



Canolfan Organig Cymru
Organic Centre Wales

Advice and knowledge transfer services for organic producers in Wales

A review of activities (2001 – 2007) and
recommendations for future services

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Summary

Introduction

This document has been prepared by Organic Centre Wales, on its own initiative, in order to fulfil a number of functions:

- Record the outputs and achievements of advice and knowledge transfer activities for organic farmers and those considering conversion between 2001 and 2007
- Explore how these activities have contributed to the delivery of the Organic Action Plans for Wales
- Inform the future development of advisory and knowledge transfer activities in Wales over the course of the next Rural Development Plan (2007 – 2013)

The review is principally concerned with two main services;

- The Organic Conversion Information Service (OCIS) comprising of the OCW helpline, an information pack and advisory visits
- Farming Connect advisory services and knowledge transfer activities. In this context, 'Advisory Services' include the Farm Business Development Plan, Technical advice and the Environmental Opportunities Review. 'Knowledge transfer' refers to the demonstration and development farms network, the discussion groups, the programme of training, conferences and seminars and the development projects.

It also makes recommendations to the Welsh Assembly Government on the future direction of these services. 'Short term implementation' relates to current contracts (up to March 2008). Medium term recommendations relate to new arrangements that might be implemented in future (from April 2008), for example as part of the new RDP.

Action Plan

Knowledge transfer and advisory services make a vital contribution to the implementation of the action plan. Reviewing the provision of these services is an explicit recommendation of the current action plan (Recommendation 43) and this report makes a significant contribution to that process. The Knowledge Transfer and advisory services are essential for the implementation of the following recommendations:

- Increasing area of land under organic management from 10 – 15% by 2010 (Recommendation 1)
- Encouraging the sustainable procurement of organic food (Recommendation 8)
- Developing the retail market for Welsh organic produce (Recommendation 13)
- Increasing the use of organic food in the food service and hospitality sector (Recommendation 19)
- Resumption and extension of benchmarking, (Recommendation 44)

- Maintaining and promoting high production standards and the integrity of organic products (Recommendation 48).

OCIS

OCIS was reviewed by various means including a small telephone survey, accessing previous reviews of the service and internal OCW discussions. Since OCW took over the management of the service from ADAS in 2002, 1233 registrations have been taken and 1234 visits have been delivered (790 first and 444 second). The survey indicated that the service was generally of high quality (most aspects of the service scored consistently 4 or 5 on a scale of 1-5). A number of suggestions were made to improve the service, which have been taken up in the recommendations below. The issue of whether or not to replace the 1st visit with a group workshop is one of considerable debate. Discussion with in OCW and the OCIS management team favour retaining the 1st visit, but further discussions are required in order to arrive at a wider consensus.

With regard to the future recommendations are as follows:

- Modify the information pack to include: an estimate of the cost of organic certification; summaries of updated market intelligence reports; consider multi media materials (e.g. CD ROM or DVD); Organic Farm Management Handbook (*Short term implementation*)
- Include a training needs assessment as part of the first visit, specifically in the context of organic conversion (*Short term implementation*)
- Include an illustrative budget, generated by Orgplan, to explore the financial implications of conversion in broad terms (*Medium term implementation*)
- Review the structure and scope of reports to take account the above changes (*Medium term implementation*)
- Retain the 2 visit structure, but note the need for further debate on this issue as discussed above (*Medium term implementation*)
- The advisory team should consist of accredited advisors who are based, or work regularly in Wales. There should be the capacity within the team to deliver services in Welsh. (*Medium term implementation*)

Farming Connect Advisory Services

Previously farmers have had the opportunity to use the Farming Connect FBDP, Technical advice and EORs services to develop detailed management and business development plans. A total of 136 farmers requested organic related FBDP (including certified producers and those in or considering conversion), and 229 accessed the technical advice available. Of the technical advice days delivered the largest proportion (38%) was conversion related and many were linked to FBDPs. Advice on animal nutrition, environmental management (including Tir Gofal and its relationship to the OFS) grassland management, manure management and horticultural production was also frequently requested. Overall, the quality of advice was good, as evidenced by farmer feedback and OCW input in the QA system, but there were 6 technical advice days and 7 FBDPs that were not up to standard.

Under current proposals, the new FAS/ Farming Connect service will support the development of a whole farm plan, which can be adapted to the needs of organic and in-conversion farmers. This plan would act as a management tool for the farmer and would also meet the requirements of the organic certification bodies and agri-environment schemes.

Recommendations for the future service, to be implemented in the medium term, are as follows:

- A lead consultant, chosen by the farmer, should be assigned to each case.
- OCW will advise farmers on the most appropriate choice of lead consultant and the content and scope of the plan.
- The lead consultant should be able to bring in additional specialist input if required.
- Require all lead consultants, and where possible those providing specialist input, to be accredited with the Institute of Organic training and Advice (IOTA)
- Encourage farmers to take a lead in the preparation of the plans, and develop a mechanism by which farmers' own plans can be signed off by an accredited advisor
- Build in consultancy time to review the plan on a regular basis. Previous plans should be reviewed at the start of whole farm planning process
- Strengthen the advisory team in key areas, including business management, pigs and poultry and animal nutrition.
- Investigate additional funding sources, including using the augmented OFS payment on the 1st hectare (£1,000) to offset the cost of the plan

Linking OCIS and FAS/ Farming Connect

There need for close links between the two services to ensure that converting farmers can access support to prepare detailed conversion plans that build effectively on the information provided through OCIS.

One proposal is to fully integrate the two services. Administration could be centralised, although OCW must be able to keep in contact and monitor progress of farmers through system. However, OCIS is an information service linked closely to the Organic Farming Scheme, and plays an analogous role to the Tir Gofal Project Officers in helping farmers prepare for joining the scheme. As such it needs to remain firmly anchored in Axis II, and open to all farmers considering applying for the OFS conversion (i.e. not just those registered with/ eligible for Farming Connect). Also, OCIS will become a very minor part of the over all service, and there is a risk that it will become a low priority within the service if resources become stretched.

Development Farms

The role of development farms is to communicate recent research and development findings to the industry. There were 3 farms in the network under the previous phase of Farming Connect: IGER Ty Gwyn, ADAS Pwllpeirian and the Welsh College of Horticulture.

In the short term there is little activity planned on development farms. Cuts in DEFRA research budgets are having a knock on effect on activity on some of the farms and

the direction of IGER Ty Gwyn is uncertain, with a merger between UWA and IGER currently underway. However, in medium term OCW sees an important role for the development farms.

For horticulture, a strategic change direction towards mixed field based systems is being proposed, and has been supported by the Agrifood Partnership Sub-group on Organic Horticulture. This has implications for the development farm network because WCOH, as a specialist horticulture unit based on vegan standards will have a lesser role to play in this regard. Consideration should be given to including Frongoch, the organic farm at IRS, as a mixed farm model including the establishment of a field vegetable enterprise.

Recommendations for the future of the network, to be implemented in the medium term, are as follows:

- Continue to develop programme of events at ADAS Pwllperian and IGER Ty Gwyn when the current uncertainties are resolved.
- For horticulture, move the focus away from the specialist vegan system at WCOH and consider developing a mixed farming model at Frongoch as discussed above.
- Since the farms are centred on Aberystwyth (a reflection of the strong R&D base in this area historically), organise a series of events where research staff participate in meetings around the country to communicate information to farmers who are unable to travel to the research farms.

Demonstration Farm Events

For the period 2002 – 2007, 71 on farm events were held, attended by about 1450 farmers. All the main sectors were covered, and event topics included production, business and environment related issues for each sector. Analysis of the evaluation forms showed that in terms of content, level of information and organisation, most farmers rated most events as either good or excellent. Across the network, about 63% of farmers said they had gained new ideas which they intended to implement on their own farms.

Recommendations for the future, to be implemented in the short term, are as follows:

- Retain the active demonstration farms (Aberhyddnant, Big House, Rhedycriw), but switch the focus to a series of ‘one off’ events. This will enable us to respond to specific issues quickly, serve the more minor sectors better and cover Wales more effectively from a geographical point of view.
- Recruit new in- conversion farms to serve new converters
- Ensure the programme adequately caters for the entire sector, and that long term organic farmers are not disadvantaged by a focus on new converters. Identify the target audiences clearly on event publicity
- Work more closely with producer groups in all sectors to develop programmes of activity

Seminars, workshops and conferences

A total of 49 events were held, attended by 1263 producers in the period 2002 - 2007. The programme covered a range of topics reflecting the issues of the day, outputs of

R&D projects, development of new technologies. Events played a crucial role in supporting the other knowledge transfer activities events were well received in that most farmers found the content and information of the course useful and pitched at the right level.

