

ORC 2014 Organic Producers' Conference: Full programme (as at 29/11/13)

WEDNESDAY 22nd JANUARY 2014

09.30 – 10.30 Space for pre-conference meetings

10.00 – 11.00 REGISTRATION and refreshments

11.00 – 13.00 OPENING PLENARY

Sustainable food systems - the challenges we need to address

Addressing the main theme of the conference, this session will feature leading speakers on themes of economic and environmental sustainability, food systems, food security and sustainable intensification

Susanne Padel (ORC): Chair

Charles Godfray (Oxford University): What do we mean by Sustainable Intensification?

Gunnar Rundgren (Grolink): Changing the world, but how?

Iain Tolhurst (Grower): The challenge of sustainable food production from a grower's perspective

Another speaker (TBC)

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch/networking

14.00 – 15.00 WORKSHOPS 1 Round table discussions

Achieving sustainability in practice – what steps we take to address the challenges

This session is all about gathering and sharing the knowledge and experience of everyone at the conference and identifying the priority issues we need to tackle. In small groups, we will capture what individuals and organisations are doing on the ground to put the principles of organic and sustainable farming into practice, and what we could do differently/ better. We will record your good works on flip charts which will then be used as a resource to inform the rest of the conference. (Organised by ORC with OCW/ Nafferton Ecological Farming Group (NEFG))

15.00 – 15.30 Refreshments

15.30 – 17.00 WORKSHOPS 2

Growing Oats – fulfilling the potential (Organised by ORC)

Oats are an important component of many organic rotations. Practical advice from researchers, industry specialists and end users will help producers realise the full potential of this organic friendly crop.

Henry Creissen (ORC): Chair

Nick Fradgley (ORC): Results from ORC trials: variety performance in organic conditions

Simon Penson (Camden BRI): Oat quality requirements

Ross Dawson (GB Seeds): The potential for naked oats

Building local/regionally adapted seed systems (Organised by OGA)

What are the implications of the new EU seed directive? How can growers re-skill in seed-growing and build resilient varieties fit for purpose?

Organic Growers Alliance: Chair

Ben Raskin (Soil Association): The new seed regs and veg varieties

Grower (tbc): Vegetable varieties field lab report

Peter Brown (Biodynamic Agriculture Association): The biodynamic seed production and breeding project

Liverfluke control (Organised by National Sheep Association)

The session aim is for the delegates to understand: the impacts of fluke on sheep/cattle health, the life cycle of liver fluke and climate change related changes, the avoidance and treatment options available.

Phil Stocker (NSA): Chair

Kevin Thomas (Welsh farmer) : The impacts of liver fluke

Phil Skuce (Moredun): The life cycles, climatic changes, testing and analysis options, potential new developments

Fiona Lovett (vet): Treatment and avoidance, identifying and avoiding resistance to current treatments

Home grown feed and forage –closing the system (Organised by PFLA)

There are many forages that can be grown on farm either as a standalone crop or as a mix. Such diverse forages can be used to minimise the need for grain and other concentrate feeds while maintaining production. This workshop will cover the experience of farmers as well as providing information on other forage options.

Anna Bassett (Pasture Fed Livestock Association): Chair

Tom Tolputt (Farm Consultancy Group): Nutritional benefits of using alternative forages

Simon Cutter (Model farm): Experiences of using alternative forages on an organic farm

WEDNESDAY 22nd JANUARY 2014 (continued)**CAP reform – what's in store?** (Organised by ORC)

With the new EU policy regulations nearly finalized, and plans for implementation in different parts of the UK and Ireland well advanced, what are the implications for organic producers and what issues still need to be addressed?

Nic Lampkin (ORC): Chair

Speakers representing producers from different UK regions and Ireland (TBC)

17.00 – 17.10 Comfort break**17.10 – 18.00 Short workshops/small group meetings****Future arable research priorities for organic growers** (Organised by HGCA)

This will be an interactive session that will aim to identify the current and future challenges for arable organic growers and then discuss how new research activities may help address these challenges. This will be done against the backdrop of developing HGCA's next research strategy.

