

"The Irish Experience"

Derek O'Brien

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen.

My paper today is entitled "Back to the Future - the Irish Experience" and will cover Bakery Education and Training and the Artisan Baker in Ireland.

The Dublin Institute of Technology is the largest 3rd. level institution in Ireland. Its origins date back to 1887. The Institute caters for 10000 whole time and 12000 part time students. It offers more than 80 programmes at Certificate, Diploma, Degree and postgraduate level, across a wide range of disciplines. The Institute has played a leading role in the evolution of technical,

technological and business education in Ireland and is actively involved in research and development, providing advisory and consultative services to industry. The Institutes has six faculties and twenty six schools located throughout the city on 40 different sites.

In 2007 the Institute will relocate on a phased basis to a new campus on an 80 acre site on Dublin's north side at a capital cost of € 700 million.

It is often forgotten that during the time of the British Empire, Dublin City ranked second only in importance to London. Like London, Dublin had its various

trade Guilds. The Dublin bakers, like their London counterparts, had their own Guild and trade union. John Swift, a self educated socialist, was general secretary of the bakers union during the first part of the last century and he was driving force in the establishment of what was then known as the Dublin bakery school.

1935 by Irish baker's trade union in Dublin. Over the following 40 years it provided training for apprentice bakers. Irish people seeking a higher qualification in baking were forced to look outside the country. In the 15 years leading up to 1970, British Bakery Schools attracted many Irish students, particularly the Borough Polytechnic, London (now University of the South Bank). In 1972, in response to demand the National Bakery School introduced the Diploma in Baking Technology and Management - this course was modelled on the UK National Diploma.

The British connection remained strong and external examiners to this course included Mr. Sid Bamford of the National Bakery School, London;

Mr. John Hilton of the Department of Baking Technology, Thomas Danby College, Leeds; Prof. Mike Whieldon, University of South Bank, London. In recent years Dr. Klaus Kopf of the Bundesfachschule des Deutschen Backerhandwerks has acted as external examiner.

During the early part of the period 1990 to 2002 all seemed well at the National Bakery School. Whole time student numbers increased significantly and academic staff numbers doubled. I was aware that the situation in Britain was somewhat different. British bakery schools were experiencing low student numbers and some schools discontinued bakery courses altogether. I anticipated that such a trend would probably occur in Ireland - but at some time in the future. I was amazed at how quickly we followed the

British trend.

Applications for the Baking Technology & Management programme collapsed. In 1998 we had 6 applicants, in 1999 this dropped to 4, and in 2000 there were no applications at all. There were a number of reasons for this new situation. Rationalization within the bakery industry and the economic boom taking place in Ireland at that time were the main factors. As head of the school I had a responsibility to my staff and to the industry to try somehow to address this problem. The National Bakery School is the only centre dedicated to bakery education and training in southern Ireland. The thought of it ceasing to exist during my stewardship was an anathema to me and I was not prepared to allow that to happen. I held a crisis staff meeting to discuss the future of National Bakery School and to outline a broad ranging action plan I had devised. For the plan to have any chance of success it required total commitment from all members of staff. I am pleased to say that that full and total commitment was forthcoming.

The plan consisted of three essential elements.

Phase 1 involved researching and examining Irish market trends and comparing them with other countries in Europe. We also researched the USA bakery scene and market trends.

Phase 2 involved an in-depth examination of all programmes offered by the National Bakery School with the view of completely redesigning them to meet modern needs. We aimed

to attract a new student clientele from the wider food areas.

Phase 3 This was the most ambitious. It involved strengthening links with the industry, particularly the small and medium size bakeries and promoting

the concept of professionalism among the bakers themselves. To achieve this we needed to establish a professional organisation dedicated to the bakery industry, to introduce a bakery awards scheme and finally, to organise a National Artisan Baker Award competition.

Phase one

The market research confirmed what we already knew. Bread consumption had continued to decrease while at the same time the number of small bakeries was dwindling to a critical point. Industrial bakeries dominated the market and their market share was increasing. One encouraging sign however - the sale of speciality breads was increasing year on year and seemed to be commanding realistic retail prices.

