

Scotland's Organic Action Plan 2013-2015



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INTRODUCTION

In 2011 an Organic Action Plan for Organic food and farming in Scotland was prepared by Scottish Government in partnership with the Scottish Organic Forum, an industry body made up of key stakeholders from within the organic sector in Scotland.

Members of the Forum include Soil Association Scotland, Scottish Organic Milk Producers (SOMP), Scotland's Rural Colleges (SRUC), Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society (SAOS), Biodynamic Agricultural Association—Demeter (BDAA), Caledonian Organics and Scottish Organic Producers Association (SOPA).



In 2013 the Forum and Scottish Government published a review of Scotland's Organic Action Plan. This sets out ongoing and new actions that will support the future growth of the organic food and drink sector in Scotland.

Scotland's Organic Action Plan 2013-5 continues to concentrate on three pillars: Supporting Organic Production, Sustainable economic growth of the Organic sector and Understanding Organics. *Some actions are still relevant to the sector and so are carried forward from the 2011 plan.*

Supporting Organic Production

The Scottish Organic Forum will develop Continued Professional Development [CPD], mentoring and skill enhancement through initiatives such as the Monitor Farm Programme

The Scottish Organic Forum will revisit the SRDP guidance to provide better advice to Assessment Officers, by reflecting environmental benefits delivered by organic farming.

SRUC provides advice to organic farmers, and those considering converting to organics under the Scottish Government funded Advisory Activity

Organic Control Bodies will continue to review and streamline certification procedures where appropriate

SRUC will liaise with SRDP Regional Co-ordinators to improve knowledge and understanding, including market conditions

SOPA, representing the SOF will sit on the CAP Stakeholders Group to feed in organic sector interests for the RDP 2014 - 2020

SG will liaise with their UK counterparts to consider how best to work together to meet EU requirements on organic standards, inspections and certification

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Sustainable economic growth of the Organic food and drink sector

Supply Chain Mapping

The Scottish Organic Forum will work within the supply chain to promote collaborative initiatives on a geographical and/or market sector basis

The Scottish Organic Forum will engage with all marketing outlets from Multiple Retailers through to Farm Shops and Farmers' Markets to sign post and raise awareness of opportunities

The Scottish Organic Forum will develop a mentoring programme for supply chain participants

The Scottish Organic Forum will liaise with Scottish Development International and Scotland Food & Drink to identify and promote export opportunities to exploit expanding organic markets

Scottish Government will provide clear signposting to business support or funding for organic producers and processors

SRUC are monitoring the supply chain in Scotland to inform industry and support policy in line with supply and demand

Scottish Government has produced guidance for public sector food and drink contracts to promote the achievement of sustainable development objectives.

This includes guidance on allocating appropriate weighting to social, economic and environmental factors when awarding contracts for food and catering services. This guidance specifically identifies the opportunity to specify organic food in contracts

Scottish Government continues to provide support through a range of grant schemes

Scottish Development International provides advice, business mentoring, and access to specialist services to food and drink businesses in Scotland who wish to develop trade activities outside Scotland

SAOS will provide support for organic businesses on the benefits of co-operation within the supply chain

SRUC will provide dedicated marketing advice to organic producers and food and drink businesses on behalf of Scottish Government

International Events will be promoted via Scottish Development International and Scotland Food websites, and The Scottish Organic Forum will signpost organic businesses to these events

The Scottish Organic Forum will regularly review the market situation in the rest of the UK to assess impact on Scotland's organic sector.

Understanding Organics

The Scottish Organic Forum will encourage organic businesses to enter competitions and award schemes and ensure appropriate publicity opportunities for successes

The Scottish Organic Forum will support, stimulate and facilitate New Product Development [NPD] in the organic sector

The Scottish Organic Forum will engage with industry stakeholders outwith the sector to communicate benefits of organic farming

SRUC are providing training and education in organic farming, including PGDip and MSc

Continuing Organic Monitor Farm Projects where the aim is to encourage adoption of best organic practice and innovation

The SOF are raising consumer awareness of organics at various events e.g. RHS

The SOF will work in partnership with RHET and RNCI to establish opportunities for from visits for school children in Scotland

SOF will liaise with the OTB and Sustain to exploit opportunities for Scotland



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