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ORGANIC STATISTICS 2010 UNITED KINGDOM

The latest National Statistics produced by Defra on the organic farming sector were released on 11 August 2011, according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority. This release shows information gathered during 2010 for organic crops and livestock produced in the United Kingdom, and the numbers of organic producers / processors who are registered with Organic Certification Bodies in the UK.

The key results are:

Land areas (Tables 1 to 5)

At a UK level the total organic land area has fallen by 3% between 2009 and 2010 to 718 thousand hectares. The organic cereals area has seen a decrease of 5% to 57 thousand hectares which may reflect falling organic grain prices towards the end of 2009. The vegetables area (including potatoes) has shown a small decrease for the second year running of 5% to 18 thousand hectares. Temporary and permanent pasture land continue to make up the majority (84%) of organic land and they have shown relatively little change between 2009 and 2010, with temporary pasture showing a very slight decrease of 1% to 125 thousand hectares and permanent pasture falling by 3% to 479 thousand hectares.

Livestock numbers (Tables 6 to 9)

Whilst the numbers of organic cattle and sheep increased between 2009 and 2010, organic pig and poultry numbers continued to decline over the same period. The number of organic cattle rose by 6% to 350 thousand as sales of organic beef rose, even though prices of organic dairy produce levelled off in 2010. The number of organic sheep was up by 11% to 981 thousand between 2009 and 2010 as the supply of lambs was boosted by new entrants. In the face of rising production costs, both the organic pig and poultry sectors continued to shrink, though the scale of the decline was smaller than between 2008 and 2009. Pigs fell by 4% to 47 thousand pigs (in sharp contrast to the 32% drop between 2008 and 2009) and poultry fell by 2% to 3.9 million birds, compared with the 9% reduction between 2008 and 2009.

Producer / processor numbers (Tables 10 to 12)

For the second year running, the number of organic producer / processors in the UK has shown a slight decrease (4%) to 7,300 at the end of 2010 which is in line with the reduction in the total area of organic land. All the UK's regions have shown decreases with Northern Ireland experiencing the largest percentage drop of 14%, and the North West showing the largest percentage drop in England for the second year running of 5%.

Please visit: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/foodfarm/enviro/organics/> for more information from this survey. Alternatively, you can contact us on 01904 455332.

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Detailed results

Figure 1 shows organic crop areas over time from 2005 to 2010. The graph shows that, of the crop types shown, the cereal area increased steadily from 2005 until 2009 before it fell in 2010. Vegetables have shown a more gradual increase in area to a peak in 2008, before declining slightly since then. The area of other crops has been very consistent over the time period involved.