We investigated the craft bakery sector and established that collectively they experienced similar weaknesses. They operated on low margins and possessed inadequate craft skills and technical knowledge. There was a poor appreciation of the terms "Speciality" or "Artisan" baking. Many bakers considered staff education and training as an avoidable expense. There was little evidence of marketing expertise or an understanding of the concept that quality can be used as a vehicle to generate improved sales. All European Union and Irish Government

regulations were regarded as time consuming interferences in the operation of the business.

We established the main strengths as local market knowledge, local goodwill and personal connections. The successful baker tended to consolidate his / her own position in the local community by being aware of local consumer needs and by providing better quality product.

We researched and compared all aspects of the baking industry in Ireland with Britain and Europe. Ireland was bottom of the table in all the categories examined, including number of bakeries operating in each country, ratio of craft bakeries to industrial. The average retail price of bread was lowest in Britain, followed by Ireland and bread consumption was lowest in both countries. There was however one sign of encouragement. Bread sales and consumption had increased in Ireland in recent years.

The baking industry in Ireland and Britain have developed along very similar lines, with a similar product range and manufacturing methods. Both markets are dominated by the industrial produced sliced pan. There is little comparison between this product and the type of breads popular in France and Germany - and therein lies the problem.

Next we moved our attention to the baking industry in USA. We were very impressed with the contribution the Bread Bakers Guild of America had made to the baking scene in that country. The organization was

established in 1993 with a single goal - to raise the professional standards of artisan bread baking in America. The Guild filled a void for those bakers passionate about traditional baking techniques and the organisation has grown from one mans dream (Tom McMahon) to a worldwide membership of 1300. Early in its existence the guild took the highly ambitious step of entering a team of American bakers in the Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie (the world cup of baking) at Europain in Paris. The USA team first entered the competition in 1994 and were placed in the in top 6 finalists. In 1996 *they* were again placed in the top six finalists and also won 1st. prize in the breads section. In 1999 they achieved the impossible - they won the competition. In 2002 they followed up their success with a very credible second place. This organisation has made huge strides in re-introduction artisan bread and bread making methods to America and also have achieve this huge accolade of an American baking team winning the most important baking competition in the world.

The USA bakery market trends indicated that bread consumption was increasing and particularly the sales of artisan breads. As a direct result of this increased market share the specialist baker began to experience a skills shortage. This has led to a renewed interest in baking courses. In response to this demand the American Institute of Baking has introduced a 16 week full time Certified Baker Programme aimed at bakery employees. The

Retail Bakers Association has also introduced a Certification scheme that includes both Journeyman and Master Baker qualifications.

While we were researching the American market, Forfas, the Irish expert group on future skills needs issued a report on the USA food industry. In the section covering the bakery industry it stated:

Following a prolonged and intense period of rationalisation and automation, the USA bakery industry has now taken note of consumer demands. It is now reverting back to "Old Technology" and is concentrating on the production of more "traditional", "specialist" and "regional" bread products. It is now accepted that the key drivers in the bakery industry in the future will be towards a "Market Led" rather than "Production Driven" market. This trend is likely in Ireland.

Phase Two

An in-depth examination of the programmes offered by the National Bakery School commenced. The outcome was a recommendation to design a completely new programme that would appeal to students from previously untapped sources and cater for a new student clientele. The programme would be structured in such a manner to be exciting, with an emphasis on quality and a substantial level of hands on practical experience. It should have a flexible timetable to

facilitate mature students in full time employment and encourage the concept of life long learning. It would be modularised to allow the student to complete the programme selectively and over a time period suitable to their requirements.

Rather than wait until the end of what could be a long programme validation process, I decided to straight away offer the practical elements of the new programme on a part time pilot basis for assessment purposes. In 2000 two elements, professional baking bread and professional baking cake were offered attracting 135 students. In 2001 two further elements, professional baking sweet bread and professional baking pastry were offered and the four elements between them attracted over 200 students. The following year these four courses attracted 400 students.