Recommendations for the future, to be implemented in the short term, are as follows:

- Continue to develop a programme of seminars, workshops and conferences, and link them to the other knowledge transfer activities
- Support the annual conference which is now established as a key event for Welsh organic producers.
- Continue to work closely with producer group to develop programmes

Discussion groups

About 140 discussion group meetings were held, attended by just over 1700 farmers. Overall, the network was considered highly effective, and was recognised as such in the FAS/ Farming Connect Options paper. The number and structure of the groups was quite fluid; Over time, some merged together while others split into separate groups and others started up but were not maintained due to lack of attendance.

The most successful groups tended to be those with an enthusiastic leader and/or facilitator, who was prepared to put in the time and effort required to drive the group forward. However to date, the groups have consistently underspent, and there is a desire to plan activities better to ensure better utilisation of funds

Recommendations for the future, to be implemented in the short term, are as follows:

- Focus on consolidating and strengthening the existing groups and take a more strategic approach to establishing new groups. For example, use the OCIS database to establish groups in or considering conversion.
- Develop a closer partnership between the discussion groups and OCW, and formally include them in decision making. The Development Centre Support Officer should keep in regular contact with all discussion groups to ensure groups remain engaged and active
- Develop a closer partnership between the groups themselves, for example through a low cost newsletter to all discussion group members detailing the activities of the individual groups.
- Promote a more ‘action learning approach’ to group work and encourage farmers to experiment with new ideas on their own farms

Support officers

In the past, facilitators played a crucial role in the delivery of OCW services in particular: establishing and running discussion groups; identifying demonstration farm candidates; Organising and publicising demonstration farm events; providing local knowledge and a link to local farming communities generally; promoting OCW’s other (non Farming Connect) activities and services. OCW welcomes the proposal for a network of support officers, linked to the development centres, to take on this role in the next phase. However, there is a need to ensure that all development centres

have access to the services of all support officers so that links into local farming communities can be maintained right across Wales

Development Projects

The role of these projects is to communicate existing knowledge and information, rather than carrying out 'phase 1 research' that takes place on development farms. A total of 19 projects were coordinated by OCW, covering a range of topics across all the key enterprises. They have played an important part in the wider knowledge transfer programme by: addressing key industry problems in a timely manner and on a technically sound basis; Providing robust and accurate data for the development of factsheets and technical guides; Supporting on-farm events, training events and other knowledge transfer activities; Identifying priorities for the sectors and/or future work to be carried out

Recommendations for the future, to be implemented in the medium term, are as follows:

- Include development projects in the next phase of Farming Connect
- Increase the farmer participation at all stages of development and implementation process (proposal development, data collection and collection, drawing conclusions).
- With specific regard to benchmarking:
 - Include another 10 organic farms in FBS data
 - For the dairy sector, work out a collective arrangement for Welsh organic dairy producers with Kingshay

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1. Introduction

1.1 Scope and purpose

This document has been prepared by Organic Centre Wales, on its own initiative, in order to fulfil a number of functions:

- Record the outputs and achievements of advice and knowledge transfer activities for organic farmers and those considering conversion between 2001 and 2007
- Explore how these activities have contributed to the implementation of the Organic Action Plans for Wales
- Inform the future development of advisory and knowledge transfer activities in Wales over the course of the next Rural Development Plan (2007 – 2013)

1.2 Contribution to the organic action plans for Wales

The development of the organic sector has been underpinned by 2 action plans. The first covered the period 1999 – 2005, and the second from 2005 – 2010. The first action plan focussed on increasing the production base, and more specifically the area of land under organic management. It set a target of 10% of all agricultural land in Wales to be organic by 2005. In the second action plan the emphasis changed significantly to include improving the marketing of organic products and the development of consumer understanding and increasing demand. It set a target of 10%-15% of agricultural land in Wales to be organic or in-conversion by the end of 2010, to be reviewed against a number of indicators of sustainable development of the organic market.

Knowledge transfer and advice has a key role to play in attainment of many of the action plan's objectives, and *developing and reviewing the provision of these services to ensure they remain effective and relevant* is an explicit recommendation of the second action plan (Recommendation 43). It also has an important role in *maintaining and promoting high production standards and the integrity of organic products* (Recommendation 48).

Knowledge transfer activities, by providing information on the implications of conversion and support through the conversion period, are clearly central to achieving the increase in the area of organic land mentioned above (Recommendation 1). Other recommendations rely directly or indirectly on this increase, and they include: '*Encouraging the sustainable procurement of organic food*' (Recommendation 8); '*Developing the retail market for Welsh organic produce*' (Recommendation 13); and '*Increasing the use of organic food in the food service and hospitality sector*' (Recommendation 19)

In addition, Recommendation 44 concerns the *resumption and extension of benchmarking*, which to date has been supported, at least in part, by Farming Connect

1.3 Overview of advisory and knowledge transfer services

This review is principally concerned with two main services;

- The Organic Conversion Information Service (OCIS) comprising of the OCW helpline, an information pack and advisory visits
- Farming Connect advisory services and knowledge transfer activities. In this context, 'Advisory Services' include the Farm Business Development Plan, Technical advice and the Environmental Opportunities Review. 'Knowledge transfer' refers to the demonstration and development farm networks, the discussion groups, the programme of training, conferences and seminars and the development projects.

This report assumes a high level of familiarity with these services. For background information, visit www.organic.aber.ac.uk/farmers for OCIS and <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/farmingconnect/> for Farming Connect

2 The Organic Conversion Information Service

2.1 Introduction

The aim of OCIS is to ensure that farmers who chose to convert do so based on a sound understanding of the implications for their farming system. It was first established in October 1996 and is one the longest running publicly funded organic advisory services. In Wales, the service is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and is currently managed by Organic Centre Wales. Previously (Oct 1996 – April 2002¹²) it was managed by ADAS. Under the current arrangements the service is funded until the end of September 2007, after which time the Welsh Assembly Government will put the contract out to tender. Part of the purpose of this review is to feed into that tendering process.

Farmers access the service through a telephone helpline. Following registration, an information pack is sent out, which outlines the general principles of organic systems, some of the key issues that farmers are likely to encounter during conversion and the technical, business and financial support available to farmers during the conversion period. In addition, up to two on-farm information visits are available to discuss the issues pertinent to the particular farm. OCIS was linked to the previous phase of Farming Connect, such that having made the decision to convert, farmers could use the business planning and technical advice services to develop a detailed conversion plan. Arrangements to achieve this under the new RDP are discussed in section 3.6.

2.2 Headline statistics

Since its launch in October 1996, 4087 farmers registered with the service, representing about 17% of the active farming population in Wales (total 23,000). Of those 2462 (about 65%) received first visits and 1280 (31%) received second visits (Table 1). Since May 2002, when OCW took over management of the service, 1233 registrations have been taken, and 790 first and 444 second visits have been delivered.

	Oct '96 – Mar '02	May '02 – Mar '07	Total
Registrations	2854	1233	4087
1 st visits	1672	790	2462
2 nd Visits	836	444	1280

Table 1: Total OCIS registrations and visits delivered

Currently, there is no system in place to ascertain whether individual OCIS clients subsequently convert, although OCW is currently working with the organic certification bodies to achieve this. However, we can get a measure of the proportion based on the uptake of the Organic Farming Scheme. There are currently about 790 OFS agreements either in place or waiting to be being processed, and this represents about 60% of second visits delivered (assuming all applicants used OCIS).

¹ A review of OCIS Delivery this period was carried out by OCW in 2001. Click [here](#) to access report

² For a summary of the OCIS statistics for this period click [here](#)

2.3 Factors affecting uptake of OCIS services

Broadly speaking, the uptake of OCIS services reflects developments in the sector. Figure 1 shows the annual number of registrations from 1996 to the present, highlighting key events that are likely to have had an impact on demand for OCIS. Note that the figures for 2007 represent the uptake to the end of March only, given the current trends, the total for 2007 could exceed that for 2006.

