

General News

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Classifieds are on a separate sheet.

Update on the new feed regulations

We perhaps didn't make it sufficiently clear in our last Newsletter article that non-organic feeds can only be used where the feed material is not available as organic and there are no suitable organic alternatives available. This applies to all non-organic feeds whether they are on the Green List or not.

Any farmers wanting to use non-organic feeds on the Green List must complete the new OF&G Record Sheet 25 'Justification Record for Use of Non-Organic Feeds' (copy enclosed). This needs to detail the suppliers contacted and the reasons for not using an organic feed.

Any farmers wanting to use non-organic feed materials that are not on the Green List must get a derogation approved by OF&G before purchasing such feeds. Record Sheet 26 'Non-Organic Feed Derogation Application Form' can be used for this purpose, (copy enclosed).

Compound Feeds

We had previously stated that where a farmer buys a part-organic Compound Feed the feed supplier should provide a copy of the derogation obtained from their certification body to the farmer, for the farmer to use as justification.

However, following discussion with Defra and the other Certification Bodies it has now been agreed that it will be sufficient to keep a copy of the feed label attached to OF&G Record Sheet 25 'Justification Record for Use of Non-Organic Feeds' as justification for the use of the non-organic feedstuff within the compound.

(Note: OF&G-registered Feed Mills have been sent a copy of Technical Leaflet 206 – Guidance Notes for Feed Mills on the Manufacture, Labelling & Use of Feeds for Organic Farming'.)

A copy of OF&G Technical Leaflet 124 'Guidance Notes for Farmers on the use of Organic & Permitted Non-Organic Animal Feeds' is enclosed, this contains the latest guidance on the requirements.

Please add Record Sheets 25 and 26 to Section 6 of your OF&G Control Manuals. An electronic version of these Record Sheets is available to download from our website.

You must ensure that you are familiar with these requirements and if in any doubt contact your Certification Officer for clarification.

To assist you in sourcing in-conversion and organic feeds we are adding a new page to our website that can be used to advertise feeds for sale. Please use this facility and let us know if you have any feeds for sale. If you do not have access to the internet please contact us and we will check this for you.

Grain buyers list

OF&G is putting together a list of any known buyers of in-conversion/organic cereals, pulses, oilseeds etc. to distribute to our operators. We would be grateful if you could let us know of any buyers that you are aware of so that we can add them to our list.

Contact us

Phone:
0845 330 5122

Fax:
0845 330 5123

E-Mail:
info@organicfarmers.org.uk

Website:
www.organicfarmers.org.uk





Technical News for Producers

Important news for all organic egg producers

In the February issue of this newsletter we told you about the changes in the standards for organic egg producers, these are summarised below.

- Pullets introduced onto organic farms should be organic
- If organic pullets are not available you should obtain non-organic pullets that are less than 3 days old
- The requirement to use non-organic pullets of less than 3 days old has been relaxed and non-organic pullets up to 18 weeks of age can be brought-in BUT YOU MUST BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING:

After 31/12/05 the following will apply

- Any non-organic pullets up to 18 weeks old brought-in to an organic unit must be managed to the organic feed and vet standards prior to being introduced to the organic unit
- The supplier of the non-organic pullets will be expected to provide a declaration with each consignment to the effect that 'the birds have been produced in accordance with the Defra Compendium of UK Organic Standards for feed and veterinary management'.
- From now on the use of non-organic pullets must be approved by OF&G, in writing, before the pullets are introduced

Defra have now confirmed that if you are unable to obtain organically reared pullets, or non-organic pullets less than 3 days of age then the only other option is to obtain non-organic pullets up to 18 weeks of age that have been reared according to the organic feed and vet standards.

AFTER 31/12/05 WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ALLOW THE USE OF NON-ORGANIC PULLETS UP TO 18 WEEKS OF AGE THAT HAVE NOT BEEN REARED TO THE ORGANIC FEED AND VET STANDARDS.

It is therefore extremely important that all organic egg producers contact their pullet suppliers to ensure that they are able to provide birds that have been reared to the organic feed and vet standards.

In practice it is not expected that pullets hatched prior to 1/1/06, for delivery to organic units on or after 1/1/06, should have their diets and vet management changed part way through the rearing period. We do expect that any non-organic pullets, for use on organic farms, that are hatched on or after 1/1/06 are reared to the organic feed and vet standards once they arrive at the pullet rearers.

You should be aware that these pullets will not be regarded as organic and will still be subject to a six-week conversion period under full organic management before the eggs can be sold as organic.

Farm Assurance

We have been asked by members of the industry to remind you all that there is an increasing requirement for organic farm produce (crops and livestock) to be Farm Assured. There are a host of reasons for this, as an example, organic livestock or part of the organic carcass may have to be sold into the non-organic market due to seasonal oversupply. Through our partnership with EFSIS we are able to offer joint Organic and Farm Assurance inspections. If you would like more details please contact your Certification Officer.

Information for beef producers regarding certificates

Members of the organic meat industry have asked us to clarify an issue over the enterprises listed on your organic Certificates (OF&G Certificate of Compliance). For Beef producers we currently have 3 categories that could be listed on the Certificate, these are: "Beef Suckler Cattle", "Beef Calves & Stores" and "Beef Finished Cattle". If you produce finished beef cattle please check that your Certificate does state "Beef Finished Cattle" as some abattoirs have refused to take in organic beef cattle where this is not listed on the Certificate even if "Beef Suckler Cattle" are. If you think that your Certificate is not correct please contact your Certification Officer.

Certification news for producers

The Declaration that was previously included in several application documents (extension, annual questionnaire etc) is now a stand-alone document that we will ask you to sign once each year.