Students who had taken all four elements demanded more, so we introduced a further two elements. These new elements, professional baking German breads and professional baking German cake, were unique in that they were delivered at the Bundesfachschule des Deutschen Backerhandwerks, the premier master baking school in Germany.

Last year applications for these part time courses reached 600 with over 400 students being facilitated. The School was now at full stretch over a 6 day week and clocking up 60 hours during the week. Almost overnight the National Bakery School experienced a transition from what was perceived as a failing entity to a school that could

boast the most dramatic increase in student numbers and the most utilized facilities in the entire Institute.

Few among this new student cohort were bakers. They were people who had travelled and who appreciated real bread but were having difficulty in sourcing it in Ireland. Here was significant proof that consumer requirements were not being met.

After 18 months of planning the new programme entitled "Certificate in Baking and Pastry Arts, Technology and Management" was validated by the Dublin Institute of Technology. This 2 year whole time programme

commenced in September 2004. It attracted the first preferences of 90 leaving certificate students (A Levels). 20 offers of a place were made and 15 students enrolled (including 3 non EU students)

The programme is divided into 3 **segments. Baking and Pastry Arts Studies.** This is the practical hands on element. The programme covers breads, Cakes, Sweet Breads and Pastry with student contact of 10 hours per week. **Technology and Science Studies** covers the areas of ingredient studies, baking technology, product development, food science, cereal science, food hygiene and safety, and nutrition. Finally, **Management Studies** covers IT Studies, communications, management studies, cost control management, food marketing, production planning, quality assurance and enterprise development.

Phase Three

This was the most ambitious

element of the plan. We set ourselves the task of strengthening our links with industry and encouraging the small baker to embrace 'the concept and image of the baker as a professional. To this end we looked to our already well established links in Ireland and Europe. These included FAS, the Irish apprenticeship authority, Enterprise Ireland, Slow Food Ireland, Artisan Bakers of Northern Ireland, UK Bakery Schools, British Society of Baking, American Society of Baking, Bread Bakers Guild of America, American Institute of Baking, Rlichemont School Switzerland and the Euro 20 - 21 Partnership.

The Euro 20/21 partnership is a grouping of 5 centres of bakery education and training excellence on mainland Europe. National Bakery School staff have attended and contributed to seminars at these centres. The purpose of these visits was to enable them to familiarize and immerse themselves in the Continental methods.

We needed to establish a professional organisation that would concentrate on the promotion of baking as a profession and bakers as professionals. We were aware that Rlichemont clubs were well established in many European countries. The primary function of these organisations is to maintain and promote high standards in the bakery industry. Most Europeans bakers consider this a sure way to guarantee industry success into the future. The Rlichemont Club Ireland was established by Jimmy Griffin, Griffins Bakery, Galway and myself. The Club

works closely with the National Bakery School in seeking to promote high standards in the industry and to contribute to improvements in the education and skills training of everybody engaged in the industry. The club is non political.

Ireland's National Baking team is made up of 3 members of staff of the National Bakery School. The team is sponsored by the Richeumont Club Ireland and the Dublin Institute of Technology. The first competitive outing was in 2002 at the Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie, European, Paris, where the team achieved 8th. Place.

They then entered and have had some considerable success in the Coupe d'Europe de la Boulangerie competitions. In Switzerland in 2002 they were placed 7th. The following year in France they achieved 3rd. place and this year in Denmark were placed 2nd. and took silver.

Our next task was to establish a baking awards scheme that could be conferred on individuals in recognition of their contribution to the baking industry. It was noted that the French had such an awards scheme. The Meilleurs Ouvriers de France (best craft person of France) is a scheme that annually recognises one person from each profession as the best craftsman. The recipient is presented with a gold medal by the president of France. We decided to introduce a similar scheme in Ireland.

Artisan Baker Award. The Farmleigh estate of 78 acres situated to the north-west of Dublin's Phoenix Park was purchased from the Guinness

family by the Irish Government in 1999 for 30 million. The house is used to accommodate visiting dignitaries and guests of the nation. It is also used as a cultural centre where music, art and gastronomic events are provided for public enjoyment.