Vicky Foster (HGCA): Chair

UK organic markets – trends and opportunities (Organised by ORC)

The UK organic market has been difficult, but we are seeing some indications of change. We will give an overview of recent trends in the UK organic market and compare this with information from other European countries.

Susanne Padel (ORC): Chair

Finn Cottle (Soil Association): Presentation

Participatory plant breeding with diverse wheat populations (Organised by ORC)

Diverse cereal populations are likely to be available soon for marketing. The increase in diversity available to farmers can be exploited through on-farm participatory breeding approaches, leading to the creation of locally adapted lines and populations, which may ultimately result in a decentralisation of the seed supply chain.

Nick Fradgley (ORC): Chair

Speaker TBC

The organic principle of health in practice (Organised by ORC)

The organic principle of health (IFOAM) describes the connection of health between soils, plants, animals and humans; and suggests that human health strongly depends on the health of all other agricultural domains. This workshop explores and discusses possible translations into practice.

Anja Vieweger(ORC): Chair with

Lawrence Woodward (Whole Organic Plus)

Planning succession of your farm (Organised by IOTA/ORC)

Passing your farm to future generations? This workshop will help identify the way forward. Our experienced speakers are working with succession planning and management and supporting families through change. Discussion might include funding sources, share farming and donation to trusts.

Mark Measures (IOTA): Chair

Community woodfuel : Integrating energy production into farming systems and communities (Organised by ORC)

This session will explore ways in which farmers, landowners and communities can localise energy production and make use of existing on-farm resources; using regular management activities to provide sustainable, locally sourced woodfuel for different scales of heating systems.

Sally Westaway (ORC): Chair

Andrew Shadrake (Dartmoor Circle): Community supported woodlands and hedgerows

Jon Halle (ShareEnergy): Community owned woodfuel cooperatives

18.30 – 19.00 Bar and Workshop 1 flipchart session**19.30 – 24.00 Conference dinner, bar and maybe entertainment**

THURSDAY 23rd JANUARY 2014

09.00 – 10.30 WORKSHOPS 3

Reducing the productivity gap in organic farming

– balancing nutrients supply and demand (Organised by NEFG)

What does the research on comparative yields and the long term trials in the UK and Switzerland tell us? How have farmers measured and managed the fertility gap to maintain yields over 10 and 20 years?

Julia Cooper (NEFG): **Chair**

Julia Cooper (NEFG): **Comparative yields under organic and low-input systems.**

Paul Mader (FiBL): **Findings from the long-term DOK trials at FiBL, with 35 years of soil fertility measurements.**

Farmer (tbc):

Making our growing systems truly local (Organised by OGA)

Many growers sell their produce locally, but to what extent can our systems be considered truly local? What about our energy inputs, seeds, labour, fertility? This interactive workshop will set out the challenges and highlight innovation and what needs to change.

Alan Schofield (OGA): **Chair**

Wendy Seel (Vital Veg): **The challenges of re-localising our systems**

Organic beef and lamb markets: opportunities and bottlenecks (Organised by OCW)

This workshop will help producers understand recent trends in the organic red meat market and help them identify where the opportunities lie and where the pinch points are along the supply chain. With regard to the latter it will focus on the issue of ensuring the supply of organic beef stores, many of which are currently sold on the conventional market, to enable us to meet the current demand for finished beef. (Organic Centre Wales)

TBC (TBC): **Chair**

Tim Leigh (Organic Livestock Marketing Co-operative): **Market trends and opportunities for organic red meat**

Stuart Vile (Graig Producers/ Meadow Quality): **The beef market – Linking store producers and finishers**

Philip Jones (Lan Farm) (tbc): **Producing and marketing beef stores: A farmer's view**

Maintaining productivity from grassland in the long-term (Organised by IOTA/ORC)

Grassland productivity on organic farms varies widely. This workshop will draw on the experiences of farmers to identify some of the causes of low performance and how to remedy them: phosphate and potassium levels, biological activity, soil structure, forage species, manuring and grazing systems.

