

## General News

### We don't and won't demand the use of our logo

As word has begun to spread about the new Soil Association standards requiring the use of its logo on most packaging in future, we have had a number of enquiries regarding whether OF&G will do the same. The answer is, simply, no.

It's possible that SACL has quietly made this move because of the requirements under the new EU Organic Regulation for the inclusion of a new EU organic logo from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 (please note that with regard to the EU organic logo, transitional measures apply that will mean that most operators will have until January 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 to make the change).

Organic Farmers & Growers understands that licensees want to retain as much control as possible over labels and that there are already many statutory demands to be met. It is for this reason that our policy will remain as it always has; as long as packaging meets the legal requirements for identifying your control body, OF&G does not require the use of its logo.

For more detail on the new labelling requirements please call us or take a look at our new *Guide to Organic Certification: Processing* (see appendix F) which can be downloaded for free from our website at [www.organicfarmers.org.uk/guide](http://www.organicfarmers.org.uk/guide).

### Speaking of logos...

Following the debacle over trademark infringements (with Aldi) that led to the withdrawal of the first design for an EU organic logo, the Commission has now opened up a competition for art students to come up with a new offering.

Art and design students from across the EU are being invited to submit entries, with the winner receiving a 6,000 Euro cash prize, plus the bragging rights to having their design on millions of product packages for years to come.

OF&G has been promoting the competition to universities and colleges across the UK because we think it would be great to see a British winner. If you know any students who might be interested, why not flag it up to them? The information is at <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/logo/>.

### Stop Press : Classifieds

For Sale: Small organic meat business in the East of England with leasehold premises and equipment. Would be suitable for a farmer or farmers' co-operative. Call 07040 900250 for more details

For Sale: The Flyford Herd of Pedigree Organic Dairy Cattle principally Holstein incl 10 Brown Swiss – Entire Herd Dispersal on Friday 8th May. Also farm machinery and implements. Hill Court Farm, Grafton Flyford, Worcs. Tel: Halls on 01743 284777 / 01562 820880 for further details or catalogue.

## Technical News for Producers

### Easy access to Approved Products

The Producer Certification Officers receive many calls each week from producers asking if they can use a particular product such as a mineral supplement or silage additive. To help with this we have set up the OF&G Evaluation Scheme for products that are not organic but are approved for use by OF&G in organic

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farming or processing. All newly approved and recertified products will appear in this Newsletter throughout the year and a complete list can be provided if you contact us. For those with internet access you can also access the list of approved products on our website, Below is a step-by-step guide to accessing the list. The example is for mineral supplements but the same process would apply to other inputs.

Go to [www.organicfarmers.org.uk](http://www.organicfarmers.org.uk). On the right hand side of the page, click on the button 'Search Approved Inputs'. On the next page, choose a product type (e.g. Mineral Supplements) from the drop down menu in the box and click Submit. Using this example, you should find a list of around 80 pre approved mineral supplements. Each product that is listed as 'Approved' may be used without a derogation, the others will be listed as 'Derogation Required'.

Please note that these products are from companies that requested to become part of our Evaluation Scheme, this is not a comprehensive list of all the products available and our approval of these products is by no means an endorsement of them.

## Technical News for Processors

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### IFOAM EU Group launches dossier on new Organic Regulation

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IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) has released a dossier on the new EU Organic Regulation 834/2007 that came into force in January 2009. It offers expert views on legal, production and processing, import and fair trade, control and certification aspects of the new regulation as well as an introduction into the new areas that have been brought into the regulation or will be brought in in the near future. .

The dossier can be downloaded from the IFOAM EU's website at <http://www.ifoam-eu.org>

### Soil Association 2009 Market Report released

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The report shows that the economic downturn has affected the organic market, but overall, sales increased by 1.7% to £2.1 billion. The rise in sales value has been attributed to an overall rise in food prices rather than sales volume increases.

The report shows there has been a fall in sales of certain products, including fruit, bread and bakery products, soft drinks and prepared foodstuffs. However there has been dynamic growth in sales of organic food through farmers' markets where figures increased an estimated 18.6% to £23.7 million last year.

Organic shoppers have been buying fewer premium products and prepared foods, and switching to lower-cost retailers. There is also a focus on cutting waste and cooking from scratch - sales of organic home cooking ingredients increased by 13.5% in 2008, while sales of organic prepared foods dropped sharply.

The full report can be downloaded from the Soil Association website at <http://www.soilassociation.org/marketreport>

### Soil Association Organic Food Awards

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The Organic Food Awards recognise and celebrate the very best of produce and enterprise at the forefront of the UK organic food industry.

The criteria covers taste, appearance, recipe (with a commitment to sourcing the finest ingredients), provenance where the foods are produced according to regional influence and craftsmanship.

If you are an organic farmer, grower or food manufacturer and would like to enter the Awards, entries are invited in twelve main organic food and drink categories:

• Baked Goods	• Fruit and Vegetables
• Beer/Cider	• Juice/Non Alcoholic drinks
• Cakes/Puddings/Biscuits/Confectionery	• Meat/Fish
• Cereals	• Prepared foods
• Children and Baby food	• Store Cupboard Staples
• Dairy	• Wines

If you wish to apply please complete and return the application form, along with the appropriate payment to the Soil Association, before May 29<sup>th</sup> 2009.

Further information, including application forms can be downloaded from the Soil Association website at <http://www.soilassociation.org/foodawards>

## Natural & Organic Products Europe

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Our team reports a very successful visit to N&OPE for the second year in a row.

