



Steps to on-farm conversion and opportunities

The Teagasc Signpost Series
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Outline

- What is Organic Agriculture?
- Organic Production in Ireland
- Opportunities
- Steps to Organic Conversion
- The Future

What is Organic Agriculture?

*“Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains health of **soils, ecosystems and people**.*

*It relies on **ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions**, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effect.*

*Organic agriculture combines **tradition, innovation and science** to benefit the shared environment and promote **fair relationships** and a good **quality of life** for all involved.”*

(Source IFOAM)

Organic Regulation

EU Council (defined minimum standard)



Competent Authority in Ireland

Dept. of Agriculture, Food and the Marine



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



Organic Production in Ireland

Organic Land Area 2018



EU organic logo

Ireland
2%

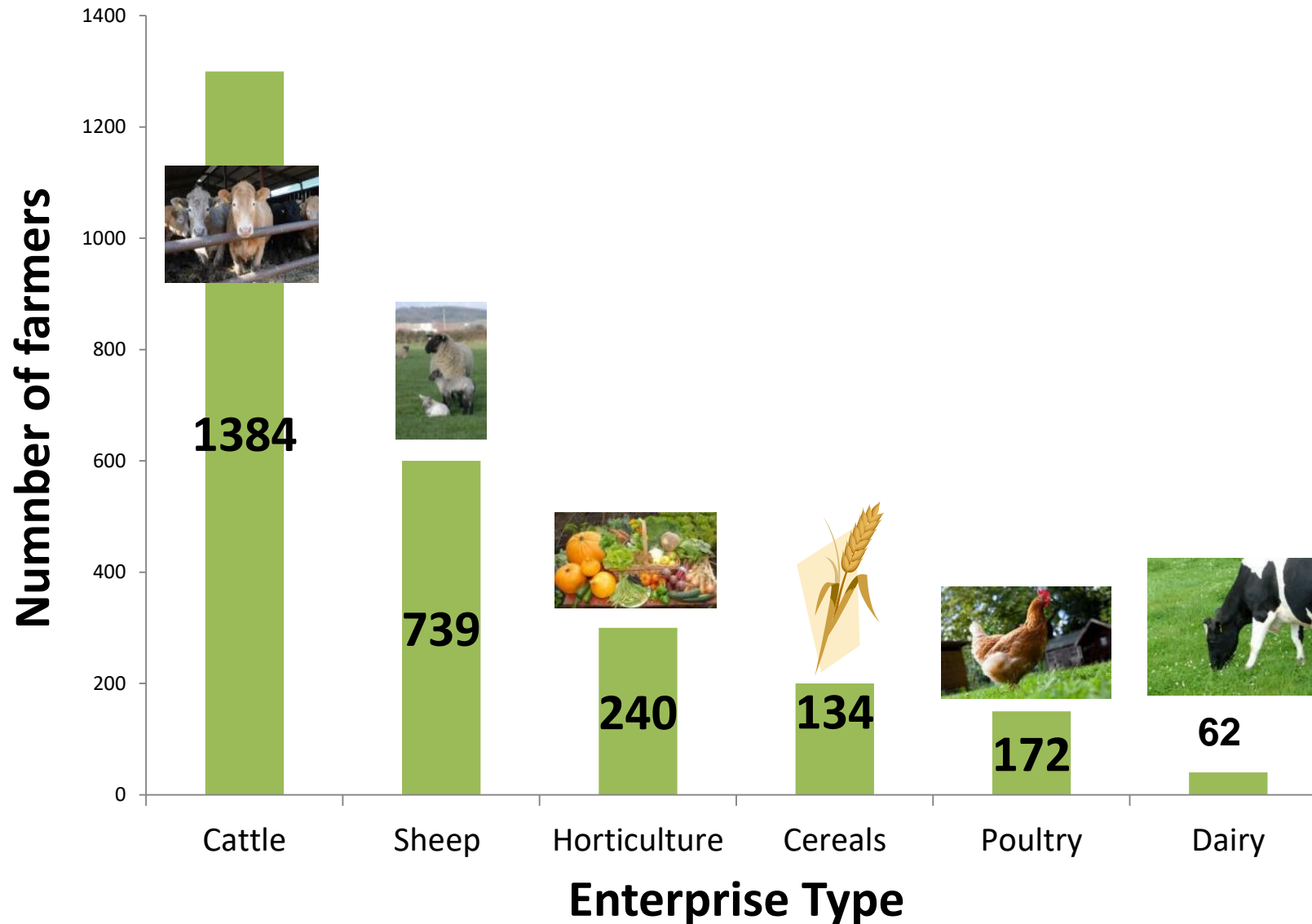
EU-28
7.5%

EU Green Deal:

“Suggestion of
25% EU Organic
land area by 2030”



