



Organic Trade data in the UK

Evaluating different approaches for implementing organic trade data collection

AUTHOR

Stefano Orsini

CONTACT

Stefano Orsini

ORC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Nic Lampkin, Susanne Padel

YEAR

2020

FUNDING - PROJECT

UK Department of International Trade (DIT)

- Evaluating the different approaches for improving UK organic trade statistics

In the UK, there is currently no organic trade data collection in the national statistical system. Accessibility to trade statistics is critical to assist businesses in identifying market prospects. This is especially relevant as new trade relationships are being negotiated between the UK and the rest of the world. Meanwhile, food exports and imports with the EU have decreased since Brexit (see **Figure 1**), and are expected to be hit further with the implementation of physical checks at the border after January 2022.

Defra commissioned a project to review the costs and benefits of the different methods for collecting organic trade data, to identify which method would be appropriate in the UK. Defra and ORC coordinated the project consortium which included: Organic Policy Business Research Consultancy (OPBRC), Soil Association Certification (SAC), Organic Farmers and Growers (OF&G), AHDB and Organic Trade Board (OTB).

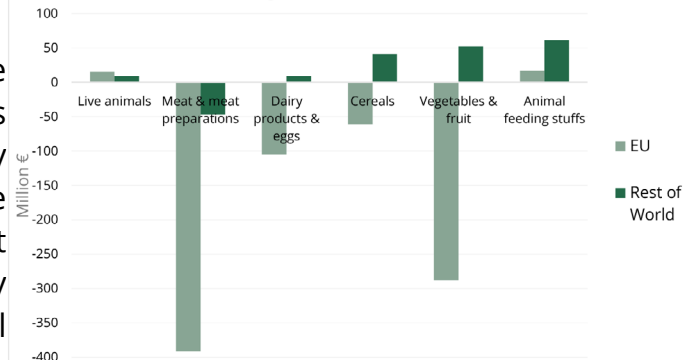


Figure 1 UK imports, YoY change Q1 2021. Breakdown between conventional and organic is not available. Source: ONS

One of the main recommendations is that Certificate of Inspection (CoI) – which is the form accompanying organic traded agri-food goods – should be used as source of information for organic trade statistics. The form ensures that organic products are compliant with the organic regulation of the import country and includes relevant information such as the volume of the imported goods, which are not captured in a data recording system at present. We therefore recommend that a system is implemented linking CoI to customs declarations and capturing the related data through Port Health Authorities.

The stakeholders of the UK organic industry consulted during the project are eager to see a data collection system implemented and believe it would strengthen the sector’s ability to control organic integrity by making sure that quantities actually marketed in the UK are in reasonable balance with domestic production and net imports.

FURTHER READING

1. Office for National Statistics (ONS) [Business, industry and trade](#)



The Organic Research Centre
 Trent Lodge, Stroud Road, Cirencester GL7 6JN - United Kingdom
 Company Registration: 1513190 | Registered Charity: 281276
organicresearchcentre.com