

Teagasc Organic Farm Walk

On the farm of:
Kay O'Sullivan, Mallow, Co. Cork



Tuesday, 26th August 2014 | 2pm



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Background

Kay's farm entered organic conversion on 1st January 2010 and has full organic status since 1st January 2012. The total area farmed which is all owned is 48 hectares which is divided into 33.5 hectares of forage, 3.5 hectares of combi crop and 11 hectares of forestry. (See fig.1)

Figure 1

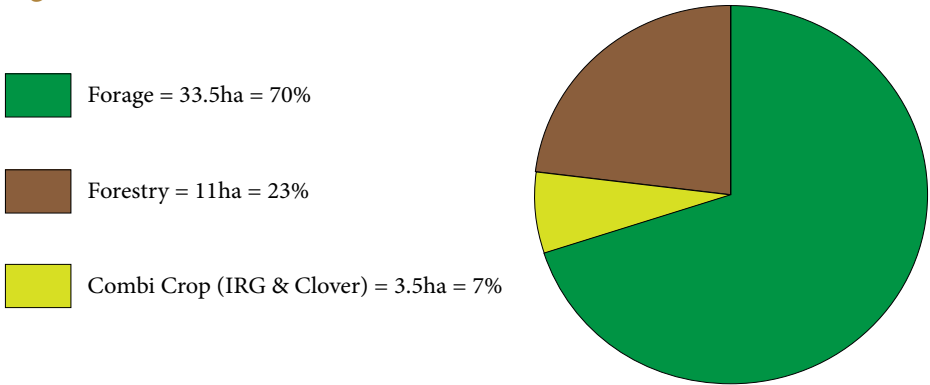


Table 1: 2014 Livestock Numbers

Stock Type	Number	Livestock Units
Suckler Cows	17	17
0-1 year olds	16	4.8
1-2 year olds	13	7.8
2 year olds	1	1
Ewes	85	12.7
Stocking Rate per Hectare		1.3

Due to the high costs associated with being a pedigree sheep breeder Kay decided in 2009 to look at different options for the farm and attended the Teagasc/DAFM organic farm walks during that summer. In Kays opinion the key messages from the walks were premium prices for produce and lower costs. She believed that this farming system would enable her farm to become self-sufficient.

The main changes that have been made on the farm are as follows:

- The pedigree sheep flock is gone and has been replaced with a flock of commercial ewe flock crossed to Texel rams.
- The suckler cow numbers are being increased. Kay operates a clean grazing system.
- A reseeding programme has been put in place. Clover has been incorporated into a large proportion of the farmed area.
- A cereal crop is being grown to provide on farm feed.

Kays plans for the future are to build the suckler cow numbers to 25, with all the progeny being brought to finish with the aim to sell from January to March directly to an organic processor.

The current stock numbers as follows: 1 stock bulk (pedigree Hereford), 17 cows, 6 replacement heifers to calve in 2015, 16 weanlings and 7 finishers. The sheep flock size of 85 ewes and system will not change as Kay has good markets built up for the sale of lamb. The possibility of growing more cereals will be considered.

Organic Farming in Ireland

- 58,556 hectares of land (1.3% of UAA) Av 38 ha. 1,346 producers
- Mainly livestock production
- Cattle = total herds 981, average size = 42 animals
- Suckler cows = 13,600
- Dairy farms = 27 with 1,539 cows
- Sheep = 410 producers, average 80 breeding ewes
- Pigs = 6 producers
- Poultry = 160 producers (approx.)
- Cereals = total area 2,312 ha, 156 growers, with 62 growers of > than 10 ha
- Horticulture = 300 growers, 420 ha, with 20 > 6 ha (approx..)
- Size of Irish Organic Market = €98m (Source: Bord Bia, April, 14)