This year Farmleigh, in conjunction with Bord Bia (Irish Food Board) and the National Bakery School launched an Artisan Baker competition aimed specifically at the small baker. This new award was presented to the successful baker by an Irish government minister at the end of September last. The winning bakery can expect to benefit from a considerable amount of media publicity over the coming year.

The Winner of the 2004 Farmleigh Artisan Baker Award is:

Jean Baptiste Capral of La Maison des Gourmets, Dublin.

In conclusion, the future for many small bakers in Ireland is uncertain but we should take inspiration from our artisan baker colleagues in Northern Ireland.

We at the National Bakery School are working towards a goal. That goal is to encourage awareness in the consumer and the highest standards by example. The Irish consumer is ready - it is now up to the baker.

Question - Jim Brown, Cumbernauld

First of all Derek congratulations on a superb presentation, the amount of information you gave was fantastic and is going to be very useful in the printed proceedings for people to use in the future. The question I would

like to ask is what happens to most of the students that you get, because you say they don't come from the baking industry, so where do they go, do they utilise their knowledge just for home baking, or the catering industry or where?

Answer - It happened by accident quite frankly, we offered the professional baking courses, with practical elements out and we assumed we might get 30/40 people. The first day 86 people turned up, and I was in business once myself, you don't turn people away if they arrive. All of a sudden other courses were put on for them, bakers or teachers were brought in. The results were whole time courses. We have two things happening here. There are whole time students who are going through a two year full time course, they will go back to the industry and we would hope they will be the technologists and technicians of the future. Even here at this meeting I was asked did I know anyone who would be interested in a job as technician here in a company in Britain. That happens all the time and there is nobody there because the industry stopped training. So we have a group of people in the first year of a two year certificate who will hopefully go out and fill that void. At the same time we are promoting the bakers product with these 400 people who are coming in. Very few of them will ever work in the baking industry, some of them will be interested in working in a bakery on a part time basis, say, and there are some bakers who would be delighted with that, somebody coming in 2/3/4 afternoons per week to do a particular job, but the most important thing is we

are getting media publicity. If you look at any of the food programmes, Jamie Oliver etc, an awful lot of the time they are producing baker's product, and people are really interested in baking and it has happened all of a sudden. The reason as it has happened in Ireland we have become very rich recently and we are travelling more, and we are going to France and Germany and abroad and we are seeing these things and coming

back. People are saying why can't I get that. The baker doesn't want to talk to them so they are coming to us and learning about breads. So you help people have a knowledge of breads, so when they go to the baker next time, they tell him his product is rubbish and will he please improve it, and even suggest technical ways of doing that. So to answer your question there are two courses, one is the group that we are really concentrating on and they are going to be the technologists, the bakers of the future, and the other group are the people who are supporting all of us.

Question - Martin Light body, Hamilton

How often, if at all do you put the students into industry as part of their course? I would obviously be interested in taking some of our students for a time if that's possible.

Answer - Yes it is, now remembering that the whole time students have only started, it's an administrative nightmare trying to arrange to place people and we don't have those facilities. What we do is we ask them to contact bakers themselves, so if you are

interested and you want to contact me I will arrange for some of those students to contact you on the phone. If you want to meet them they can come and see you or vice versa and we would be delighted to do that, so placing them in industry is of course very important. We encourage them also to go to the continent and our connections with the Germans are excellent because when they go to Germany the small bakeries they work with in Germany also supply them with their meals and with their accommodation. So to answer your question we would be delighted to have them placed in industry in Britain if possible.

Question - Jean Grieves, Marple

Congratulations Derek, I'm sure you must be the envy of every bakery school in the UK. I just wanted to ask you have you thought of trying to link your programmes into a National qualification that is accredited towards an NVQ?

Answer - Many years ago when we had quite a lot of students, mainly apprentices, all of them were encouraged to take the City & Guilds qualification because Irish people at that time, and things weren't good in Ireland at the time, if they emigrated to Canada, Australia, New Zealand and they had a City & Guilds qualification, that was a ticket to a job. When the NVQ's came in we didn't like what we saw and we decided to withdraw from it and I haven't looked at the NVQ's in a long time but I'm not too sure

that it would match or marry with what we are trying to do. Having said that I'm open to suggestions.