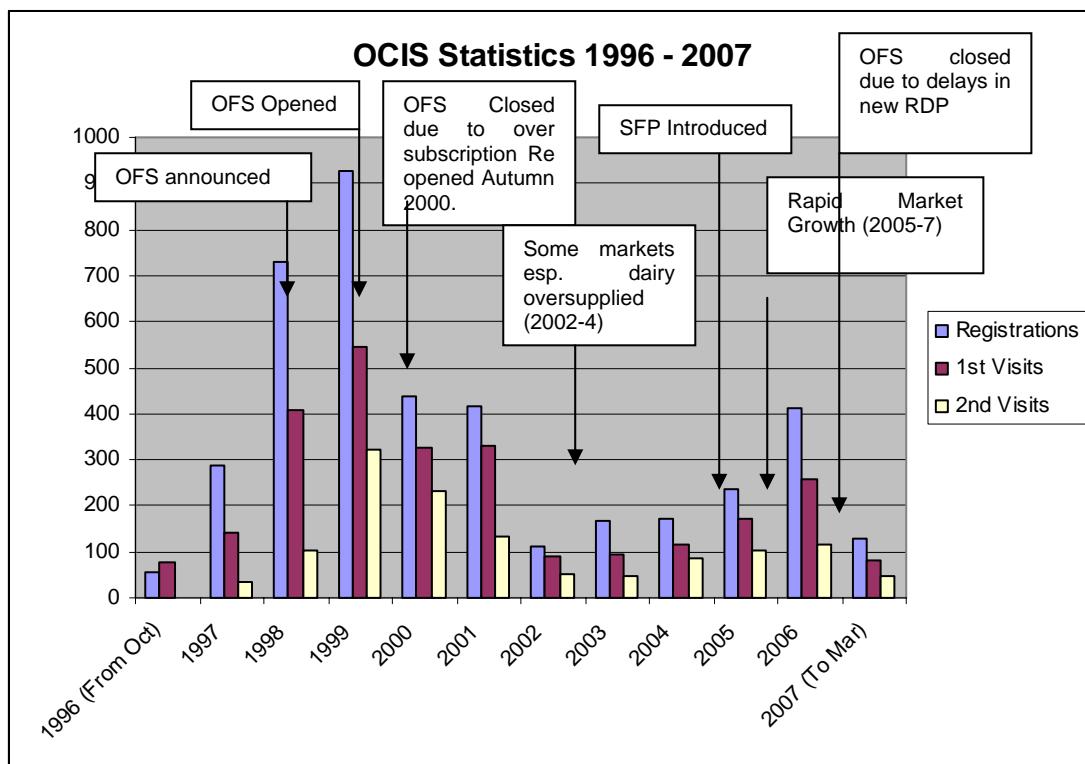


Figure 1: OCIS registrations and visits (1996 – 2007)

Against this background, there is also significant variation in numbers of registrations within the year. Figure 2 shows a detailed breakdown for the years 2005 – 2007, which shows a pattern broadly replicated across the other years. Peaks tend to coincide with the Royal Welsh and Winter Fair shows, where OCW has a good profile and helpline staff are available to discuss issues with producers face to face. Troughs usually occur during spring, mostly related to lambing, sowing and other key operations in the farming year that take priority over more long term strategic thinking. The general growth in the market, and the implications of CAP reform and the Single Farm Payment also contributed to a general increase in interest in the latter half of 2006.

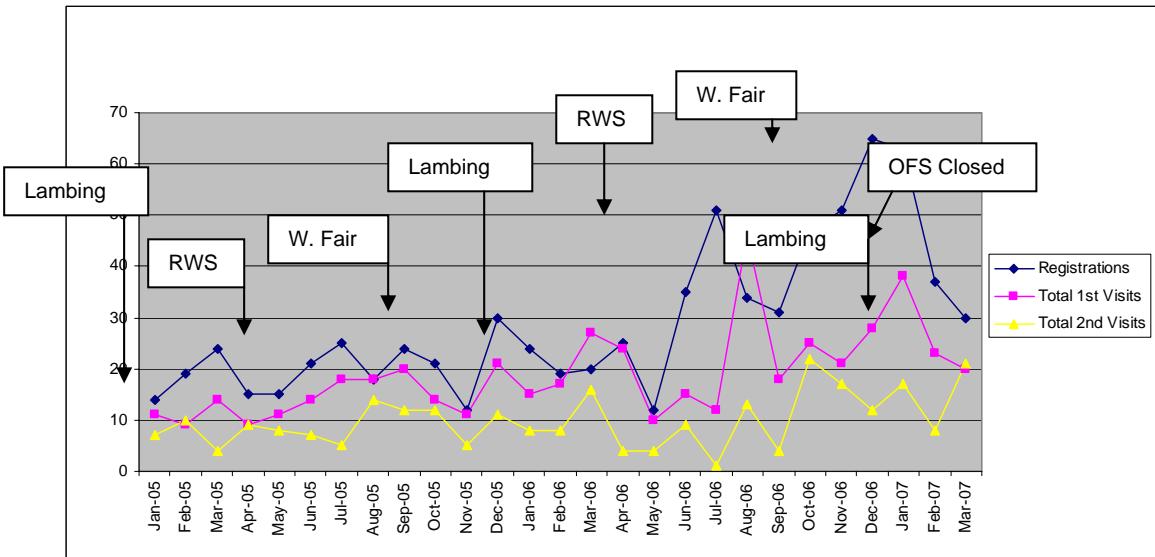


Figure 2: Monthly breakdown of OCIS registrations and visits 2005-2007

2.4 Enterprise Analysis

As one might expect in Wales, livestock enterprises are dominant, with beef and/or sheep accounting for approximately two thirds of registrations, first visits and second visits (Figures 3, 4 & 5 respectively). The two enterprises were run together in the majority of cases, but there were a significant number of sheep only enterprises (approximately 20% of the total) considering conversion. Dairy enquiries follow closely the trend in the dairy market with very few enquiries 2002 – 2004, while the market was in oversupply, and a corresponding increase in interest as the situation improved from 2005 through to the present time.

