



THE DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES & FOOD  
AN ROINN TALMHAÍOCHTA, IASCAIGH & BIA

## **Foreword by Mr. Trevor Sargent T.D., Minister for Food and Horticulture at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food**

I am delighted to present this Organic Farming Action Plan 2008–2012 on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Organic farming has a major role to play in meeting the ever-increasing challenges of depleting oil supplies, climate change and the provision of a sustainable supply of food. I want to reiterate my own personal commitment, and that of this Government, to developing the organic sector in Ireland. The Programme for Government sets down an ambitious target to convert a minimum 5% of acreage to organic farmland by 2012. This Action Plan is indeed timely in pursuit of this target.

I would like to thank all the stakeholders on the National Steering Group and sub-Groups for their input into this document. I know that all the participants in these Groups consistently demonstrate a high level of commitment, not only on behalf of their organisations but also at a personal level, to the development of the organic sector.

The Plan has four main objectives — to increase production in line with market trends, increase the knowledge base, develop the organic market home and abroad, and encourage the development of public procurement opportunities for organic products. There are over 60 actions listed in the Plan and it will take the commitment of all stakeholders to assist in reaching the Government target.

I am pleased to be able to give my support to this Action Plan, and I can guarantee that I will do everything I can to assist in achieving the challenging target set out in the Programme for Government.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Trevor Sargent". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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**Trevor Sargent T.D. Minister for Food and Horticulture at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food**

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## **Introduction**

The Organic Farming Action Plan 2008-2012 is the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's response to the commitment in the Programme for Government to convert a minimum 5% of acreage to organic farmland by 2012.

In November 2000, an Organic Development Committee (ODC) was established on foot of a recommendation in the Agri-Food 2010 Report. The Committee presented its report in April 2002 and it contained a range of recommendations for action by the various stakeholders in the organic sector. Among these was a priority recommendation that some additional structures were required to assist the development of the organic sector, including a Steering Group, drawn from among the stakeholders in the Organic Development Committee.

The National Steering Group (NSG), now in its second 3 year term, is made up of a wide range of stakeholders representing organic farmers, mainstream farmers, the food processing and retail sectors, semi-state bodies, organic certification bodies and consumers - (See Appendix 2). It is supported by two sub-Groups, the Organic Market Development Group (OMDG), chaired by Bord Bia and the Partnership Expert Group, (PEWG), chaired by Teagasc.

The Organic Farming Action Plan 2008-2012 was produced in consultation with the members of the three Groups and has been approved by the National Steering Group.

## **Background**

The implementation of the main recommendations of the Organic Development Committee Report has had a positive impact on the development of the organic sector in recent years. The increased number of operators and land area since 2005 is encouraging. In 2005 there were 1,090 operators with 35,266 hectares under organic production. This increased to 1,334 operators and 41,122 hectares by the end of 2007. The percentage increase for 2006 was 15% but this levelled off somewhat in 2007, due, in the main, to the delay in getting Commission approval for the Rural Development Programme. The new Organic Farming Scheme and capital Grant Aid Schemes will provide the financial certainty that operators have been waiting for and this should have a positive effect on attracting new entrants into the sector. The three additional organic specialist advisor appointments in Teagasc will need time to make an impact, as will the Organic Market Development Plan 2006-2009 being

implemented by Bord Bia, before we can evaluate what impact these initiatives are having on encouraging new producers and processors into the sector.

Notwithstanding the above positive developments, it is clear that further initiatives are needed to achieve the 5% land area target set out in the Programme for Government. As we are currently at 0.9% of the land area, this is a challenging target. The improved returns from conventional dairying and cereal production, and the potential of energy crops competing for the same land area are factors inhibiting the growth of the organic sector. The situation with REPS 2 and 3 participants not allowed to apply for the stand-alone Organic Farming Scheme without transforming to REPS 4 is also a major barrier to attracting existing REPS participants to convert. According to advisors on the ground, very few if any REPS2/REPS3 participants will move to REPS 4 in advance of their normal finish date. This leads to potential problems, e.g. markets that are open at present may be supplied from elsewhere in 4 to 5 years time, also an individual's circumstances may change in a year or two. Teagasc alone can already identify over 100 producers affected by this anomaly and the independent agricultural consultants are encountering similar problems with their clients. The Department is currently pursuing this issue with the European Commission.