Question - Andrew Adam,, Chester

Having educated great numbers of young people to come into the industry and picked up on this awareness of good bread, do you also see a role in educating the industry as it is so that the maturer students, so that you've actually got a production base for the future to produce breads of an acceptable quality?

Answer - Yes, we have now been able to consolidate our position and at the beginning of September we offered an artisan bakery course specifically for the industry. We didn't know how it would go but we had 33 bakers come to us over a three day period, not all together we don't have the facilities for that. So 11 per day over a three day period and we brought them through what we describe as basic bread, that's bread made with fermentation, bread made on the ADD process so they could see and taste the difference. On day 2 we brought them through artisan bread as we understand it, that is sough dough, cultures, overnight sponges and so on and on day 3 we brought them through sweetbreads, the likes of which they had never tasted in their lives before. We will offer courses immediately after Christmas because the baking industry after Christmas is not very busy usually and we will offer courses immediately after Easter. Now I have those slots blocked off specifically for the industry. I can't force the industry to come to us and if they don't take this up I will fill it with these professional bakery students, so we will be offering courses and it's up to the bakers to take it. Bakers tend to be very slow on the uptake, they think about things , and they give out about things, so we are hoping slowly, slowly slowly they will become involved in courses with us and this artisans bakers competition should generate an interest things, and they give out about among a lot of them, we hope.

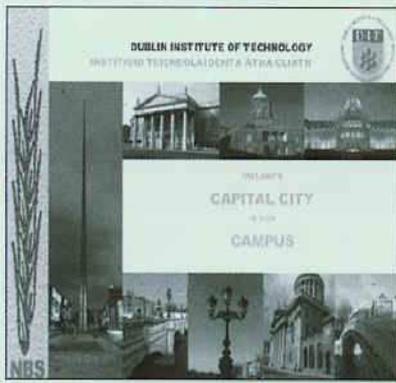
British Society of Baking
Autumn Conference 2004



Back to the Future
The Irish experience

Derek O'Brien BCI, BSB, BAKA

NBS



National Bakery School - History

1935: Bakery School established by Irish Baker Trade Union in Dublin.
Over the following 40 years it provided training for apprentice bakers.

1955 - 1970: British Bakery Schools attract Irish students. Particularly the Borough Polytechnic, London, (now University of the South Bank).

1972: Diploma in Baking Technology & Mgt. Modeled on the UK National Diploma.

External Examiners:
Mr. Sid Blomqvist, Mr. John Wilton,
Prof. Mike Woodson, Dr. Nuala Phipp

John Swift 1896-1990



Don't Panic - Yet

Applications for Baking Technology & Management programme collapse.

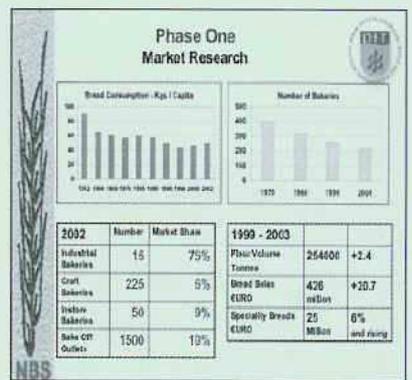
1991: 9 Applicants
1999: 4 Applicants
2000: 3 Applicants

Reasons
Industry rationalization and Ireland's economic boom.

Crisis Meeting
Future of National Bakery School
Board ranging action plan proposed and implemented

