



TEAGASC PHD WALSH FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

“Understanding consumer attitudes and behaviour in relation to the development and consumption of meat by-products”

Ref: 2013044

Background

Enterprise Ireland (2008) estimate that 263 kg/head of ‘waste’ is generated per beef animal processed. This represents a significant cost, as well as an opportunity foregone. This is because many of the secondary or by-products include edible offal, tendons, etc. which are currently sold to low value markets as well as components that could be upgraded to food grade. However, “unless consumers can agree that the benefits of by-products management are equivalent to sustainable, desirable and acceptable food production practices, consumers are unlikely to recognise and realise many of the potential benefits of by-products management (Frewer and Gremmen, 2007, p32). Indeed, there is concern that consumers will not accept food products derived from secondary, by-product or waste streams, as they may consider them “waste”, “unnatural” or “unhealthy” for example. This project seeks to improve understanding of how consumers view such source materials, conceptualise sustainability and consider product concepts utilising such ingredients, as well as understanding their information sourcing and processing patterns. The ultimate aim is to support the development of strategies that reduce the possibility of consumer out-of-hand rejection of the upgrading of by-products. The research will adopt a mixed-methods approach. It will form an integral part of a larger project funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (called ReValueProtein) so there will be close interaction with technical researchers throughout.

Requirements

Applicants should have a good primary degree (First or Second Class Honours) or M.Sc. in an appropriate discipline (food business, marketing, food science, sociology, psychology, etc.). The successful candidate should be highly self-motivated and be prepared to undertake fieldwork using a range of data collection techniques.

Award

The PhD Fellowship is a joint research project between the Department of Agrifood Business and Spatial Analysis, Teagasc and the Department of Food Business and Development, University College Cork. The student will be based at the Teagasc Food Research Centre at Ashtown, Dublin 15 (under the supervision of Dr Maeve Henchion) and will be registered at University College Cork (under the supervision of Dr. Mary McCarthy). The Fellowship will start as soon as possible (with registration in UCC in July or October) when the most suitable candidate is appointed.

The fellowship provides a stipend of €21,000. University fees are paid by the student from the stipend which is tenable for 3 years.

Further Information/Applications

Dr Maeve Henchion, Rural Economy and Development Programme Teagasc, Teagasc Food Research Centre, Ashtown, Dublin 15, Republic of Ireland

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Dr Mary McCarthy, Department of Food Business and Development, University College Cork.

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Application Procedure

Submit an electronic copy of Curriculum Vitae and a letter of interest simultaneously to:

Dr Maeve Henchion (maeve.henchion@teagasc.ie) and

Dr Mary McCarthy (m.mccarthy@ucc.ie).

Closing date

12th April 2013