Producers and Processors beware!!

A London trader has been ordered to pay thousands of pounds by a court after selling non-organic food which was said to be likely to mislead the public into thinking it was organic.

Magistrates in Richmond, London, imposed a fine of £3,130 and ordered the offender to pay £1,870 in costs. The case was brought by Environmental Health Officers from Richmond Council. Under UK law, all food labelled as organic must be certified by an approved Organic Certification Body. OF&G has welcomed the prosecution as a reminder to all that the organic standards must be protected and enforced to ensure consumer confidence.

Technical News for Processors

Feed Compounders

On 25/8/05 the derogation allowing organic livestock to be fed a proportion of non-organic feed came to an end.

A new derogation is now in place, to allow the feeding of a reduced amount of non-organic feed & the details are explained in Technical Leaflet 206 – Guidance Notes for Feed Mills on the Manufacture, Labelling & Use of Feeds for Organic Farming.

The main difference is that Feed Mills now have to apply for a derogation to use ANY non-organic agricultural ingredients. (Previously they could be used without derogation as long as they were on the permitted list in OF&G Control Manual Section 8.4.)

To simplify the derogation process, we have created a record sheet for Feed Mills to apply for derogations where necessary. This is Record Sheet 26. (Copies of TL206 & RS26 have been sent to all OF&G registered Feed Mills.)

Spirulina

DEFRA have notified us that due to the fact that Spirulina is a farmed aquacultural product and its inputs can be controlled, any operators who wish to import organic spirulina from countries outside of the EU will now need to apply to DEFRA for an import authorisation.

If you want any further information please contact Susan Berry on ext 230 or email susan.berry@organicfarmers.org.uk

Miscellaneous

Sustainable Trade & Agriculture Awareness Group

The Sustainable Trade and Agriculture Awareness Group will be set up to foster linkages between farming, retail and consumer groups in the 'Developed World' with those of farming groups in the 'Developing World'.

Purpose: The purpose for doing this is to foster understanding, knowledge, technical expertise and solidarity between primary producer groups in two parts of the world. The long-term sustainable linking between a producer group in Mid-Wales and a producer group in a developing country will foster the right environment to enhance the quality of life for both groups overall.

We are particularly looking for farmers who are interested in being part of this project. If this interests you then please let us know.

For more information contact Andy Parnell on 01686 412 731 or email: andy@pedec.org.uk. For more information about PEDEC (The Powys Environment and Development Education Centre) see www.pedec.org.uk

Staff News

New Senior Processor Certification Officer, Susan Berry

Experienced food scientist, Susan Berry, is the latest specialist to join OF&G. Susan has been appointed Senior Processor Certification Officer following a spell with the business on a temporary contract. She brings a wealth of experience in the food industry to the expanding processor department of OF&G. With a degree in food science and 25 years in the industry, Susan's move to OF&G follows time with major food companies and retailers, including Sainsbury's, Heinz, Grand Met, Hazlewoods and Holland & Barrett.



OF&G Evaluation Scheme products

The following products have recently been accepted into the OF&G Evaluation Scheme as 'Product Approved for Use in Organic Systems' or 'Product Approved for Restricted Use, Derogation Required'

Category	Name	Supplier	Telephone	OF&G Eval Scheme Status	Certificate Expiry Date
Soil Conditioner	Bioganix Compost	Bioganix	01568 619122	Appr-Restr.	31/5/06
Soil Conditioner	Extensive Turkey Litter	Bioganix	01568 619122	Appr-Restr.	31/5/06
Mineral Supp	Crystalyx Extra High Energy	Caltech	01697 332443	Appr-Restr.	31/5/06
Mineral Supp	Crystalyx Organyx	Caltech	01697 332443	Appr	31/5/06
Mineral Supp	Crystalyx Organyx Plus	Caltech	01697 332443	Appr	31/5/06
Mineral Supp	3 in 1 Bucket	Zinte	01568 708008	Appr-Restr.	31/5/06
Mineral Supp	Tailormade Minerals	Zintec	01568 708008	Appr-Restr.	31/5/06
Mineral Supp	Micronutrient Sheep Drench	Zintec	01568 708008	Appr-Restr.	31/5/06
Mineral Supp	Micronutrient Cattle In Feed	Zintec	01568 708008	Appr-Restr.	31/5/06
Insect Control	Hemexsan Powder	Heaton (Export & Marketing) Ltd	01422 822308	Appr	31/5/06
Animal Health Product	Mas-Gel	Kilco	01576 205480	Appr-Restr.	31/5/06
Animal Health Product	Superhoof	Kilco	01576 205480	Appr	31/5/06
Animal Health Product	Scoursolve	Kilco	01576 205480	Appr	31/5/06
Animal Health Product	HPPA	Kilco	01576 205480	Appr	31/5/06
Silage Add/Inoc	Mole Corn Extra (Lalsil MS01)	Lallemand (UK) Ltd	02920 475561	Appr	31/5/06
Fertilizer	Alga 600	Travena Ltd	01332 830090	Appr	31/5/06
Compost	Worm Casts	Willy Worms	01757 618630	Appr	31/5/06

Organic Farmers and Growers
Elim Centre
Lancaster Road
Shrewsbury
SY1 3LE

The Practical Organisation for Organic Certification

www.organicfarmers.org.uk

Licenses in the News

We would like to congratulate Brian Goodenough from Eling Farm, Newbury for winning the best farmed farm in the medium category of up to 1500 acres at the Newbury Agricultural Society Show. Out of 8 entries in that category his farm was also the only organic one. Brian, who will pick up the award in a few weeks time, said that he was very happy with the result and that it "proves an organic farm can perform just as well as a conventional farm when being compared to each other".