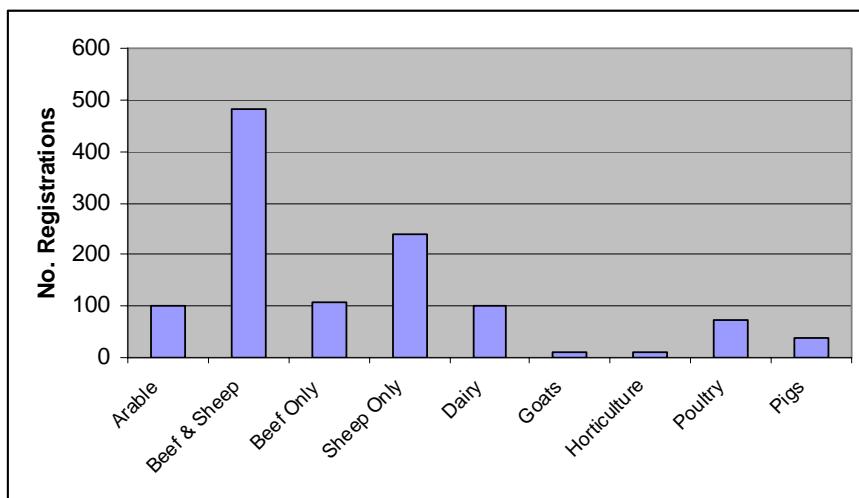


Figure 3: Enterprise breakdown of OCIS registrations, 2002-2007

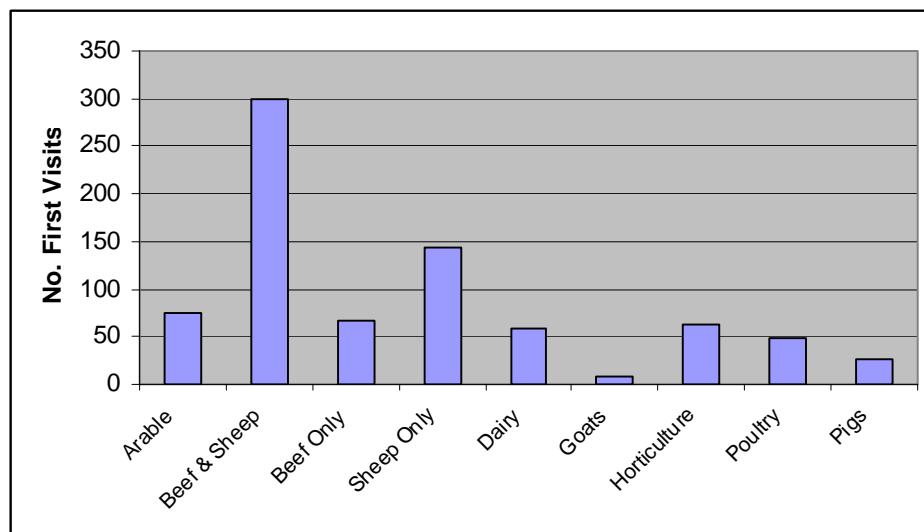


Figure 4: Enterprise breakdown of OCIS first visits, 2002-2007

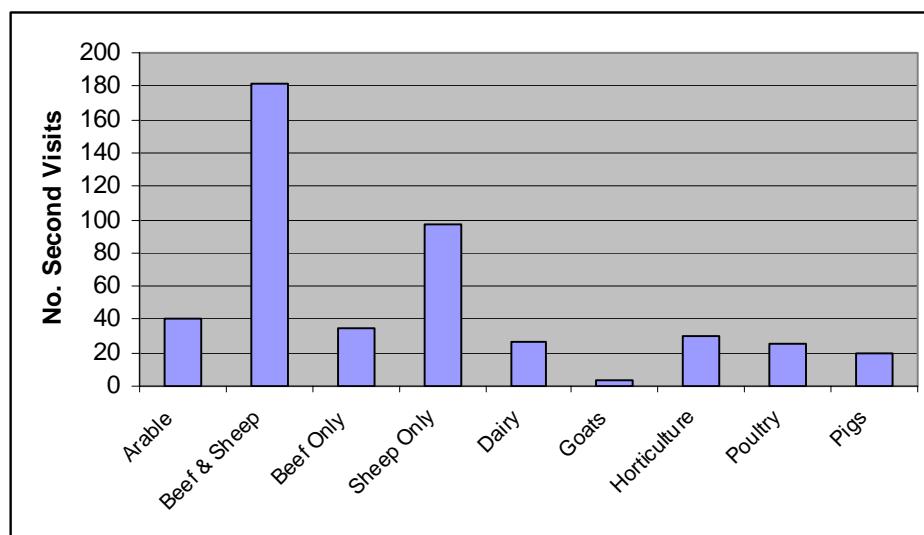


Figure 5: Enterprise breakdown of OCIS second visits, 2002-2007

Overall, approximately two thirds of farmers registering proceeded to the first visit (Table 2) and of those 58 % went on to receive second visits. Those farms with arable enterprises tended to have the highest progression rates, which is encouraging considering the current shortage of organic feed. Sheep only and Beef only farms also had a high rate of progression, which is perhaps surprising given that the standards consider a mix of enterprises to be ideal. One possible explanation is that these farms are sufficiently extensive to avoid some of the problems (such as internal parasites) associated with single enterprise systems. Another possibility is that sheep farmers are bringing in cattle on tack, and vice versa, and this is may not be reflected in the data on which this report is based. Horticultural producers are likely to proceed from registration to a first visit, but less likely to receive second visits. This perhaps reflects the high costs of certification and conversion relative to livestock systems on the one hand and low levels of from the Organic Farming Scheme (due to generally smaller areas) on the other. Proposed changes to the OFS may go some way to addressing the latter issue.

	Registrations	% Reg. to 1 st visits	% 1 st visits to 2 nd visits
All	1243	63	58
Arable	100	74	54
Beef & Sheep	482	62	60
Beef Only	109	61	53
Sheep Only	238	60	68
Dairy	101	58	46
Goats	12	67	38
Horticulture	90	70	48
Poultry	73	66	52
Pigs	38	68	77

Table 2: Progression from registrations through to visits (2002 – 2007)

2.5 Sources of contact

The data on the source of the initial enquiry is patchy, and information was recorded for only 456 (37%) of the 1226 enquiries. From the data available (Figure 6) it is clear that the linkages to other services, in particular Farming Connect, are very important; referrals from the FBDPs, EORs, Facilitators and the Service Centre collectively accounted for just over half the enquiries recorded. A review of OCIS in England, where these services and links are not in place or weak, showed that OCIS struggled to gain the profile with industry in some areas. The one area where the links were not as effective as they could have been was the skills check, which might have been expected to highlight a need for further information for those considering organic conversion. In the event, only one referral to OCIS came through this route.

Other important referral points are the certification bodies and, to a lesser extent, neighbours and friends. The website and the press appear to play a very minor role in raising awareness of OCIS.

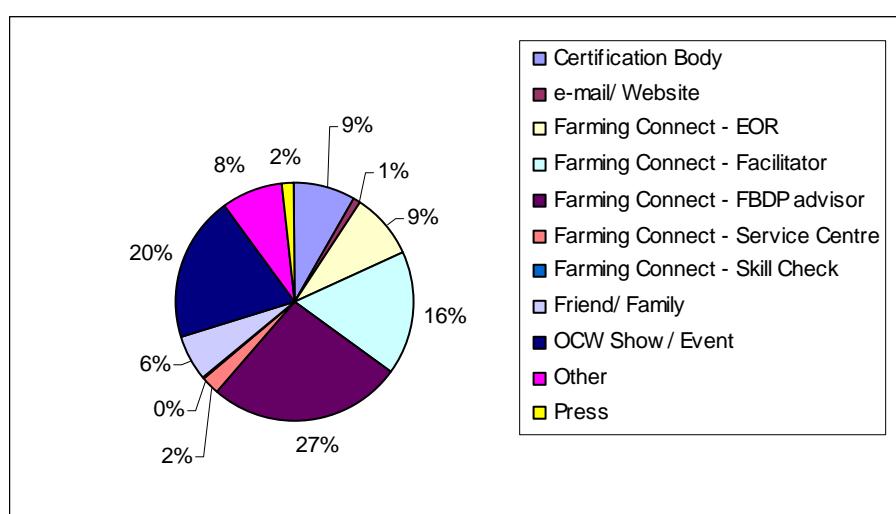


Figure 6: Sources of initial contact

The analysis in Section 2.3 suggests the big shows are important in attracting registrations for the service, but this was not adequately reflected in the data due to poor record keeping. Farmers tend to feel comfortable discussing issues face to face

and, since they are away from the farm, they are not under the same time pressures as they would be normally.

2.5 Effectiveness of OCIS

A small telephone survey (Appendix I) was carried out to assess the effectiveness of the service. 50 farmers were contacted, 10 of whom had received the information pack only, a further 10 who had received the first visit as well and 30 who had received both first and second visits. A total of 29 interviews were secured. Not all farmers answered all questions, and the low number of comments and suggestions for the future direction of the service was disappointing. The results are summarised in Table 3.

Nevertheless, indications from the responses that were obtained were that OCIS has been well received by the industry and overall farmers were satisfied with the service. The information pack and the introductory conversation were also well received. One important issue with regard to the information pack concerned the factsheet on the interaction of the OFS and Tir Gofal. This led some farmers to conclude that the two schemes are incompatible, and some chose not to convert, or even seek further information, as a result. However, the proposed removal of the environmental prescriptions from the new Organic Farming Scheme will address the double funding issue when the scheme reopens. Factsheets detailing the new arrangements will be produced when the scheme is re-launched.

With regard to the issue of whether a group event could replace the first visit, what feedback there was indicated that the first visit should be retained. This was particularly true for farmers who had only received a first visit, and had decided not to convert on the strength of it. They commented that they needed very farm specific information, that could only be effectively delivered by a visit .

Farmers were split about 50- 50 on whether, with hindsight, they would have been willing to pay for the service, but some commented that they would need to be assured of quality before paying out. Previous reviews reached very similar conclusions with regard to both the level of satisfaction and also the willingness to pay.

2.6 Conclusions and recommendations

OCIS has remained fundamentally unchanged in the 10 years or so in which it has been in existence. The organic sector, and the wider farming industry, meanwhile has been through enormous change. A new contract for OCIS will be put out to tender shortly. It is therefore timely to consider some of the options available to modify the service to better meet the needs of the industry, and to link with the next phase of Farming Connect and the Farm Advisory Service.

2.6.1 Information pack

The information pack was generally thought to be useful, but since farmers receiving the pack were in the initial stages of information gathering it is hard for them to critically evaluate it. However, for some it contained sufficient information to arrive at the decision not to convert, and this could be regarded as an indication that it is effective, comments regarding the relationship with Tir Gofal (Section 2.5) notwithstanding.