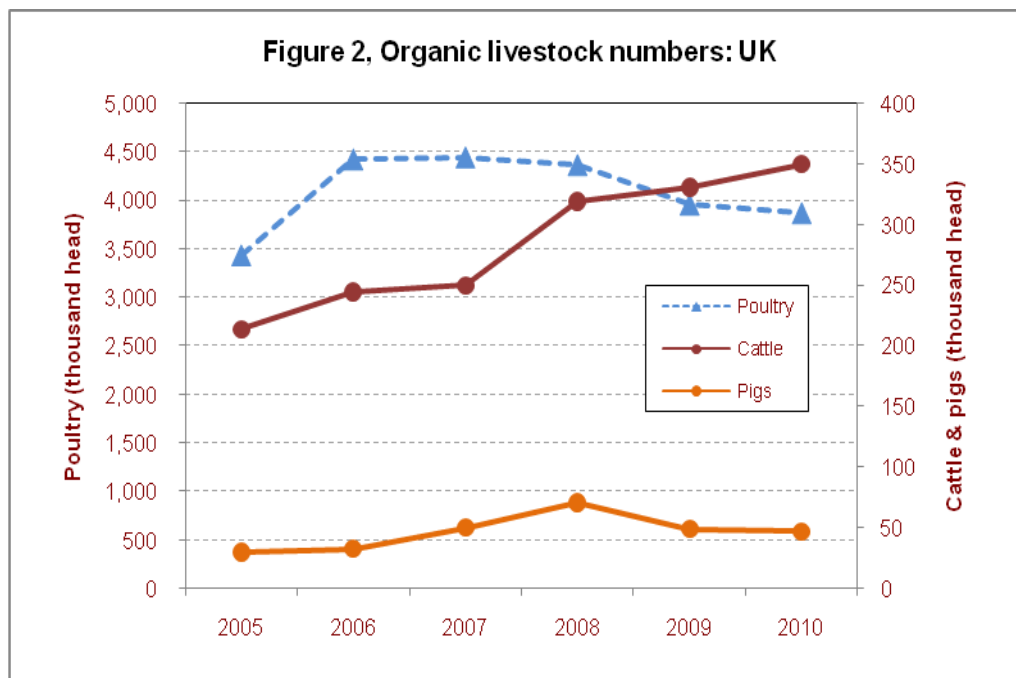
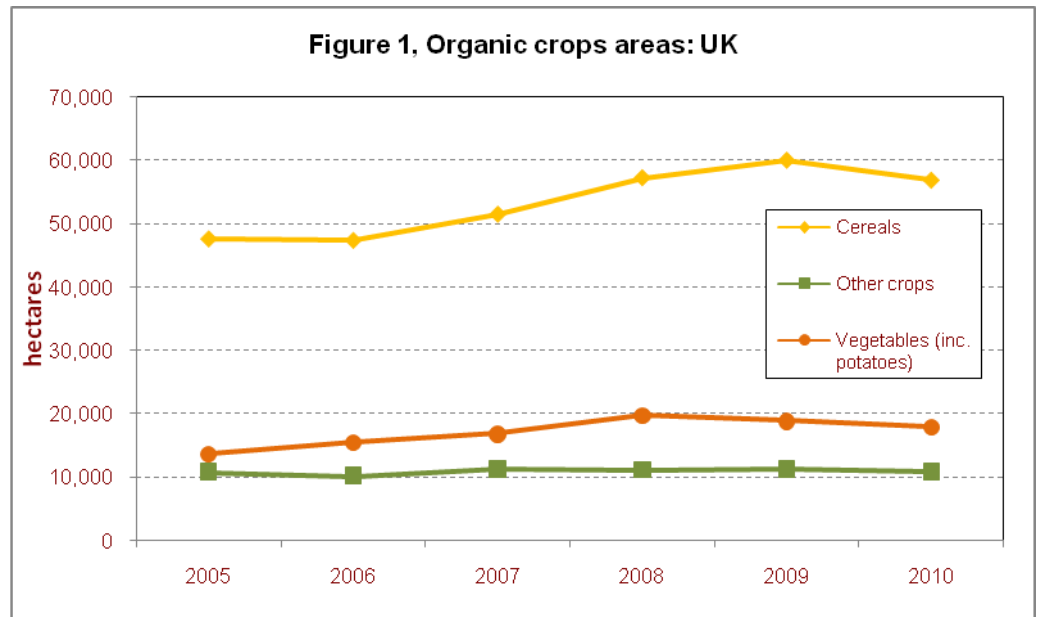
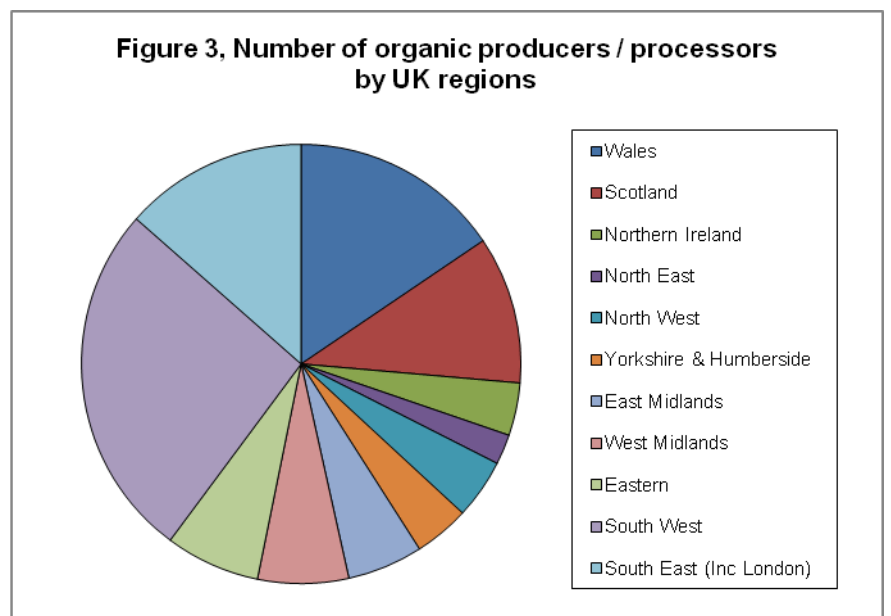


