellbeing across Dairygold.

Dairygold remains focused on strengthening our female talent pipeline and creating more opportunities for women to progress across the organisation. Increasing female representation in senior, specialist and leadership roles will help us build a more balanced organisation and, over time, contribute to narrowing our gender pay gap.

Dairygold is addressing this through a programme of measures including:

- fair and transparent recruitment and promotion processes;
- targeted learning, mentoring and leadership development;
- focused emphasis on personal development planning which will support career development and succession planning throughout the business;
- flexible and inclusive working practices that support retention and progression; and
- regular analysis of representation, appointments and promotions at every level.

By enabling more women to progress into senior and higher-paid positions, Dairygold can work towards a more balanced workforce across all pay quartiles and deliver a meaningful, long-term reduction in our gender pay gap.




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