

Technical Newsletter

Contents:

OF&G at events this summer	2
Problems with docks?	2
Woodchip corrals	2
The use of copper as a fungicide	2
Free FABBL Beef registration	3
New product dev	3
Ion exchange	3
Packaging appeal	3
Leaflets and marketing material	3
Staff news	3
Advertisements	4

GENERAL NEWS

OF&G's new Business Manager and Representative to join Organic Action Plan Group

It is with great pleasure that we announce the appointment of Richard Jacobs as the new OF&G Business Manager. Richard has taken on the role with immediate effect.

For the last two years Richard has been Producer Certification Manager and will continue to oversee that role for the foreseeable future. He replaces Steve Belton in the Business Manager's post, following Steve's move to pastures new earlier this year.

In what's proving to be a busy time for Richard, he has also been announced as the latest member of Defra's Organic Action Plan Group. The group is continuing the work laid-out in the 2002 Organic Action Plan and reports directly to Organic Farming Minister, Ben Bradshaw.

Prior to joining OF&G Richard, 41, was an organic farmer himself for eight years, including four years with Elm Farm Research Centre.

He said: "It's proving to be quite a busy time for me, but for all the right reasons. I'm absolutely delighted to become Business Manager at what is a very exciting time for OF&G. We're constantly working to improve the way we operate and the service we provide and I believe we've got the right team to keep up that momentum.

"Joining the Organic Action Plan Group gives us an even stronger voice right at the heart of the UK organic sector and I'm really pleased to be involved in the important work that has to be done to keep it moving forward."

New Certification Programmes

OF&G is about to launch two new certification programmes, making a total of four in all, in order to meet the increasing demand for certification services. The programmes now available are:

- OF&G/Defra Programme – This is currently based on the EC Regulation and UKROFS Standards, shortly to be changed to the Defra Compendium of UK Organic Standards. All operators are automatically in this programme, as required by EU and UK law.
- Partnership Programme – This is equivalent to the Soil Association Standards and is about to be formally approved by Soil Association Certification Ltd (SA Cert) as being equivalent to their own Symbol Scheme. Operators who supply SA Cert registered processors, particularly pig and poultry producers will be required to register with the Partnership Programme.
- USDA National Organic Program (NOP) – This is required for all operators whose product is to be exported to the USA, and therefore requires compliance with the US Standards.

cont...



Richard Jacobs

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New Certification Programmes cont.

- Higher Level IFOAM Accredited Programme – This has been operating since OF&G became accredited with IFOAM last August and is available to operators who need IFOAM certification in order to supply those multiple supermarkets that demand it. This will also include operators who supply processors registered with SA Cert IFOAM programme (known as the Global Partnership Programme).

All operators should contact their customers to check whether they may be required to register with one of these programmes. If you think that this may be necessary, please contact your certification officer as soon as possible. The additional requirements will shortly be published in the new Control Manual, but can be sent earlier if necessary. The inspector will check for compliance at the annual inspection provided that we are notified in advance, otherwise an additional inspection will be required.

OF&G at events this summer

Come and meet the OF&G Certification Officers at the Royal Show 4th July – 7th July, in the Organic Section, and also in the Organic Marquee at the Royal Welsh Show 19th July – 22nd July. OF&G will also be present at the Pembrokeshire Show between 17th – 19th August.

TECHNICAL NEWS FOR PRODUCERS

Problems with Docks?

Having trouble with docks? Information regarding all aspects of organic weed management can be found on www.organicweeds.org.uk or by contacting Becky Turner or Gareth Davies at the International Research Department, HDRA, Ryton Organic Gardens, Coventry, CV8 3LG, 02476 308200.

Woodchip Corrals

We have recently been informed by Defra that there are concerns within the UK Environment Agencies about woodchip corrals. It would appear that the Environment Agencies are moving towards a policy of strict control, in essence to discourage the use of woodchip corrals, and where still considered, that they are subject to proper prior investigation and risk evaluation. However you should note that no firm decision has been made or policies set out.

