

## Managing The Farm Workers

### Workforce management

As herd size increases, the labour resources on farm become stretched. Initially, this is dealt with by adopting labour efficient techniques and systems. These include compact calving, an efficient calf feeding system and a good milking routine, to mention but a few.

Another approach with increasing numbers is to increase the use of relief workers or contractors e.g. milkers, slurry, fertiliser and heifer rearing. But as numbers increase further additional full-or part-time staff may be considered. This can be difficult for you to see as you attempt to complete all of the work yourself. Joint farming ventures, such as farm partnerships and share farming are also ways to gain help and share responsibilities.

#### Importance of workforce management

The ability to manage staff is a key skill requirement in order to ensure a profitable business operation. A good workforce management approach will help the business run smoothly with minimum stress.

If workers enjoy their work environment they are less likely to want to leave and this gives a much better return on the investment or payback with their skills development.

#### Requirements in managing a workforce

- All employment issues such as hiring, keeping workers, employment conditions and costs.
- Defining work tasks before and during employment.
- Team works skills and ability to lead.
- Negotiation and communication.
- Help available in managing a workforce

Farmers who start employing people need in most cases to acquire new skills and information. The main sources of information include:

Labour Relations Agency

**[www.lra.org.uk](http://www.lra.org.uk)**

Department for Employment and Learning

**[www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)**

Department for Communities Employers Online NI

[www.employersonlineni.com](http://www.employersonlineni.com)

Health and Safety Executive NI

[www.hseni.gov.uk/](http://www.hseni.gov.uk/)

HMRC

[www.gov.uk/pay-for-employers](http://www.gov.uk/pay-for-employers)

### Training Opportunities

There is a broad range of skills-based training available in workforce management. The key training areas of relevance would include:

- Negotiation and Communication
- Leadership
- Management
- Workforce/ Human Resource Management