Table 2: Suckler Cow Performance 2013-2014



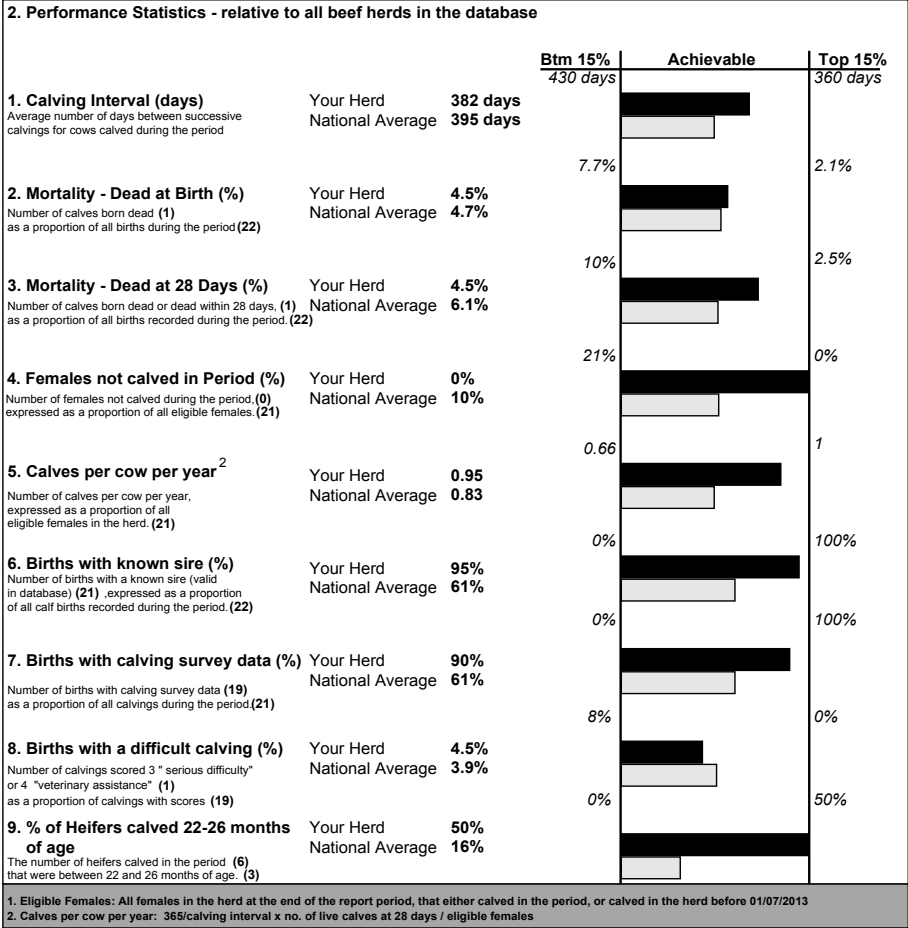
LoCall 1850 600 900

Beef Calving Statistics (01/07/2013 --- 30/06/2014)

Herd Owner: KAY O SULLIVAN

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1. Summary Data				
Report is based on beef cows with a calving record in the cattle breeding database and where the calving date is between 01/07/2013 and 30/06/2014 (Embryo births excluded)				
	All	Heifers		All
Total Calvings	21	6	No. of Cows not calved	0
No. of Calves - Live at Birth	21	6	No. of Calves - Live at 28 days	21
No. Calves - Dead at Birth	1	0	No. of eligible females¹	21
No. Male Calves - Live at Birth	13	2		
No. Female Calves - Live at Birth	8	4	Average age at calving	Cows 6y 10m 2y 2m



- Calving interval below national average of 395 days at 382 days
- Herd mortality of 4.5% below the national average of 4.7%.
Taking into account the size of the herd this figure in real terms is only one loss
- Calves per cow per year at 0.95% above the national average of 0.83%
- The % of heifers calved at 22-26 months of age is 50% compared to the national average of 16%. This is very important and an excellent management indicator from the point of view of:
 - Good growth rates of animals
 - Good heat detection and breeding policy
 - Low cost system

Table 3: Performance of 2013 Born Steers

Tag Number	Date of Birth	Sex	Weight on 10/05/14 (kg)	Weight on 08/08/14 (kg)	Weight Gained from 10/05 to 8/8 (kg)	ADG (kg) From 10/5 to 8/8
-0044	02/03/13	M	430	532	102	1.13
-0046	08/03/13	M	421	512	91	1.01
-0051	16/05/13	M	390	526	136	1.51
-0052	15/06/13	M	342	426	84	0.93
-0055	19/07/13	M	286	388	102	1.13
-0056	19/07/13	M	353	479	126	1.40
Average						1.185

- At a year old, animals are achieving between 0.9 to 1.0kg average daily gains. This is an indication of good winter management in relation to diet as regards good silage quality, housing and healthy stock
- The average second summer daily gain of 1.1kg between weighing's shows that animals have access to good quality grass which in turn indicates good grassland management. Good genetics of the animals is also important in achieving this daily gain.