It is clear that all stakeholders will have to play their full part to reach the 5% objective. While the emphasis in the Programme for Government is on increased production, this Plan has other key objectives, namely ensuring that expansion is market driven by identifying existing markets and developing new ones. It will also encourage public procurement. A key aspect will be the development of an increased knowledge base, including the provision of an enhanced level of training, education, research and advice.

## **Current Position**

The current area under organic production Ireland at the end of 2007 is 41,122 hectares, which represents just 0.9 % of the total utilisable agriculture area (UAA) in the country. The target of 5% of the land area translates to 215,000 hectares based on the current total UAA of 4.3 million hectares. This represents a targeted increase in actual land area of circa 520%.

Conventional grass based enterprises represent our greatest land use and beef production is believed to hold the greatest potential for increasing the area devoted to organics. It is imperative that growth in the organic sector is market driven and an

adjusted version of the Organic Market Development Plan 2006-2009 will need to be put in place to address anticipated expansion in production.

The UK presently imports 4,000 tonnes of organic beef per year and at 3.5 carcasses per tonne, this translates to a requirement for 14,000 animals. On a rough estimate, to supply both the home and UK market, we need 3 times the amount of beef currently produced. Supply deficits of a wide range of organic products in the UK would imply a greater opportunity to export produce to the UK.

Some impediments to substantial growth have been identified by stakeholders. The current economic climate of higher food prices across the EU may make it a more difficult decision for consumers to consider buying premium products, such as organic. The increase in conventional milk and cereal prices has had a two-fold effect. Organic cereal prices have risen substantially and a scarcity of supply is likely to continue to be the case in the short to medium term. This scarcity, coupled with the 100% organic feed requirement for herbivores from 1 January 2008, are major barriers to increased numbers of beef and sheep farmers converting to organics. Conversely, however, it may give existing operators confidence to expand their cereal output in the knowledge that there will be a definite market for their product. The increase in conventional milk price will make it more challenging to convince dairy farmers to move to organic production. In addition the recent increases in beef prices may have a similar negative effect.

### **Market Development Issues in relation to delivering the 5% target**

The planned expansion of organic land area in Ireland to 5% of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) will necessitate developing markets capable of accommodating large volumes of products. In this regard, it is imperative that market development initiatives are put in place simultaneously with plans to expand production.

Investment in market research should be a priority in establishing market opportunity and market information to give producers, processing companies and packers full market knowledge. The conversion of 5% of the land area to organic production will necessitate the development both of the Irish and also key export markets.

The National Organic Marketing Plan is the cornerstone of the existing marketing strategy. The Plan emphasises the need for directing national and/or local PR initiatives at two broad levels of trade, i.e. retail multiples and independent/direct channels like farmers' markets, farm shops etc. The objective of the existing plan is to

develop the Irish organic sector for existing suppliers and new entrants, assisting them to capture more market share of Irish and other EU organic food markets. The implementation of this plan is currently the primary goal of the Organic Market Development Group. The backdrop of the existing plan relates to marketing support initiatives in the existing situation where less than 1% of land area is in organic production. The target to expand organic production to 5% will necessitate revising the existing plan, to ensure adequate marketing development initiatives are put in place to support increases in production. To revise and expand the existing marketing plan, it is imperative to establish where and when supplies of organic product will be available. The two-year conversion period into organic farming should facilitate sufficient lead-in time to plan and develop marketing measures to accommodate increases in the supply of organic product.