Figure 2 shows numbers of organic cattle, pigs and poultry over time from 2005 to 2010 (please note the dual axis due to the comparatively high numbers for poultry). The graph shows that for cattle the general trend has been for numbers (of head) to increase. Pig numbers have shown a gradual increase from 2005, then a sharp decrease between 2008 and 2009 which levelled off in 2010. The organic poultry flock grew dramatically between 2005 and 2006 before levelling out to 2008 and decreasing since then.

Figure 3 shows the regional distribution of organic producers / processors in the UK, which has changed very little since 2009. Once again, the region with the greatest number of organic producers / processors is the South West with 26 per cent of the UK's total, and Wales has the next largest number of producers / processors with 16 per cent, closely followed by the South East (including London) with 14 per cent and Scotland with 11 per cent of the UK's total. As in 2009, the UK region with the smallest number of organic producers / processors is the North East which has just two per cent of the UK's total.



Organic statistics methodology

This statistical release contains data compiled from the UK's Organic Certification Bodies. Each year, certifier bodies visit their registered farms to carry out annual inspections. During these inspections, certifiers record the crop areas and numbers of livestock present on the organic holding on that day.

The data collected during these inspections is sent to Defra each January, to form the annual return required under Eurostat Commission Regulation No. 889/2008 of 5 September 2008. The data also feeds into the 'Action plan to develop organic food and farming in England' which can be found at the following link:

<http://www.archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/growing/organic/policy/actionplan/index.htm>

The information collated by Defra is checked thoroughly before the figures are presented in this statistical release. Due to the nature of the inspections, the data is collected at varying times through the year. Therefore, the data presented here does not give an exact snapshot of organic farming at any specific time of year so should be treated with caution. Defra is very grateful to the inspectors and members in the UK's Organic Certification Bodies for the information collected in the annual returns each year.

Note

In this statistical release, unless specified otherwise, all data includes both in-conversion and fully organic holdings. Some totals may not add up to the sum of their sub-totals as a result of rounding of the figures.

Organics overview

Only food that has been produced in accordance with organic standards by farmers/producers registered with an approved inspection body may be legally sold as 'organic' within the EU. The inputs and practices used in organic farming are strictly regulated in accordance with EU Regulations (please see <http://www.archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/growing/organic/standards/index.htm> for more details on organic standards and current legislation).

Key elements of organic farming systems

The main components of an organic farming system are the avoidance of artificial fertilisers and pesticides, and the use of crop rotations and other forms of husbandry to maintain soil fertility and to control weeds, pests and diseases. Livestock also form an integral part of the majority of organic farms, although there are some successful stockless systems. Organic standards do not allow intensively housed stock or systems where a large amount of total feed has to be bought in. Pigs and poultry must be managed extensively under an organic system, with extensive outdoor access.

Conversion

In most cases land must be managed organically for a minimum of two years (three years for top fruit orchards) before it is granted approved 'organic' status and is eligible for organic certification. Producers can then sell their produce as 'organic' and organic livestock breeding can commence. For further information about organic farming, please see <http://www.archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/growing/organic/index.htm> .