A discussion workshop with farmers, researchers and advisers facilitated by Mark Measures (IOTA)

Addressing the skills gap: Information/innovation opportunities (Organised by ORC/SA)

Addressing the Skills Gap. Organic agriculture and agroecological approaches to farming are reliant on high levels of skills and knowledge. How do we best address the need to improve and expand these skill sets? The workshop will have brief presentations from different approaches to addressing the skills gap (apprenticeships, field labs, SWARM) and then be opened to the floor to draw on the experiences and needs of participants.

Rachel Harries (Soil Association) **Chair:**

Kate Collyns (Grown Green): **Addressing the skills gap: The apprenticeship approach**

Steve Roderick (Duchy College): **Addressing the skills gap: the SWARM project**

John Pawsey (Shimpling Park Farms): **Addressing the skills gap: The Field Labs Approach**

10.30 – 11.00 TEA/COFFEE BREAK

11.00 – 12.30 WORKSHOPS 4

Reducing the productivity gap in crop production - weed management

– adapting Danish experience and expertise to the UK context (Organised by Organic Arable)

Drawing on the Danish Highcrop research project we will be looking at what we can learn from the Danes using their knowledge in the UK setting. The session will cover planning weed control strategies and discuss some of the tools we have available to assist us. (Organised by Organic Arable)

Andrew Trump (Organic Arable): **Chair**

Bo Melander (Associate Professor, Dept. of Agroecology, Aarhus University, Denmark)

THURSDAY 23rd JANUARY 2014 (cont.)

11.00 – 12.30 WORKSHOPS 4 (cont.)

Innovative local marketing - beyond posh nosh (Organised by OGA)

In this session we will look at innovative ways of promoting sales and connecting farms, restaurants, shops and consumers, without compromising the organic message. The workshop will also look at shortening food chains in urban areas, both UK and Europe.

Pete Dollimore (OGA): **Chair**

Rob Alderson (Manchester Veg People): **A co-operative approach to feeding a city**

Pete Ritchie (Whitmuir/Nourish): **Innovative local marketing: affiliations and associations**

Ulrich Schmutz (Garden Organic/CAFS): **Shortening food chains in metropolitan areas - examples from London, Berlin, Rotterdam and Milan**

Reducing antibiotic use for sustainable agriculture (Organised by SA)

The aim of this session is to learn from research and on farm practice towards reducing antibiotic use and promoting sustainable and responsible health management. Come and discuss the problems, and identify solutions and actions we need to take to reduce antibiotic resistance going forward

Tom MacMillan (Soil Association): **Chair**

David Tisdale (Vet): **The sustainable and responsible use of antimicrobials: : work in practice with dairy farmers**

Christine Gosling (Berkeley Farm): **Putting research into practice: lessons learnt from field lab trials**

Richard Young (Soil Association): **Organic farming and antibiotics - problems and solutions.**

Soft rush control in grassland (Organised by NEFG)

In some areas, increasing soft rush is cited as a reason for ceasing organic production. What do we know about how to control rush in organic management after 6 years of wet summers in the west of the UK and British Isles?

Kate Gascoyne (NEFG): **Chair**

Ian Cairns (SRUC): **Methods for control of soft rush in organic farming systems.**

James McDonnell (Teagasc): **Experience from Eire.**

Farmer experiences (tbc)

Agroforestry: A question of scale

– from forest gardens to landscape scale agroforestry (Organised by ORC)

The aim is to explore the benefits and challenges of integrating trees into a productive agricultural system at different scales, ranging from forest gardens, to farm-scale agroforestry to landscape scale projects.

Jo Smith (ORC): **Chair**

Bethan Stagg (SchumacherCollege): **Forest Gardens – combining forestry and horticulture.**

Martyn Bragg (Shillingford Organics): **Farm-scale agroforestry – a newly planted 4 acre system with apples, alders and organic vegetables.**

Mike Townsend (Woodland Trust): **Pont Bren farmers – cooperative action for landscape scale change**

12.30 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 15.00 CLOSING PLENARY

Making sustainability happen!

Keynote speaker to be confirmed

15.00 – 15.30 REFRESHMENTS and CLOSE OF CONFERENCE