



What is Organic Farming

Organic farming is a sustainable production system. It provides the opportunity of an alternative farming system based primarily on balancing inputs and outputs in a 'closed' system. Increased consumer awareness of food safety issues and environmental concerns has contributed to the growth in organic farming in recent years.

Organic agriculture is a farming system which relies on crop rotations, the recycling of farm-produced organic materials, that is, crop residues, animal manure, legumes, green manure and off-farm organic wastes and on a variety of non-chemical methods for the control of pests, diseases and weeds.

Organic farmers can access a range of services and information from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Regulation of the Organic Sector:

- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine regulates the organic sector in Ireland.
- Organic production and labelling of organic products is controlled by European regulations, Regulation (EU) No. 848/2018 as amended refers.
- The EU legislation allows Member States to use private inspection bodies to carry out the inspection and licensing system of organic operator which is the system in place in Ireland.



Converting to Organic Farming:

Organic farming involves undergoing a period of conversion in which the land and producer adjust to organic farming methods. The conversion period for the change from conventional to organic farming will be for a duration of two years. Organic Farmers will receive priority access to Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES).

Steps to Join the Organic Farming Scheme:

- Register as Organic - contact an Organic Control Body (details overleaf)
- Complete an approved Organic Farming Principles course - Teagasc or National Organic Training Skillnet(NOTS) (details overleaf)
- To find an Organic Agent contact Teagasc or Agricultural Consultants Association(ACA) (details overleaf)

Having registered as an organic operator with an Organic Control Body (OCB), you may then apply to the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine to join the Organic Farming Scheme (OFS). This requires two separate online applications:

- a. Submit separate Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) application ONLINE.
- b. Declare land parcels as “in-conversion” or “organic” on Basic Income Support Scheme(BISS) application ONLINE.

Organic Farming Scheme (OFS):

Payment Rates	Year 1-2 (in-conversion) 1 - 70 ha €/ha	Year 1-2 (in-conversion) > 70 ha €/ha	Year 3 – 5 (fully converted) 1 - 70 ha €/ha	Year 3 – 5 (fully converted) > 70 ha €/ha
Drystock	€300/ha	€60/ha	€250/ha	€30/ha
Tillage	€320/ha	€60/ha	€270/ha	€30/ha
Dairy	€350/ha	€60/ha	€300/ha	€30/ha
Horticulture	€800/ha	€60/ha	€600/ha	€30/ha

A new participation payment will be paid to farmers in the Organic Farming Scheme of €2,000 in their first year of conversion to organic farming and €1,400 per annum thereafter

Organic Capital Investment Scheme (OCIS):

- Grant assistance available for on farm investments.
- On Line applications via agfood.ie.
- 60% grant assistance on pre VAT price for farmers participating in the Organic Farming Scheme.

Scheme of Grant Aid for the Development of the Organic Processing Industry(OPIG):

- Grant assistance available for OFF farm investments.
- 40% grant assistance on pre VAT price.

Terms & Conditions available for above scheme and grants @ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/fc7c8-organic-farming/>

Useful contact details:

Teagasc:

Elaine Leavy, Teagasc, Grange, Dunsany, Co. Meath. Email: Elaine.Leavy@teagasc.ie

Joe Kelleher, Teagasc, Gortboy, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick. Email: Joe.Kelleher@teagasc.ie

Organic Certification Bodies:

O.T. : Organic Trust CLG, Office A1, Town Centre House, Dublin Road, Naas, Kildare. Tel: 045 882377.

I.O.A. : Irish Organic Association, 13 Inish Carraig, Golden Island, Athlone, Westmeath. Tel: 0906 433680.

ACA:

Agricultural Consultants Association(ACA), Granary Business Centre, Greenside, Carrick on Suir, Co Tipperary E32AK80.

Email: acaservices@aca.ie

NOTS

National Organic Training Skillnet(NOTS), The Enterprise Centre, Hill Road, Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim Email: info@nots.ie

Organic Unit:

Organic Unit, Department of Agriculture, Food and The Marine, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford.

Tel: 053 9163425.

Email: organic@agriculture.gov.ie.