Aspect	Results																								
Telephone conversation	8 people commented on this aspect, and all said that it was satisfactory. 16 Did not answer																								
Quality of information	Farmers were asked to score the quality of the information pack, 1 st and 2 nd visits 1-5 (1=very poor, 5 – excellent). Results are shown in the graph below.																								
	<table border="1"> <caption>Data from the bar chart showing the number of respondents for each score category across three groups: Information pack Score, 1st visit, and 2nd visit.</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Score</th> <th>Information pack Score</th> <th>1st visit</th> <th>2nd visit</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>8</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>9</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Score	Information pack Score	1st visit	2nd visit	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	2	3	8	6	2	4	9	5	4	5	4	8	9
Score	Information pack Score	1st visit	2nd visit																						
1	0	0	0																						
2	1	1	2																						
3	8	6	2																						
4	9	5	4																						
5	4	8	9																						
Intention to convert, and impact of OCIS on that decision	Of the 27 farmers that answered this question, 12 intended to convert, 11 did not and 4 were still undecided. 9 felt that OCIS had had a high impact, 2 a medium impact and 1 a low impact, and the remainder left the question unanswered																								
Willingness to pay	With the benefit of hindsight, 6 said they would be willing to pay for the service, 7 said they would not and 4 did not know.																								
Future of the service	Very few farmers passed comment on the future direction and structure of the service. There was no support for replacing the 1 st visit with a group workshop, and 4 farmers said a workshop should be included as well as the 1 st visit. The majority left the question unanswered.																								

Table 3: Results of the OCIS survey

The following recommendations are based on the telephone survey and the results of the OCIS England review:

- Following the re-launch of OFS, modify the factsheet on relationships with other agri-environment schemes to reflect the new arrangements
- A one-page certification costs ready reckoner should be devised to make it easy to roughly estimate the cost of organic certification.
- Include more information on marketing and market intelligence. These could take the form of one page summaries of the sector reports that have been recently carried out
- Include financial performance data and other information on the costs of conversion
- Make the pack more enterprise specific. This has become easier to address as the range of technical guides and information available from OCW has increased.

- Seek necessary funding to reintroduce copies of the Organic Farm Management Handbook
- Investigate the production of a CD ROM and/or DVD that to bring all the relevant information together and takes farmers through the key stages of conversion

2.62 First visit

A simple training needs identification exercise, specific to organic conversion, should be carried out as part of the first visit. This can be done within the existing resources and be implemented immediately

All reviews have considered whether a 2-visit approach is the most effective method of delivery, and specifically whether a group workshop should replace the first visit. There are pros and cons for each option. The Workshop approach has the following advantages:

- It enables farmer to exchanges views experience and knowledge.
- It could form the basis of a group who could support each other during the conversion period.
- It would be cheaper (£233 per farmer compared to £353). See Table 4 for details).This assumes 15 participants and a cost of £1,200 per workshop.

However, it also has drawbacks, specifically:

- Farmer opinion, as evidenced from the current survey to date and the two previous reviews, is against it.
- The first visit allowed farmers for whom conversion was clearly not appropriate to identify this early on and withdraw from the service at an early stage. In the absence of a first visit, the uptake of second visits is likely to increase and this will have a knock-on effect on the cost per farmer.
- Group workshops cannot give information in a farm specific context, although most farmers will have given the matter some considerable thought and would come to the workshop with a few key issues specific to their systems.

The other side of the ‘reduced costs’ coin is potential delays in delivery. At present, most visits can be delivered within 4 weeks of the request although this varies depending on the availability of the farmer as much as the advisor. If the geographical spread of participants is reasonably even (which appears to the case at present) at the higher volume this would equate to 1 workshop every 6 weeks in each of the regions of Wales (N, Mid, SE, SW). This would probably be acceptable to most farmers. However at the lower volume, waiting times could be much longer (about 3 months between workshops in each of the regions). Many farmers will be working to specific timetables (e.g. to convert at strategic times of year), and these delays will be unacceptable to these individuals.

On balance, the OCIS management group favours the retention of the 2 visit approach as the most effective way of providing farm specific information in a timely manner. The OCIS England review arrived at a compromise where the first

visit was replaced by attendance at a conversion workshop, on which receiving the follow up would be conditional. Those who found this unsatisfactory could receive the current initial half day visit for a nominal fee of say £50. The fee would be waived if no workshop could be provided within a specified period and distance to travel. This model could also be considered for Wales.

2.63 Second visit

An outline budget should be included to illustrate the financial implications of conversion in broad terms, in addition to the information on the farming system. This is important because all reviews have identified that many farmers have chosen not to convert for 'financial/ economic' reasons but it is unclear on what information this assessment is based. Software developed specifically for conversion planning (Orgplan) has been developed, with DEFRA funding, and could be used in this context to generate appropriate scenarios quickly and easily and without the need for large time inputs from consultants.

Nevertheless, and the scope of the second visit would need to reviewed and modified to accommodate this recommendation.

<i>Option 1: Retain 1st visit</i>	Low volume			High Volume		
	Units	Cost (£)	Total (£)	Units	Cost (£)	Total (£)
Registrations per year	300	35	10500	500	35	17500
Progression to 1st visits	0.63			0.63		
No 1st visits	189	270	51030	315	270	85050
% progression to 2 nd	0.37			0.37		
No. 2nd visits	111	400	44400	185	400	74000
Total			105930			176550
Average/ farmer			353.1			353.1
<i>Option 2 ; Replace 1st visit with workshop</i>						
	Low volume			High Volume		
	Units	Cost (£)	Total (£)	Units	Cost (£)	Total (£)
Registrations per year	300	35	10500	500	35	17500
Progression to WS	0.63			0.63		
No Farmers attending WS	189			315		
No Workshops (15 participants each)	13	1200	15120	21	1200	25200
Progression to 2nd Visits	0.37			0.37		
No. 2nd visits	111	400	44400	185	400	74000
Total			70020			116700
Average/ farmer			233.4			233.4

Table 4. Cost implications of replacing 1st visit with a workshop

2.64 Delivery team

Delivery of OCIS visits should be by a team of advisors that are:

- Accredited
- Based in, or frequently working in, Wales
- The team as a whole should be able to provide services in Welsh, although this will not preclude non Welsh speaking individuals from delivering

3. Farming Connect Advisory Services

In the context of conversion, the FBDP allowed farmers to build up a detailed picture of the financial implications of organic conversion during the conversion period itself and into the first few years of fully certified organic production. The technical advice could be used to build on the information delivered through OCIS to develop an organic farming system, while the EOR and the specialist advice available on nutrient budgeting could be used to look at the environmental, and soil nutrient management issues in detail.

3.1 Farm Business Development Plan Service

A total of 136 farmers requested organic related FBDP (including certified producers and those in or considering conversion). Of these, 64 returned feedback forms to the Welsh Assembly Government, 19 of whom rated the service as excellent, 33 as good, 5 as adequate and 7 as poor. This would indicate that on the whole the service was well received but there were some problems as evidenced by the 7 poor ratings, although the nature of these problems were not clear from the evaluation forms.

3.2 Technical advice

A total of 229 days of organic related technical advice were delivered under the service. The breakdown of advice topics and enterprises is shown in Figures 7 and 8 respectively. In terms of topics, the largest proportion (38%) was conversion related and many were linked to FBDPs. Advice on animal nutrition, conservation (including Tir Gofal and its relationship to the OFS) grassland management and manure management and horticultural production was also frequently requested. Other enquires included housing, improving margins, organic egg production, integrating new land into existing organic systems and general management reviews.

In terms of enterprises, the distribution is very similar that observed for OCIS, and indeed were the same individuals in many cases.

3.3 Environmental Opportunities Review

No figures for EOR delivery were collected for this review. However, since this service was linked to the FBDPs, we can assume that at least an equal number of EORs were delivered.

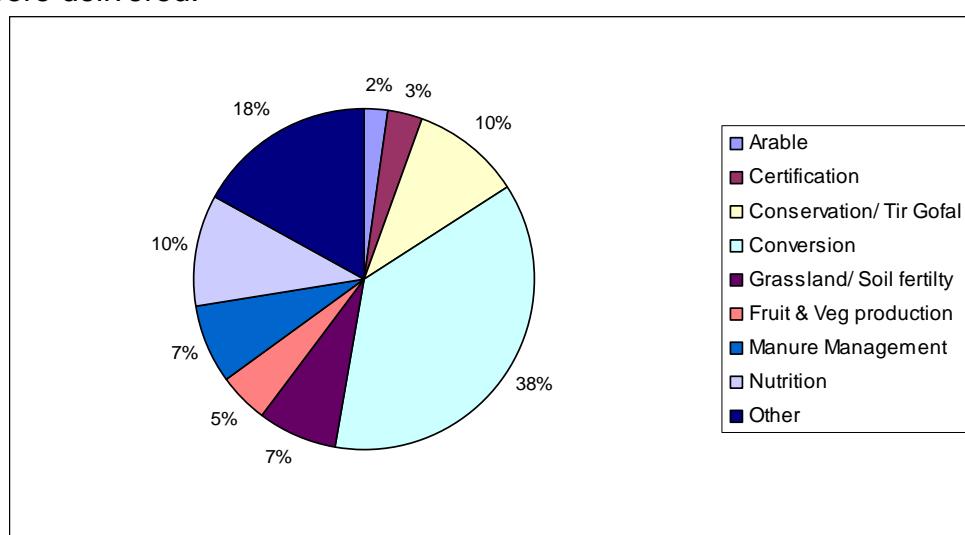


Figure 7: Technical advice delivered by topic (2002- 2007)

