

2007 Organic Feedstuffs: Survey of Members

Summary Report of Survey Findings



Background

As of 1st January 2008 organic livestock producers will only be allowed to feed fully organic rations. The current 5% non-organic feed allowance will cease to be legally allowed on 31st December 2007 even if purchased but still in storage. The Green List will therefore cease to exist. 2nd year in conversion feedstuffs will be allowed to be fed to a level of 50% of dry matter intake (80% if from own unit) until 31st December 2008 and 30% of DMI (60% if from own unit) until 31st December 2009.

This change in feeding rules, whilst anticipated, will create a number of strategic and business problems for a number of SOPA livestock producers.

Introduction

Simple surveys were sent to more than 280 SOPA members who hold livestock and to whom the regulation will specifically apply. 63 responses were received, a rate of 22%. Considering the time of year the survey was issued (in the height of a poor summer when many farmers were struggling to cut silage and hay), we were surprised and pleased with this level of response.

Q 1

98% of the respondents (62 out of 63) were aware that the Regulation is due to change on the 1st January 2008.

Q 2

52% of respondents declared the regulation will have a severe impact on their business. 51% of all respondents are determined to remain in organic production, whereas 46% felt it likely they would cease organic certification. The respondents were asked what changes they are making to their business to cope with the 100% regulation. Examples of comments are as follows:

- Planning ahead with home-grown feed stuff production
- identifying bought-in supplies in good time
- considering alternative and new forage crops
- possibly sell livestock
- probably make staff redundancies
- many Scottish businesses lack the scope to make changes
- concerned at higher costs

Q 3 a

Forage Supplies

3% of respondents will not have enough fodder and they intend using existing farmer trade networks or the SOPA website to source supplies. However, 90% of respondents will be self sufficient in forage and believe they have sufficient stocks.

Q 3 b

Concentrate Supplies

38% will have sufficient concentrate feedstuffs, mostly home-produced but there are some inter-farmer trade networks already in place. 50% of the farmers will not have enough concentrate feedstuffs and of these 56% had already identified where they would source the products – mostly feed companies who already supply organically approved products and who have indicated confidence they will be in a position to offer 100% feedstuffs in 2008. However, 46% have not yet identified where they will source the additional feedstuffs from.

Shortfall

Not all surveys were completed fully but those who indicated what type and quantity of feedstuffs they would be looking for are summarized in the table below.

Feedstuff	Quantity (tonnes)
Cattle cake	1213
Cereals	218
Pulses	76
Dark Grains/Draff	10
Sheep rolls/blocks	108
Soya	45
Beet Pulp	23
Molasses	No quantity specified

SOPA Website

71% of respondents would use the SOPA website to attempt to source additional feeding. 8% would not use the website and the reasons given were due to lack of computer or isolation (Islands).

Other comments

- derogations will be necessary, perhaps for specific animals e.g. breeding males
- serious concerns for energy supplies for late-pregnancy and lactating ewes
- insufficient supply of fully organic products e.g. proteins, draff etc
- grant aid would help
- maximizing quality of home-produced forage
- investigating new additional land for organic production to increase supply of feedstuffs

Several respondents commented that they were already feeding 100% organic and did not foresee difficulties within their own closed systems.