The show has proved to be a great opportunity to meet up with existing licensees and to explain the OF&G services and ethos to those who dropped by.

Once again we were joined on our stand by Rebecca Rayner, of Glebe Flour, the folks from Trevarno Organic Skincare and, new this year, one of our recent licensees, Science in Sport.

Our CEO, Richard Jacobs, also joined a panel discussing ways to beat the credit crunch.

We have put some pictures of the event online at [www.flickr.com/photos/ofg](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ofg).

## Licensee News

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As ever there has been a rash of public activity from OF&G licensees, which we're delighted to round-up here. Contributions about what you, or your business, have been up to are welcome. Email them to [mark.waugh@organicfarmers.org.uk](mailto:mark.waugh@organicfarmers.org.uk)

### Another accolade for Ian

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Already widely lauded for coming up with the concept of Open Farm Sunday, OF&G licensee Ian Pigott has now been awarded the Countryside Alliance's Rural Hero award. The winners were announced at a ceremony in London and Ian scooped the coveted title.

More than 400 farms took part in Farm Sunday last year as the event has gone from strength-to-strength and opened the eyes of thousands of people to life on the farm.

Ian, who is also a Farmers Weekly columnist, beat off some high-profile competition in the form of TV chef, Clarissa Dickson Wright, journalist Janet Street-Porter and Federation of Yorkshire Shows chairman, Les Wake, to take the title. In 2006 Ian was named NFU Farming Champion at the Farmers Weekly Awards.

### Julia in TB battle with Benn

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Julia Evans, of Bromyard on the Herefordshire/Worcestershire border, was featured over two pages in the Farmers Weekly regarding the damage being done to her livelihood by TB infected badgers. Julia publicly tackled Environment Secretary, Hilary Benn, over the issue at the NFU Conference. Unfortunately she received a predictably unsatisfying answer.

### Getting it right in dairy

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Also taking up two pages of FW was George Perrott, manager of Clinton Farms, in Devon. George explains why, despite shifts in milk prices, going organic was the right thing for the land and the estate's two dairy units. He looks at the challenges and benefits of being organic in what is a very positive and interesting article.

### Shoots of an elm tree revival

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Licensee Mark Steele, of Pershore, Worcestershire, was seen in front of the camera in a piece on BBC News about early efforts to revive the lamented elm tree in a (hopefully) Dutch Elm Disease resistant form. Mark was discussing the impact the loss of the elm had had on the landscape. You can still see the piece here <http://tinyurl.com/c626fq>.

### Robots the way forward in milking

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Richard Calcott, of Wigginton, Staffordshire, was seen expounding the virtues of his robotic milker. In another FW piece, Richard describes how the machine gives him and wife, Deborah, the freedom to also manage the rest of their operation (beef cattle, turkeys and 350 acres of arable) without needing extra staff.

### Welsh 'agri-environment heroes'

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Clyde and Helen Parker, of Wrexham, Denbighshire, were well featured in the Wrexham Evening Leader and the Daily Post for their achievement in being named among the RSPBs' ten Welsh 'agri-environment heroes'.

The couple have completed lots of work on their land to actively enhance the habitat for wild birds and other wildlife, with support from the Tir Gofal agri-environment scheme. Helen is quoted: "It's so enjoyable running an extensive farm and working with nature rather than against it."

## OF&G in the News

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OF&G has also been busy keeping up the headlines. Highlights since the last newsletter include our CEO, Richard, being part of a BBC Radio Four programme looking at the decline (and, as it turns out, demise) of the Royal Show. Richard was interviewed about OF&Gs' decision to cease attendance at the event a couple of years ago.

OF&G also featured prominently in a full-page Guardian article looking at the state of organic farming in the current economic climate. We, and the Soil Association, made quite plain in the piece that organics was actually holding steady in terms of licensees coming and going, though quite a lot of the media followed up on this article by focusing almost entirely on negatives. Sometimes you can't win!

We also commented recently on claims by Sainsbury's boss, Justin King, that organics was failing to get its message across to shoppers. We would tend to agree. You may see some coverage of that in the current issue of Natural Products and elsewhere, or read our points online at [www.organicfarmers.org.uk/news/view\\_news.php](http://www.organicfarmers.org.uk/news/view_news.php).

And finally: we were very pleased in the office to see an OF&G mug take pride of place on the desk of Farmers Weekly deputy news editor, Caroline Stocks, as she presented an edition of the Farmers Weekly video news update. The lady has taste.

## Organic Places to Stay Competition

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We have been offered six copies of *Organic Places to Stay in UK and Ireland* (3rd ed.), by Linda Moss, to give away. According to the author around 60 of our licensees are listed in the book, which is a comprehensive directory of B&Bs, guesthouses and hotels serving organic food.

So if you're a keen traveller to other organic establishments, just want a nosey at who's offering what, or are thinking of doing it yourself and want inspiration, this could be ideal. You can find out more about the book at <http://www.organicholidays.co.uk>.

To be in with a chance of owning one of the six copies available, phone or email Angela Norman (on 01939 291800 ext: 222 or [angela.norman@organicfarmers.org.uk](mailto:angela.norman@organicfarmers.org.uk)) by 15<sup>th</sup> May with your details and the answer to the following question:

*What is the date this year of the OF&G National Organic Cereals event?*

Please use the subject line 'Competition' in your email, to ensure your entry doesn't get lost. (Entries with the correct answer will be put in the proverbial hat and the first 6 pulled out will win).