

# Technical Newsletter

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## GENERAL NEWS

It has been a busy but productive couple of months for OF&G and here we present a round-up of what we've been up to on your behalf:

### **Poultry derogation to stay until 2010**

Following wide discussion in the industry, organic poultry producers in business before 1999 will be allowed to continue to benefit from their flock size derogation.

The derogation, which currently permits up to nine birds per square metre and flocks of up to 12,000 (OF&G licenses none above 9,000), was scheduled to end in 2005 – five years earlier than for our continental counterparts.

However, following lobbying from the sector, organic farming minister Ben Bradshaw has agreed to leave the derogation in place until 2010, allowing producers to compete with Europe. OF&G discussed the matter face-to-face with the minister and made its own written representation to Defra on the issue.

OF&G has welcomed this move, while remaining sensitive to the fact that producers entering the sector since 1999 are already operating at the lower levels of six birds per square metre and 3,000 in a flock.

OF&G Business Manager, Richard Jacobs, said: "We believe that pushing back the end of the derogation is the lesser of two evils. It will give those producers covered by the derogation the opportunity to gear-up for the lower levels, while still being able to compete with Europe. The alternative was a huge part of our egg industry being made instantly uncompetitive and that would damage UK organics as a whole."

### **Control Manual & Email Addresses**

OF&G will be distributing a new Control Manual in the near future.

Due to the high costs of printing and postage, it has been decided to offer the following options.

- Either a CD-ROM for use on a computer and/or for printing out, which will be free of charge.
- Or a printed copy posted to you that will incur a charge of £12, which will be added to your annual fee.

During the next few weeks we will be telephoning you to ask for your preference. We will also be asking if you have a valid email address to update our records. Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

### **Christmas opening hours**

The OF&G office will be closing for the Christmas break at 1pm on Christmas Eve. It will re-open on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 2004. The office will also be closed for the Bank Holiday on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2005.

## Contact us

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# TECHNICAL NEWS FOR PRODUCERS

## **Update re seeds: Potato Seed**

Please be aware that if you are intending to produce organic potatoes next season you should order your organic potato seed in good time (January/February) in order to ensure that you get the best quality of organic seed available. Any licensee ordering late should be aware that if the variety that they want to use is not available as organic the non-organic stock may be from treated seed which cannot be used on organic farms.

## **Use of synthetic vitamins A, D & E for sheep, cattle and other ruminants**

The OF&G Certification Committee has been reviewing the derogations allowing the use of synthetic vitamins for sheep, cattle and other ruminants. The following will now apply to all applications to use these synthetic vitamins:

- 1) If you need to use synthetic vitamins for your ruminant livestock you must submit a derogation request to OF&G using OF&G Record Sheet 9 the 'Restricted Practice and Material Derogation Application Form'.
- 2) When submitting the request for derogation you must provide the following additional items:
  - A copy of that part of the Animal Health Plan that describes the issues and specifies the need for these supplements;
  - A copy of a letter from your vet supporting the request to use synthetic vitamins.

This derogation, when approved, will not need to be renewed annually as is usually the case with derogations. However the Health Plan must be reviewed regularly and if necessary updated, to ensure that it is still appropriate to the health status of the cattle. The OF&G Inspectors will be checking that the Health Plan is reviewed and updated regularly.

If you already have a derogation approved for the use of synthetic vitamins and you submitted the copy of the Health Plan and the vet's letter detailed above then you do not need to get your derogation renewed. However please be aware that the Inspectors will be checking the Health Plans and that they are regularly reviewed and updated.

## **Non organic seed derogations**

Following a recent amendment to the Regulation 2092/91, there have been some changes to the way in which the derogations for non-organic seeds, plants and seed potatoes are to be handled.

A new UK database has been developed ([www.organicXseeds.co.uk](http://www.organicXseeds.co.uk)) which now contains all the known varieties of organically produced seed. This will be kept up to date by the seed merchants, who must register the availability of their organic seeds online. If you have access to the internet, this site should now be checked for the availability of a variety before an application is made. If you do not have internet access, please contact your certification officer at OF&G.

Applicants should continue to apply directly to OF&G for all seed derogations.