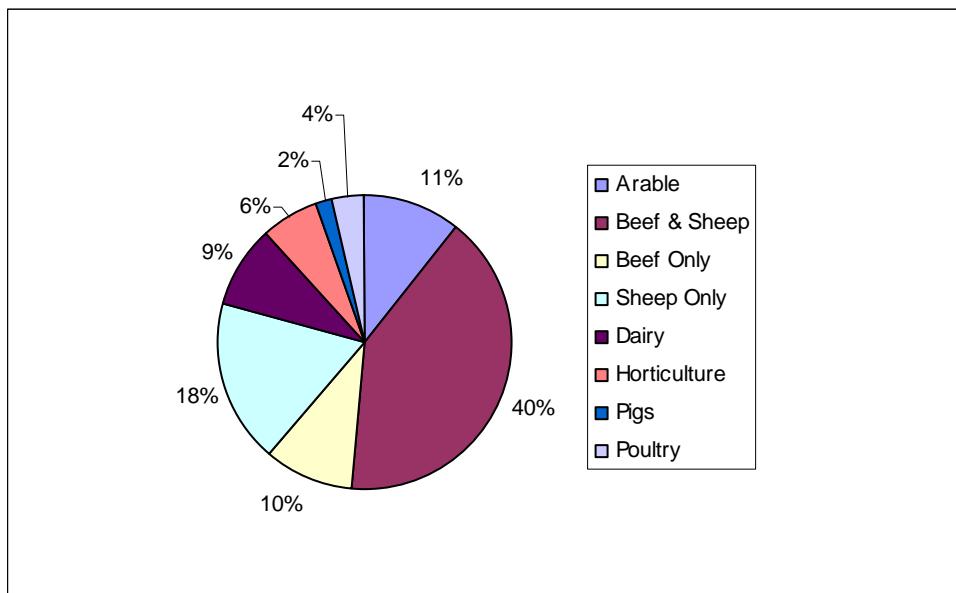


Figure 8: Technical advice delivered by enterprise (2002- 2007)

5.4 Effectiveness of advice delivered

The effectiveness of the advice was assessed by reviewing previous Farming Connect Evaluation documentation, a small telephone survey conducted by OCW and OCW's QA comments on the reports.

Of the 229 technical reports commissioned the majority (86%) were satisfactory and were approved for payment with no further comment. Six were rejected and required substantial revision prior to payment. In two cases, this was because the consultant had insufficient specialist organic knowledge (cases were not referred to OCW and were taken on by non accredited consultants). In future communication between development centres should ensure that all organic related cases are referred to OCW to prevent this. In the other four cases, reports were either not reflective of a day's consultancy or consisted mainly or entirely of non farm-specific, information. Rewrites were required before they were submitted to the regional Farming Connect Executives for payment. Other reports were approved subject to minor modifications. Problem areas included:

- Independence issues, especially with regard to choice of organic certification body, input suppliers and sources of further advice and information.
- Minor inaccuracies/ inconsistencies (errors in OFS support calculation, misinterpretation of some standards)
- Omissions (Lack of detail in rotations, missed opportunities re Tir Gofal)
- Unclear, ambiguous or otherwise poor report writing
- Failure to link effectively with other services (including other Farming Connect services)

3.5 Organic Management Plans and the future of FAS/ Farming Connect

3.51 Structure and Content

With FBDPs, Technical Days and EORS subject to different delivery companies and administration systems, one of the key issues surrounding the delivery of the Farming Connect was the somewhat disconnected nature of the different types of advice provided. This made the task of coordination a difficult one. The new whole planning service, as described in the options paper will go some considerable way to resolving this issue. It will enable a single report to be generated, covering the key areas (Business/ Financial issues, technical issues, animal health and welfare, environment). This is applicable for conventional and organic farms, but there are certain characteristics that make it particularly appropriate for organic systems:

- Organic systems by their nature are more integrated than conventional farms
- Conservation and efficient use of nutrients are at the heart of organic production systems, and careful management is vital to the success of the business. This is in contrast to some conventional systems where manure/slurry is often seen as a waste product and an environmental risk
- Environmental considerations are an integral part of the production system, whereas in some other systems they are treated as entirely separate issues
- Organic farming is more knowledge intensive, and relies heavily on long term strategic planning. Organic farmers have little or no recourse to short term solutions to correct mistakes. It is therefore vital that where changes are made in one part of the system, the impact on the other parts are well understood.
- Positive promotion of good animal health and welfare is fundamental to the system
- Organic conversion can have far reaching implications for all aspects of the business. These can only be fully understood when all parts of system are considered together
- Family support and involvement are vital for the success of conversion. (Organisations involved in rural issues recognise the vital role of farmer health in the success of farm productivity and rural communities^{3 4}, although these are issues relevant to all farms)

The challenge is to build on the basic concept so that for organic farmers it delivers a living management document to assist in the running the farm business and delivering agri-environmental benefits, while meeting the requirements of the organic certification bodies, and the Organic Farming Scheme, Tir Gofal and Tir Cynnal and other schemes. An outline plan is proposed in Appendix II.

In terms of consultancy time, it is estimated that in addition to the 1.5 days of OCIS, 3 days would be required to deliver the detailed planning service and a further 2 for review (Total 6.5). This is a day less than under the previous scheme (1.5 OCIS, 3 FBDP, 2 Technical days and 1 EOR). Time saved by taking a more coordinated approach, greater farmer involvement and better use of existing advisory and

^{3[1]} <http://www.sustainablefarmfamilies.org.au/project.htm>

^{4[2]} <http://www.arcresources.org.uk/rusourcehome.html>

planning tools, including the Orgplan conversion planning software (specialist software developed with DEFRA funding designed to make preparation for Conversion Planning) should help to make up the difference.

3.52 Delivery team

To date organic advice has been delivered by a team of consultants, accredited by OCW. There was sufficient expertise within the team to cover all general beef and sheep enquiries comfortably, but in other sectors resources were sometimes stretched. For instance, up until mid 2006, when an additional dairy advisor was accredited, the dairy sector was covered by a single consultant. The situation was similar for the horticulture, poultry and pig sectors and specialist nutritional advice in particular. In the event, the team was collectively able to deliver on all requests, although there were some delays in delivery. However, in future, when demand could conceivably be much higher (as evidenced by the increase in OCIS registrations) the team may need to be strengthened in these areas. This could be achieved either by bringing in additional advisors to fill specific expertise gaps, and training the existing team to develop new areas of specialisation. Since the consultant base is still fairly narrow for the organic sector, both approaches will likely be required.

To gain accredited status advisors were required to show evidence of:

- Successful completion of a recognised organic training programme
- In-depth regulatory (including standards, animal welfare and relevant agri-environmental regimes), technical knowledge and basic financial knowledge of at least two of the main areas below in an organic farming context:
 - Arable
 - Horticulture
 - Dairy
 - Beef & Sheep
 - Pigs
 - Poultry
 - Grassland
 - Marketing
 - Animal Nutrition – species specific
 - Soil Management and Fertility
 - Nature Conservation
 - Conversion planning
 - Other relevant areas
 - Business Management

In the next phase it is proposed that accreditation is taken on by the Institute of Organic Training and Advice (IOTA), in which OCW is a partner. IOTA is a professional body for advisers to the organic food and farming sector across the UK., established in 2005 It provides accreditation services (based on the original criteria drawn up by OCW for Farming Connect), underpinned by a CPD programme. For more information visit <http://www.organicadvice.org.uk>. In practice this means that consultants will effectively be required to join IOTA. There has in the past been resistance to this from some consultants, mainly because the other Farming Connect Development Centres do not impose similar requirements on advisors, and some work will be required to bring these individuals on board.

OCW will work with IOTA to ensure that the programme is relevant to the services delivered in Wales, which will address the issues concerning advisor quality and CPD raised in the FAS/ Farming Connect Options paper.

3.53 Delivery mechanism

A lead consultant, chosen by the farmer, will be assigned to each case, but he or she should be able to be able to bring in additional specialist input as required. The proposal to widen the advisory team to include veterinary/ animal health planning input and alternative energy expertise is welcome. OCW should invite expressions of interest from vets with a particular interest in delivering to organic farmers.

