Welsh Organic Producer Survey 2015

Nic Lampkin, Dafydd Owen and Catherine Gerrard

Organic Research Centre, Newbury
a partner in Organic Centre Wales

March 2016

Published by Organic Centre Wales
c/o Organic Research Centre, Elm Farm, Hamstead Marshall, Newbury RG20 0HR
T: +44 (0)1488 658298
E: organic@aber.ac.uk
W: http://www.organiccentrewales.org.uk/

Executive Summary

The 2015 Welsh organic producer survey was undertaken by telephone interview during mid-November 2015. A total of 611 Welsh organic producers were identified, and 500 producers were contacted of whom 476 responded (77.9%), 24 declined. This resulted in 420 completed interviews as 56 producers had decertified from organic farming or retired during 2015.

Welsh organic land and livestock

Land use data collected through the producer survey and organic control body (CB) data available through Defra are summarised in Table A below. The survey data recorded approximately 61,000 hectares (ha) of land from 420 respondents. Using the overall survey response rate of 77.9%, the survey figures were then multiplied up to estimate the total land area of the Welsh organic sector. It was estimated that the sector comprised of approximately 78,000 ha in November 2015 (equivalent to 4.3% of Welsh agricultural land). The Defra statistical data from control bodies for the end of 2014 was higher at 93,000 ha, with this difference in land area due to holdings that decertified in 2015. A higher proportion of Welsh horticultural and forage land is managed organically than is the case for other land uses.

Table A Welsh organically managed land areas by enterprise and organic status (hectares)

Enterprise	Survey responses				Estimated total from Nov 2015 survey			Defra CB data (end of 2014)		All Wales land* (2014)	
	Holdings	Organic	In-conv.	Total	Organic	In-conv.	Total	Holdings	Area	Area	Organic %**
Forage	-	54063	3305	57368	69400	4200	73600	-	90021	1637847	4.5%
Arable	64	2160	5	2165	2800	0	2800	171	2706	85034	3.3%
Hortic	34	79	0	79	100	0	100	122	189	1694	5.9%
Other	-	1424	90	1514	1830	100	1930	-	6	87094	2.2%
Total	420	57725	3400	61126	74130	4300	78430	661	92922	1811669	4.3%

* Extracted from Welsh Agricultural Statistics 2014 Tables 1.1 and 1.4
** Estimated area based on 2015 survey data

The number of Welsh organic livestock was also surveyed (shown in Table B below). As with the land areas, total livestock figures for the Welsh organic sector were also estimated using the overall survey response rate of 77.9%, as well as by using the individual enterprise response rates (e.g. 57%) for beef cattle. These estimates were then compared to Defra CB data, with the estimates based upon the overall survey response rate lower than either the Defra CB statistics or the individual sector calculated estimates. As with the land areas, the decertification of organic holdings will also have reduced the organic livestock numbers during 2015.

Table B Welsh organic and in-conversion breeding livestock (head)

	Survey recorded data	Total estimated by survey sector response % (Nov 2015)		Total estimated by overall survey response % (Nov 2015)		Defra CB data (End of 2014)	All Wales livestock* (2014)	
							Number	Organic %**
Breeding cattle	7298	57%	12800	77.9%	9400	11928	214232	6.0%
Breeding sheep	118756	58%	205400		152400	182695	4765509	4.3%
Dairy cows	8029	67%	12000		10300	10000***	289877	4.1%
Laying hens	25594	36%	71100		32900	33013	1882316	3.8%
Sows	11	21%	50		15	17	3582	1.4%

* Extracted from Welsh Agricultural Statistics 2014 Tables 2.1, 2.6, 2.10 and 2.11
** Estimated area based on 2015 survey data using sector response rates
*** estimate as discrepancy in Defra data supplied

Sales

Table C presents numbers of organic livestock sold, including survey responses and estimates for the total Welsh organic sector. The results indicate that in 2015 Welsh organic farms produced an estimated 5000 finished beef, 119,000 finished lambs and 56 million litres of milk. The proportion of livestock sold organically was similar between years, with 45% of fully organic finished lambs (53,000 lambs), 25% of store cattle (1300 head), and 63% of store lambs (17,000) sold into conventional supply chains due to a lack of organic market, low organic price premiums or livestock not meeting organic market requirements.

Table C Welsh organically managed livestock sales by enterprise and organic status
(survey recorded and total Welsh organic sales estimated from 77.9% survey response rate)

	Survey responses					Estimated number of livestock sold *			
	Organic	In-conv.	Non-organic	Total	% Non-organic	Organic	In-conv.	Non-organic	Total
Finished cattle	3578	70	212	3860	5%	4600	100	300	5000
Store cattle	2688	275	1040	4003	26%	3500	400	1300	5200
Finished lambs	44366	6880	41249	92495	45%	57000	9000	53000	119000
Store lambs	5379	2191	13418	20988	64%	7000	3000	17000	27000
Milk (thou' litres)	43285	0	0	43285	0%	56000	0	0	56000
Eggs (thou' doz.)	788	0	20	809	3%	1000	0	0	1000
Pigs (all classes)	84	4	0	88	0%	100	0	0	100

*Estimated total calculated with overall survey response rate of 77.9%

Future intentions of producers

Figure A shows the level of satisfaction of organic producers with the current prices. The figure indicates that finished lamb producers were the least satisfied with current prices, partially reflected in the high numbers of organic lambs sold conventionally. The beef sector was also less optimistic due to reduced prices and a lower organic premium. However, the other sectors were generally more satisfied, with milk producers showing the highest levels of satisfaction.

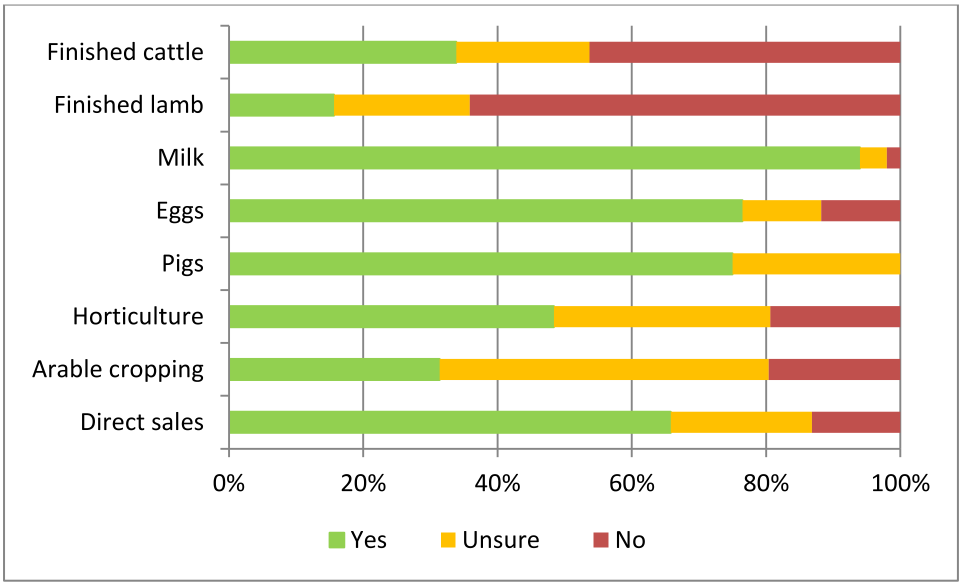


Figure A Are current prices high enough to continue organic production?

