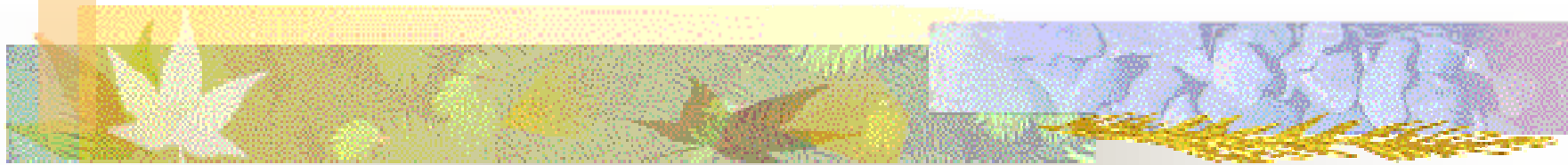
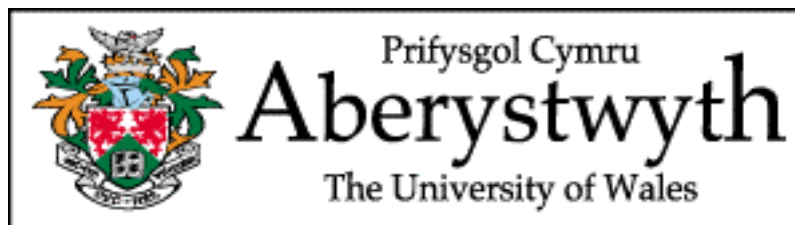


Organic farming's role in European agricultural and environmental strategies



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Overview

- European policy goals
- Rural development strategic guidelines
- Role of organic farming
- EU action plan



European Council strategies ...

Göteborg (2001) – sustainable development

- Strong economic performance combined with sustainable use of natural resources and levels of waste, maintaining biodiversity, preserving ecosystems and avoiding desertification.
- CAP should contribute to achieving sustainable development by encouraging healthy, high-quality products, environmentally sustainable production methods, including organic production, renewable raw materials and the protection of biodiversity.

Lisbon (2003) – growth and jobs

- higher economic growth, job creation and greater competitiveness in world markets.



...translated into agricultural policies (Pillar 1)

CAP Reform 2003/04 aims to:

- increase competitiveness of EU agriculture by
 - reducing price support guarantees
 - introducing decoupled direct payments
 - encouraging structural adjustment and
 - encouraging farmers to respond to market signals generated by consumer demand rather than by quantity-related policy incentives.
- increase the environmental sustainability of farming and consumer confidence by
 - including environmental, food safety and animal health and welfare standards in cross-compliance



...and rural development policies (Pillar 2)

RDP 2007-2013 (Reg. 1698/2005) has four axes:

Axis 1 (economic competitiveness)

- investing in human and physical capital; promoting knowledge transfer and innovation; quality production.

Axis 2 (environmental sustainability)

- protecting/enhancing natural resources, high nature value farming and forestry systems and cultural landscapes.

Axis 3 (social regeneration)

- developing local infrastructure and opportunities for economic diversification to enhance quality of life.

Axis 4 (LEADER)

- promoting innovative governance through locally based, bottom-up approaches to rural development.



Organic farming and EU policy goals – are they compatible?

- Organic farming aims to produce food, fibre and other products in ways which
- promote the health and sustainability of
- soil, plants, animals and humans
- as inter-connected individuals and communities (societies and ecosystems)
- locally and globally



Organic farming objectives include

- Production of quality, safe food
- Resource use sustainability
- Environmental protection
- Animal health welfare
- Social justice and wellbeing of rural communities
- Public health and food security
- Financial viability of farming



IFOAM principles

■ Health

- Organic Agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal, human and planet as one and indivisible.

■ Ecology

- Organic Agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them.



IFOAM principles

■ Fairness

- Organic Agriculture should build on relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the common environment and life opportunities.

■ Care

- Organic Agriculture should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well-being of current and future generations and the environment.



Policy support for organic farming

- Positive perceptions of compatibility of organic farming and policy goals
- Significant increase in policy support since 1990s
 - Regulation 2092/91 defining organic food
 - Direct agri-environmental payments to producers
 - Support for producer groups
 - Marketing and processing grants
 - Research, training and advice
 - Consumer promotion
 - Public procurement



EU strategic guidelines for rural development

- **Axis 2: Consolidating the contribution of organic farming.**
‘Organic farming represents an holistic approach to sustainable agriculture. In this respect, its contribution to environmental and animal welfare objectives could be further reinforced’
- **Cross axis synergies**
‘should be maximised and potential contradictions avoided, where appropriate through integrated approaches, taking into account other EU-level strategies, such as the Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming’



EU Organic Action Plan vision

- Initiated in 2001, published in 2004
- Vision of dual role for OF
 - Production for market & consumer demand
 - Land management for environment and public goods

i.e. combining the economic and environmental goals of Lisbon and Goteborg



EU Organic Action Plan objectives

Compatible development of land management and markets through

- Consumer promotion campaigns
- Research
- Full use of rural development opportunities
- Statistics and market information
- Support for producer organisations
- Regulation and standards (15 of 21 actions)



Conclusions

- Organic farming can contribute to, and is supported by, all four axes of the rural development programme
- Needs a cross-axis approach – opportunity for formally integrating national/regional action plans member state rural development programmes
- But ...



... some key questions

- What is the role of premium markets and regulations?
- Is organic farming an end in itself or a means to a (bigger) end?
- Different perspectives of stakeholders and policy makers
- Who owns the organic idea?



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The views expressed are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission, nor do they anticipate future policy in this area.