

# ORC February 2017 Organic Producers' Conference: Full programme

## WEDNESDAY 1st February 2017: ORGANIC PRODUCERS' CONFERENCE

**10.00 – 11.00 REGISTRATION and refreshments**

### 11.00 – 12.30 OPENING PLENARY

#### **Organic farming's role in future food and farming policy**

The Brexit decision opens up huge questions about food, farming and environmental policies in the UK. Can new UK policies respond better to addressing the big issues, including public health, climate change, soil and biodiversity conservation? What can organic food and farming, and the organic movement, contribute to this process? What issues should we be thinking about in developing future policy priorities, during this conference and beyond?

**Chair: Nic Lampkin (ORC)**

**Tim Lang (Centre for Food Policy): Food and Brexit: nightmare or nirvana for the UK food system?**

**Heather Anderson (Whitmuir Organics): Working for a Citizen's Agricultural Policy for Scotland**

**12.30 – 13.45 Lunch**

### 13.45 – 14.45 WORKSHOPS 1

#### **Market overview (ORC)**

How is the market doing and how can we improve the data available to producers?

**Susanne Padel (ORC): Chair**

**Paul Moore (OTB): Understanding the organic consumer**

**Finn Cottle (Soil Association): UK organic market performance - 'healthy growth'**

#### **Farmer principles of health (ORC)**

Our project has worked with farmer groups in Germany, Austria and the UK to establish what personal principles and strategies organic farmers have developed to increase the health of their farms. This session will present outcomes of the 2-year project and specifically discuss the importance of intuition, awareness and self-observation when managing healthy farming systems.

**Anja Vieweger (ORC): Chair**

**Farmers: John Newman, Iain Tolhurst, Richard Gantlett, Adrian Steele, John Pawsey, Mark Measures**

#### **Crops meet livestock (IBERS/SRUC)**

The workshop will explore the benefits and barriers to mixed farming emerging from recent EU-funded projects and discuss how mixed farming might be supported through research in the future.

**Pip Nicholas-Davies (Aberystwyth University): Chair**

**Farmer TBC: Mixed farming in the real world**

**Christine Watson (SRUC): What is needed to support increased mixed farming?**

#### **Getting to grips with the cost of production (OGA)**

An opportunity for growers to bring and compare their costs of production for planting, weeding, harvesting etc.

**Ben Raskin (Soil Association): Chair**

**Facilitation: Roger Hitchings, Alan Schofield, Rob Alderson, Phil Sumption**

#### **Latest EU organic regulation developments and future options (ORC)**

The discussions over a new EU regulation have been continuing for several years with a poor (even possibly no result) in sight. Why was it needed? What has been achieved? Could we do a better in a UK framework post-Brexit, or should we stick with the EU regulation in the long-term to facilitate international trade?

**Roger Kerr (OF&G): Chair**

**Chris Atkinson (Soil Association): The EU organic regulation revision from an IFOAM EU/UK organic perspective**

**Nick Turner (Defra): A legislative framework that works for the UK - lessons learned and new opportunities**

**14.45 – 15.00 Tea/coffee break**

### 15.00 – 16.00 WORKSHOPS 2

#### **Funding new entrants – new opportunities for financial support (ORC)**

Many new entrants to farming and growing face challenges raising finance because of a lack of track record or sufficient scale to reassure lenders of financial viability. Small-scale producers may not be able to access government grants. Other options are available.

**Simon Crichton (Triodos Bank): Chair**

**Robert Fraser (Funding Enlightened Agriculture): What the FEA can offer**

**Nic Lampkin (ORC): The Dean Organic Fund – a new incarnation of the Dean Organic Trust**

**Amy Willoughby (Plotgate CSA): Making Plotgate CSA happen – how we got the funding**

**Vincent Mears (Treddafydd farm): Treddafydd Farm and the Dean Organic Trust**

#### **Breeding for organic arable, which way forward? (ORC)**

How to boost the availability of organic varieties in a sector reliant on varieties bred for conventional systems and inputs? New perspectives on the role of genetic diversity, the traits of interest and the involvement of farmers in organic breeding programmes.

**Bruce Pearce (ORC): Chair**

**Gemma Clarke (Cope Seeds): Our experiences with organically bred material and plans going forward**

**Edith Lammerts van Bueren (Louis Bolk Institute): Organic Crop Breeding: advances and challenges**

### Market opportunities for livestock sector (ORC)

Marketing of organic and pasture fed beef and lamb is challenging, with very low or non-existent premiums and significant proportions of certified product still sold as conventional. However, some producers have succeeded in breaking through to new markets. Can their experiences stimulate new thinking on how to address the challenges?

**Jonathan Brunyee** (PFLA/RAU Cirencester): **Chair**

**Panel: John Purcell** (Good Herdsmen), **Polly Davies** (Slade Farm), **Chris Wardle** (Organic Livestock Marketing Co-op)

### GREATsoils (ORC/Soil Association)

Results from the first year of GREATsoils grower trials, comparing different soil assessment methods in 6 horticultural systems. A clear priority of the growers was soil organic matter improvement and increasing soil life through the use of green manure.