The results in Figure B below show that the majority of 2015 survey respondents indicated their commitment to organic farming for 5 years or more. Compared to 2014, there was a fall in the proportion of organic farmers committing to organic farming for 5-10 years; but an increase in farmers planning to remain in organic production for 10 years plus.

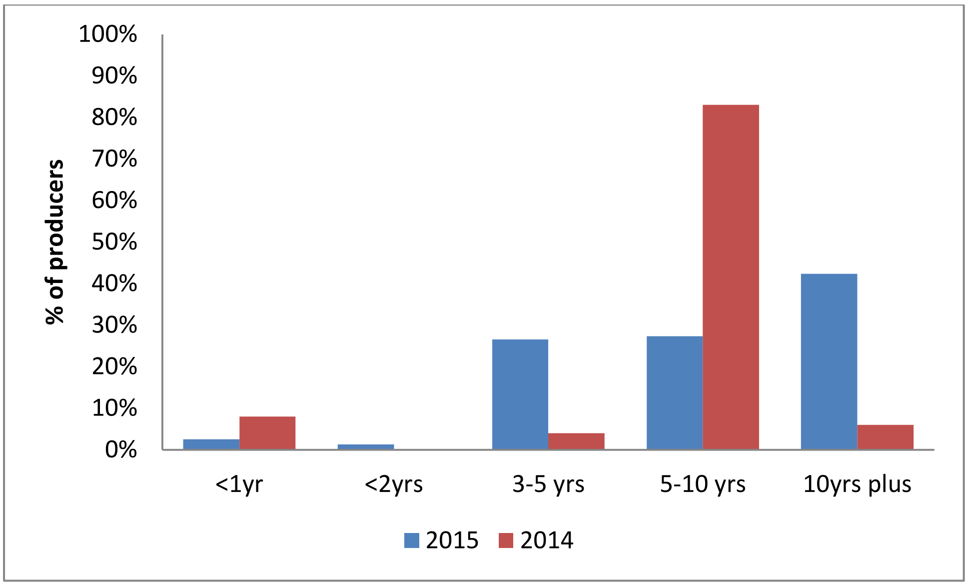


Figure B How long are you intending to continue organic production?

Conclusion

The 2015 survey continued to receive a good response rate from the telephone-only survey method. The majority of beef, milk and cropping outputs are sold into certified organic markets, although the sheep sector and store beef sales continue to suffer losses to the conventional sector at point of sale.

Despite the recent losses within the sector, organic sales remained strong and there was optimism in most sectors (especially the dairy sector in 2015) with the exception of the finished lamb and cattle sectors. There is also optimism for the future of the sector as 42% of producers who were surveyed indicated an intention to remain in organic production for 10 years or more and a further 27% for 5-10 years. This should provide a greater stability to production.

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to the many people who have assisted us in making this report possible, in particular:

- Welsh Government for funding to undertake this survey.
- All the producers who participated in the survey – we are aware how much the organic sector is over-surveyed and therefore we hope that this report, and any actions that stem from it, will go some way to making your time input worthwhile!
- The Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, Aberystwyth University staff who helped with the phone interviews and collating the survey responses: Tegid Roberts, Rowland Davies, Nick Reeves, Ian Williams, Huw Williams, Dylan Jones, Eric Jones, Eileen Edwards, Brenda Jones and Nigel Chapman, as well as Tony O'Regan for making their input possible.
- Tony Little for assistance in preparing the database of producer contacts.
- Suzanne Oliver and Gillian Woodward for administrative assistance. Alan Carter for IT assistance.
- Defra for providing certification data for the end of 2014.
- Simon Moakes for advice on prior year calculations and approaches and for providing his data extractor.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the results presented in this report, responsibility for any errors rests with the authors and feedback is always welcome. However, the quantification of the scale of the Welsh organic sector is still an imprecise art and there are significant margins for error.

This report is necessarily a summary of a large quantity of data. Readers wishing for information behind the tables and figures provided are welcome to contact Nic Lampkin at the Organic Research Centre. Also, readers with suggestions for information which would be useful in future reports should contact us.

Contents

Executive Summary **i**

Welsh organic land and livestock i

Sales ii

Future intentions of producers ii

Conclusion iii

Acknowledgements **iv**

Contents **v**

Figures **vi**

Tables **vi**

1 Introduction **1**

2 Methods **1**

3 Defra end 2014 organic certification statistics **2**

4 2015 survey results for farms, land use and livestock numbers **3**

4.1 Survey response rates 3

4.2 Organic and in-conversion farms 4

4.2.1 Reasons for reversion to non-organic farming in Wales 4

4.2.2 Glastir Organic 4

4.3 Organic and in-conversion land area 5

4.4 Livestock numbers 6

4.5 Farm diversification 8

5 2015 survey results for organic sales **9**

5.1 Livestock sales 9

5.1.1 Cattle sales 11

5.1.2 Sheep sales 11

5.1.3 Milk sales 11

5.1.4 Egg sales 12

5.1.5 Pig sales 12

5.1.6 Livestock marketing routes 12

5.1.7 Livestock feed and fodder 13

5.1.8 Livestock technical issues 13

5.2 Horticulture and arable cropping 14

5.2.1 Horticulture 14

5.2.2 Arable cropping 15

6 Direct sales **17**

7 Future intentions of producers **18**

8 Conclusions **19**

Appendix 1 – Defra Certification Body Data **20**

Figures

Figure A Are current prices high enough to continue organic production? ii

Figure B How long are you intending to continue organic production? iii

Figure 1 Finished cattle sales 2015 and 2014 11

Figure 2 Finished lamb sales 2015 and 2014 11

Tables

Table A Welsh organically managed land areas by enterprise and organic status (hectares) i

Table B Welsh organic and in-conversion breeding livestock (head) i

Table C Welsh organically managed livestock sales by enterprise and organic status ii

Table 1 Welsh certified organic and in-conversion holdings and land use (ha), end 2011 to end 2014 2

Table 2 Welsh certified organic and in-conversion livestock (head), end 2011 to end 2014 2

Table 3 Survey responses 3

Table 4 Completed survey sections compared to enterprises identified from certification data 3

Table 5 Reasons for reverting to non-organic farming (producers reverting between Jan and Nov 2015) 4

Table 6 Organic and in-conversion land area (ha) in Wales (actual survey results) 5

Table 7 Organic and in-conversion land area (ha) in Wales (estimated total areas and end of 2014 CB data) 5

Table 8 Survey recorded organic/in conversion breeding stock retained in 2015 and 2014 6

Table 9 Total Welsh organic and in-conversion livestock (head), estimated using individual sector response rates 6

Table 10 Total Welsh organic and in-conversion livestock (head) estimated using 77.9% overall survey response rate 7

Table 11 2015 survey-collected and estimated total Welsh organic and in-conversion livestock data 7

Table 12 Reported level of diversification within Welsh organic and converting farm businesses 8

Table 13 Reported livestock sales 2015 (with 2014 data for comparison) 9

Table 14 Reported non-organic livestock sales in 2015 and % split of non-organic sales 9

Table 15 Estimated total Welsh produced organic livestock sales (based on sector specific response rates) 10

Table 16 Estimated total Welsh produced organic livestock sales (overall survey response rate) 10

Table 17 Marketing route of organically produced finished beef and lamb sales (2011 to 2015) 12

Table 18 Marketing route of organically produced store cattle and lamb sales (2011 to 2015) 12

Table 19 Organic livestock concentrate feed use, proportion bought-in, prices and availability 13