Action Plan

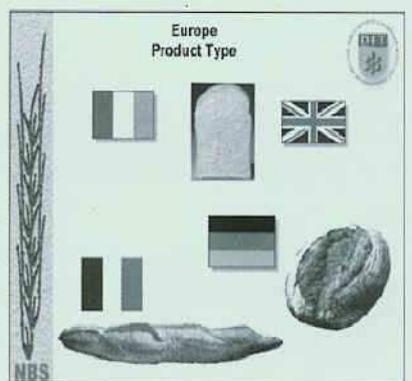
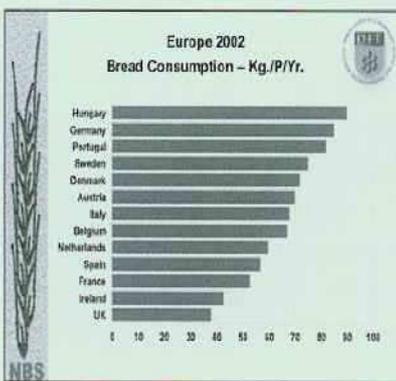
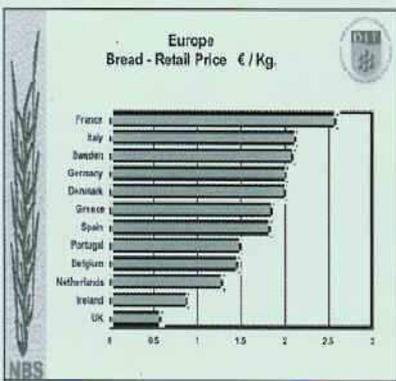
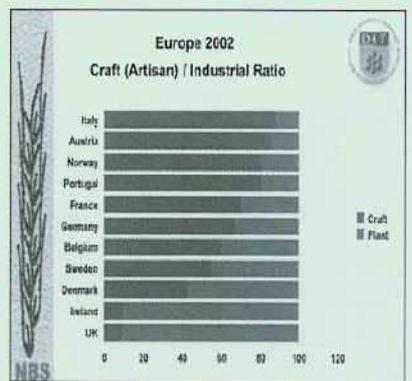
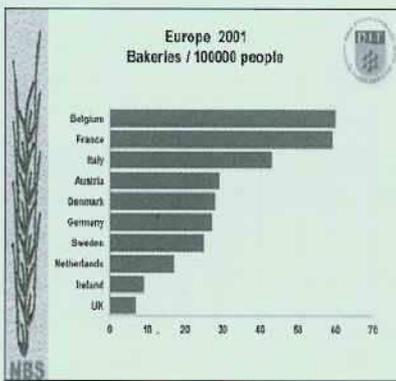
PHASE TWO	PHASE THREE	PHASE ONE
National Bakery School in-depth examination of all programmes. Complete redesign to meet modern needs. Flexibility and modularization. Attract students from hospitality and wider area. Establish new and exciting full time programme	Strengthen industry links Promote concept of professional artisan / specialist baker Establish Professional Organization Introduce Bakery Awards scheme Introduce Master Baker Status Introduce National Artisan Award	Irish Baking Industry Research and examine Irish market trends Compare with European trends Research and examine USA market trends Encourage Irish bakers to "Look outside the Box"



Ireland Craft Bakeries

Weaknesses Low margins. Poor "craft" skills Poor understanding of term "Specialty" baking. Education & Training viewed as an avoidable expense. Little marketing expertise. Poor understanding of specialty & quality concept.	Strengths Local market knowledge. Local goodwill Personal connection. Opportunities Look outside the box Examine consumer needs Provide highest quality Be aware of trends Adopt "Back to the Future" concept Train employees Educate customer
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All Government regulations regarded as interference



USA

THE PROFESSIONAL BAKERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Established in 1990

Goal: to raise the professional standards of artisan bread baking in America

Has grown from one man dream (Tom McMahon) to a worldwide membership of 1300

The Guild filled a void for those bakers passionate about traditional baking techniques

Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie European, Paris

Team USA

- 1994 - in top 8 finalists
- 1996 - 1st in breads section.
- 1999 - Winners
- 2002 - Silver

How did they do it?

- Communication
- Education
- Professionalism
- Promotion

U.S.A. Recent Market Trends

Bread consumption up

Artisan Breads increased market share

Skills shortage

Renewed interest in specialist bakery education and training courses.

New Certification system

journeyman Baker

Master Baker

Enthusiasm for artisan breads is growing

Following a prolonged and intense period of experimentation and automation, the USA bakery industry has now taken note of consumer demands.