Table 4: Summary of Steers Slaughtered in 2013

Animal Details		Factory Performance						
Tag Number	Breed	Date Killed	Age at Slaughter (months)	Cold Weight (kg)	Grade	Fat	Price Cents per kg	Overall Price €
-0039	HE	03/10/13	17	260	O+	4-	490	1,274
-0041	HE	20/03/13	19	270	R-	3+	490	1,323
-0037	HE	03/10/13	18	251	O+	3+	490	1,230
-0033	HE	03/10/13	19	286	R-	4-	490	1,401
-0035	HE	03/10/13	19	263	R-	4-	490	1,288
-0040	HE	03/10/13	15	251	O-	3+	490	1,230
Average				264				1,291

- The average age of steers slaughtered ranges from 15 to 19 months of age
- The carcass weights are what are required for the organic market
- The fat scores are indicating that these animals are finished

Profit Monitor Analysis 2013

Table 5: Teagasc Conventional Suckling to Beef Farms Profit Monitor per hectare analysis (169 farms) compared to Kay O’Sullivan’s Organic Suckling to Beef 2013 Profit Monitor

	Teagasc Profit Monitor 2013 <u>AVERAGE</u>	Teagasc Profit Monitor 2013 <u>TOP 1/3</u>	Kay O’Sullivan Profit Monitor 2013
Farm Size (cattle ha)	52	56	26
Output/ha (Physical)			
Stocking Rate (LU/ha)	1.85	2.16	1.09
Liveweight Produced (kg/LU)	340	378	256
Liveweight Produced (kg/ha)	628	816	278
Financial (€/ha)			
Gross Output Value	1376	1822	1011
Variable Costs	833	905	315
Gross Margin	543	917	696
Fixed Costs	528	565	277
Net Profit Excl. Premia	15	352	419

- The stocking rate is lower than the conventional beef farms. Kays stocking rate above is not taking into account the ewe flock which accounted for 1/3 of the farms stocking rate
- The liveweight produced of 256kg/LU is low, this is because the heifers were being retained for the suckler herd
- Due to the lower stocking rate the liveweight of 278kg/ha being produced is much lower than the conventional farms
- The variable costs are much lower as there are very little inputs bought in from outside the farm gate. Purchase of feed and forage accounted for 41% of variable costs on the conventional beef farm. Kay did not have to purchase either
- The variable costs and fixed costs are much less on this organic calf to beef system compared to the conventional calf to beef systems
- Overall the gross margin being achieved is 28% higher than that of the average Teagasc conventional suckler to beef farm participating in the 2013 profit monitor analysis

Grassland Management on Organic Farms

For many Irish farms the simplest and most financially rewarding system of production will be based on maximizing the use of grazed grass.

With good grassland management it is possible to have a long grazing season of high quality feed at low cost. On an organic farm, clover is the driver of grassland production.



On an organic farm, clover is the driver of grassland production

Clover has made very little contribution to the value of pasture on most Irish farms in recent decades. There are many reasons for this including the relatively good value of fertiliser nitrogen, the ease of establishing and maintaining nitrogen-based pastures relative to clover based ones, and the higher stocking rate potential from grass/N systems.

However, farming circumstances are changing rapidly and clover-based pastures can now maintain stocking rates suitable for 80% of Irish farms.

With this in mind farmers are now looking at organic farming with renewed interest. On farms where the stocking rates are in the range 1.2 to 1.7 Lu/Ha and there is little or no clover present, making the switch to organics will require clover to be incorporated into the grassland prior to conversion because it takes time to get clover up and running.

Organic Grassland Re-Seeding

Table 6: Material Costs per Acre

Material Costs	€/acre
*FYM 10 Tonne (purchased)	0
Organic grass/clover seed	90
Lime-1tonne	25
*Slurry (watery) - 2000gals	0
*Post emergence	
Total	115

**Note: extra costs may be incurred if slurry/FYM are sourced off-farm*

Table 7: Machinery Costs per Acre

Machinery Costs	€/acre
FYM spreading	25
Ploughing	30
Rolling	7
Power harrowing x 1	30
Einboch harrow	20
Rolling	7
Slurry spreading	20
Total	139

Different Methods of Reseeding Grassland and Grass Growth on an Organic Farm

An important factor in achieving good levels of production on organic farms is the introduction and maintenance of white clover into grass swards. The question of reseeding pastures also arises on many farms in the spring time or early summer. In good quality pastures the ryegrass content can be as high as 80 % while old pastures can be as low as 5%. Perennial ryegrass is highly productive yielding 25 % more dry matter than old permanent pasture. Perennial ryegrass also has a longer growing season, high palatability and excellent feeding quality.

Ploughing

Ploughing and cultivating is a reliable method for providing an excellent till for new seeds. With very good ploughing creeping grasses and weeds can be buried. Ploughing will break up any impending surface compaction but it should



not be deeper than 15-20cm. Deeper ploughing will bury any available nutrients out of the reach of the new emerging seed. After ploughing achieving a fine firm seed bed is necessary with the use of a suitable cultivator. After sowing, cover the seed with a light chain harrow followed by a rolling. It is important not to cover the seed mixture too deep especially when clover is included.

