



Quota boost to organic dairy farmers

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ORGANIC milk producers can apply for up to 45,000 litres of additional milk quota from the National Reserve under a new scheme announced by Minister for Food and Horticulture Trevor Sargent. This scheme is a boost to the growing organic market as it will allow existing producers to expand as well as encourage new entrants into the sector.

The Minister said a strong

market already exists and continues to grow, both at home and abroad, for Irish organic dairy products. The basic raw material — organic milk — is in scarce supply in this country and producers, supplying to the main processor Glenisk, could not expand. The new scheme has been facilitated by the recent 2% increase in quota from 1 April 2008.

The development is in line with the Organic Action Plan 2008-2012, published by the Department in April this

year. "One of the specific actions in the Plan was to facilitate the expansion of the organic dairy sector by allocating additional quota and I am pleased that we are able to deliver on this so soon," said the Minister. Application forms are available on the Department's website or from Milk Policy Division and the Minister invited organic milk producers to apply at the earliest opportunity.

Meanwhile, a National Organic Food Conference is being run by Bord Bia in

conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food on Thursday 4 September in Waterford. Themed 'Maximising Ireland's Potential', the conference will address scenarios for the future of the Irish organic sector — specifically looking at changes in consumer behaviour and attitudes as well as trends in the routes to market. Places can be reserved at www.bordbia.ie or www.terramadreibreland.com or directly by ringing Karen Devereux on 087-9096418.