**Dominic Amos** (ORC): **Chair**

**Phillip Hubbert** (JEPCO): **How to measure soil health in intensive salad rotations?**

**Iain Tolhurst** (Tolhurst Organic): **Practical worm counts to monitor soil health**

### Developing Organic (ORC)

Regulations, certification and support payments have taken on a defining role for organic food and farming. Can we rediscover, refresh and reassert the underlying principles and goals that are core to the organic movement and reflect them in future policy making? **Lawrence Woodward** (ORC): **Chair**

**Markus Arbenz** (IFOAM Organics International): **Organic 3.0 – a new vision for the organic movement**

**Stephen Meredith** (IFOAM EU): **IFOAM EU Vision for Public Goods under CAP**

**16.00 – 16.30 Break**

### 16.30 – 17.30 WORKSHOPS 3

#### The bread line - exploring food pricing (LWA)

In an age of cheap food, how does the cost of food reflect the true cost of production? How do we balance farmers' rights to earn a living from sustainable agriculture with everyone's right to affordable food?

**Rebecca Laughton** (LWA): **Chair**

**Humphrey Lloyd** (Edible Futures/ LWA): **Exploring the Politics of Food Pricing**

**Lynne Davis** (Open Food Network): **Creating greater equality between producers, processors and retailers**

#### Arable weed surgery (OK-Net Arable)

A range of arable weed experts will be available to advise farmers about addressing weed problems. At the end we will draw together with the experts the key questions and potential solutions raised during the session.

**Ambrogio Costanza** (ORC): **Chair**

**Katie Bliss** (ORC): **Facilitation**

**Panel: Jos Pelgröm** (Man@Machine), **Adrian Steele** (farmer), **Lynn Tatnell** (Weed biologist, ADAS), **Stephen Moss** (Consultant)

#### Practical approaches to positive health planning (IOTA)

Healthy animals perform well; they will have high disease resistance as well as the absence of disease. We will discuss practical methods for the development of healthy livestock and the management of disease.

**Peter Savidge** (OMSCo): **Chair**

**Tim Downes** (Organic dairy farmer): **Calf rearing for health and production**

**Peter Plate** (Veterinarian): **Reducing antibiotic use through mastitis testing; farm trials and experiences**

#### Seed growing as an enterprise (OGA)

A look at the economics and practicalities of growing seed for sale and how best to fit seed production into your system.

**Jason Horner** (Leen Organics/Irish Seed Savers Association): **Chair**

**Hans Steenbergen** (Stormy Hall /Seed Co-op): **Growing seed and maintaining open pollinated vegetable varieties**

**Kate McEvoy** (Real Seeds): **Cleaning, drying and processing seed grown for sale - methods and equipment**

#### Shining a light on the supply chain and looking at export opportunities (OTB)

The Workshop will look at UK food chain challenges and potential solutions post-Brexit. Opportunities for growth domestically and globally have never been better. However, despite market growth the UK lags behind in farm production, retail sales and export. How can we strengthen the British organic base to ensure we are food secure whilst taking advantage of global market opportunities?

**Adrian Blackshaw** (OTB): **Chair**

**Lee Holdstock** (Soil Association): **Prospects for organic exports**

**Andrew Trump** (Organic Arable): **Rebalancing the market or hitting the buffers?**

**17.30 – 17.45 Comfort break**

### 17.45 – 18.45 Fringe workshops

Meeting future needs of advice for organic farming (IOTA)

Muddy Boot Innovation Bar. Innovative Farmers/Agriculture

Research exchange for PhD/MSc students

A Matter of Scale (films): *Financial Viability and Barriers to Productivity*

**19.30 Conference dinner, bar and entertainment from Mr Stinkski's Remedy**

## THURSDAY 2nd February 2017

08.00 – 08.45 Registration

### 08.45 – 09.45 WORKSHOPS 4

#### Small is adaptable (LWA)

Are small farmers more resilient in hard times as more flexible, have lower costs and less capital invested in specialist systems? The session will scrutinise the argument, using a range of small farm examples.

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

**Rebecca Laughton** (Tamarisk Farm/LWA): **A matter of scale – What do the results of the LWA small farms productivity survey tell us about the adaptability of small farms?**

**Ashley Wheeler** (Trill Farm): **A one hectare livelihood**

#### Diversifying arable systems (ORC)

Diversity at all levels is key for resilient farming and food systems. How to translate this into practice? First results from the DIVERSIFOOD EU project on forgotten and underutilised species and on intercropping.

**Sophie Alexander** (Hemsworth Farm): **Chair**

**Ambrogio Costanzo** (ORC): **More crops in the farm, more diversity in the field: an update from DIVERSIFOOD**

**Josiah Meldrum** (Hodmedods): **Creating new routes to market for underutilised species and varieties**

#### Different feeds for improved production (IOTA)

The aim of this session is to identify new opportunities for addressing the serious shortfall in both quantity and quality of UK produced feeds and the need to improve the nutrition of livestock.