Table 20 Technical issues identified with organic livestock production (2014 and 2015) 14

Table 21 Horticulture production, prices and market split 14

Table 22 Percentage of horticultural producers experiencing difficulties with various factors 15

Table 23 Arable production, prices and marketing route (2015 harvest) 15

Table 24 Percentage of arable producers experiencing difficulties with various factors 16

Table 25 Main type of produce sold (*listed in order of importance in 2015*) 17

Table 26 Percentage of total business turnover from direct sales 17

Table 27 Direct sales changes during the previous 12 months 17

Table 28 Are current (2015) prices for products sufficiently high to continue producing them organically? 18

Table 29 Length of time producer intends to remain organic 19

1 Introduction

As in 2014, the Welsh Government funded the 2015 Organic Centre Wales Producer Survey (with the analysis carried out this year by OCW partner the Organic Research Centre), continuing the series of surveys and reports carried out by Organic Centre Wales funded as part of the Better Organic Business Link (BOBL) and Farming Connect since 2007 (see http://www.organiccentrewales.org.uk/publications.php?type=Report). The report aims to provide the Welsh organic sector with up-to-date annual, comparable statistical information and provide data that are otherwise not available from other sources. The survey also aims to provide a means for producers to relay their views on the current state of organic farming to Organic Centre Wales partners and policy makers.

2 Methods

The survey was designed and analysed by the Organic Research Centre based on previous surveys by Organic Centre Wales, with the telephone survey undertaken as previously by specialist farm survey staff within the Farm Business Survey (FBS) unit of IBERS, Aberystwyth University.

The survey contact database was formed through a combination of two data sources: organic certification data supplied to Defra by Control Bodies for 2014, and the OCW producer database, resulting in a database of 611 producers. The survey questionnaire was developed during September and October 2015 with minimal changes to allow comparison with previous years, comprising of an opening section to capture producers' general views about organic farming, a land area and livestock data section and then sections specific to each enterprise, e.g. beef, sheep etc.. As in recent years, the survey was conducted entirely via telephone, although all producers on the contact list were sent a letter outlining reasons for the survey and the type of questions before the phone calls commenced. The survey phone calls commenced on Monday 9th November and were concluded by Friday 27th November 2015.

Data collation and analysis was carried out using the same methodology as in previous years, with all survey data extracted to form a database of responses for analysis, and results presented in this report. Where possible, data from the previous year are presented alongside for comparison although, due to slight changes in the survey questions, results may not always be strictly comparable.

Survey-collected data are useful, but to fully understand the implications of the data collected, it is valuable to have figures for the whole organic sector in Wales. Therefore to give estimated results at Welsh organic sector level, it is necessary to multiply up the survey-collected figures to attempt to represent a 100% response level. In the past and for this report, the survey response rate is used to scale up data. This is achieved by dividing the actual survey data by the response percentage. The survey response rate for each enterprise was calculated by dividing the number of each enterprise survey responses by the number of enterprises indicated within the Defra certification data (see Appendix 1). The overall survey response rate was also used to calculate data and is shown for comparison.

Although this methodology assumes representativeness of the sample, it is subject to error and caution should be used when using the data. For the 2015 report, estimates of the 100% organic sector data are shown using both overall survey response and individual enterprise response rates.

3 Defra end 2014 organic certification statistics

Organic Centre Wales receives certification data from Defra on an annual basis (see Appendix 1). These data are collected through annual inspection visits to producers by the organic certification bodies (CBs) and are reported to Defra as required under EU organic legislation. Using this data, we undertook a detailed analysis, providing an estimate of the area of organic and in-conversion land and numbers of livestock within Wales, with results shown in Table 1, below. Based on certification data collected during 2014 and Welsh agricultural data for 2014 published by the Welsh Government, the figures show an 8% decrease in the Welsh organic land area in 2014, to 92,922 ha; equivalent to 5.1% of Welsh agricultural land. The total tillage area appeared to suffer a larger decrease with 29% less cropped land.

Table 1 Welsh certified organic and in-conversion holdings and land use (ha), end 2011 to end 2014 (Source: Defra certification data)

		end 2011	end 2012	end 2013	end 2014	13>14 change	All Wales 2014*	Org. % of Welsh area
Certified organic holdings	No.	964	952	786	661	-16%	24722	2.7%
Total agricultural area	ha	122718	118699	100754	92922	-8%	1811669	5.1%
Cereals	ha	2863	2907	2191	2292	5%	48302	4.7%
Other arable/fodder crops	ha	2638	2116	1590	414	-74%	33957	1.2%
Potatoes	ha	41	41	5	8	65%	2775	0.3%
Horticulture	ha	271	297	269	181	-33%	1694	10.7%
Total tillage area	ha	5854	5401	4059	2895	-29%	86728	3.3%
Temp grass	ha	9662	10074	8946	8622	-4%	152571	5.7%
Arable land (inc temp grass)	ha	15517	15475	13004	11517	-11%	239299	4.8%
Permanent grass/rough grazing	ha	105517	101214	86255	81399	-6%	1485276	5.5%
Woodland/other	ha	1684	2010	1494	n/a	n/a	87094	n/a

* Extracted from Welsh Agricultural Statistics 2014 Tables 1.1 and 1.4

Welsh organic livestock data from control bodies are shown in Table 2, with an increase in beef cow numbers (7%) during 2014 but decreases in numbers of other cattle (-13%) and sheep (-11% for ewes and -7% for other sheep). Laying hen numbers increased whereas numbers of pigs had decreased.

Table 2 Welsh certified organic and in-conversion livestock (head), end 2011 to end 2014

	end 2011	end 2012	end 2013	end 2014	13>14 change	All Wales 2014*	Organic % of Wales total
Beef cows	14111	13541	11155	11928	7%	214232	5.6%
Dairy cows	13868	11340	10434	10000**	nd	289877	3.4%
Other cattle	32516	31985	28649	24834	-13%	598659	4.1%
Ewes	255182	246559	204231	182695	-11%	4765509	3.8%
Other sheep	275851	275346	205068	190538	-7%	4973362	3.8%
Laying hens	38251	25442	26615	33013	24%	1882316	1.8%
Table birds	104394	100192	137064	137017	0%	6384034	2.1%
Other poultry	9651	8647	38185	38059	0%	730850	5.2%
Sows	72	99	677	17	-97%	3582	0.5%
Other pigs	357	378	393	177	-55%	24788	0.7%
Other livestock	3604	488	675	2777	311%	no data	-

* Extracted from Welsh Agricultural Statistics 2014 Tables 2.1, 2.6, 2.10 and 2.11

****** estimate as discrepancy in Defra data supplied.

4 2015 survey results for farms, land use and livestock numbers

4.1 Survey response rates

Table 3 below indicates that the survey achieved an overall completion rate of 77.9% with 500 out of a possible 611 producers contacted and 476 responding. The survey team identified 54 producers who had decertified from organic production within the last 12 months and two who had given up farming. The 611 producers contacted were based on a contact list provided by Defra of producers certified at the end of 2014. Taking into account the reversions and retirements (which make up 12% of the sample), it would appear that 88% of the population can be assumed to be still farming organically at November 2015. This suggests a Welsh organic producer population of 538 farms at November 2015.

Table 3 Survey responses

	Number	%
Organic producer contact list	611	
Producers contacted	500	
Declines	24	
Producers who responded	476	77.9%
Reverted to conventional farming*	54	11.3%
Given up farming	2	0.4%
Survey completed	420	88%

* farms reverted in last 12 months

Approximately 31% of the 500 producers contacted elected to use the Welsh language as a medium of communication for the survey.

