From Clean & Green to Organic: Opportunities and Impediments to Achieving an Organic Tasmania

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World Organic Agriculture

Data: Willer et al 2000a-2017
Organic Agriculture excludes...

- synthetic fertilisers
- synthetic pesticides
- GMOs
- engineered nanoparticles
- irradiation
Consumers buy Organic because...

- better for family
- better for me
- better for environment
- better for animals

ACNielsen, 2005

1924: Agriculture Course at Koberwitz (Poland)

Rudolf Steiner (1865-1925)

Paull, 2011
1928: Australia’s first organic farmer

Ernesto Genoni (1885-1974)

Paull, 2014a

1934: Australia’s first woman organic farmer

Ileen Macpherson (1898-1984)

Paull, 2017a
1940: coins the term “organic farming” (UK)

Lord Northbourne (1896-1982)

1944: World’s first organic agriculture advocacy group (Aust.)

Australian Organic Farming & Gardening Society (1944-1955)
1946: Tasmania’s first Organic Farming advocacy society (The Living Soil Association of Tasmania)

Henry Shoobridge (1874-1963)

Paull, 2009

Number of mentions of Organic Farming in the Australian press 1940-1990.

Paull, 2017b
Organic Gardening & Farming Society of Tasmania (1972-2009)
published a national journal c.1976-2000

Ulverstone, Tas
Organic (ha) - Big 5

World total = 50.9 m ha

Organic (ha) - Australia

Australia total = 27.1 m ha

Tasmania = 4,003 ha
Organic (producers) - Australia

Australia total = 2075 producers
Tasmania = 79 producers

Data: AgLAW & Mobium 2017

Organic (ha) - % of Ag land

Tasmania issues

- Island
- Blue sky
- Organics = price maker
- 21st century
- GM & fracking moratoria
- Puffery of “clean & green”
- Tourism growing
- High foreign ownership*(21.8%)

* Hanson, 2016

- Tas: High transport costs
- Tas: High labour costs
- Tas: Culture of welfare dependance
- Tas: Low institutional interest
- Disincentives to employing
- Lack of vision
- Varieties suited to organics
- Tas: Poor health outcomes
- Tas: Poor nutrition outcomes
- Tas: Low education achievements
- Commodities = price taker
- Scalability

Organic mentions=nil

Dairy Australia, 2017
Organic mentions = nil

Cadbury’s organic range
Made in Poland

Bellamy’s
HQ: Launceston, TAS
No cows, no farms, no processing facilities
Imported ingredients
Packaged in Victoria
Market to China
China: increasingly savvy consumers

China: pollution
China: sophisticated cuisine and lots of choice

China: changing tastes
China: The luxury of organic

China: Alternative certifications
Korea: 4 shades of Organic

Biodynamic produced in Egypt sold in Dubai
Willie Smith, Tasmania
Vertical integration
Organic tourism

Organic:
more labour intensive
less input intensive
“Bhutan to be the world’s first 100% organic country”
Prime Minister

3 of 20 states already declared organic

“She’s more important than Gross National Product” Constitution 2008

Vision:
Russia to supply the world with organic food

Wilson, 2016
MoAF, 2017
Uptake strategies:

- 1 farm @ a time: current approach here
- 1 state @ a time: e.g. Sikkim: India’s First Organic
- 1 island @ a time: Cicia (Fiji) & Abaiang (Kiribati)
- 1 country @ a time: e.g. Bhutan
- 1 sector at a time: e.g. Dominican Republic (bananas)

World Organic Forestry

(Tasmania = nil)

Data: Willer et al 2010-2017
World Total Certified Organic Land

90,600,111 ha

GMO moratorium: Russia, much of Europe & Tasmania

10% price premium for non-GM canola (WA)

Data source: Kahlia Wintle (2016), CBH Group Daily Contract Prices
A motivation for an Organic Tasmania …

Tasmania Farm Gate: $2.02 billion

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Price premium for organic 0% - 200%

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Q: Are we on the threshold of an Organic Tasmania?
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Tasmania enjoys a reputation as clean and green. It offers an apparent good fit with a vision of organic production as well as some natural advantages. Tasmania’s moratorium on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) is an advantage for organic production. This paper presents some context for the progress of Tasmania from the puffery of ‘clean and green’ to the standard of organic. Australia leads the world accounting for 45% of the world’s certified organic agricultural land (22.69 m ha of 50.92 m ha.). Tasmania has been an early mover as an advocate of organics with organised advocacy dating from 1946. Despite this enthusiasm, Tasmania only accounts for 0.01% of Australia’s certified organic agricultural land and 4% of Australia’s certified organic producers. Organic accounts for just 0.2% of Tasmania’s agricultural land. Tasmania’s leading organic company does not use Tasmanian ingredients. The organic chocolate products of Cadbury are made in Poland. Recent initiatives in organic and conversion to organic are presented along with some international initiatives of regional conversion to organic.
References


Hanson, R. (2016). Foreign ownership of Tasmanian farmland rises, report shows. The Mercury, September 8.