Minimum Cultivation

While ploughing is a reliable method for reseeding many pastures are unsuitable because the land is too stony, the soil too shallow and there may be no tradition of ploughing in the area. In these situations

minimum cultivation techniques may be used. The fact that there is less soil disturbance affords itself for better support for machinery and animals at the early stages of new pasture establishment. It also allows the young seedlings to make use of the fertile top soil. Graze tightly or cut for silage immediately prior to sowing in order to expose the soil.

Where minimal till system is used 2.5 tone of lime / ha should be applied prior to cultivation. This encourages the breakdown of old vegetation and prevents surface acidification. Cultivate the top 6 to 8 cm of the soil with a suitable cultivator (e.g. power harrow or spike rotavator) to a fine tilt. Roll prior to sowing to prevent seed being buried too deep into the cultivated ground. Broadcast seed mixture at a rate of 30 to 33 kgs / ha and roll again. The one pass operation is not suitable because the clover seed will be buried too deep and will not germinate.

White Clover

The option of using white clover is fast becoming essential rather than just an option on all farms. A complete reseed is considered the best means of getting clover into a sward in dense sheep pastures.

Over-sowing into permanent pastures has a 75% success rate, but the management of the sward before and after over-sowing is the key to success. A productive clover sward is able to fix up to 150 kg of N per ha per year (120 units per acre).



Establishing Clover

The Teagasc research farm in Solohead have been growing and managing clover now for a number of years throughout the farm. The same principles apply whether it is dairy cows, suckler cows or sheep that are going to be grazing the swards. There are a number of things that have to be done right if clover is going to be established.

Add 1 to 2 kg of clover seed per acre with 10 to 11 kg of grass seed included in the mix. If you have a lot of sheep on the farm go for a smaller leaf clover variety along with a medium leaf. On a cattle farm choose a medium leaf along with a large leaf. The smaller leaf varieties are more persistent but the larger leaf varieties have a higher yield.

Varieties such as Crusader and Chieftain are used. The optimum time to reseed and have success with clover is between late-April and mid-August. This ensures that the clover is well established in its first year before the winter comes. It is recommended to not use a seed drill as it will bury the clover seed too deep.

The best approach is to leave the seed on top of the seed bed (e.g. with a seed box or fertiliser spinner) with rain washing it in within a couple of days. If there is no rain then a rolling post sowing on top of the seedbed will be necessary.

Over sowing is the most popular method for establishing clover. It should not be used in old swards with large amounts of poor grass species and butty bases. If a field needs to be reseeded go ahead and reseed it properly.

Nutrients and Manure Management on Organic Farms

The aim of organic farming is to maintain soil fertility levels by efficient recycling of farmyard manure, slurry and or compost that is normally generated on the farm. The efficient storage and spreading of farmyard manure, slurry or compost is vital to organic farming. Appropriate soil management and the maintenance of soil fertility are fundamental to the success of organic farming. Management of organic farms should ensure regular inputs of manures and a level of microbial and earthworm activity sufficient to breakdown organic matter and ensure continuous and efficient nutrient cycling. Keeping soils at a pH that facilitates organic matter breakdown and nutrient recycling is essential for successful organic farming.

Organic manure nutrient content can vary widely depending on the source of nutrients and it is advisable to have the nutrient content of manures checked through laboratory analysis. The table below gives us a guideline to both the nutrient content and value of organic manures based on the value of chemical fertilisers.

Table 8: Available Nutrient Content & Guide Value (€) of Organic Fertilizers 2014