OCW, for its part, will advise farmers on the content and scope of the individual plans, the most appropriate choice of lead consultant and the need for specialist input. All lead consultants will need to be IOTA accredited, and will deliver the aspects for which he or she is approved. OCW will also require those providing specialist input to be accredited, but accepts that on occasion it may be necessary to bring in others if the expertise cannot be found among the accredited team.

Farmers should be encouraged to take a lead in the preparation of the plans, and a mechanism needs to be developed by which farmers' own plans can be signed off by an accredited advisor.

3.54 Resources

FAS/ Farming Connect will pay for 50% of the costs for up to 5 days of consultancy time, over a period of 5 years, subject to the maximum daily rates. In addition, the new Organic Farming Scheme will provide an £1000 payment on the first hectare of land, which is intended to contribute towards certification, advice and training costs and which could be used to off set the costs of preparation management plans. As discussed in sections 3.51 and 3.54, consultancy time can be reduced to some extent by increased farmer input and more effective use of existing planning tools by advisors

In addition, Lantra will also fund 50% of the cost of approved training courses that could be identified as part of the training needs assessment (see Section 2.63 for details), while the demonstration farms and organic discussion groups, which could further support the plans, will be free to the farmer.

3.6 Links with OCIS

There need for close links between the two services to ensure that converting farmers can access support to prepare detailed conversion plans that build effectively on the information provided through OCIS.

OCW supports a centralised administration system for both services, although it must be able to keep in contact and monitor progress of farmers through system. However, OCIS is an information service linked closely to the Organic Farming Scheme, and plays an analogous role to the Tir Gofal Project Officers in helping farmers prepare for joining the scheme. As such it needs to remain firmly anchored in Axis II, and open to all farmers considering applying for the OFS conversion (i.e. not just those registered with/ eligible for Farming Connect). This could present a problem if the two services were fully integrated.

Also, there is some concern that OCIS will become a very minor part of the over all service, and there is a risk that it will become a low priority within the service if resources become stretched.

4 Knowledge transfer activities

The knowledge transfer activities comprised of:

- The establishment of networks of development and demonstration farms and farmer discussion groups
- The development of a programme of events primarily through the networks detailed above but also a series of seminars, workshops and conferences
- Technical guides for dairy and beef & sheep sectors
- A series of projects undertaken to address priority issues for the different sectors

The programme was rolled out over a period of 5 years. All resources were fully utilised, with a small overspend at the end of the previous phase.

4.1 Development farms

The role of development farms is to communicate recent research and development findings to the industry. There were previously 3 farms in the network: IGER Ty Gwyn, ADAS Pwllpeirian and the Welsh College of Horticulture. A series of events, summarised in Appendix III, were organised covering a range of topics and issues. In addition the work on IGER Ty Gwyn and ADAS Pwllpeirian formed the basis of two technical guides on Organic Dairying and Upland Beef and Sheep Production respectively.

In the short term there is little activity planned on development farms. Cuts in DEFRA research budgets are having a knock on effect on activity on some of the farms and the direction of IGER Ty Gwyn is uncertain, with a merger between UWA and IGER currently underway. However, in medium term OCW sees an important role for this network.

For horticulture, a strategic change direction towards mixed field based systems is being proposed, and has been supported by the Agrifood Partnership Sub-group on Organic Horticulture. This has implications for the development farm network because WCOH, as a specialist horticulture unit based on vegan standards will have a lesser role to play as a development farm, although OCW will continue to collaborate with the College in other arenas. Consideration should be given to including Frongoch, the organic farm at IRS, as a mixed farm model including the establishment of a field vegetable enterprise. As Ty Gwyn may become part of the University farms network, there will also be an opportunity to examine how different farms, systems and enterprises can interact. OCW also explore closer links with other R&D type organisations involved in horticulture such as the HDRA, National Botanical Gardens (where we have already have a track record of successful collaboration) and the Centre of Alternative Technology (CAT)

In the absence of any development farms for the pigs and poultry, consideration needs to be given as to how these sectors can be best served. These could either involve study tours to facilities in England, or the use of Farming Connect funds to bring staff relevant staff across to lead events in Wales.

The development farms are very much focused on Aberystwyth, which has been a centre for organic research development not only Wales but in the UK as a whole.

While most events have been well attended, we need to communicate research results to farmers for whom travelling to the farms is not feasible. IGER had some success with the ‘Dairy road show’ which comprised of a series of events around the country including presentations by IGER research staff. This approach should be extended, and built into a regular programme of events for each of the development farms.

4.2 The demonstration farm network

4.21 Description of network

In contrast to development farms, the Organic Demonstration Farm Network comprised of commercial farms. The farms were used as tools for raising awareness and information transfer of new technologies, providing incentives to change with an opportunity to discuss and solve problems. They tended to be businesses that were either:

- Going through a process of change that could be monitored/observed by a group
- Inspirational to producers, processors or consumers demonstrating the potential of organic management, for example to farmers considering conversion.
- Non-institutional sites for development-phase research, such as variety trials
- Bases for groups of farmers who wish to use farms to look at different issues

Typically, farms remained in the Network for between 2 and 3 years with 3 or 4 events being held on each farm each year. In addition to the core network a number of ‘one off events’ were organised to address specific issues or cover geographical areas not addressed by the core network. These are summarised in Appendix V.

The agenda for the events was ultimately set by OCW, taking into account a number of factors including:

- On farm resources/ activities and the views of the demonstration farmers
- Demand from farmers (communicated for example through the discussion groups, OCW helpline and other events)
- Developments in the standards and certification issues
- Developments in policy and changes in legislation

4.22 Effectiveness of the network

In all, 71 on farm events were held, attended by about 1450 farmers. Attendance was extremely variable. Across the entire network, the average was 20.5 participants per event, but the range was enormous varying from 3 to 119. Most events attracted somewhere between 15 and 25 people. From a knowledge transfer perspective, the ideal group size is somewhere between 15-20 – large enough to stimulate good discussion and lively exchange of ideas and views, but small enough to encourage

active participation of everyone in the group. Logistically, large groups are difficult to handle, and people tend to wander off in small groups, particularly if they find it hard to see or hear the event leader.

An analysis of the evaluation forms for some the key farms in the network (Appendix VI) indicates that demonstration farms are a highly effective knowledge transfer tool. The feedback from these events was overwhelmingly positive, and a very similar pattern was observed across all the farms. The vast majority of forms rated the events 'good' or 'excellent' in terms of organisation, content and information.

Over all, on 59% of all evaluation forms returned, farmers identified something they had gained from the event. 'Pick up' rates varied from farm to farm, (from 36% to 77%). There could be a number of factors affecting this. Some technologies can be implemented on farm fairly quickly and easily, while others are much more complex and have greater lead in times. The nature of the participants themselves is also a key factor; some people are naturally more open to experimenting with new ideas than others. The adoption rates are therefore not necessarily a reflection on the individual farmer, but taken as a whole, they indicate that demonstration events play a very important role in the learning process.

There has also been criticism in the past that the programme has concentrated too much on converting farmers. While nobody disputes that this is an important group, and that they need a lot of support, OCW needs to ensure that they are also serving the long term/ converted farmers. This needs to be reflected in the programme, but also the publicity needs to stress who the target audience is.

Although OCW has worked well with some producer groups there is scope to develop closer relationships, especially in the horticultural sector.

4.23 Future of the network

OCW needs to strike a balance between retaining the successful and active farms on the one hand and moving towards using a wider range of farms less frequently. The latter approach was increasingly adopted toward the end of the current phase and has worked well, particularly for enterprises such as horticulture and poultry which have only been served by one demonstration farm each in the South and East respectively, and enabled us to reach more farmers over a wider geographical area.

However it would be seem unwise to move away from a core network altogether as it is clearly successful, and lends itself well to looking at issues suchas as orgaci conversion. The proposal is to retain the active demonstration farms (Aberhyddnant, Big House and Rhydycriw) and recruit new in-conversion farms. In parallel to these, work on series of subject based events across the length and breadth of Wales.

4.3. Training events, seminars and conferences

4.31 Overview

In addition to the on-farm events, OCW also ran a series of seminars, training events and conferences. Appendix VII summarises activity in this area. In total 49 events were held, attended by 1263 producers. Taken as a whole, the programme covered a range of topics, reflecting key issues of the time, outputs of R&D projects, development of new technologies and annual and enterprise specific conferences.

4.32 Effectiveness of events

These events played a crucial role in supporting the on farm activity. The evaluation form data is more difficult to analyse than for the demonstration farms and discussion groups because the format was not standardised across all events. Figure 9 shows the data that could be reconciled, but is an incomplete picture. However, it indicates that the events were well received and that most farmers found the content and information of the course useful and pitched about right. The various conferences were very well attended, and provided a forum for the exchange of ideas and debate, and to influence the direction of sector at a national (Welsh) level, which hitherto had been lacking.