6% of the 420 completed survey respondents were under 40 years, 57% were between 40 and 60, and 34% were over 60 (3% did not give their age).

The survey comprised of a general section and then various enterprise specific sections e.g. beef, lamb, milk etc. To enable scaling up of survey results to full Welsh organic sector level, survey response rates of different enterprises were calculated. The number of completed enterprise sections is divided by the number of enterprises identified from the Defra data (see Table 1 and Table 2 above). The enterprise completion percentage is then used to estimate organic area and livestock figures for the Welsh organic sector. The 2015 survey showed a similar number of enterprise sections completed to 2014, and their percentage completion rates (based upon Defra CB data) showed a similar or increased completion rate. The number of producers completing the direct sales section was, however, lower than in 2014.

Table 4 Completed survey sections compared to enterprises identified from certification data

Enterprise type	2015 survey	2014 survey	2013 survey	Defra CB data end			Survey completion rate		
				2014	2013	2012	2015	2014	2013
Beef	238	241	305	416	435	547	57%	55%	56%
Sheep	266	271	345	460	468	623	58%	58%	55%
Dairy	56	55	56	84	86	104	67%	64%	54%
Pigs	4	6	8	19	31	40	21%	19%	20%
Eggs	18	19	24	50	61	63	36%	31%	38%
Fruit & vegetables	34	33	31	122	133	162	28%	25%	19%
Grains & pulses	64	69	73	171	185	246	37%	37%	30%
Direct sales	41	56	38	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

4.2 Organic and in-conversion farms

Organic farms continue to be a prominent feature of Welsh agriculture, but the 2013 to 2015 surveys have highlighted the significant number of organic producers who have de-certified from organic production. However, the numbers decertifying each year have reduced over the period, and will be affected in future by the numbers that have agreed new 5-year Glastir Organic contracts from 2015.

4.2.1 Reasons for reversion to non-organic farming in Wales

During 2013 to 2015, a number of producers de-certfied from organic production although the numbers decertifying are reducing. 150 respondents confirmed their de-certification through the 2013 survey, a further 63 respondents informed the 2014 survey that they had decertified and 54 confirmed that they had reverted to non-organic farming in 2015 (see Table 3). Producers indicating that they had reverted were briefly asked why they had taken this decision, with results presented in Table 5 below. The primary reason for de-certification was the lack of organic premium, the same as in the 2014 survey, but there was a wide mixture of reasons indicated (note that producers could give more than one reason hence there are 118 responses from the 54 farmers interviewed who had reverted).

Table 5 Reasons for reverting to non-organic farming (producers reverting between Jan and Nov 2015)

Responses	118
Retired/family reasons	5%
High feed price	6%
Lack of organic premium	24%
Lack of organic market	11%
Certification costs	7%
Certification rules	12%
OFS agreement ending	3%
Expect future OFS to be low	9%
Technical issues	8%
Other	15%

4.2.2 Glastir Organic

During autumn 2014, the Welsh Government launched its replacement for the Organic Farming Scheme, called Glastir Organic, and producers were invited to apply during October 2014. Of the 420 producers who completed the 2015 survey, 88% were in the Glastir organic scheme of whom 51% were in Glastir entry and 39% were in Glastir advanced. A further 6% of the 420 indicated that they plan to register with Glastir Organic in the future.

4.3 Organic and in-conversion land area

As indicated in the previous section, the organic certification data supplied to Defra was collected over a 12 month period; therefore the data are always retrospective. The 2015 producer survey continued to request producers to provide basic information about their land, its use and their land's organic status. The compiled land data shown in Table 6 provides information for both aggregate land types and individual crops in 2014/15.

Table 6 Organic and in-conversion land area (ha) in Wales (actual survey results)

	Fully organic		In-conversion		Share by status	
	Area (ha)	Share	Area (ha)	Share	Organic	In-conv
Grassland (inc. rough grazing)	54060	93.7%	3300	97.2%	94.2%	5.8%
Fodder crops (inc. legumes, roots)	480	0.8%	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Arable forage	520	0.9%	10	0.1%	99.1%	0.9%
Arable crops (combined)	1160	2.0%	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Arable (total)	2160	3.7%	10	0.1%	99.8%	0.2%
Potatoes	10	0.0%	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Horticulture	70	0.1%	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Other	1420	2.5%	90	2.7%	94.0%	6.0%
Total	57730	100%	3400	100%	94%	6%

Based upon the data collected through the survey, land data was then scaled up to estimate Welsh organic sector totals for the various categories, based on the overall survey response rate of 77.9%. (see Table 7). The data for fully organic land shows the majority of land (ca. 94%) is forage with the arable area (including fodder and cereal crops) accounting for most of the remainder, whilst the Welsh horticultural area remained very small, although the estimate is affected by the actual low response rate for horticulture. The area of land in-conversion was 4,300 ha (5.5%) due to the very low number of producers currently in conversion. When compared with 2014 Defra data Table 7 shows the reduction in land area due to additional decertifications in 2015.

Table 7 Organic and in-conversion land area (ha) in Wales (estimated total areas and end of 2014 CB data)

Crop Type	Estimated total areas (based on survey response rate of 77.9%)			Defra end 2014 CB data
	Organic	In-conv	Total	Total
Grassland (inc. rough grazing)	69400	4200	73600	90021
Fodder crops (inc. legumes, roots)	600	0	600	-
Arable forage	700	0	700	414
Arable crops (combined)	1500	0	1500*	2292
Arable (total)	2800	0	2800	2706
Potatoes	10	0	10	8
Horticulture	90	0	90**	181
Other	1830	100	1930	6
Totals	74130	4300	78400	92922

* 3135 ha based on 37% response rate for grains and pulses
** 250 ha based on 28% response rate for horticulture

4.4 Livestock numbers

Respondents were asked to provide details of organic and in-conversion livestock retained on their holdings at 31st October 2015, shown in Table 8, below.

Table 8 Survey recorded organic/in conversion breeding stock retained in 2015 and 2014

	Organic 2015		In-conversion 2015		2015 Total	2014 Total
	Head	Farms	Head	Farms	Head	Head
Breeding cattle	7148	207	150	7	7298	6432
Growing cattle	11672	221	187	7	11859	11057
Replacement beef heifers	893	118	36	6	929	665
Breeding sheep	112619	248	6137	13	118756	107677
Growing sheep	20897	135	1500	7	22397	26703
Ewe lamb replacements	28121	226	1460	13	29581	22661
Dairy cows	8029	56	0	0	8029	7170
Dairy heifers	4679	56	0	0	4679	4284
Laying hens	25594	18	0	0	25594	4606
Sows	11	4	0	0	11	15

The 2015 data generally shows a slight increase in livestock numbers recorded through the producer survey. From the survey collected data, estimated livestock numbers at Welsh organic sector level were then calculated. For comparison, this calculation was undertaken both by calculating the response rate per individual enterprise, as well as by using the overall survey response rate of 77.9%. Table 9 (estimates from sector-specific response rates) and Table 10 (estimates from overall survey response rate) indicate the estimated Welsh organic sector stock numbers.