## **Developments to date**

### ***Financial Supports***

- New Organic Farming Scheme launched in August 2007
  - Stand-alone element to encourage small-scale horticultural producers and large-scale tillage producers to convert
  
- New Grant Aid Schemes launched in June 2007
  - Lower Income Unit levels required
  - Lower eligible limit for individual applications

### ***Research, Education, Training and Advice***

- Enhanced demonstration farm programme
- Extension of agronomist expertise to include pig and poultry sectors
- Three additional Teagasc specialist organic advisors
- A study of the breed effects on the production for beef on the organic farm at Johnstown Castle
- Evaluation of production of organic crops
- Contract researcher appointed April '07 to work on soils/forage crops
- Tillage rotation experiment on-going
- Teagasc Production Conference in May 2007
- Upskilling of non-organic Teagasc advisors
- 2 Seminars held in 2007 to brief non-Teagasc Agricultural Consultants who had expressed an interest in organics

- Publications produced by Teagasc, Bord Bia and FSAI
- Poultry Report published by Teagasc
- Funding provided for some of the educational institutions
- Specially adapted information leaflet distributed at all the Department information meetings on the new Animal Welfare, Recording and Breeding Scheme for Suckler Herds
- Similar information leaflet for the promotion of organic crop production has also been produced and circulated.

### ***Marketing***

- Organic Market Development Plan 2006-2009 approved
- Bord Bia Summer Campaign ran for 2 weeks in July 2007
- National Organic Week now an annual event
- First organic awards at SHOP trade event in September 2007
- Bord Bia presented market research on UK and Italian export markets
- Farmers' Markets Guide published by Bord Bia in November 2007
- Work on updated Organic Guide and new website ongoing

## **Objective 1**

### **Increase Production in Ireland in line with market requirements**

#### **Ministerial engagement**

Experience in the UK has shown that engagement with stakeholders at Ministerial level works. In the UK the focus was on the retail multiples but in Ireland we recommend that the engagement with stakeholders starts with the farming social partners. The reason for this is that there still seems to be an image problem with organic farming among the farming sector. To address this, the Minister for Food and Horticulture should invite key industry leaders, opinion makers and agricultural academics to hear some of Irelands top class organic farmers and growers explain to them at first hand what organics is and to allay any misconceptions they may have. This should help to improve this perceived image problem.

#### **Proposed Actions**

The following proposed actions should facilitate the development of the production base in Ireland. Details of timeframe and responsibilities for the proposed actions are at Appendix 1:

#### ***General***

- Encourage the establishment of Local Producer Groups
- Target existing REPS participants – through planners and with direct organic info via leaflet/ flyers
- Farming and local press should be given producer profiles of the Demonstration farmers, in advance of the events to obtain maximum publicity.
- The national media, including the Farmers Journal, should be targeted with regular articles on the individual sectors, giving factual information and contact details for follow up advice. It is important to highlight the full supply chain with particular emphasis on the areas that are profitable based on the research carried out
- Build on contacts with Agricultural Consultants
- Encourage cross-border co-operation
- Encourage caterers to work with local producers to develop organic tourism opportunities
- Information on traditional breeds should be disseminated widely

- Teagasc to hold a technical conference annually for the duration of the Plan
- Teagasc will produce a newsletter three times per year for circulation to all existing organic farmers and all Teagasc advisers

### ***Livestock***

- Target suitable potential finishers – through liaison between the meat processors and Teagasc
- Promotion of regional brands
- Facilitate the expansion of organic production by the allocation of additional milk quota to organic producers

### ***Tillage***

- Targeted meetings/workshops countrywide with conventional cereal and field scale horticulture producers. Pilot one before rolling out across the country.
- Target a group of 6-10 large field-scale conventional producers across a range of crops to visit large scale organic operators in the UK and see at first hand the level of professionalism that exists
- Use miller to help identify potential organic tillage farmers.
- Teagasc to provide research/advice on alternative forage crops
- Technical experts to examine best practice in Europe
- Training needed in stockless rotation

### ***Horticulture***

- Using DAFF database, circulate possibilities under the Organic Farming Scheme to Horticultural producers
- Large scale packers, distributors and processors should be invited in groups to specifically arranged farm walks to field-scale organic horticultural demonstration units
- Briefings/Demo farm days for invited groups
- Encourage the establishment of Local Horticulture Producer Groups, which will be facilitated by the new Regulation in that area – Crop Production Division are drafting a 5-year strategy for Producer Organisations for the European Commission and organics is included as part of this strategy.

