

## Dairy farming roles lack appeal, especially for the more skilled

### Background

More than 2,000 UK adults were questioned in early June 2017 to find out how acceptable they would find the option of working in the dairy farming sector. The questions established their willingness in the past to consider the acceptability of a number of general working conditions, and whether they would consider them acceptable now.

Of the 10 features listed relating to a working environment, six were strongly related to dairy farming – working with animals, working with machinery, being mainly outdoors, situated in rural locations, working within small workforces, and a requirement for flexibility in working hours due to the likelihood of some early morning/late evening and weekend working.

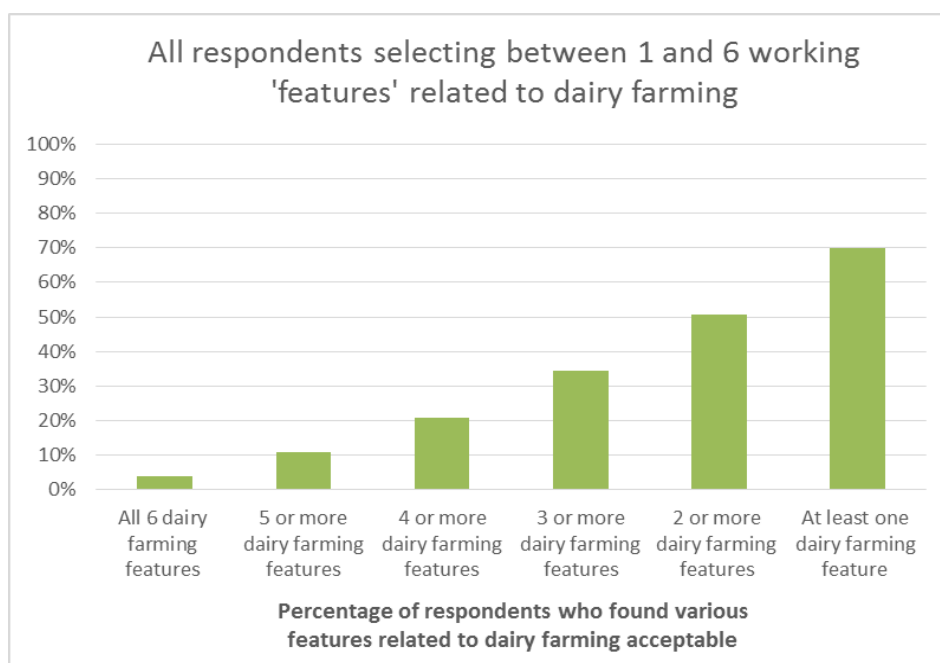
The respondents were then asked how likely they would be to consider a role in dairy farming.

### Overall popularity of dairy farming

A surprising number of respondents – 11% – said it was likely they would consider a role in dairy farming in the future. However, closer inspection of the results suggests this is misleading: the working conditions for dairy farming are unpopular; interest appears to tail off once people are asked how likely they would be to actually consider a role in the sector; and skilled or qualified people are more unlikely (51%) to consider a job in dairy farming than semi or low skilled people (9% and 37% respectively), despite competitive pay,