Table 9 Total Welsh organic and in-conversion livestock (head), estimated using individual sector response rates

	Sector response rate	Organic 2015	In-conversion 2015	2015 Total (Rounded)	2014 Total (Rounded)
Breeding cattle	57%	12494	262	12800	11600
Growing cattle		20401	327	20700	20000
Replacement beef heifers		1561	63	1600	1200
Breeding sheep	58%	194755	10613	205400	186000
Growing sheep		36138	2594	38700	46100
Ewe lamb replacements		48630	2525	51200	39100
Dairy cows	67%	12044	0	12000	11200
Dairy heifers		7019	0	7000	6700
Laying hens	36%	71094	0	71100	14800
Sows	21%	52	0	50	100

2014 estimates were calculated at 2014 sector response rates (see 2014 Producer Survey report)

Table 10 Total Welsh organic and in-conversion livestock (head) estimated using 77.9% overall survey response rate

	Organic 2015	In-conversion 2015	2015 Total (Rounded)	2014 Total (Rounded)
Breeding cattle	9176	193	9400	8900
Growing cattle	14983	240	15200	15200
Replacement beef heifers	1146	46	1200	900
Breeding sheep	144569	7878	152400	148300
Growing sheep	26825	1926	28800	36800
Ewe lamb replacements	36099	1874	38000	31200
Dairy cows	10307	0	10300	9900
Dairy heifers	6006	0	6000	5900
Laying hens	32855	0	32900	6300
Sows	14	0	15	20

Organic and in-conversion livestock numbers, summarised in Table 11, indicate survey collected numbers and estimated Welsh totals, in addition to 2014 certification data from Defra for comparison. For beef, sheep and dairy, the enterprise specific estimates match the Defra CB data more closely, with estimates based upon the overall response rate lower than Defra statistics. However, due to the reduction in numbers of organic producers, estimates based upon the overall survey rate may be more reflective of the current situation.

Table 11 2015 survey-collected and estimated total Welsh organic and in-conversion livestock data
With 2014 Defra CB data for comparison

Livestock category	Actual survey data	Total estimated by sector response %		Total estimated at overall response %		Defra 2014 CB data
Breeding cattle	7298		12800		9400	11928
Growing cattle	11859	57%	20800	77.9%	15200	
Replacement beef heifers	929		1600		1200	
Breeding sheep	118756		205400		152400	182695
Growing sheep	22397	58%	38700	77.9%	28800	
Ewe lamb replacements	29581		51200		38000	
Dairy cows	8029	67%	12000	77.9%	10300	10000*
Dairy heifers	4679		7000		6000	
Laying hens	25594	36%	71100	77.9%	32900	33013
Sows	11	21%	50	77.9%	15	17

*estimate due to discrepancy in Defra data supplied

4.5 Farm diversification

As indicated in previous producer survey reports, farm diversification is often a significant source of income for organic farms. Table 12 indicates that in 2015, 41% of the organic farms surveyed had a diversified enterprise, more than the 35% indicated in the 2014 survey. In particular, diversification into renewable energy has increased in importance in the sector. These results represent an encouraging increase since the publication of the BOBL report '*Why sustainable agri-tourism is a market opportunity for the organic sector - A guide for farmers and other businesses*.'[1]

Table 12 Reported level of diversification within Welsh organic and converting farm businesses

	2015		2014	
	%	n	%	n
Farm has a diversified enterprise	41%	171	35%	154
On farm processing	4%	15	4%	19
On farm retailing	3%	14	5%	20
Educational activities	0%	2	2%	8
Tourism activities (with food)	2%	9	3%	11
Tourism activities (without food)	11%	46	8%	35
Agricultural contracting	3%	12	4%	19
Renewable energy	26%	108	17%	76
Other	3%	13	5%	20
Multiple diversification enterprises	9%	38	10%	45

[1] Organic Centre Wales Better Organic Business Links Project http://www.organiccentrewales.org.uk/publications.php

5 2015 survey results for organic sales

Certified organic crops and livestock may be sold to organic outlets or non-organic outlets at conventional prices. This section analyses the quantities and proportions of output marketed as organic.

5.1 Livestock sales

Livestock sales recorded through the producer survey are presented in Table 13. Sales were recorded as those sold as certified organic, those sold as in-conversion and those sold conventionally, e.g. due to a lack of organic market. Survey recorded data (Table 13), indicated that reported organic sales were lower in 2015 than 2014 for finished cattle and finished lambs but greater for store cattle, store lambs, milk, eggs and pigs. The pig numbers should be treated with caution due to the low response rate and small sample size. In-conversion status sales were minimal.

Table 13 Reported livestock sales 2015 (with 2014 data for comparison)

	Organic		**Non-organic sales**				**Total**		**Responses**	
			In-conversion		Other reason				n	
Year	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Finished cattle	5549	3578	15	70	299	212	5863	3860	117	94
Store cattle	2585	2688	20	275	968	1040	3573	4003	152	167
Finished lambs	48420	44366	1343	6880	33670	41249	83433	92495	238	224
Store lambs	5171	5379	0	2191	14375	13418	19546	20988	91	105
Milk (thou' litres)	40742	43285	0	0	0	0	40742	43285	55	55
Eggs (thou' doz.)	461	788	0	0	0	20	461	809	19	18
Pigs (all classes)	75	84	64	4	55	0	194	88	8	4

Results shown in Table 14 indicate that total non-organic sales as a percentage of total sales were similar between 2014 and 2015. When analysing the reasons given for selling non-organically, it can be seen from Table 14 that the majority of non-organic beef sales in 2015 were due to difficulties meeting the organic specification or because the organic premium was minimal, whereas non-organic finished lamb sales were partly for that same reason and partly also due to a lack of organic market.

Table 14 Reported non-organic livestock sales (excluding in-conversion) and % split, 2014 and 2015

	Reported non-organic sales (excl. in-conv.)		**Non-org sales as % of total sales**		**Due to finishing spec / high conv. prices**		**Due to lack of organic market**		**Due to other reasons**	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Finished cattle	299	212	5%	5%	11%	89%	60%	10%	29%	0%
Store cattle	968	1040	27%	26%	32%	42%	30%	30%	38%	28%
Finished lambs	33670	41249	40%	45%	56%	43%	36%	48%	8%	9%
Store lambs	14375	13418	74%	64%	37%	55%	50%	29%	14%	16%
Milk (thou' litres)	0	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Eggs (thou' doz.)	0	20	0%	3%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%

As with the retained livestock data (see Table 8), the actual livestock sales recorded by the survey were scaled up to estimate sales at Welsh organic sector level, with values calculated by two methods (overall and sector specific response rates). Table 15 shows data multiplied up by the individual sector response rates.

Table 16 shows data multiplied up by the overall survey response rate of 77.9%. Data in Table 15 and Table 16 indicate similar organic sales for many sectors in 2015 compared with 2014, but lower organic sales of finished cattle.

