

## 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 SOPA Organic Standards. Attention should be given to fertility building practices during the conversion period. 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 AECS 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 AECS funding. Your organic start date will need to be approved before you start conversion.

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 etc
- 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 or non-organic enterprises.
- 5) A minimum of five years' 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. Completing the SOPA Crop and Livestock Management Plans will meet the requirements of this conversion plan. The conversion plan 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 for selling organic produce once full organic status is achieved.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE SOPA HELPLINE ON 0131 335 6635