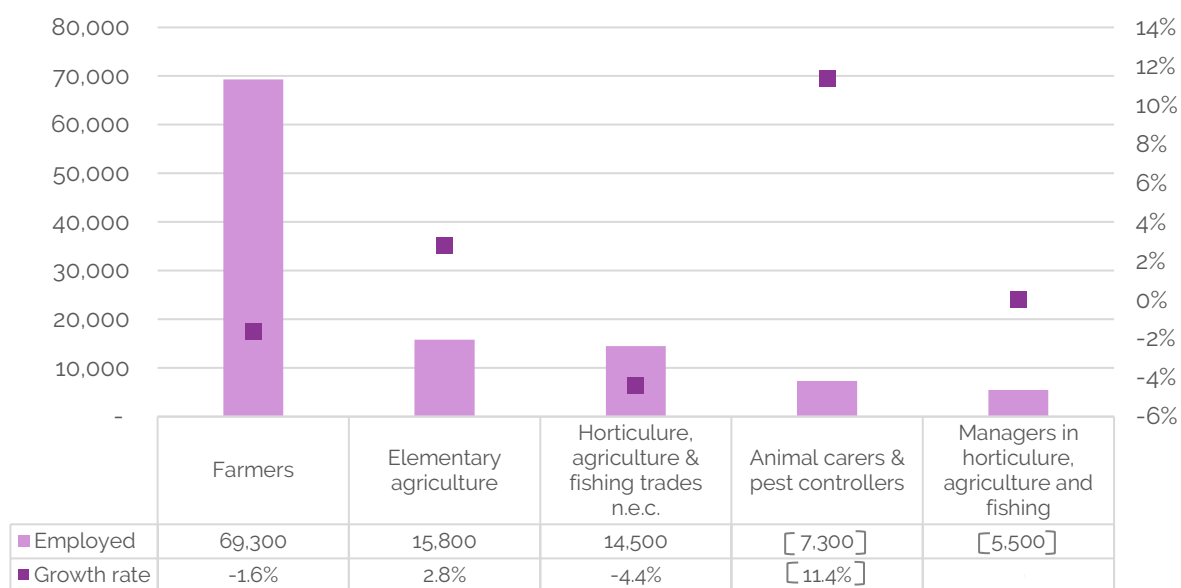


## 10.10 Agriculture & Animal Care Occupations

Figure 10.10 Annual Average Employment (2022) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2017-2022)



<b>Overall employment</b>	<b>112,300</b>
<b>Share of total workforce</b>	4.4%
<b>Main sectors of employment</b>	84% - Agriculture sector
<b>Employment growth</b>	-2,100 between 2017 and 2022 -0.4% on average annually (compared to +3.0% for total workforce)

2022	% Female Q4	% Full-time Q4	% Aged 55 years & over Q4	% Irish citizens Q4	% Third level graduates Q4	Number of new employment permits	Recruitment Agency Survey
Managers in horticulture, agriculture and fishing	...	[93%]	...	[93%]	...	94	
Farmers	12%	78%	61%	99%	19%		
Horticulture, agriculture & fishing trades n.e.c.	...	[59%]	[37%]	95%	...		
Elementary agriculture	[37%]	[55%]	[30%]	75%	...	1,004	
Animal carers & pest controllers	...	...	...	[87%]	...	58	
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>1,156</b>	

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO (LFS) data, DETE, and SLMRU Recruitment Agency Survey (RAS)  
Numbers in square brackets should be treated with caution; an ellipsis ( ... ) denotes numbers too small to report

## Overall Outlook for these Occupations

Overall employment numbers for agriculture and animal care occupations have remained relatively unchanged in recent years. Despite this, there are issues with recruitment resulting in a relatively high number of employment permits issued in 2022. Government targets in relation to climate action and disincentives to engage in low paid work are likely to impact on employment numbers for these occupations in the coming years.

*Note: veterinarians are included in the health occupations.*

Occupation	Economic summary
Managers in horticulture, agriculture and fishing	Numbers employed in this occupation are too small to allow for any analysis. Employment permits issued in 2022 related to farm managers (including pig and dairy).
Farmers	Farmers had a negative employment growth over the five-year period, with employment levels remaining broadly unchanged between 2021 and 2022. Of those employed as farmers, 61% were aged 55 years or older which will likely impact future employment numbers in this occupation.
Horticultural, agricultural & fishing trades n.e.c. (e.g. gardeners)	Although the employment growth over the five-year period was negative for this occupation, employment levels have remained static since 2020. At 37%, the share aged 55 years or older was almost double the national average of 19%. A relatively high share of persons employed in this occupation were employed part-time. The administrative and support services sector accounted for the largest share of employment for this occupation at almost two-fifths.
Elementary agriculture	Employment growth for elementary agriculture workers over the five-year period was marginally below the national average, although employment fell in 2022, returning to 2019 levels. Almost half of those employed in these occupations were working part-time and the share aged 55 years or older was above the national average. At 25%, the share who were non-Irish citizens was above the national average. The re-introduction of quotas for employment permits resulted in just over 1,000 new permits issued in 2022, primarily for horticultural operatives but also mushroom harvesters and dairy farm assistants. There was a large number of vacancies advertised through the DSP for horticultural operatives and harvesters for the mushroom industry. There was also a relatively high share of jobseekers registered with DSP in December 2022 who had previously been employed in agricultural roles. Although there is no evidence of shortages, the apparent attractiveness of the job is resulting in recruitment issues. This occupation has been identified as being at high risk of automation, although this may depend on businesses having the resources to invest in new technology. Issues have also been identified with recruiting trained forestry workers; while the numbers involved are very small <sup>1</sup> , an increase in demand may arise in line with Ireland's Forest Strategy (2023-2030).
Animal carers & pest controllers	Numbers employed in this occupation are too small to allow for any analysis. Employment permits issued in 2022 related to work riders in the equestrian sector.

<sup>1</sup> Partnership for Skills (June 2022) report. Available at <https://regionalskills.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5022a479ede2060ea00e2b0ee&id=236e45ec9f&e=9ac4cage00>