



TEAGASC PHD WALSH FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

“Impact of grass feeding versus concentrate production systems on the sensory characterisation of Irish beef”

Ref Walsh Fellowship Number: 2017108

Background

Ireland has a strong reputation for grass-fed beef production; beef is also produced through grain-fed systems, although to a lesser extent. The importance assigned to understanding the sensory characteristics of beef is increasing as industry recognises the extent to which consumers base their perception of quality on the sensory properties of the product. Although animal diet and production system are known to influence sensory quality, little is currently known about the complexity of how grass-forage and grain-fed systems affect the sensory profile, consumer liking and emotional appeal of beef. This research project will take a collaborative approach to develop a comprehensive sensory map of Irish grass- and grain-fed beef using a combination of sensory evaluation, flavour chemistry and emotional profiling techniques. The study will determine the key sensory properties that are driving consumer liking of beef in Ireland, and will apply flavour chemistry techniques to investigate whether differences in sensory perception are due to individual compounds originating from the diet of the animals. The research will also measure consumers' emotional response to beef produced under different systems to determine how meat-evoked emotions relate to sensory properties. The findings will enhance our understanding of the influence of different diets on sensory perception of beef in Ireland, and provide important information which could be used for targeted marketing of Irish grass-fed beef globally.

Requirements

Applicants should have a first or upper second-class honours primary degree or equivalent in an appropriate discipline (food science, or similar). The successful candidate should be highly self-motivated, interested in sensory science and be prepared for laboratory work involving meat products.

Award

The PhD Fellowship is a joint research project between Teagasc Food Research Centre, Ashtown and Texas A&M University. The student will be based at Teagasc Food Research Centre, Ashtown and will be registered at Texas A&M University, working under the supervision of Prof. Rhonda Miller, in association with Teagasc supervisors, Drs Emily Crofton and Eimear Gallagher.

The fellowship funding is €22,000 per annum. University fees are paid by the student from the stipend, which is tenable for 4 years.

Further Information/Applications

Dr Emily Crofton, Food Quality and Sensory Science Department, Teagasc Food Research Centre
Ashtown, Dublin 15.

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Application Procedure

Please submit an electronic copy of your Curriculum Vitae and a letter of interest simultaneously to Dr Emily Crofton.

Closing date:

Friday, 18th August, 2017.