It is now reverting back to "Old Technology" and concentrating on the production of more "traditional", "specialist" and "regional" bread products.

It is now accepted that the key drivers in the bakery industry in the future will be towards a "Market Led" rather than "Production Driven" market.

This trend is likely in Ireland

Phase Two Programmes - In-depth Examination

Design new programme to appeal to students from previously untapped sources - cater for a new student clientele

Structured to be interesting and educational with emphasis on quality

Substantial level of hands on practice and experience

Flexible timetable to facilitate mature students in full time employment and the concept of life long learning

Modularized to allow student to complete programme selectively

Practical elements of programme offered on pilot scale for assessment purposes

Pilot fee set at €500 (£340) for 20 session course - 4 hours per session

National Bakery School Pilot - Professional Baking Course

2000 Prof. Baking - Bread

2001 Prof. Baking - Cake

2001 Prof. Baking - Sweet Breads

2002 Prof. Baking - Pastry

2002 Prof. Baking - German Bread

2002 Prof. Baking - German Cake

The school was now school operating 10 hours each day and 6 hours on Saturday

Student Numbers

Year	Students
2000	100
2001	200
2002	400
2003	500

Full time Professional Baking Programme

After 18 month planning new course validated

DfT Certificate Baking & Pastry Arts, Technology and Management

2 Year whole time

Commenced September 2004

Attracted 90 first preference Leaving Certificate students (A Levels)

Places offered - 20

Actual enrolment 13 (including 2 non Irish students)

Certificate in Baking & Pastry Arts, Technology and Management

Baking & Pastry Arts Studies	Technology & Science Studies	Management Studies
Professional Baking Bread	Equivalent Studies	IT Studies
Professional Baking - Cake	Baking Technology New Product Dev.	Communications
Professional Baking - Sweet Breads	Applied Science	Management Studies
Professional Baking - Pastry	Food Science Food Science	Food Marketing
	Food Hygiene & Safety	Production Planning
	Business	Quality Assurance
		Enterprise Development

11 hours per week

8 hours per week

8 hours per week

Phase Three Strengthen Industry Links Encourage Concept of the Professional Baker

FAS Apprenticeship Authority

Enterprise Ireland

Slow Food Ireland

Artisan Bakers of N. Ireland

UK Bakery Schools

British Society of Baking

Richemont School Switzerland

Euro 20 - 21 Partnership

American Society of Baking

Bread Bakers Guild of America

American Institute of Baking

National, European, and International Connections

Euro 20 / 21 Partnership

MIDDELSAAT VAKSCHOOL Wageningen

Bakkerij School, Wageningen

Ter Groene Poort

Levensmitteltechnologie Universität, Bonn

Richemont Club Ireland.

Richemont clubs have been established in many European countries. Their primary function is to maintain and promote high standards in the bakery industry.

Most Europeans consider this a sure way to guarantee industry success in the future.

The Richemont Club Ireland was established by Jimmy Griffin, Griffins Bakery, Galway and Derek O'Shea, National Bakery School.

The Richemont Club Ireland works closely with the National Bakery School in promoting high standards in the industry and contributing to improving the education and skills training of everybody engaged in the industry.

The club is non political.

Richemont Club Ireland Irish National Baking Team

2002 Coupe du Monde 8th

2002 Coupe d'Europe Switzerland 7th

2003 Coupe d'Europe France 3rd

2004 Coupe d'Europe Denmark 2nd

Richemont Club Ireland Achievement Awards

Meilleur Ouvrier de France

High Award for Baking Excellence

FARMLEIGH

FARMLEIGH 2004

ARTISAN BREAD AWARDS

Artisan Baker Award

FARMLEIGH

Bord Bia Irish Food Board

National Bakery School

Government Minister launches Irish Artisan Baker Competition

The Winner

Jean Baptiste Capral - La Maison des Gourmets

Conclusion

ARTISAN

The future for many small bakers in Ireland is uncertain.

We should look to our colleagues in Northern Ireland.

We at the National Bakery School are working towards a goal.

That goal is to encourage higher standards by example.

The consumer is willing - it is now up to the baker.