Research undertaken on behalf of the Scottish Executive indicates that the concerns are real and that the effluent produced at the base of woodchip corrals is indeed highly polluting and presents a potentially serious risk to ground and surface waters.

All licensees that have or are considering a woodchip corral must ensure that they have the approval of their local Environment Agency for the corral.

The use of copper as a fungicide now needs derogation

As of today the use of copper as a fungicide requires written derogation prior to application.

Derogation requests to use copper as a fungicide must be submitted using OF&G Record Sheet 9. On the request in addition to answering all the questions on the form, we will need to know the name of the product being used and the quantity of copper in the product.

All users of copper as a fungicide should note the following that is an amendment to the EU Regulation on organic farming:

For annual crops;

Until 31st December 2005 no more than 8 kg copper per hectare per year can be applied and from 1st January 2006 no more than 6 kg copper per hectare per year.

For perennial crops;

The total maximum of copper quantity used from 23rd March 2002 until 31st December 2006 must not exceed 38 kg copper per hectare. From the 1st January 2007, the maximum quantity which may be used each year per hectare shall be calculated by subtracting the quantities actually used in the 4 preceding years from, respectively, 36, 34, 32 and 30 kg copper for the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and following years.

Should you have any queries about the above, please do not hesitate to contact your Certification Officer.



Free FABBL Beef registration

Anglo Beef Processors (ABP) are offering to pay the cost of FABBL registration for any organic producers that are new to the FABBL scheme and are supplying, or intending to supply beef, to ABP. Please note that this offer is only available for new entrants to the FABBL Beef scheme. If you wish to take advantage of this offer contact Yvonne Blackmore at EFSIS on - 01908 844314 and ask for a 'free of charge' FABBL Beef registration form.

TECHNICAL NEWS FOR PROCESSORS

New Product Development

If you are thinking about launching a new organic product, please let us know during the development process. By informing us in the early stages, we will be able to approve ingredients, processes and your new label before launch, preventing any costly alterations.

Please contact Nicola Strudwick, Processing Certification Officer on 0845 330 5122 ext 230 or email nicola.strudwick@organicfarmers.uk.com

Ion exchange is a processing aid not allowed in organic production

Defra have confirmed, with the Article 14 committee of the EU that Ion exchange is a processing aid/procedure that is not allowed in organic production. We have been given a few months for any processor using ingredients produced by ion exchange or using ion exchange to source a suitable alternative. If any one has an issue with this please will they contact Caroline Cheyne on caroline@organicfarmers.uk.com or tel: 0845 330 5122 ext 233.

Packaging Appeal

We made an appeal a little while ago for you to send in packaging for us to use in displays at the Royal Show and the Royal Welsh. We have had a good response but the more we see the better the display will be. If you have not already let us have some examples of your products, please send us any packaging you would like to see displayed on our stand.

Leaflets and marketing material

Many companies producing organic foods are creating promotional literature, websites and advertising with emphasis on the organic status of their products. If you are thinking of creating this type of material please let us know. We are able to make suggestions as to the wording of your literature as well as check all reference to organic production. We are also able to supply a copy of our logo, which may be used on promotional material.

Staff News – New face on organic licensing team



Experienced farm and animal health worker, Jenny Bibb, is the latest addition to the team at Organic Farmers & Growers. Jenny, 29, has joined OF&G as a Producer Certification Officer and will be working closely with farming licensees.

With an honours degree in Agriculture from Harper Adams University College, Jenny has run her own business as a relief milker and spent a year working as a casual animal health inspector for Defra. She has also travelled the world extensively, working on farms in New Zealand and Australia during a 12-month trip.

She said: "I'm really pleased to have joined Organic Farmers & Growers. Organics is a fascinating and growing sector of the industry and I'm learning fast about the dedication and skills of the people in it. I've worked hands-on around farming for my whole career so far. Now I'm enjoying being immersed more in the business side with one of the organisations that supports agriculture in this country."