In line with the other certification bodies we have had to develop a new system and Derogation Application Form to comply with these changes. Producers must use the revised Record Sheet 4 for all applications. This combines the previous sheets for grass/forage mixtures and single seeds onto one sheet and will be printed in the forthcoming revision of the OF&G Control Manual. A copy is enclosed for immediate use. Please do not use any previous versions from now on otherwise your application may be rejected or delayed.

Page 16 now incorporates the official instructions from Defra, which explains the steps to be followed and lists the reasons to justify the use of the non-organic seed – (a); (b); (c); (d1); (d2); (d3); and (e). Applicants must familiarise themselves with these and use the correct letter in the Justification box for each variety. If (c) is used for an agronomic justification, additional evidence must be supplied. Box (e) is to be used for grass/forage mixtures containing 50% or more organic seed.

**The layout of the Seed Derogation Notice issued by OF&G has also been changed to include the new information required and may be a little longer than before.**



# MISCELLANEOUS

## GoFarmer website

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www.gofarmer.com is a new website to help farmers and rural people sell their goods by either farm to farm sales or marketing to the general public. Items for sale include all types of livestock, machinery, vehicles, land and farms to meat and veg boxes to your door. You can also advertise your farm shop, holiday let, farm attractions; in fact anything rural!

### **One year free trial for members of OF&G**

Members of OF&G are being given the opportunity for a free trial on the gofarmer.com website. This offer allows you to advertise and sell as many items as you want and at no cost. You would also have control over your adverts via your own admin area. What's the catch? There isn't one; Gofarmer are running this as a special introductory offer (usual price £35). To take advantage of this free offer go to [www.gofarmer.com](http://www.gofarmer.com) and register as a buyer. This service is free. Then send an email to [info@gofarmer.com](mailto:info@gofarmer.com) and mention that you have joined as a buyer and that you are a member of OF&G. Gofarmer will upgrade you to a seller, which is normally chargeable, for free.

## How's your IQ?

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The TV production company behind BBC1's Test The Nation programme is looking for male farmers to form a team for a forthcoming edition.

The show, presented by Phillip Schofield and Anne Robinson, will be broadcast live from a studio in London in December. Various teams, including one made up of celebrities, will be tested on their knowledge of events from the past year.

The production company, Talent TV, is looking for male farmers to make up a team and anyone who takes part will have their travel expenses paid and will be fed and watered for the day.

If you are interested contact them directly:

Phone: Jo on - 020 7421 7816  
Email: [Johanna.holloway@talenttv.com](mailto:Johanna.holloway@talenttv.com)  
Website: [www.talenttv.com](http://www.talenttv.com)

## New look to OF&G processing

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There have been a couple of changes in staff in our processing department to let you know about. Processing Certification Manager, Caroline Cheyne, has now left OF&G for pastures new.

As ever, we like to ensure a single point of contact for all licensees and this will now be Nicola Strudwick, who many people will already know. Our processing department will be overseen by Gabrielle Lanceley who, as a food technologist by profession, has many years of practical experience in the processing industry under her belt.

Anyone with any queries should contact Nicola in the first instance, who will be happy to help you out. She can be reached on 0845 3305122 extension 230, or by email at [nicola.strudwick@organicfarmers.uk.com](mailto:nicola.strudwick@organicfarmers.uk.com)

## Licenses in the news

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The Hereford Cattle Society held their Autumn Show and Sale at Hereford Market earlier this month. One of OF&G's licensees, Mrs Purchase of Canterbury, attended this sale. Her Lynsore herd of cows and calves made the highest average price in their class at an average of £1882. Her cattle were sold to both conventional and organic farmers.

