

ORC Organic Producers' Conference 1-2 February 2017

CLOSING PLENARY – selected comments and conclusions

- What about urban non-certified production – need for inclusion in the organic family. They are part of the family. Good connection with consumers/citizens. Certified organic is not the predominant form in the global south, which are mostly smaller producers. We forget them at our peril!
 - Who and when are people going to do it as we hear what needs to be done but not how and when – will be here hearing the same things next year? Perhaps a list of what the outcomes are and put who and how and when against it? A lot of representative groups here who should be representing us – needs to start with specifics.
 - ORC should circulate a long list which could be helpful but perhaps identify what needs to be done and then work out who should lead?
 - Soil Association is active on Brexit at 3 levels and in collaboration with others. 1. Here and now – English Organic Forum. 2. Playing a part in wider coalitions i.e. Green Alliance to ensure that issues relevant to organic movement get a good airing. Agroforestry and circular economy are important. 3. Ensuring that as an environment movement we are not working in a bubble so working with others. Perhaps a policy commission which is getting some buy in with others.
 - OF&G engaged with English Organic Forum and working to get this running properly – seen minister already. Scottish forum up and running. Possibility of meeting around NOCC in July.
 - Land Workers Alliance – peoples food policy. Worked on for 18 months and now have a draft happening. Bottom up and up until April www.thepeoplesfoodpolicy.org is open for comment. We can all talk to civil society about the benefits for organic food and farming. Lay down challenge to do 1-3 about why organic and spread the message before next years' conference.
 - The English, Scottish, Welsh organic forums getting going is a positive action and happening. The relationship building with the non-organic groups is the next stage. Lots of us are talking to others but need to coalesce and not be so random. List of what needs to be done could help and allocate tasks and communicate.
 - Andrew Trump: A lot of work to be done but how will it be paid for? Money will need to be raised to finance this work. Easy to say nothing ever happens but ORC, SA, OF&G etc. have limited resources.
 - Pete Ritchie: Next 5 years as we repatriate from Brussels and the demand will grow exponentially. CAP reform is nothing compared to this. We don't have the resource at the moment but perhaps the principals of these organisations (ORC, SA etc.) need to come together and then find funding i.e. Triodos for this policy officer/work? There was a bid for a shared policy office to Esmee Fairbairn in summer 2016 but failed. They are putting some money into the policy forum though. SUSTAIN was set up for this.
 - Resources are key: Conference slides on website. ORC working on 100 arguments for organic farming, which could be developed in format to assist others to make case.
 - Having common resources is worthwhile. Could ORC have somewhere where this can be stored and shared? Agricolgy?
 - Pooling resources: Good if some of the local events and other activities could go in bulletin or Agricolgy website.
 - Timeline for a larger meeting would be to respond to the Green Paper probably be between May and July. Could issue a more general invitation for people to engage.
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