Senior Certification Officer, Steve Clarkson, added: "We're delighted to have Jenny on the team. She has a wealth of on-farm experience which will be invaluable in providing a practical service to our licensees."



For Sale

12 tons organic **Nicola seed potatoes**, elite 1 grade, size 35-55 mm. Contact Mr Ashworth. Tel: 01328 855400. Norfolk. (posted 22/04/04)

Organic 16 month old Steers - 6 Aberdeen Angus and 6 Limousin, One claim taken. Contact Mr Webber Tel: 01884 860346. Devon. (posted 06/05/04)

6 in **calf Ayrshire heifers**, due mid June, in calf to Ayrshire. Contact Mr Adams. Tel: 01335 330203. Derbyshire. (posted 26/05/04)

British Friesian first calf heifers, springing to calf. Contact Mr Weaver. Tel: 01275 472207. North Somerset. (posted 04/06/04)

Organic spring barley & organic cross Charolais, Limousin and Montbeliard calves. Contact Mr & Mrs D E Ward. Tel: 01691 830262. Shropshire. (posted 21/06/04)

Organic dairy herd for sale, 76 cows averaging approx 6385 ltrs at 4.08 BF, 3.40 P, 12 months rolling SCC 185, Bactoscan 36, herringbone parlour milked and cubicle housed, calve all year round, good udders, presently ave 27 ltrs/ day, looking for £650/cow or £45.000 for whole herd, May split, Contact Martyn Glover Tel: 01392461302 or 07860835754. Devon (posted 21/06/04)

Wanted

Over-wintering land, organic or in conversion, for at least 150 hogs. Preferably Cumbria, Durham or North Lancashire. Needed from mid September 2004 until the end of March 2005. Contact Mrs Wilson. Tel: 01833 640791.

Growers required for borage seed production on buy back contract fixed price. Yorks/Lincs preferred but not essential. Preferably minimum of 25 acres. Seed provided and full advice with visits free of charge. Low input crop, ideal for organic. Careful management to control subsequent volunteers required. Planting anytime April to mid May. Contact Phillip Clayton. Tel: 01652 678661 or email pbcenterpr@aol.com. (posted 05/04/04)

Organic Ayrshire cows or heifers, must be spring calving. Contact Peter Willis. Tel: 01928 740348. Cheshire. (posted 14/06/04)

Wanted for an art performance project in Liverpool. We are looking to hire 6 organic cows for 14 days. We would also need a cow handler for the duration of the project. Contact Ulrike Steven. Tel: 020 7684 8232 (posted 21/06/04)

Miscellaneous

Organic grazing to let at Dallington, East Sussex. Contact Martin Maunders. Tel 01424 838564 (posted 10/06/04)

Wanted an experienced Organic manager to help convert, develop and manage a 100 acre farm to organic production. Mainly Horticulture (vegetables, soft fruit, fresh flowers, willows) and some smaller animals (sheep). No cattle but maybe some Deer.

The farm is located on the South Down Coast of Northern Ireland at the foot of The Mourne with a half mile river of salmon and trout fishing. Has existing Farm House and 2 cottages which are being refurbished for self catering purposes. We would want to exploit the tourism use of the dwelling and cottages to supplement the farm income and would like if a Managers wife or partner could take control of this area. Also farm shop.

Accommodation for family will be provided and transport. This is an exciting opportunity for a passionate and progressive producer to become part of an exciting organic development.

Please forward CV with references to: The Human Resources Manager, Clogarran Hall, 43 Killowen Old Road, Rostrevor, Co Down, N Ireland, BT34 3AD.

I am looking for work as a picker/harvester during July in Ireland or the UK. Contact Jethro Brice. Email: jeth@myrealbox.com. Posted (21/06/04)

Organic Farmers and Growers

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The Practical Organisation for Organic Certification

We're on the Web!

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www.organicfarmers.uk.com