Table 15 Estimated total Welsh produced organic livestock sales (based on sector specific response rates)

	Sector response rate	Organic		Non-organic sales				Total	
				In conversion		Other non-organic			
		2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Finished cattle	57%	10000	6300	0	100	500	400	10600	6700
Store cattle	57%	4700	4700	0	500	1700	1800	6400	7000
Finished lambs	58%	84000	77000	2000	12000	58000	71000	144000	160000
Store lambs	58%	9000	9000	0	4000	25000	23000	34000	36000
Milk (thou' litres)	67%	63700	64900	0	0	0	0	63700	64900
Eggs (thou' doz.)	36%	1500	2200	0	0	0	100	1500	2200
Pigs (all classes)	21%	400	400	300	0	300	0	1000	400

* 2014 estimates calculated at 2014 sector specific response rates

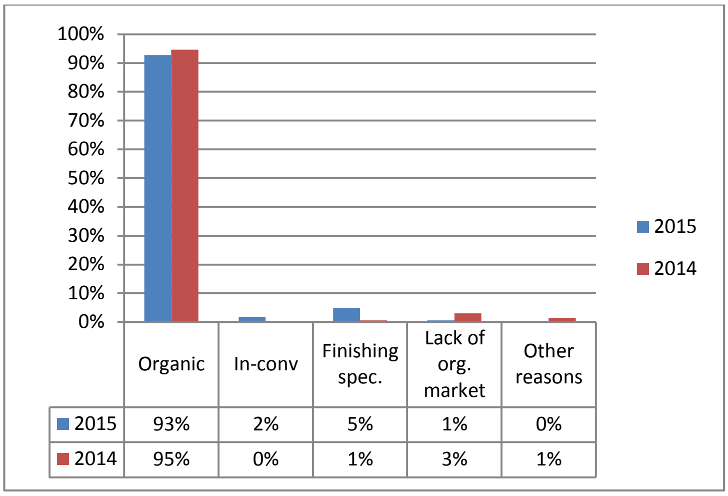
Table 16 Estimated total Welsh produced organic livestock sales (overall survey response rate)

	Survey response rate	Organic		Non-organic sales				Total	
				In conversion		Other non-organic			
		2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Finished cattle	77.9%	7600	4600	0	100	400	300	8100	5000
Store cattle		3600	3500	0	400	1300	1300	4900	5100
Finished lambs		67000	57000	2000	9000	46000	53000	115000	119000
Store lambs		7000	7000	0	3000	20000	17000	27000	27000
Milk (thou' litres)		56000	56000	0	0	0	0	56100	56000
Eggs (thou' doz.)		600	1000	0	0	0	0	600	1000
Pigs (all classes)		100	100	100	0	100	0	300	100

* 2014 estimates based on a 73% survey response rate overall

5.1.1 Cattle sales

Figure 1 indicates that virtually all finished cattle sales were sold into organic markets in 2015. Store cattle sales appeared to be slightly lower overall and organic sales fell slightly from 72% in 2014 to 67% in 2015.

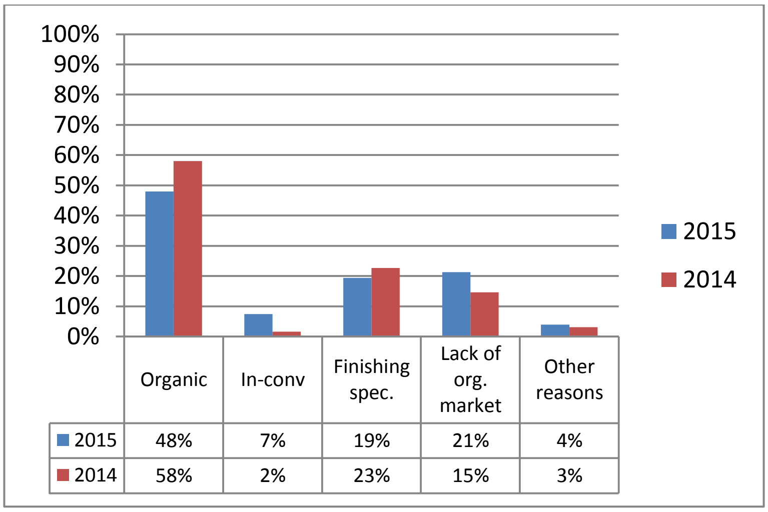


	Organic	In-conv	Finishing spec.	Lack of org. market	Other reasons
2015	93%	2%	5%	1%	0%
2014	95%	0%	1%	3%	1%

Figure 1 Finished cattle sales 2015 and 2014

5.1.2 Sheep sales

The percentage of total organic finished lambs sold organically was about 48% in 2015. The percentage of non-organic sales (excluding livestock in-conversion) increased very slightly to 44% of total sales, with a reasonably even split between those sold conventionally due to finishing specification or high conventional prices and those sold conventionally due to a lack of organic market.



	Organic	In-conv	Finishing spec.	Lack of org. market	Other reasons
2015	48%	7%	19%	21%	4%
2014	58%	2%	23%	15%	3%

Figure 2 Finished lamb sales 2015 and 2014

The proportion of store lambs sold non-organically remained at 74% in 2015, although 10% were due to in-conversion status and the remaining 64% were sold non-organically due to finishing specification, lack of organic market, or other reasons, and this remains a key area of livestock loss from the organic supply chain.

5.1.3 Milk sales

Milk sales data from the survey indicate that overall organic milk sales were similar in 2015, at around 56 million litres, with no non-organic sales reported. Organic milk price data are still not readily available, but surveyed producers indicated that they received an average of 35.3 ppl in 2015, showing a reduction from the 37.3 ppl indicated by the 2014 survey.

5.1.4 Egg sales

Organic egg sales appeared to be higher in 2015, although due to the small sample and large scale of some producers the margin of error can be quite large. The average price received was higher in 2015 at £2.79 per dozen, compared with £2.58 in 2014 but this varied greatly between producers selling in bulk (typically £1.50/dz.) or direct to the public (e.g. £2.50 plus).

5.1.5 Pig sales

Organic pig sales appeared to be similar to 2014 sales, however the response rate was very low which affects the robustness of estimates.

5.1.6 Livestock marketing routes

Sales from beef and sheep livestock enterprises were recorded by their marketing route, indicating the sales split between different marketing routes for finished stock (Table 17) and store stock (Table 18).

Table 17 Marketing route of organically produced finished beef and lamb sales (2011 to 2015)

	Finished cattle					Finished lamb				
Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Responses	95	119	143	151	150	230	237	295	376	372
Direct to Abattoir	73%	78%	79%	77%	69%	61%	58%	66%	60%	57%
Producer Group	9%	12%	8%	9%	14%	3%	1%	3%	4%	6%
Livestock mart.	4%	2%	2%	4%	7%	30%	33%	24%	31%	34%
Direct to public	13%	8%	11%	10%	11%	6%	7%	7%	5%	3%

The 2015 survey indicates a slight decrease in the percentage of finished stock that was sold direct to an abattoir for finished beef and a very slight increase for finished lamb.

In 2015 an additional question was added about whether livestock were sold direct to a PGI status abattoir i.e. one that allows the sale of the meat as "Welsh beef" or "Welsh lamb". Of the 73% finished beef that were sold direct to an abattoir, 93% was sold to a PGI abattoir and only 7% through another abattoir. Similarly, of the 61% of finished lamb sold direct to an abattoir, 97% was sold to a PGI abattoir. This may allow the possibility of marketing the produce as "organic Welsh beef" or "organic Welsh lamb".

Table 18 Marketing route of organically produced store cattle and lamb sales (2011 to 2015)

	Store cattle					Store lamb				
Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Responses	160	146	184	241	246	94	92	103	139	166
Producer Group	4%	2%	5%	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	4%
Livestock mart.	65%	64%	60%	68%	70%	67%	72%	77%	75%	73%
Direct to another producer	31%	34%	36%	30%	28%	31%	27%	23%	23%	22%

The store marketing routes for cattle and lamb highlight the high reliance upon marketing through livestock markets, and whilst producer groups encourage sales and purchases through their producer linkages these remain minimal in terms of overall numbers.