Available Nutrient Content & Guide Value (€) of Organic Fertilizers 2014

Organic Fertilizer Type	N kg/m ³ (units/1,000 gal)		P kg/ m ^{3,6} (units/1,000 gal)	K kg/ m ³ (units/1,000 gal)	Value €/ m ³ Or (€/ 1,000 gal) ^{4,5}
	N ¹ (S131,2014)	N ² (Actual)			
Liquid Manures					
Cattle (7% DM)	2.0 (18)	0.7 (6.5)	0.8 (7)	3.9 (35)	6.2 (28)
Pig (4% DM)	2.1 (19) ³	1.5 (13)	0.8 (7)	2.2 (20)	5.3 (24)
Soiled Water	0.48 (4)		0.08 (0.7)	0.6 (5)	1.2 (5.5)
	N kg/t¹ (units/t)		P kg/t (units/t)	K kg/t (units/t)	Value €/ton
Solid Manures					
Dungstead Manure	1.4 (2.8)		0.9 (1.8)	4.2 (8.4)	7
Farmyard Manure	1.35 (2.7)		1.2 (2.4)	6.0 (12.0)	10
Poultry					
Broiler / deep litter	5.5 (11.0)		6.0 (12.0)	12.0 (24)	30
Layers (30% DM)	6.85 (13.7)		2.9 (5.8)	6.0 (12)	19
Layers (55% DM)	11.5(23)		5.5 (11.0)	12.0 (24)	35
Turkeys	14 (28)		13.8 (27.6)	12.0 (24)	54
Spent Mushroom Compost	1.6 (3.2)		1.5 (3.0)	8.0 (16)	13

¹ Nitrogen availability based on Nitrates Directive SI 31, 2014 (Cattle slurry total N of 5.0kg/m³ / Pig slurry 4.2kg/m³). kg by 2 = units
Spring application of organic manures is required to maximize N recovery. Manures should be tested to determine manure nutrient content
² The realistic value of N in Cattle slurry is approx. 7 – 8 units/1,000 gallon (Based on total N of 3.6kgN/m³ @ 20% N availability). Pig slurry application without incorporation assumes 35% N availability.
³ Incorporation of pig within 2hrs of application assume 50% N availability.
⁴ Value of N = 1.00€/kg, P = €2.00/kg, K = €1.00€/kg (Nutrient values based on price / volume of range of fertilizer products).
⁵ Cost of spreading & transport not included.
⁶ Reduce P availability to 50% on P index 1 & 2 soils

Updated 27th February, 2014

Organic Sheep Enterprise

The sheep enterprise is made up of a flock of commercial ewe flock crossed to Texel rams. In 2013 there were 80 ewes plus 25 hoggets.

There were 130 lambs born and 23 of the hoggets sold for breeding to an organic producer. All lambs were sold into the organic market either to organic producers or directly to the processor, Irish Country Meats.

The price that was achieved ranged from €6.10 to €6.40 per kg. All lambs were sold except for 4 ewe lambs which were kept for breeding.

In 2014 there were 75 ewes producing 120 lambs. This year's trade is back on last years and the price being achieved is ranging from €5.70 to €5.80 per kg. Also some ewe lambs suitable for breeding are being sold directly to other organic producers.



Organic Sheep Production

Sheep production can fit in well on a mixed organic farm but can prove difficult if run as the sheep-only unit. This is because parasites will be very difficult to control where clean grazing is not available for at least part of the production cycle. If sheep are run as a minority enterprise on the farm, with the larger proportion of the land taken up with cattle and/or tillage, they will be much easier to manage successfully. Sheep can help improve the performance of beef dairy enterprises by improving sward quality and helping to control weeds. In mixed grazing with cattle they also improve overall efficiency by eating grass which cattle leave behind, i.e., around dung pats.

Breeds and Breeding

A crossbred ewe is ideal and a cross of any two existing breeds can produce good quality ewes. If a farmer is aiming for a high lambing percentage, the Belclare breed has a big advantage. Research has shown that the Texel breed has substantially better resistance to parasites than the Suffolk. This gives the Texel a distinct advantage in organic production and the breed also produces a lean carcass. The Belclare breed carries a proportion of Texel genes and therefore also has advantages over the Suffolk in parasite resistance. Breeding own replacements and thus keeping a closed flock is of great benefit as it reduces the chances of introducing disease into the flock and helps build up resistance to pathogens on the farm.

Flock Health

Disease prevention is the key to good flock health. Measures such as operating a closed flock, double fencing boundaries and good general hygiene will reduce the risk of infection from various sources. Stress is a big cause of ill health in sheep, so at all times try to avoid anything that stresses your sheep.

Stomach worm infestation in lambs during their first summer is the biggest health problem, in particular nematodirus in May. Grazing new pastures each year gives good control of nematodirus. Weaning the lambs in late June onto silage aftermath will greatly reduce or eliminate the stomach worm burden in summer and autumn.

Regular foot-trimming and zinc sulphate footbaths are the recommended way to control lameness. Other foot bathing products, such as copper sulphate, are permitted but formaldehyde is prohibited. The foot rot organism will only survive in the ground for about 12 days without sheep being present.

After foot bathing the flock should be put onto ground where sheep have not grazed for the previous 14 days. Vaccines are not recommended but permission may be given for their use following a written confirmation by a veterinary surgeon that there is a known farm problem.

