

The 2017 Organic Farm Management Handbook is published

The Organic Farm Management Handbook is the only source of up-to-date information on the costs and performance of organic farming.



This is a ‘must have’ publication for everyone interested in the business of organic farming and growing. The completely revised 11th Edition is published by the Organic Research Centre during uncertain times, but also times of opportunity for organic producers. The new edition provides technical and financial data, information on current support schemes, Brexit permitting, as well as an update on organic markets as growth returns.

2016 saw clear signs of confidence returning to the organic sector, with strong market growth and renewed interest from producers in conversion to organic production. The fall in the value of the pound following the Brexit referendum has created new opportunities for expanding exports. In the UK domestic market it has meant a more competitive position for UK producers in the light of more expensive imports. Also the Organic Trade Board has been successful in securing €10.4 million (from Industry and the EU) for a joint promotion campaign with Organic Denmark. These factors should strengthen demand in 2017 with positive impacts on farm-gate prices.

Dr Susanne Padel, Senior Programme Manager at ORC and one of the editors of the handbook said: “For obvious reasons, for this edition it has been more difficult than usual to predict with confidence the likely trends affecting organic farm business management in the UK. Price and exchange rate volatility are likely to remain high and will have significant impacts on the actual results achieved. Over the years, organic farming yields have also fluctuated widely, partly responding to markets but mainly due to weather conditions. The sensitivity analyses provided for each enterprise allow selecting prices and yields that are applicable to a specific farm.”

“The vote to leave the EU has also created many short-term uncertainties that are already impacting on the organic sector, including the commitments of UK governments to adequately finance the existing organic conversion, maintenance and other RDP schemes. Uncertainty also exists about what version of EU organic regulations, if any, will become part of UK law when we leave the EU - made worse by the very drawn out negotiations on this in the EU. And the situation regarding migrant EU labour in agriculture at present is also unclear. Despite all the uncertainties, the figures provided help to make business decisions on a better basis than back of the envelope calculations that only consider headline prices.”

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Notes to Editors

- The Organic Research Centre (ORC), established in 1980, is the UK's leading independent research centre for the development of organic/agroecological food production and land management solutions to key global issues including climate change, soil and biodiversity conservation, and food security.
- The Organic Farm Management Handbook was first published in 1994.
- We gratefully acknowledge the generous financial support of Triodos Bank and many other businesses for this edition.
- To interview Susanne Padel call +44 (0)1488 658298 Ext:552 or email: susanne.p@organicresearchcentre.com
- To order a review copy please contact ORC with details of the review plans.