



THE INNOVATION JOURNEY



Margaret Farrelly began selling free range eggs in the early 1980's to supplement income from her husband's farm on the Cavan-Meath border. After the arrival of the first 150 hens, Margaret developed a deep affection for them and drew great satisfaction from caring for them and caring for the land.

Margaret's Eggs grew into a family company and fifteen generations of family have produced eggs on their farm, supplying firstly neighbours and later local shops. The company is a passionate family of farmers who live and breathe what they do. Margaret says: *"It is the joy and satisfaction we feel from looking after our hens and caring for the land is what inspires us"*.

THE INNOVATION IMPACT

Margaret started with 150 hens and supplied a nearby buyer who took care of the grading and packaging of the eggs. After a few months of selling eggs through the buyer, Margaret discovered that it would be more lucrative to handle the grading, packaging, and selling of the eggs themselves on their own farm. From

an initial 150 hens the flock grew to 160,000 hens, working with several dozen farmers across the region and packaging close to 50 million eggs a year. To grow the customer base, Margaret engaged in building a wholesome branding model around eggs as she felt that "Eggs had no personality". From this process she launched a new brand, **Margaret's**, and added new products to the market, including an innovative product, pasteurised liquid egg products, for cooking and baking. The business now employs 32 people. The fresh eggs are sold straight from the family farm and through major national retailers and is one of the most easily identifiable trademarks on the Irish shop shelf.



Over 34 years in business, Margaret is proud of how the business has grown and evolved over the years, after capitalising on an opportunity to grow the free-range business after battery cages were banned by the EU from January 2012, forcing egg producers to instead switch to an enriched colony system.

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