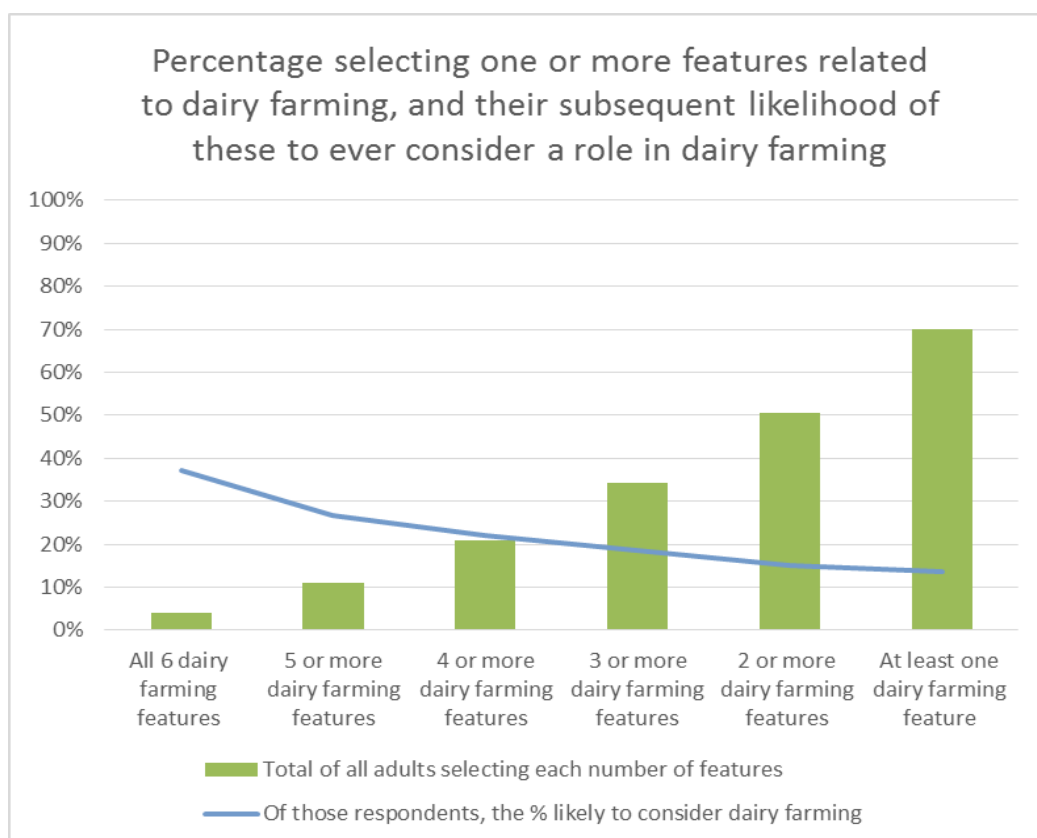
### The working 'features' of dairy farming

Just 4% (82) of those questioned say they would consider all six features (related to dairy farming) personally acceptable in a job role.



Many of those who consider these features acceptable would be unlikely to take their interest forward if actually offered a role in the sector. For example, just over a third (37%) of those saying they would accept all six of these features in a job role would be likely to ever consider a role in dairy farming (1.5% of the whole sample)

As one would expect, as fewer features linked to working conditions on dairy farms are selected as personally acceptable, there is progressively reducing interest in considering an actual role in dairy farming.



### Popularity of various features of dairy farming

The least popular of the tasks associated with dairy farming work is working with machinery. Only 15% had ever considered a job with this criteria, such as working with computerised technology or heavy lifting equipment, in the past and only 17% would consider it personally acceptable if they were applying for a job now.

Just 18% had considered work involving animals in the past with 27% considering it personally acceptable now. Working in a rural location was also fairly unpopular with 23% considering it in the past and 36% deeming it acceptable now.

### Skills base

Of all respondents who said it would be likely they would ever consider a job in dairy farming, the biggest percentage comprised those who were unskilled or had low skills, were unqualified or just had school qualifications (40%).

Of those who would be unlikely to consider a job in the industry, the biggest percentage comprised those with highly skilled qualifications, from higher further education up to degree level (51%).

Of those who said they would find all six dairy farming requirements acceptable and went on to say they would be likely to consider a job in dairy farming (31 respondents), just 12 were skilled or well-qualified.

## Summary

- Very few people – 4% in this survey – would consider job roles that include all the main features of working on a dairy farm personally acceptable.
- Of those finding any one or more of the features related to dairy farming personally acceptable, 81% of these said they are unlikely to consider a role in the sector, suggesting that they lose interest once they are aware it is in dairy farming.
- Working with machinery and animals is particularly unpopular, as is working in a rural location.
- A tiny number (12) of skilled or well-qualified respondents appear to accept the main features of working on a dairy farm and would be likely to consider a role in the sector. The greatest proportion – 51% – of those unlikely to consider a role in dairy farming are skilled or well-qualified.

## About the survey

*All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2097 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 1st - 2nd June 2017. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).*

### LOW SKILLED

No formal qualifications  
CSE grades 2-5  
CSE grade 1, GCE O level, GCSE, School Certificate  
Scottish Ordinary/ Lower Certificate  
GCE A level or Higher Certificate  
Scottish Higher Certificate

### SEMI SKILLED

Youth training certificate/skillseekers  
Recognised trade apprenticeship completed  
Clerical and commercial  
City & Guilds certificate  
City & Guilds certificate - advanced  
ONC

### SKILLED

Nursing qualification (e.g. SEN, SRN, SCM, RGN)  
Teaching qualification (not degree)  
University diploma  
Other technical, professional or higher qualification  
University or CNAA first degree (e.g. BA, B.Sc, B.Ed)  
University or CNAA higher degree (e.g. M.Sc, Ph.D)

### DON'T INCLUDE

Don't know  
Prefer not to say