## **Objective 2**

### **Increase the knowledge base in organic food and farming**

#### ***Education/Training***

Adequate education and training are vital for the development of the organic sector. Teagasc has played an important role to date in the delivery of these services. The educational institutions, including an t-Ionad Glas, Organic Centre Rossinver, and Wexford Organic Centre also provide a valuable service to organic producers on limited resources. They should be supported financially by DAFF on an individual project basis. DAFF should facilitate close co-operation between the three institutions on an-ongoing basis to improve communications and to ensure that there is no duplication of effort.

There appears to be a gap in educational, training and re-training facilities for larger scale farmers whose whole or majority income is from pure production, and who are not involved in direct selling. This could be addressed through the existing agricultural colleges who could provide initial training and re-training / up-skilling required for farmers to become successful organic producers.

#### **Proposed Actions:**

- Extension of Distance Learning initiative
- More FETAC accredited courses to be rolled out nationwide.
- A new FETAC Level 6 course to be developed in 2008, on a pilot basis initially.
- Consideration should be given to the development of a degree level course
- Production of an educational/training DVD
- Inclusion of organic module in REPS and 180 hour courses
- Ensure grassland management/reseeding etc. is full part of education/training/ demonstration farm programme
- Expansion of Teagasc discussion Groups – eight discussion groups will be operational in 2008. The target is to have 15 groups coming together at least four times/year by the end of 2010.
- In-service training will be provided annually for the general body of Teagasc advisory staff.

### *Advice*

While the farm demonstration programme has been very successful, there has been up to now a lack of follow up advice for those farmers expressing an interest in converting to organics. It is encouraging that Teagasc has increased its number of specialist organic advisors, but there is also a need for technical documentation to be produced at individual sector level.

The requirement for each demonstration farm to participate in the National Farm Survey and the commitment from Teagasc to complete an E-Profit monitor for each farm will facilitate Teagasc in their provision of a comprehensive level of advice, both to existing organic operators and also farmers considering joining the organic production system.

DAFF should build on the contacts made with the Agricultural Consultants last year and keep them up to date on all developments. DAFF intends to meet with a representative group of these consultants to obtain their views on how to expand the sector.

While there is technical documentation available for the beef, sheep, dairy and tillage sectors, this material needs to be reviewed periodically and updated where necessary. Similar documentation is not available for the smaller sectors, like horticulture, pigs and poultry. It is recommended, therefore that production templates should be developed for these sectors. Other initiatives recommended include:

- Advice campaign on “*Achieving High Organic Cereal Yields*” must be put in place. This should take the form of information sessions, farm walks and press articles.
- Advisory service to target potential organic tillage operators, also to provide research/advice on alternative forage crops, e.g. fodder beet.
- Training and follow up advice required in specialist organic crop growing methods – explore possibility of a one to one mentoring service for new entrants into organic cereal growing provided by current successful organic growers.
- Further external consultancy input in 2008 and beyond as deemed appropriate.
- Advanced courses in areas such as grassland management, animal health, nutrient management and financial planning will be offered by Teagasc in 2009 and subsequent years.

- Each Teagasc adviser will carry out approximately 100 individual farm visits in 2008.
- Consideration should be given to strengthening the Teagasc specialised advisory support in the horticulture area. This could be done initially on a pilot basis.

### ***Research & Development***

The areas for initial inclusion include the following:

- Research into crops that will allow extension of the grazing system.
- Research into winter feed – maintenance and production elements
- Reactivation of the full DAFF organic cereal variety testing programme
- Teagasc will set up a web page containing published scientific research on organic production and also identifying sources of further reliable material
- Research into composting and soil development especially as phosphate and potash are limited sources and will in turn become more and more expensive.

There is clearly a need for appropriate research in horticulture and this should be examined as a matter of urgency.

