



### **Company**

The Little Milk Company

### **Sector**

Dairy

### **Chief products**

A range of organic cheddar and cream cheeses

### **Sustainability headlines**

- Developed the first unpasteurised organic mature cheddar in Ireland
- Plastic wrapping to be 100% recyclable and compostable by 2019
- Whey by-product now replacing organic meal in organic pig farms

### **Background**

The Little Milk Company is the trading name of Irish Organic Milk Producers (IOMP), which comprises of 10 organic dairy farmers spread across Munster and Leinster.

### **Who we are**

The Little Milk Company was established in 2008 to act as the product development and marketing body for 10 organic milk producers located throughout Ireland with a total milk pool of three million litres per annum.

Following market analysis, opportunities were identified for the company in premium raw-milk white organic cheddar and soft cheeses. The Little Milk Company now offers multi award-winning cheeses and is establishing a strong market at home and abroad.



### **Our sustainability credentials**

Since its establishment, The Little Milk Company has shown clear leadership around the goals of sustainability. It developed the first unpasteurised organic mature cheddar in Ireland; is one of only a handful of companies to pay a fair price for organic produce; and is committed to creating a sustainable market for organic milk. Through its commitments and actions, it seeks to encourage other farmers to get involved in organic dairying.

As well as practicing a sustainable, organic, low input dairying system, all its farmers participate in environmental schemes such as Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-Environment Scheme (GLAS) (<http://goo.gl/kYItDM>) and Agri-Environment Options Scheme (AEOS) (<http://goo.gl/R4vUlo>), which involves measures such



as tree planting, hedge laying, wild bird cover, habitat protection, wild meadows, and the introduction of clover into grasslands.

The Little Milk Company uses traditional methods of cheese making, and refrains from using chemical additives. Accreditation achieved by the company includes: IOFGA Certification; HACCP; Department of Agriculture Approved Milk Purchaser; and Good Food Ireland food Provider. As part of Origin Green, IOMP farmers will join the Bord Bia Dairy Assurance Scheme.

### **Origin Green in action**

The Little Milk Company's participation in Origin Green covers the years 2014 to 2019, with 2014 being the base year. The company is targeting three areas for action:

- Raw material sourcing (packaging)
- The manufacturing process (biodiversity and whey)
- Social sustainability (the company's role in the community)

Currently, plastic wrapping used for cheese is not recyclable. During the lifetime of the plan, a stretch target is to make packaging 100% recyclable and compostable. A re-sealable style packaging will also be introduced.

Whey is the main waste output in cheese production. Through Origin Green, whey that was formerly a waste product is now being used as organic feed in an organic pig farm: with 90,000 litres of what was once waste whey, now replacing an equivalent 10,000 kg of organic meal.

The Little Milk Company is also in negotiation with an organic drink producer to develop an organic whey drink.



### **Social responsibility**

Investing in the local community is an important element of social responsibility. As a fast growing company, The Little Milk Company will mentor a JobBridge intern (<http://goo.gl/GfqxYV>) and a university student on an annual basis to give them experience in the organic food and business sector. The company supports a variety of local community groups in Ireland, including the Croom Development Association. (<http://cromadh.com/>)

### **What we're doing better**

The Little Milk Company believes that the development and conservation of the ecosystems on each of its 10 farms is important. Over the lifetime of their Origin Green plan, they will seek to increase the amount of natural flora and fauna on its farms. Wildlife audits will be followed by training from organic certified eco specialists, training farmers on the methods to increase and diversify flora and fauna.

For more information, visit [www.thelittlemilkcompany.ie/contactus](http://www.thelittlemilkcompany.ie/contactus)

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