Grazing

Grass on its own is a complete feed for ewes and lambs and is a small fraction of the cost of organic concentrates. The most common system of sheep farming in Ireland is mid-season lamb production, that is, ewes lambing in March, and the aim is to sell all lambs off grass.

A rotational grazing system is preferred to set stocking as it is easier to control grass quality; a rotation with three to four paddocks or fields, which need not be the same size, is best. After weaning, lambs should continue to graze good quality pastures, preferably silage aftermaths, which provide clean grazing. Lambs perform excellently on pastures with high clover content.

Housing

Sheep housed for the winter must be provided with a bedded solid floor area. Up to 50% of the total area can be slatted. Plenty of straw should

be used to keep the lying area for the ewe dry at all times. The space required per ewe is 1.5m² (16 sq. ft) minimum. Adequate ventilation is essential, if not, sheep are liable to get pneumonia. Also make sure there is no draught under the sheep. A minimum of 50cm of trough space per heavily pregnant ewe must be provided. Any house type is suitable provided it meets the above requirements.



Oats undersown with Italian Ryegrass and Egyptian Clover



Elmer Koomans, Fruit Hill Farm, Bantry, Co. Cork

Tel: 027-50710 | **Website:** www.organicfarmandgardensupplies.ie

Sowing Date Oats: 18/3/2014

Sowing Date Italian Ryegrass and Egyptian Clover: 14/4/2014

Seed Mixture: In the Italian Ryegrass/Egyptian Clover the amount of Italian Ryegrass should not be more than 10-12kg/ha (2N) and 15-20kg/ha (4N) and the Egyptian Clover between 5-10kg/ha/

Possible N contribution from Egyptian clover to next crop or Italian Ryegrass in spring is 15kg N/acre.

The thoughts regarding the undersowing of the oats with Egyptian clover and Italian Ryegrass were that the Egyptian clover is great feeding (high protein), no problems with bloat or oestrogen; the Italian ryegrass is a fast growing grass that will use the nitrogen produced by the clover. The idea was that there would be plenty of good grazing after the oats harvest. Even when the clover stops growing there will be plenty of grass in the spring.

The Silage crop made after harvesting the oat grain is a bonus, fantastic feeding for dry cows and heifers.

Livestock Health

Based on 4 Principles

1. Appropriate breeds or strains of animals
2. Animal husbandry practises appropriate to the requirements of each species
3. Good feed regular exercise and access to pasturages
4. Appropriate density of livestock.

Conventional Veterinary Treatments Permitted

- Animals for meat consumption: 1 course antibiotics within 12 months
- Animals for breeding: 2 courses antibiotics within 12 months
- Dairy Mastitis: 2 courses antibiotics within 12 months
- If limits exceeded, organic status taken away from animal

Withdrawal Periods for use of Veterinary Products

- Guideline: x2 the legal withdrawal period for anthelmintics, antibiotics or x3 for mastitis treatment.
- Min 48hrs adhered to if no period specified or at least..
 - 7 days eggs
 - 14 days milk (or x3 times mastitis withdrawal period whichever shorter)
 - 28 days for poultry
- If treated with organophosphates, loose organic status permanently

Organic Animal Housing Standards for Bovines

- Adjustments to meet organic standards may be necessary – depends on farm situation
- Housing is not compulsory
- At least 50% of floor area must be bedded
- Straw, rushes or untreated wood shavings are acceptable bedding materials and these need not be organic.
- All animal housing is subject to inspection and approval by the Organic Certification Body (OCB)

Table 9: Minimum housing area per head and by weight

Animal	Minimum Indoor Areas (net area available to each animal)	
	Live-weight Minimum (kg)	m ² /head
Calves; Beef Cattle; Bull Beef; Suckler Cows	Up to 100kg	1.5
	Up to 200kg	2.5
	Up to 350kg	4.0
	Up to 500kg	5.0
Dairy Cows	Up to 600kg	6.0 min
	Over 600kg	1m ² /100kg
Breeding Bulls		10m ²



Organic Beef Industry in Ireland

Organic Market for Beef

Despite the recession the sales of organic foods in Ireland has stabilised at €98 million per year (Source: Bord Bia, 2014).

Fresh meat sales account for approximately €6million per annum.

In Europe, the market for organic food has quadrupled in size over the last 10 years. This growth represents an opportunity for Irish farmers to supply more organic food, especially organic beef.

Market Demand for Organic Beef

In 2012, there were over 9,000 organic cattle slaughtered in Ireland by 526 farmers (Source: DAFM).