## **Objective 3**

### **Develop the market for organic produce in Ireland and abroad**

#### ***Consumer Information***

The consumer needs to be better informed about the benefits of organic food production and where organic food can be purchased. National Organic Week has been providing this service but it only lasts for a short period of time. Ongoing PR work is required explaining the principles of organic farming to consumers, and this information needs to be disseminated widely.

#### ***Supply chain development***

The fragmentation of the organic supply chain can make it difficult for smaller producers to supply organic produce to retail outlets, or to wholesalers. By grouping together, producers can have access to greater markets and increase their ability to secure fair prices. This also creates benefits for wholesalers and retailers through improved quantity, quality and consistency of supplies.

Distribution systems for some commodities and marketing channels are now well developed, but problems remain in local distribution. Retailer initiatives, e.g. increasing the number of local producers serving local retailers directly, should be encouraged. The development of farmers markets, in co-operation with Local Authorities, should improve access for local producers.

#### ***Market intelligence***

In order to provide enhanced market intelligence to organic farmers, those planning to convert, and to policy makers, a new database should be developed by DAFF to provide this information. This would provide updated statistics on the production census carried out in 2002. Also DAFF and Teagasc should utilise existing farm surveys by seeking the inclusion of a handful of questions aimed at non-organic producers asking some central questions, such as, are they interested in potentially converting to organics and why, where would they like to get information from, what do they understand organics to be about. Also if the response is negative, what they see as the reasons for not considering the organic option.

#### **Other Proposed Actions**

- Communicate market research findings to the industry
- Disseminate market information on organic food to key companies in the Irish food sector

- Disseminate market and research findings to stakeholders
- Further research of potential export markets in EU
- Evaluate markets for seasonal products

#### **Objective 4**

##### **Encourage the development of Public Procurement Opportunities for organic products**

A public procurement pilot project should be initiated using local organic produce. It is recommended that DAFF should take the lead on this, commencing with Agriculture House. Buy-in by catering staff and local organic producers will be the first step. Other State agencies should be encouraged to follow suit with a view to replicating the initiative at regional level.

Progress on the Plan should be reviewed annually, and updated where necessary, by the National Steering Group, based on performance indicators to be agreed by the NSG.

## Appendix 1

### List of Actions

No	Action	Lead Role	Support Role	Time-frame <sup>1</sup>
1	Ministerial engagement with stakeholders	DAFF	Teagasc & Farming social partners	ST
2	Encourage the establishment of Local Producer Groups	DAFF	Teagasc, OCBs & existing Producer groupings	MT
3	Target existing REPS producers – through planners and with direct organic info via leaflet/ flyers	DAFF	Teagasc & Agricultural Consultants	ST
4	Farming and local press should be given producer profiles of the Demonstration Farmers, in advance of the events to obtain maximum publicity.	Teagasc	Farming social partners	ST
5	The national media, including the Farmers Journal, should be targeted with regular articles on the individual sectors, giving factual information and contact details for follow up advice.	Teagasc	Bord Bia, OCBs & DAFF	ST
6	Build on contacts with Agricultural Consultants	DAFF	OCBs	ST
7	Encourage cross-border co-operation	DAFF	Teagasc, Farming Social Partners, existing Producer groupings & Educational Institutions	MT
8	Encourage caterers to work with local producers to develop organic tourism opportunities	DAFF	Failte Ireland, Bord Bia & Teagasc	MT
9	Information on traditional breeds should be disseminated widely	Teagasc	DAFF	ST
10	Annual Technical Conference	Teagasc		ST
11	Teagasc to produce a newsletter three times per year for circulation to all existing organic farmers and all Teagasc advisers. It will also submit management tips to Organic Matters and Clover, on a quarterly basis.	Teagasc	OCBs	ST
12	Target suitable potential finishers	Teagasc,	Bord Bia, meat	ST