Do you have any news for future issues of this newsletter? If so, contact Mark Waugh on 0845 330 5122 ext 234 or email [mark.waugh@organicfarmers.uk.com](mailto:mark.waugh@organicfarmers.uk.com)



## For Sale:

Please note that purchasers of stock advertised by OF&G should always check the current certificate and the status with the vendor. OF&G cannot take responsibility for any stock, items or services sold through this service

Organic **small bale haylage**. Contact: Paul & Liz Coomber. Tel: 01559 371270. Carmarthenshire. (posted 25/08/04)

**50 organic hardy speckled yearlings**. Contact: Cyril or Tony Davies Tel:01686650245 Newtown, Powys (posted 25/8/04)

Complete herd dispersal of **organic Aberdeen Angus**, including 44 in-calf cows and heifers. Contact: Denis Rankine Tel: 07796 956228 Oxon/Bucks border (posted 05/10/04)

**30 Beulah/speckled face yearling ewes**. Contact J.T.P and E.P Davies. Tel: 01686 650 332. Email redhouse5@tiscali.co.uk Newtown, Powys (posted 03/09/04)

**Organic Maize** available as dried grain or for crimping (delivered in bulk to your farm for clamping). Interested? Contact John Pitts. Tel: 01243 789284. West Sussex (posted 14/09/04)

**25 organic South Devon suckled calves**. Contact: Mr G White. Tel: 01458 831492. Somerset (posted 15/09/04)

45 fully **organic pedigree Polled Dorset females**, including ewes, gimmers and ewe lambs. Can be lambed at any time of year. Excellent carcasses. Contact Ian Sutherland. Tel: 01665 579225. Northumberland. (posted 22/09/04)

4 **Holstein Friesian bulling Heifers**. Home bred, fully organic, pedigree. Contact Ian Sutherland. Tel: 01665 579225. Northumberland. (posted 22/09/04)

Fully **organic haylage** in 4 ft bales Contact Ian Sutherland. Tel: 01665 579225. Northumberland. (posted 22/09/04)

**Organic Grazing Land Available:** 300 acres of organic grazing land, suitable for grazing organic sheep from spring 2005. Contact: George Dyke Tel: 01782 796395. Staffordshire. (posted 22/09/04)

15 x 12mth old **store cattle** and 2 x sucklers. Also 3 tonnes **organic oats**. Contact Mr Davies Tel: 01239 810466 Ceredigion (posted 22/09/04)

16 **organic Simmental x heifers**, born Jan to March 2004. Contact Simon Gibson Tel: 07900 570219 Essex (posted 27/09/04)

25 **Organic mule theaves**, and also between 20 and 40 mule ewe lambs for sale. Contact: Mr Adams Tel: 01335 330203. Derbyshire (posted 05/10/04)

40 tons of **organic wheat**. 80 round bales organic **red clover silage**. Contact: Ian Laurie. Tel: 01544 230176 or 07773 599804 Herefordshire (posted 12/10/04)

35 **Organic Pure Lleyn gimmer hogs**. Contact: Mr Robinson. Tel: 01200 446240 or email hrobinson05@aol.com. Lancashire. (posted 20/10/04)

## Wanted

**Wanted - Someone to rent 2 acres of my land** in Winsford with the view to converting it to organic production. Contact: Annette McClaren Tel: 01606 558714. (posted 25/08/04)

**Wanted - An organic dairy farmer in North Notts, Derbys or South Yorks** area who has beef x dairy calves for sale. Must be weaned, required end November. Contact: Mr Foster Tel: 01142 872317 or 07711 212777. (posted 06/10/04)

## Miscellaneous

I am a photography student at Goldsmiths College in London and would like to take some photographs of an organic pig farm as part of a landscape project. If anyone is interested in allowing me to do this can you contact Thomas Bangsted on 07951 283816 or email thomasbangsted@yahoo.dk (posted 06/10/04)

Organic smallholding amounting to 85 acres. An existing and successful free range egg producer in West Sussex is looking for an enthusiastic and knowledgeable individual to enter into a joint venture. Would consider other organic uses. For further information please contact: Simon Lush of Henry Adams & Partners. Tel: 01243 533633 (posted 06/10/04)

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ORGANIC SMALLHOLDING. Offers invited to submit tender for the rental of 5.6 acre soil associated certified nursery with glasshouses on a 15 year farm business tenancy. The successful applicant will be able to take on the existing award winning box scheme from the outgoing tenants. Contact: Willow Nursery on 01243 552852, or David Pennel of Cluttons on 01903 882213. (posted 12/10/04)

### Organic Farmers and Growers

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**The Practical  
Organisation for  
Organic Certification**