**William Waterfield** (FCG): **Chair**

**Tom Willoughby** (Organic dairy farmer): **Experiences of growing and feeding simple and multi species leys**

**Neil Rowe** (Organic farmer and adviser): **Development, production and experiences of feeding sprouted grains to ruminants and non-ruminants**

#### Potatoes post-copper (OGA)

What is the future of organic potato production without copper? We look at the latest in potato breeding for blight resistance, plus cultural methods to minimise impact.

**Tony Little** (Sustainable Farming Consultancy): **Chair**

**Edith Lammerts van Beuren** (Louis Bolk Institute): **Transitioning to copper free production**

**Frederik Bonestroo** (Duchy Home Farm): **Growing potatoes without copper**

#### Public benefits of organic farming (ORC)

Organic food production has clear environmental benefits recognised through EU support for organic conversion and maintenance. But the details of these benefits are often poorly understood, by producers, policy makers and the general public. How can we ensure the achievements of organic producers are properly recognised and supported?

**Joy Greenall** (Cow Hall organic farm): **Chair**

**Laurence Smith** (ORC): **Carbon and nitrogen cycles: linking productivity, pollution and climate change**

**Vicki Swales** (RSPB): **Birds, bugs and bees: how organic farming benefits nature**

### 09.45 – 10.00 Comfort break

### 10.00 – 11.00 WORKSHOPS 5

#### The challenges of securing organic supplies in a growing market (ORC)

The Session will illustrate with practical examples how cooperation has helped a retailer to find solutions.

**Bruce Pearce** (ORC): **Chair**

**Duncan Sinclair** (Waitrose): **The challenge to secure livestock supplies**

**Katharine Dennis** (Dalehead): **Collaboration to secure feed supplies for organic pigs**

#### Silvo-arable agroforestry (Woodland Trust)

The latest practical guidance on setting up a successful silvo-arable agroforestry system.

**Jo Smith** (ORC): **Chair**

**Stuart Holm** (Woodland Trust): **Developing agroforestry systems to suit your farm**

**Paul Burgess** (Cranfield University): **The economics of silvo-arable agroforestry**

#### Sheep breeding and health (ORC)

The session will delve inside existing knowledge and innovative farm practices to facilitate deployment of sustainable parasite control strategies.

**Kevin Harrison** (National Sheep Association): **Chair**

**Tim White** (Proven Shedding Sheep): **Genetic solutions to animal health and welfare**

**Spiridoula Athanasiadou** (Scotland's Rural College): **Tackling the parasitological challenges arising from organic farming practices**

### Keeping the soil in organic (OGA)

Can hydroponic systems ever be compatible with organic growing? We explore the issues.

**Roger Hitchings (OGA): Chair**

**Alan Schofield (OGA): The importance of retaining integrity with soil-based production**

**Dave Chapman (Long Wind Farm Vermont): A tomato grower gives the US perspective (video link)**

**Margi Lennartsson (CAWR/Garden Organic): Organic growing where soil is not an option**

### Which way forward for UK agriculture now? (ORC)

Since the referendum there has been a whirlwind of proposals from different organisations on what the priorities for future policy should be. While many share common perspectives, some have disagreed strongly. We ask the NFU and RSPB to present two different views of the future of UK agriculture.

**Peter Melchett (Soil Association): Chair**

**Diane Mitchell (NFU): NFU perspective on the future of agricultural/environmental policy**

**Tom Lancaster (RSPB): Farming for people and nature**

**11.00 – 11.30 Tea/coffee break**

### 11.30 – 12.30 WORKSHOPS 6

Concluding workshops in each strand to identify key action points - regulatory, financial support, markets, technical/quality issues and research/innovation – that should feature in future policies for organic food and farming in the UK.

Strand	Business and markets	Arable	Livestock/grassland	Growers	Policy post-Brexit
Chair	<b>Oliver Rubinstein</b> (ORC)	<b>Steven Jacobs</b> (OF&G)	<b>Mark Measures</b> (IOTA)	<b>Tony Little</b> (Sust. Farming Consultancy)	<b>Nic Lampkin</b> (ORC/English Organic Forum)
Rapporteur	<b>Roger Kerr</b> (OF&G)	<b>John Pawsey</b> (Shimpling Park Farms)	<b>TBC</b>	<b>Alan Schofield</b> (OGA)	<b>Wendy Seel</b> (Scottish Organic Forum)

**12.30 – 13.30 LUNCH**

### 13.30 – 15.00 CLOSING PLENARY

#### Envisioning the way forward

What could the future of organic food and farming in the UK look like and how do we get there? What are the priorities for action in the next 12-24 months? The closing plenary will feature feedback from the different strands (presented by the rapporteurs from the pre-lunch workshops), followed by:

**Christopher Stopes (IFOAM EU Group President/EcoS Consultancy): Chair**

**Nic Lampkin (ORC) Looking back and looking forward: a new vision for organic food and farming in the UK**

**15.00 – 15.30 REFRESHMENTS and CLOSE OF CONFERENCE**

Programme correct as of 27/01/17 May be subject to change.

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