<sup>1</sup> ST = Short term , 1 year

2 MT = Medium term 1-3 years

No	Action	Lead Role	Support Role	Time-frame <sup>1</sup>
	– through liaison with the meat processors and Teagasc		processors, Farming Social Partners & DAFF	
13	Promotion of regional brands	DAFF	Teagasc	MT
14	Facilitate the expansion of organic production by the allocation of additional milk quota to organic producers	DAFF	Organic Milk Processors	MT
15	Targeted meetings/workshops countrywide with conventional cereal and field scale horticulture producers. Pilot one before rolling out across the country.	DAFF	Teagasc and Bord Bia	ST
16	Target a group of 6-10 large field scale conventional producers across a range of crops to visit large scale organic operators in the UK, or elsewhere as appropriate, to see at first hand the level of professionalism that exists	Teagasc	Farming social partners & DAFF	ST
17	Use miller to help identify potential organic tillage farmers.	Teagasc	DAFF	ST
18	Teagasc to provide research/advice on alternative forage crops	Teagasc	Agricultural Consultants	ST
19	Technical experts to examine best practice in Europe	Teagasc		MT
20	Training needed in stockless rotation	Teagasc	Educational institutions & National Organic Training Skillnet (NOTS)	ST
21	Using DAFF organic database, circulate possibilities under the Organic Farming Scheme to Horticultural producers	DAFF	OCBs and Teagasc	ST
22	Large scale packers, distributors and processors should be invited in groups to specifically arranged farm walks at field-scale organic horticultural demonstration units	Teagasc	Bord Bia, OCBs & DAFF	ST
23	Briefings/Demonstration Farm days for invited groups	Teagasc	DAFF & OCBs	ST
24	Encourage the establishment of Local Horticulture Producer Groups, which will be facilitated by the new Regulation in that area	DAFF	Teagasc & NOTS	MT
25	The educational institutions, including an t-Ionad Glas, Organic Centre Rossinver, and	DAFF		ST

No	Action	Lead Role	Support Role	Time-frame <sup>1</sup>
	Wexford Organic Centre should be supported financially by DAFF on an individual project basis.			
26	DAFF should facilitate close co-operation between the Educational Institutions to improve communications and to ensure that there is no duplication of effort.	DAFF	Educational Institutions	ST
27	Existing agricultural colleges should be encouraged to provide initial training and re-training / up-skilling required for commercial farmers to become successful organic producers.	Teagasc	Agricultural Colleges	ST
28	Extension of E-Learning initiatives	An t-Ionad Glas & Teagasc	DAFF	ST
29	More FETAC accredited courses to be rolled out nationwide	Educational Institutions, Teagasc & NOTS		ST
30	Advanced courses in areas such as grassland management, animal health, nutrient management and financial planning to be offered by Teagasc in 2009 and subsequent years	Teagasc		MT
31	All Agricultural Colleges to deliver a module on organic production to each new group of Vocational Certificate in Agriculture students.	Teagasc		MT
32	A new FETAC Level 6 course to be developed in 2008, on a pilot basis initially.	Educational Institutions	Teagasc	ST
33	Consideration should be given to the development of a degree level course	Universities	Teagasc	MT
34	Production of an educational/training DVD	Teagasc	DAFF	MT
35	Inclusion of organic module in REPS and 180 hour courses	Teagasc & Agricultural Consultants		ST
36	Ensure grassland management/reseeding etc. is full part of education/training/ demonstration farm programme	Teagasc	DAFF	ST
37	Expansion of Teagasc Discussion Groups	Teagasc		ST
38	In-service training will be	Teagasc		ST