Other relevant data sources

Data on national crop areas and livestock numbers are collected through the annual June Survey of Agriculture. Results from this survey for the UK and England can be accessed at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/foodfarm/landuselivestock/junesurvey/>

The next update from the June Survey of Agriculture will be the publication of early crop areas for England on 11 August 2011. The final England results of crop and grassland areas and of numbers of cattle, sheep and pigs will be published on 15 September 2011. Please note that no provisional results from England's 2011 June Survey will be published.

This organics statistical release will be updated in July 2012.

Table 1 Organic land areas timeseries (UK)

	<i>Thousand hectares</i>						
	2005	2006	2007	2008 ^(a)	2009	2010	% change 2010/2009
Cereals	48	47	52	57	60	57	-5.2%
Other arable crops	11	10	11	11	11	11	-3.0%
Fresh vegetables (inc potatoes)	14	16	17	20	19	18	-4.9%
Fruit and nuts	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.9%
Herbaceous & ornamentals	1	1	1	6	6	6	7.3%
Temporary pasture	98	103	125	130	126	125	-1.2%
Permanent pasture (inc. rough grazing)	428	423	452	494	496	479	-3.4%
Woodland	7	8	11	6	7	8	13.2%
Unutilised land	12	11	11	18	12	12	7.0%
Total organic land area	620	620	682	744	739	718	-2.8%

(a) The large increase in the area of 'herbaceous & ornamental' plants is due to refinements in data recording systems rather than a genuine increase in area.

Table 2 Organic land areas timeseries (England)

	<i>Thousand hectares</i>						
	2005	2006	2007	2008 ^(a)	2009	2010	% change 2010/2009
Cereals	39	37	40	44	46	45	-2.4%
Other arable crops	9	8	9	8	8	8	-1.5%
Fresh vegetables (inc potatoes)	11	12	13	15	14	14	-5.5%
Fruit and nuts	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.7%
Herbaceous & ornamentals	1	1	1	4	4	5	10.2%
Temporary pasture	78	82	101	106	103	103	0.0%
Permanent pasture (inc. rough grazing)	140	142	165	185	187	199	6.8%
Woodland	5	6	9	4	5	6	23.8%
Unutilised land	7	6	7	7	9	9	8.7%
Total organic land area	292	296	348	375	379	392	3.4%

(a) The large increase in the area of 'herbaceous & ornamental' plants is due to refinements in data recording systems rather than a genuine increase in area.

Table 3 Detailed organic land type 2010 (UK)

	<i>Hectares</i>				
	In conversion	Organic	Total	Total crop area at June 2010 ^(a)	Organic area as % of June area
Total cereals	2 165	54 685	56 850	3 013 230	1.9%
Wheat	781	20 178	20 959	1 938 578	1.1%
Barley	733	15 757	16 490	921 162	1.8%
Oats	391	11 673	12 064	124 460	9.7%
Rye, mixed corn and triticale	260	7 077	7 337	29 030	25.3%
Other arable crops	690	10 159	10 850	1 289 902	0.8%
Sugar beet	31	188	219	118 493	0.2%
Fodder, forage and silage crops	423	7 331	7 754	71 115	10.9%
Maize, oilseeds and protein crops	237	2 640	2 876	1 100 294	0.3%
Fresh vegetables	490	15 628	16 118	121 142	13.3%
Potatoes	26	1 808	1 834	138 310	1.3%
Fruit and nuts	231	2 036	2 267	34 325	6.6%
Herbaceous & ornamentals	954	5 220	6 174	11 718	52.7%
Temporary pasture	7 288	117 457	124 745	1 231 501	10.1%
Permanent pasture (inc. rough grazing)	35 712	443 307	479 019	9 979 795	4.8%
Woodland	1 894	6 224	8 118	773 963	1.0%
Unutilised land	1 344	11 027	12 371		
Total organic land area	50 794	667 551	718 345		

(a) Source: Defra June Survey of Agriculture

Table 4 Detailed organic land type 2010 (England)

