

GUIDANCE NOTE: ORGANIC CONVERSION PLAN



Conversion of a holding to organic management will vary from unit to unit according to individual circumstances.

Important influences on conversion planning will include the balance, complexities and intensity of farming practice, on the experience of the farmer, on the ecological situation and on finances.

Organic conversion must be effected using permitted materials and practices, with reference to the standards, and with monitoring by the certification body. Attention should be given to fertility building practices during the conversion period.







Reference to the SOPA standards should be made at all stages in the conversion process. Advice should also be taken on any individual requirements if applicable.

A full conversion plan as outlined below is mandatory and should be completed and submitted to SOPA after you have been confirmed a contract for organic conversion funding under SRDP and **BEFORE** conversion commences. This conversion plan is in addition to the Organic Viability Plan which is required by SGRPID as part of the application to SRDP funding.





The conversion plan must include the following aspects where applicable to the individual unit.

- 1) A map of the holding including field numbers/OS details and hectares (ideally an IACS map)
- 2) Holding number (County, Parish, Holding)
- 3) A sketch map of the steading, indicating dimensions of buildings, number of cubicles, capacity of silos/storage areas
- 4) Field histories and records, with up to date ids. Must include a four year history, where available, and a timetable for conversion. The previous history on your holding – should include detail of previous chemical usage and indicate dates of last prohibited input and any intensive systems e.g. bull beef.
- 5) A five year forward cropping /grazing rotation plan
- 6) A soil management programme including soil analyses where available.
- 7) Manure management, storage, handling, and spreading of manures and slurries and dirty water.
- 8) Whole farm nutrient budget. As much detail as possible, but at least a 'farm gate' budget.
- 9) An individual section for all main enterprises. This should include the following where applicable.





Livestock

-  Breeds and breeding programme
-  Conversion of livestock
-  Housing or other wintering practices. Include details of cubicles, housing densities etc.
-  Feeding regimes
-  A detailed health and veterinary plan (Animal Health Plan)
-  Any other management issues e.g. stocking densities, mineral supply, health and biosecurity issues. Furnish details of any blood, soil or forage analyses etc.

Cropping

-  Crop programme with potential varieties
-  Pest and disease control
-  Nutrient supply
-  Weed control measures

Grazing and grassland management

-  Weed control strategy
-  Ley details, including legumes
-  Reference to manure and nutrient supply
-  Clean grazing and parasites control practice

- 10) Environmental conservation measures- practice and policy. Detail membership of any other Agri-environment schemes, with any potential areas of conflict with organic conversion i.e. Grazing management
- 11) Marketing plans. Detail any plans for marketing your produce.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT THE SOPA HELPLINE ON 0131 335 6619

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