No	Action	Lead Role	Support Role	Time-frame <sup>1</sup>
	provided annually for the general body of Teagasc advisory staff			
39	Series of technical booklets to be prepared	Teagasc		ST
40	Advice campaign on “Achieving High Organic Cereal Yields” must be put in place. This should take the form of information sessions, farm walks and press articles	Teagasc		ST
41	Advisory service to target potential organic tillage operators, also to provide research/advice on alternative forage crops, e.g. fodder beet	Teagasc & Agricultural Consultants		ST
42	Training and follow up advice required in specialist organic crop growing methods – explore possibility of a one to one mentoring service for new entrants into organic cereal growing provided by current successful organic growers	Teagasc	Existing organic crop producers	ST
43	Possible further external consultancy input in 2008 and beyond as appropriate	DAFF	Teagasc	ST
44	Each Teagasc adviser to carry out approximately 100 individual farm visits in 2008	Teagasc		ST
45	Consideration, on a pilot basis, should be given to strengthening the Teagasc specialised advisory support in the horticulture area.	DAFF	Teagasc	ST
46	Evaluation of production of organic crops	Teagasc	All stakeholders including OCB’s, farmers and other experts from within and outside Teagasc	MT
47	Research on the productivity of clover based grassland under organic management, including evaluation of nitrate losses	Teagasc		ST
48	Research on development of a successful system for lamb & beef production	Teagasc	Universities	MT
49	Research on development of a successful organic milk production system	Teagasc		ST
50	Reactivation of the full DAFF organic cereal variety testing programme	DAFF	Organic cereal producers	ST
51	Research into composting and	Teagasc	Universities	MT

No	Action	Lead Role	Support Role	Time-frame <sup>1</sup>
	soil development especially as phosphate and potash are limited sources and will in turn become more and more expensive.			
52	Appropriate research in horticulture should be examined as a matter of urgency.	DAFF	Teagasc	ST
53	Teagasc should set up a web page containing published scientific research on organic production	Teagasc		MT
54	Organic message needs to be disseminated widely to the consumer - ongoing PR work required explaining the principles of organic farming.	Bord Bia	All stakeholders	ST
55	Retailer initiatives, e.g. increasing the number of local producers serving local retailers directly, should be encouraged.	Retail Multiples	DAFF & OCBs	MT
56	The development of farmers markets, in co-operation with Local Authorities, should be closely monitored	DAFF	Bord Bia & Local Authorities	MT
57	A new database should be developed by DAFF to provide market intelligence.	DAFF		ST
58	Include additional questions in the Farm Survey to identify how best to expand the sector	Teagasc	DAFF	MT
59	Communicate market research findings to the industry	Bord Bia		ST
60	Disseminate market information on organic food to key companies in the Irish food sector	Bord Bia	DAFF and Teagasc	ST
61	Disseminate market and research findings to stakeholders	Bord Bia		ST
62	Further research of potential export markets in EU	Bord Bia		MT
63	Evaluate markets for seasonal products	Bord Bia		MT
64	An organic Public Procurement project should be initiated on a pilot project basis.	DAFF	Organic Producers, Processors & OCBs	ST

## Appendix 2

### Membership of the National Steering Group for the Organic Sector

Mr John Duggan	Chairperson
Mr Patrick Barry	Teagasc
Mr Stiofán Nutty	Advisor to Minister of State Sargent
Mr George Kearns	Irish Co-Operative Organisation Society
Ms Elaine Farrell	Irish Farm Association
Mr Denis Purcell	Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association
Mr Joe Fox	Enterprise Ireland
Mr Gerry Scully	Teagasc
Mr John Purcell	Good Herdsmen Ltd
Mr Lorcan Bourke	Bord Bia
Mr Michael Kilcoyne	Consumers Association of Ireland
Ms Ciara Feehely	Irish Cattle & Sheep Farmers Association
Mr Vincent Cleary	Glenisk Ltd
Mr Michael Miklis	Demeter Standards
Mr Urs Tobler	Irish Small Medium Enterprises
Ms Bernadette Phelan	Western Development Commission
Ms Grace Maher	Irish Organic Farmers & Growers Association
Mr Pat Lalor	Organic Trust
Mr Tim Camon	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Mr Robbie Smith	Musgraves/Supervalu
Mr Shaun Doherty	Tesco Ireland
Ms Mary Cloherty	Irish Dairy Board
Mr Neil McGowan	Irish Builders and Employers Confederation
Mr John Fox	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Mr Donal Coleman	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Mr Michael O'Donovan	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Mr Jim Carew	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Mr Tony Reid	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Mr William Murphy (Secretariat)	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food