The majority of animals were slaughtered by processors. Approximately 5% of animals were slaughtered in organically certified abattoirs with the meat sold through farmers markets, box schemes or direct to consumers, speciality retailers, local shops or restaurants.



Beef farmers interested in organic conversion should speak with other organic farmers, processors and wholesalers about potential markets. The major factory outlets for organic beef are Goodherdsmen, Slaney Meats and AIBP. Premium prices of +15% to +20% have generally been achievable for organic beef in recent years.

The majority of organic cattle are exported (~70%) mainly to UK and mainland Europe, especially Germany and Scandinavia. The main processors are currently paying 4.70 /kg for finished organic cattle.

There is also a market available at present for calves to supply the organic veal market. The organic beef price fluctuates throughout the year, it is usually at its lowest from October to January and large volumes of grass fed animals are presented for slaughter during this time.

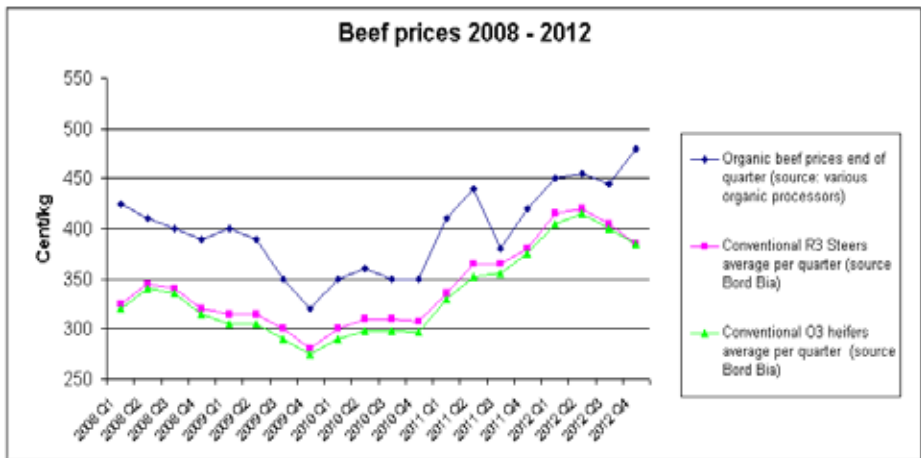
Organic cattle sold in spring tend to achieve highest prices but they also incur higher costs associated with winter finishing.

Figure 2: Organic Exports, Abattoir and Factory Disposals 2012



Factory - 8,627; Abattoir - 377; Live exports - 23; Total - 9,027 cattle
DAFM

Figure 3: Trend of organic Beef Prices from 2008-2012 (Source: IOFGA '13)



Organic Certification in Ireland

A major factor that distinguishes organic farming from other approaches to sustainable farming is the existence of internationally acknowledged standards and certification procedures.



The standards for organic production within the European Union are defined and enshrined in law by Council Regulation EC 834/2007 as amended.

In Ireland the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is the competent authority (i.e. the Department's Organic Unit is based at Johnstown Castle Estate, Wexford) for regulating the organic sector and ensuring that the obligations and requirements of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 as amended are adhered to.

The Organic Unit of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine have designated official Organic Certification Bodies whose role is to certify organic producers, farmers and processors through an inspection process of each individuals unit or farm.



Proposed Organic Farming Scheme 2015

The objective of the Organic Farming Scheme (DAFM) is to deliver enhanced environmental and animal welfare benefits and to encourage producers to respond to the market demand for organically produced food.

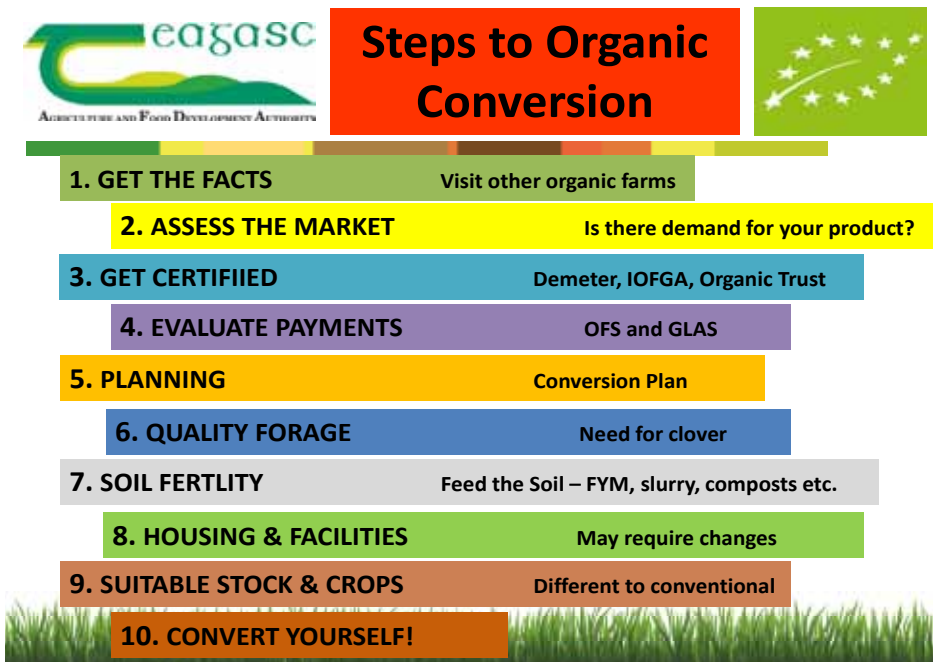
The main elements of the Scheme are as follows:

- The Scheme will be delivered as a stand alone scheme.
- The standard rate of payment is €220/ha for conversion with maintenance rate of €170/ha, with higher rates of €300 (conversion) and €200 (maintenance) applying for Horticulture operations, and €260 (conversion) and €170 (maintenance) for Tillage operations. In addition, a top-up of €30/ha for red-clover is included. The higher horticultural rates will apply to the first six hectares only; thereafter the standard rate applies. For tillage farmers, the higher rate ceiling is 20 ha.
- An organic capital investment scheme has been included in the new TAMS II. A general grant aid rate of 40% will apply, with 60% available for young farmers. An investment ceiling of €80,000 will apply



The Organic Conversion Process

- A conversion plan is required for the two-year conversion period. This is submitted to your chosen organic certification body
- The role of the Organic Certification body is to regulate the organic production system through an inspection process carried out at farm and processing level
- All entrants to organics are entering for an initial five year term in line with the Organic Production Standards and the five year Dept of Agriculture Organic Farming Scheme
- To be eligible for the organic farming scheme an application has to be submitted to the Organic Unit of the DAFM which is based in Johnstown Castle Wexford.
- A 25 hour 'Introduction to Organic Production' course has to be completed before acceptance into the organic farming scheme



Information on Organic Farming

Teagasc Organic Specialists

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Elaine Leavy, Teagasc, Grange, Dunsany, Co. Meath

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Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine

Department of Agriculture Food & Marine, Organic Unit,
Johnstown Castle Est, Wexford

Tel: 053-9163400 | **Email:** organicunit@agriculture.gov.ie

Website: www.agriculture.gov.ie

Organic Certification Bodies

IOFGA (Irish Organic Farmers and Growers Association),
16A Inish Carraig, Golden Island, Athlone, Co Westmeath

Tel: 090 6433680 | **Website:** www.iofga.org

Organic Trust Ltd, Vernon House, 2 Vernon Avenue, Clontarf, Dublin 3.

Tel: 01 8530271 | **Website:** www.organictrust.ie **Email:** organic@iol.ie

Demeter, 40/11 Woodhall Rd, Edinburgh EH13 ODU Scotland.UK

Tel: 00 44 131 4781201 | **Website:** www.demeter.net

Material Costs per Acre	
FYM 10 t (sourced on farm)	0
Organic Grass Clover Seed	90
Lime – 1 tonne	25
Slurry (2,000 gal. watery)	
-post emergence (sourced on farm)	0
Total Materials*	€115

Machinery Costs per Acre	
FYM Spreading	25
Ploughing	30
Rolling	7
Power Harrow x1	30
Einboch Harrow	20
Rolling	7
Slurry spreading	20
Total Machinery	€139

*Note: extra costs may be incurred if slurry/FYM are sourced off-farm



Grazing management of white clover

Maintain soil fertility

Take regular soil samples

Soil Fertility	
pH	6.0 to 7.0
Phosphorus	3.1 to 6.0 ppm
Potassium	75 to 120 ppm

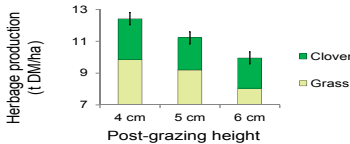
- Apply slurry in Spring for growth
- Alternate cutting and grazing fields



Soil sample every 3-5 years



Extend grazing season



- Extend grazing season
- Avoid poaching
- Rotational (paddock) grazing to 4-5 cm



Reducing bloat risk:

- Don't put livestock straight onto clover-rich grassland when hungry
- Livestock may need to "get used" to clover so introduce gradually
- If in doubt, use an anti-bloat feed/water additive and provide roughage





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