	<i>Hectares</i>				
	In conversion	Organic	Total	Total crop area at June 2010 ^(a)	Organic area as % of June area
Total cereals	1 646	43 636	45 282	2 496 798	1.8%
Wheat	732	18 272	19 005	1 791 900	1.1%
Barley	425	11 360	11 785	586 026	2.0%
Oats	240	7 858	8 098	94 737	8.5%
Rye, mixed corn and triticale	248	6 146	6 394	24 135	26.5%
Other arable crops	540	7 244	7 784	1 176 014	0.7%
Sugar beet	28	180	208	118 493	0.2%
Fodder, forage and silage crops	306	4 911	5 216	36 783	14.2%
Maize, oilseeds and protein crops	205	2 154	2 359	1 020 738	0.2%
Fresh vegetables	418	12 149	12 568	103 046	12.2%
Potatoes	13	1 081	1 093	99 939	1.1%
Fruit and nuts	220	1 988	2 207	30 189	7.3%
Herbaceous & ornamentals	900	3 877	4 777	10 366	46.1%
Temporary pasture	6 410	96 678	103 088	586 690	17.6%
Permanent pasture (inc. rough grazing)	16 828	182 561	199 389	3 781 414	5.3%
Woodland	1 597	4 503	6 100	295 295	2.1%
Unutilised land	1 198	8 276	9 474		
Total organic land area	29 769	361 992	391 761		

(a) Source: Defra June Survey of Agriculture

Table 5 Organic land areas by UK region 2010

Thousand hectares

	In conversion	Organic	Total (ha)	Total agricultural area ^(a) at June 2010 ^(b)	Organic area as % of total agricultural area
UK	51	668	718	17 055	4.2%
England	30	362	392	8 887	4.4%
Wales	4	119	123	1 529	8.0%
Scotland	13	176	189	5 644	3.3%
Northern Ireland	4	10	15	994	1.5%
North East	4	31	35	570	6.1%
North West	2	20	22	879	2.5%
Yorkshire & Humberside	1	14	15	1 066	1.4%
East Midlands	1	16	17	1 177	1.5%
West Midlands	2	35	38	915	4.1%
Eastern	1	17	19	1 381	1.4%
South East (Inc London)	4	54	58	1 141	5.1%
South West	14	175	188	1 758	10.7%

(a) excludes common land

(b) All figures are as at June 2010.

Table 6 Organic livestock numbers timeseries (UK)

	<i>Thousands</i>						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% change 2010/2009
Cattle	214	245	250	320	331	350	5.7%
Sheep ^(a)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	885	981	10.9%
Pigs ^(b)	30	33	50	71	49	47	-4.1%
Poultry	3 440	4 421	4 441	4 363	3 959	3 871	-2.2%
Other livestock ^(c)	2	5	4	5	3	5	32.5%

(a) We are currently unable to provide historical data for sheep as we are investigating some inconsistencies in the historical data and will publish these results as soon as they are available.

(b) Please note that the 2009 total pigs figure has been revised in the light of more up to date data being available.

c) "Other Livestock" includes goats, farmed deer, horses, camelids and any livestock not recorded elsewhere.

Table 7 Organic livestock numbers timeseries (England)

	<i>Thousands</i>						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% change 2010/2009
Cattle	152	177	176	214	237	249	5.1%
Sheep ^(a)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	380	431	13.4%
Pigs ^(b)	27	32	49	57	46	42	-9.5%
Poultry	2 241	2 820	2 674	2 294	1 969	1 931	-1.9%
Other livestock ^(c)	2	4	2	3	2	2	27.5%

(a) We are currently unable to provide historical data for sheep as we are investigating some inconsistencies in the historical data and will publish these results as soon as they are available.

(b) Please note that the 2009 total pigs figure has been revised in the light of more up to date data being available.

c) "Other Livestock" includes goats, farmed deer, horses, camelids and any livestock not recorded elsewhere.