5.1.7 Livestock feed and fodder

Purchased and home grown feed usage is shown in Table 19, with most of the beef sector's feed requirements continuing to be sourced as straight cereals with compound feed comprising only 24% of total requirements. Compound feed continued to comprise a much higher percentage of total feed used for sheep production at 77% of the total. The organic dairy sector continued to use large quantities of compound feed, as well as straights, with almost 11,092t of feed recorded through the survey.

Based on the overall response rate for the survey (77.9%), it can be estimated that total organic ruminant concentrate feed requirements for Wales were around 19,362 tonnes, slightly lower than the estimated requirement of 20,391t in 2014, and higher than 16,792t in 2013, but lower than 28,500t in 2012 and 21,000t in 2011, reflecting the reduction in Welsh organic sector size.

Table 19 Organic livestock concentrate feed use, proportion bought-in, prices and availability

		Feed used		Feed source			Feed prices		Feed availability*	
		t	n	Home-grown	Bought-in	n	£/t	n	rating	n
Beef	Cereal	1785	43	90%	10%	42	172	6	1.5	20
	Protein	13	3	0%	100%	2	740	3	1.0	2
	Compound	576	90				336	90	1.5	88
Sheep	Cereal	353	30	85%	15%	27	160	5	1.4	13
	Protein	19	9	0%	100%	3	718	9	1.4	8
	Compound	1245	152				427	149	1.5	140
Dairy	Cereal	1275	15	83%	17%	12	205	4	1.2	12
	Protein	199	4	67%	33%	3	285	2	1.3	4
	Compound	9618	54				323	52	1.4	43
Poultry	Cereal	600	1	-	-	0	-	1	-	1
	Protein	0	0	-	-	0	-	0	-	0
	Compound	761	17	-	-	-	407	15	1.4	15

* Feed availability rated from 1=Good, 2=Sufficient, 3=Difficult, 4=Poor, 0=Don't know/no view

The proportion of home-grown ruminant feed varied from as high as 90% for cereals fed down to 0% for protein fed to beef cattle and sheep. Compound and cereal prices were similar to 2014 with costs varying from £160/t for cereal for sheep to £740/t for protein for beef cattle. Protein prices remained more variable between sectors. Due to small sample sizes, estimating the total organic feed requirements for the poultry sector was difficult, but using the overall survey response rate of 77.9% indicated an estimated total of 1747t. This result must be treated with great care, however, as the sample is very small.

5.1.8 Livestock technical issues

Table 20 highlights the technical issues identified by producers within their organic livestock production system. Forage production remained a concern within the ruminant systems, and health was also a concern in sheep and dairy systems.

Table 20 Technical issues identified with organic livestock production (2014 and 2015)

	Beef		Lamb		Milk	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Responses	40	55	45	67	25	26
Forage	5%	6%	4%	2%	4%	13%
Health	2%	4%	7%	10%	5%	14%
Concentrate (energy)	2%	3%	1%	4%	13%	4%
Biosecurity	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Concentrate (protein)	1%	2%	0%	1%	4%	4%
Breeding (choice of breed)	1%	3%	1%	1%	4%	2%
Infrastructure	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%
Other	5%	5%	3%	6%	4%	9%

5.2 Horticulture and arable cropping

5.2.1 Horticulture

Data collection within the horticultural sector has proved difficult due to the small number of producers and the large variety of crops, as well as the varying markets supplied. Table 21 indicates the areas of differing horticultural crop types and the average marketing route for that crop type. It was not possible to quantify output due to the high number of crops and varying scale of operations. Holdings producing mixed market crops and field vegetables were the most prevalent, with a high percentage of produce sold direct to the public although a majority of fruit and potatoes were sold via wholesalers or in bulk.

Table 21 Horticulture production, prices and market split

	Responses	Area (ha)	Marketing routes		
			Direct to public	Wholesale	Bulk
Mixed market garden	20	30.7	82%	18%	0%
Potatoes	7	6.9	45%	35%	20%
Field veg	12	29.9	68%	33%	0%
Fruit	9	6.5	18%	68%	14%
Other crops	3	50.1	-	-	-
Total	42	124.0			

Producers were asked about any marketing difficulties they had experienced: there were 16 responses of which 44% indicated that lack of market was an issue. Table 22 indicates that fewer responding horticultural growers experienced difficulties in controlling weeds during the 2015 growing season, but climate change was an increasing challenge as were seeds. Producers were asked about any marketing difficulties they had experienced: there were 16 responses of which 44% indicated that lack of market was an issue.

Table 22 Percentage of horticultural producers experiencing difficulties with various factors

Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Responses	17	16	15	31	29
Weeds	12%	15%	26%	22%	41%
Seeds	9%	0%	3%	4%	14%
Disease	3%	9%	0%	4%	3%
Labour	3%	3%	0%	0%	3%
Climate change	12%	0%	10%	11%	7%
Machinery	0%	0%	0%	2%	7%
Other	12%	21%	10%	24%	24%

5.2.2 Arable cropping

Table 23 indicates that in 2015 the largest arable crop areas continued to be barley, oats and wheat, with the majority of these being produced for home-grown feed. Due to the very small sample sizes it is difficult to comment on prices. Average prices obtained by producers for oats were much lower in 2015 at £188/t compared with £331/t in 2014, however this may be a reflection of the small sample sizes and an increased proportion (9% in 2015 compared with 0% in 2014) being sold to bulk buyers.

Table 23 Arable production, prices and marketing route (2015 harvest)

	Area (ha)	Total production (t)	Sales volume (t)	Price (£/t)		Marketing routes			
				2014	2015	Direct to farmer	Direct to processor	Bulk buyer	n
Responses	89	88	-	15	-	-	-	-	
Wheat	245	1396	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Barley	360	1579	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Oats	247	1129	531	331	188	73%	18%	9%	11
Triticale	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Peas or beans	133	330	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Cereal/legume	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Other crops	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total/Average	1112	5043	-	290	-	-	-	-	

- data not shown due to small sample size

Similarly to 2014, almost 30% of arable producers experienced difficulties in controlling weeds during the 2015 growing season (Table 24), with other factors also affecting some producers, including challenges from changing climate and weather concerns.

Table 24 Percentage of arable producers experiencing difficulties with various factors

Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Responses	33	30	26	50	47
Weeds	27%	26%	27%	28%	60%
Seeds	6%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Disease	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Labour	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Climate change	9%	6%	1%	11%	6%
Machinery	2%	4%	3%	2%	13%
Other	6%	7%	3%	10%	21%

Producers were asked about any marketing difficulties they had experienced, but few responded, preventing publication of their views.

6 Direct sales

The number of respondents indicating direct to public sales was lower in 2015 at 41 compared with 56 in 2014. As in previous years, Table 25 shows that meat continued to be the most widely directly sold product, followed by vegetables and eggs.

Table 25 Main type of produce sold (*listed in order of importance in 2015*)

	% of direct sellers			
Year	2015	2014	2013	2012
Responses	41	56	38	52
Meat	51%	48%	58%	48%
Vegetables	24%	20%	13%	29%
Eggs	12%	14%	11%	8%
Mixed Content	7%	11%	11%	4%
Fruit	5%	5%	0%	6%
Dairy	0%	2%	8%	6%

Table 26 indicates the high importance of direct sales to the majority of the producers involved. Whilst around a quarter of producers with direct sales did not heavily rely on these sales, over 50% produced 80-100% of their total business turnover this way (similar to 2014 data).