PROFILE OF IRISH ORGANIC PRODUCTION 2019



Data Source: DAFM, Org Cert Bodies

Opportunities

Sustainable Low Input System



Increasing Demand for Organic Food



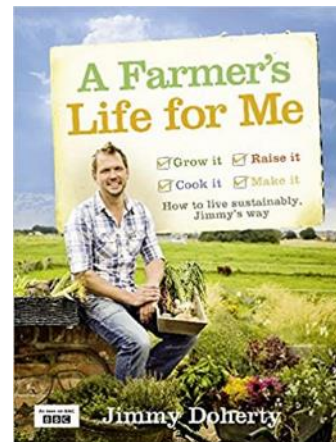
Additional Animal Welfare considerations



Increasing Rural Viability



Farmer Lifestyle Choice





Steps to Organic Conversion

Step 1: Consider Crop Systems

- Can you incorporate a grass/clover break in the rotation?
- Do you have a source of on-farm nutrients?
- Can you see yourself farming without pesticides and chemical fertilisers?



Step 1: Consider Animal Systems

- Is your stocking rate below two livestock units per ha?
- Can your animal housing be modified to incorporate a bedding lying area?
- Do you already use no or relatively low levels of artificial fertiliser?



Step 1: Consider Profitability

Key Components

- Land Quality
- Management / Skills
- Access to markets
- Accessing scheme support
- Producer attitude

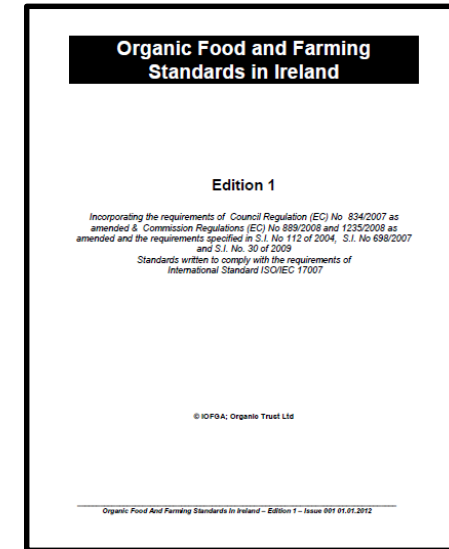


Step 2: Investigate

- Attend farm walks



- Familiarise yourself with organic regulations and standards



- Talk to organic farmers



Step 3: Assess the Market

What are the Options?

- Processors



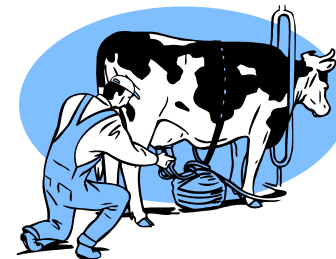
- Direct Sales



- Other Organic Farmers



- Farmer led organised groups



Step 4: Contact Organic Certification Body



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Marine



Approved private sector body

Organic Certification Bodies



Step 5: Complete 25 hour QQI Course on Organic Production

For information on Teagasc

25 hour QQI

Organic Farming Principles

course go to:

www.teagasc.ie/organics





Step 6: Organic Support Schemes



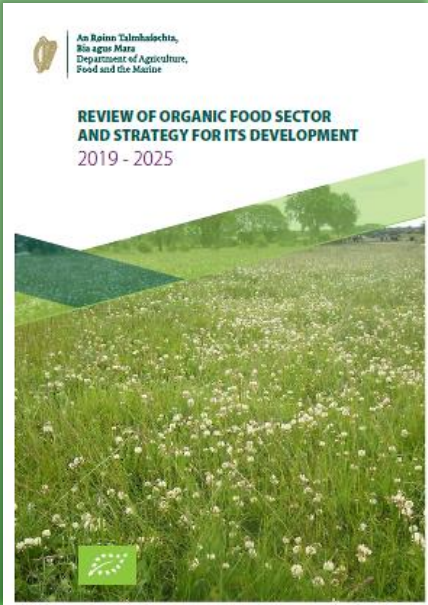
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- 1) Organic Farming Scheme (OFS)**
- 2) Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme
Organic Capital Investment Schemes (OCIS)**
- 3) Development of the Organic Processing Industry-off
farm scheme**

Step 7: Start Organic Conversion

Enterprise	Conversion period
Livestock Systems (grass based) 	2 Years
Arable and Horticulture 	2 Years (only crops sowed after the conversion period has elapsed achieve full organic status)

The future?



Ireland:
7 year Govt.
Strategy Plan 2019-
2025



CAP:

Prospect for
future CAP
funding for
organics looks
positive.



Market:

Forecasted to
continue
growing globally.

Summary

- EU Regulation for Organic Farming
- Organic sector in Ireland is small and growing
- There are opportunities
- There are a number of steps in converting to organic farming
- Organic market is forecasted to grow globally

Thank You