Table 8 Organic livestock numbers 2010 (UK)

	<i>No. head</i>				
	In conversion	Organic	Total	Total livestock at June 2010 ^(a)	Organic as % of total livestock
Cattle	26 123	324 060	350 183	10 111 687	3.5%
Sheep	47 101	934 122	981 223	31 084 338	3.2%
Pigs	284	47 103	47 387	4 460 317	1.1%
Poultry	26 417	3 844 474	3 870 891	163 867 173	2.4%
Other Livestock ^{(b) (c)}	286	4 223	4 509	n/a	n/a

(a) Source: Defra June Survey of Agriculture / Cattle Tracing System for cattle populations.

(b) June figures are not provided for 'Other livestock' as the types of animals included are not comparable with the organic data

(c) "Other Livestock" includes goats, farmed deer, horses, camelids and any livestock not recorded elsewhere.

Table 9 Organic livestock numbers 2010 (England)

	<i>No. head</i>				
	In conversion	Organic	Total	Total livestock at June 2010 ^(a)	Organic as % of total livestock
Cattle	21 008	227 554	248 562	5 541 520	4.5%
Sheep	26 950	404 303	431 253	14 239 840	3.0%
Pigs	273	41 817	42 090	3 606 117	1.2%
Poultry	21 903	1 909 242	1 931 145	125 172 787	1.5%
Other Livestock ^{(b) (c)}	266	1 781	2 047	n/a	n/a

(a) Source: Defra June Survey of Agriculture / Cattle Tracing System for cattle populations.

(b) June figures are not provided for 'Other livestock' as the types of animals included are not comparable with the organic data

(c) "Other Livestock" includes goats, farmed deer, horses, camelids and any livestock not recorded elsewhere.

Table 10 Number of organic producers and/or processors time series

	<i>numbers</i>						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% change 2010/2009
UK	6 413	7 043	7 631	7 896	7 567	7 287	-3.7%
England	4 554	5 005	5 516	5 474	5 278	5 131	-2.8%
Wales	800	835	953	1 230	1 176	1 166	-0.9%
Scotland	792	911	860	889	820	737	-10.1%
Northern Ireland	267	292	302	303	293	253	-13.7%
North East	129	161	173	179	167	160	-4.2%
North West	311	332	367	367	333	315	-5.4%
Yorkshire & Humberside	279	319	356	330	308	302	-1.9%
East Midlands	416	446	487	449	422	408	-3.3%
West Midlands	478	520	556	555	507	494	-2.6%
Eastern	508	556	574	551	529	515	-2.6%
South East (Inc London)	901	939	1 042	1 041	1 024	984	-3.9%
South West	1 532	1 732	1 961	2 002	1 988	1 953	-1.8%

Table 11 Numbers of organic producers and processors by UK region 2010

	<i>numbers</i>			
	Number of producers only	Number of producer/processors	Number of processors only	Total
UK	4 741	208	2 338	7 287
England	3 001	172	1 958	5 131
Wales	1 003	29	134	1 166
Scotland	533	6	198	737
Northern Ireland	204	1	48	253
North East	120	3	37	160
North West	158	10	147	315
Yorkshire & Humberside	142	8	152	302
East Midlands	197	10	201	408
West Midlands	303	17	174	494
Eastern	207	17	291	515
South East (Inc London)	424	31	529	984
South West	1 450	76	427	1 953

Table 12 Numbers of crop / livestock organic producers and processors 2010 ^(a)

	<i>numbers</i>			
	No. crop producers	No. crop producers and processors	No. livestock producers	No. livestock producers and processors
UK	4 570	206	2 860	163
England	2 903	168	1 739	135
Wales	992	28	636	20
Scotland	488	9	311	7
Northern Ireland	187	1	174	1
North East	117	3	87	2
North West	156	10	107	7
Yorkshire & Humberside	131	8	88	6
East Midlands	184	10	130	7
West Midlands	293	16	189	15
Eastern	199	17	71	12
South East (Inc London)	408	30	188	24
South West	1 415	74	879	62

(a) Mixed organic holdings will be recorded under both the crop and livestock headings above so the above numbers cannot be added together to get total producers / processors by region as this will lead to double counting. For totals please see Table 11.