Table 26 Percentage of total business turnover from direct sales

Year	**2015**	**2014**	**2013**	**2012**
0-20%	16%	26%	25%	23%
20-40%	12%	4%	8%	4%
40-60%	7%	11%	11%	6%
60-80%	14%	7%	11%	13%
80-100%	51%	52%	44%	54%

Table 27 indicates that as in previous years, the majority of producers with direct sales had experienced, increased or similar sales; only 14% had seen a decrease.

Table 27 Direct sales changes during the previous 12 months

Year	**2015**	**2014**	**2013**	**2012**	**2011**	**2010**
Responses	42	54	34	51	58	64
Up by 10%+	21%	11%	12%	20%	12%	7%
Up by 1-10%	21%	24%	18%	13%	16%	14%
No change	43%	54%	62%	50%	55%	67%
Down by 1- 10%	7%	6%	6%	9%	6%	5%
Down by 10%+	7%	6%	3%	8%	12%	7%

7 Future intentions of producers

As part of the survey, producers were also asked for their views on whether the current (2015) prices for products were high enough to continue producing organically (shown in Table 28). Beef producers' responses were similar to 2014, with only 34% of finished producers considering that current prices are high enough. 40% of store cattle rearers thought prices were high enough and 45% did not.

The sheep sector results were very similar between years, with 16% of finished lamb producers (and 9% of store lamb producers) expressing positive views, but 64% of finished lamb producers (and 70% of store lamb producers) indicated that the current lamb price wasn't high enough to continue organic production. The organic dairy sector was much more positive in 2015 (at time of surveying), with 94% of producers positive about current prices, compared with 76% in 2014, whilst only 2% of milk producers were negative about current prices, compared with 12% in 2014.

Egg producers' views in 2015 were an improvement on 2014, with 76% of the small number of responses indicating a positive opinion of current prices and 12% indicating a negative opinion.

Horticulture producer views were more negative in 2015 than in 2014, although 48% were positive and only 19% were negative. Arable producers were similarly positive in 2015, with 31% being positive, identically to 2014. Producers undertaking direct organic sales were slightly less positive in 2015 with 66%, compared with 70% in 2014, indicating prices were high enough to continue operating organically.

Table 28 Are current (2015) prices for products sufficiently high to continue producing them organically?

	Definitely		Probably		Not Sure		Probably Not		Definitely not		2014	2015
Year	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	n	n
Finished cattle	1%	2%	31%	32%	16%	20%	24%	25%	27%	21%	144	121
Store cattle	0%	3%	33%	37%	21%	15%	20%	22%	26%	23%	148	150
Finished lamb	1%	0%	19%	16%	19%	20%	25%	19%	36%	45%	208	198
Store lamb	0%	0%	12%	9%	25%	21%	23%	21%	39%	49%	115	117
Milk	13%	32%	63%	62%	12%	4%	8%	0%	4%	2%	52	50
Eggs	6%	41%	56%	35%	13%	12%	13%	12%	13%	0%	16	17
Pigs	25%	0%	50%	75%	0%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%	4	4
Horticulture	13%	6%	50%	42%	13%	32%	19%	16%	6%	3%	32	31
Arable cropping	5%	12%	26%	20%	45%	49%	17%	12%	7%	8%	42	51
Direct sales	28%	21%	42%	45%	6%	21%	14%	11%	10%	3%	50	38
Average (weighted)	4%	6%	30%	28%	19%	20%	21%	18%	26%	28%		

When asked how long they intend to remain as a certified organic producer the 2015 results in Table 29 indicate how the sector has changed over the last four years. The numbers of respondents answering this question has decreased from 566 in 2012 to 399 in 2015. The percentage of producers committed to farming organically for 5 or more years has risen from 30% in 2012 to 89% in 2014 but then dropped to 69% in 2015, but those committed to remaining organic for 10 years or more had increased markedly. With the launch of Glastir Organic and a number of producers joining the sector it is likely that some stability or even modest growth will follow in the next few years.

Table 29 Length of time producer intends to remain organic

Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Responses	399	398	444	566	561
<1yr	3%	8%	20%	26%	-
<2yrs	1%	0%	19%	21%	-
3-5 yrs	27%	4%	31%	23%	-
5-10 yrs	27%	83%	11%	8%	22%
10yrs plus	42%	6%	19%	22%	36%

8 Conclusions

The 2015 survey continued to receive an excellent response rate from the telephone only survey method. A high percentage (88%) of producers indicated that they had joined the new Glastir Organic scheme.

The majority of beef, milk and cropping outputs are sold into certified organic markets, although the sheep sector and store beef sales continue to suffer losses to the conventional sector at point of sale.

Despite the recent losses within the sector, organic sales remained strong and there was optimism in most sectors, especially the dairy sector in 2015, with the exception of the finished lamb and cattle sectors. There is also optimism for the future of the sector as 42% of producers who were surveyed indicated an intention to remain in organic production for 10 years or more and a further 27% for 5-10 years. This should provide a greater stability to production.

Appendix 1 – Defra Certification Body Data

As at end year		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Change
Holdings	N	710	857	1048	1013	1006	964	952	786	661	-16%
Land use											
Area	ha	78973	95865	114393	123623	121093	122718	118699	100754	92922	-8%
Cereals	ha	2144	2361	3002	3591	3191	2863	2907	2191	2292	5%
Other arable	ha	1557	1618	3164	3428	3317	2638	2116	1590	414	-74%
Potatoes	ha	99	96	99	45	38	41	41	5	8	65%
Horticulture	ha	244	322	362	432	379	312	338	274	181	-34%
Total tillage	ha	4044	4397	6627	7495	6926	5854	5401	4059	2895	-29%
Temp grass	ha	10564	11286	10125	9904	9474	9662	10074	8946	8622	-4%
Arable land (inc temp grass)	ha	14608	15683	16752	17399	16399	15517	15475	13004	11517	-11%
Perm. grass/ rough grazing	ha	63103	78976	95961	104024	102464	105517	101214	86255	81399	-6%
Woodland/ other	ha	1262	1206	1679	2200	2229	1684	2010	1494	n/a	n/a
Livestock numbers											
All cattle	head	41612	45096	54281	49388	52040	60495	56866	50238	59053	18%
Dairy cows	head	9346	11069	11372	13670	12478	13868	11340	10434	10000*	nd
Est. milk output	M litre	50	61	63	75	69	76	62	57	55	nd
Beef cows	head	8470	8985	12119	9627	11530	14111	13541	11155	11928	7%
All sheep	head	279361	367597	531209	293930	358100	531033	521905	409299	373233	-9%
Ewes	head	148935	179122	262639	143510	177062	255182	246559	204231	182695	-11%
Other sheep (incl. lambs/yearlings)	head	130426	188475	268570	150420	181038	275851	275346	205068	190538	-7%
Poultry	head	153800	120689	265647	265752	252518	152296	134281	201864	208089	3%
Laying hens	head	45823	28102	57135	51409	38405	38251	25442	26615	33013	24%
Est. eggs	M doz	1.1	0.7	1.3	1.2	0.9	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.8	26%
Table birds	k head	80	84	99	105	105	104	100192	137064	137017	0%
Est. chickens	k head	280	293	348	350	350	350	350	350	480	0%
Other poultry	head	28059	8837	109112	109676	109446	9651	8647	38185	38059	0%
Sows	head	16	82	49	338	332	72	99	677	17	-97%
Other pigs	head	194	649	173	412	359	357	378	393	177	-55%
Goats	head	35	28	23	17	25	8	27	32	70	119%
Other (deer, camelids, equids)	head	1012	1684	1808	1767	2427	3596	461	643	2707	321%

* Estimate as discrepancy in data received