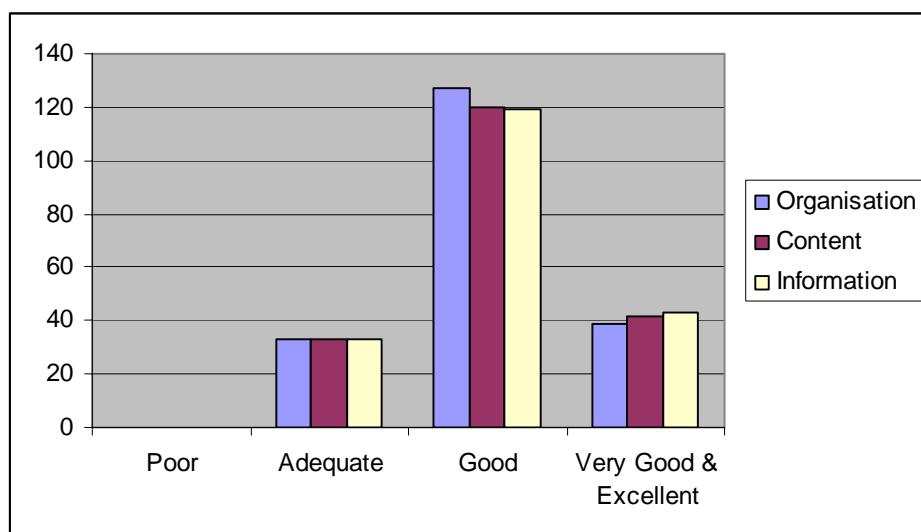


Figure 9: Analysis of evaluation forms from conferences, seminars and workshops

4.33 Future direction

Seminars, conferences and networks are a very important part of our overall knowledge transfer activities. There is clearly a demand for these types of events, and the evaluation forms indicate they are well received by farmers. The OCW conference, in particular, is now well established as an annual event, and should continue to be supported. A series of smaller events should continue to be implemented to address a range industry priorities and to complement our other knowledge transfer work, and the advisory services

4.4 Discussion groups

4.41 The discussion group network

The aim of discussion groups was similar to that of the demonstration farms, that is to enable technology transfer between farmers, researchers and advisors, but the approach was very different. Whereas OCW played a key role in setting the demonstration and development farm agendas, discussion groups are very much farmer led, and OCW's role was more to respond to requests for assistance. OCW provided some financial support (up to £1000 per group per year), which was used to fund a number of activities including speakers, study tours/ farm visits, on farm development work. The facilitator network helped to establish the groups and provided administrative support for the meetings. The groups also provided a vehicle for the development of the organic sector. For instance they fed into the demonstration farm, research priorities and OCW responses to policy consultations.

4.42 Effectiveness of discussion groups

In all 140 discussion group meetings were held, attended by just over 1700 farmers. Appendix VIII summarises activity for the different groups Overall, the network was considered highly effective, and was recognised as such in the FAS/ Farming Connect Options paper. Feed back from discussion group leaders also supports this and it is clearly valued by farmers

The number and structure of the groups was very fluid. As they developed some merged together, while others split into separate groups as different interests developed. Some started up but were not maintained due to lack of interest/ attendance. Increasingly the groups were holding joint activities, adding value to programme by increasing the pool of knowledge and experience. As with demonstration farm events attendance was extremely variable, both between and within groups. The most successful groups have tended to be those with an enthusiastic leader and or facilitator, who was prepared to put in the time and effort to drive the group forward.

However to date, the groups have consistently underspent, and there is a desire to plan activities better to ensure an active programme and better utilisation of funds.

4.43 The future of the network

As pointed out above, the FAS/ Farming Connect Options paper acknowledges that the discussion groups are 'highly effective'. It also proposes that 'Farming Connect should focus on funding technical speakers to existing groups, rather than funding administrative costs'. As identified above, experience suggests that the groups are highly successful precisely *because* administrative support has been provided to them; the most active groups tend to have the most active facilitators attached to them. This role is an important one and needs to be actively taken forward by the Development Centre support staff.

We should seek to consolidate and strengthen the existing groups in the next phase, by developing a greater feeling of partnership between the discussion groups and OCW, and formally include them key decision making processes. The development centre support officer will have an important role in this regard. Another idea is to establish some sort of membership structure, which would facilitate a closer relationship, ensure closer involvement with OCW activities

This does not preclude the establishment of new groups. However, in the past new groups have been formed on a more or less adhoc basis, in the new phase they should be linked more closely to other activities. In particular, OCIS registrations could be used as basis to set up new groups. This would facilitate the running of the conversion related workshops, and help us support these converters more effectively.

There is also scope to link discussion groups together more effectively. The idea of a low cost quarterly newsletter which would be a round up Discussion group activity should be explored and developed.

A great deal of research has been carried out into the effectiveness of various models of knowledge transfer and capacity building. The main conclusion is that farmers learn best by experimenting with new ideas on their own farms, making their own observations and drawing their own conclusions – so called ‘action learning’. This approach has been used successfully in some of the groups, for example asses the effectiveness of biodegradable mulches for weed management, and could be extended.

4.5 Role of Facilitators/ support officers

In the past, facilitators played a crucial role in the delivery of OCW services in particular: establishing and running discussion groups; identifying demonstration farm candidates; Organising and publicising demonstration farm events; providing local knowledge and a link to local farming communities generally; promoting OCW’s other (non Farming Connect) activities and services. OCW welcomes the proposal for a network of support officers, linked to the development centres, to take on this role in the next phase. However, there is a need to ensure that all development centres have access to the services of all support officers so that links into local farming communities can be maintained right across Wales

4.6 Development Projects

In addition to the event based activities Farming Connect funded a series of development projects. Collectively they covered a range of topics across all the key enterprises. Appendix IX summarises the projects undertaken. They have played an important part in the wider knowledge transfer programme by:

- Addressing key industry problems in a timely manner and on a technically sound basis
- Providing robust and accurate data for the development of factsheets and technical guides
- Supporting on-farm events, training events and other knowledge transfer activities
- Identifying priorities for the sectors and/or future work to be carried out

Benchmarking has been identified as one the Assembly’s priorities and to date has been supported through the projects. Indications are that this arrangement is unlikely to continue in the future. It is proposed that future WAG resources should be focused on making benchmarking data available from the FBS. OCW agrees with this in principle, but the current sample sizes (including additional holdings from a Defra funded study) are currently too small to act as a benchmark industry standard. Fifteen would be the desirable minimum for each main farm type, which at present would only be achievable in combination with English holdings. Five is the absolute

minimum publishable sample size. OCW recommends that funding for the inclusion of an additional 10 organic holdings in the Welsh FBS sample be considered (at the normal FBS cost), to match the DEFRA funding, to allow sufficiently large samples. If these were drawn from the existing producer group holdings, it would be possible to still analyse some groups on a producer group basis. However, we also believe there is merit to considering an alternative approach to collecting benchmarking data for dairy farms, which is to work out a collective arrangement for Welsh organic dairy producers with Kingshay (which already benchmarks a significant number of English organic dairy holdings including a monthly costings service). A collective arrangement would reduce costs to producers, and might include a small (minority) element of public funding to act as an incentive to uptake. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these ideas further

5. Summary of conclusions and recommendations

This section brings together the key recommendations from sections 2-4. Short term implementation relates to current contracts (up to March 2008). Medium term recommendations relate to new arrangements that might be implemented in future (from April 2008), for example as part of the new RDP.

5.1 OCIS

- Retain information pack with the following modifications:
 - Include a one-page certification costs ready reckoner to estimate the cost of organic certification (*Short term implementation*).
 - Include summaries of updated market intelligence reports (*Short term implementation*).
 - Include more enterprise specific information (*Short term implementation*).
 - Investigate the production of CD ROM to provide information in a readily accessible format (*Medium term implementation*)
 - Secure funding to include the Organic Farm Management Handbook (*Short term implementation*).
 - Retain the 2 visit structure, but note the need for further debate on this issue as discussed in Section 2.6 (*Medium term implementation*)
 - Include a training needs assessment as part of the first visit specifically in the context of organic conversion (*Short term implementation*)
 - Include an illustrative budget generated by orgplan to illustrate the financial implications of conversion in broad terms. (*Medium term implementation*)
 - Review structure of reports & scope of service to take account of these changes (*Medium term implementation*)
 - The advisory team should consist of accredited advisors who are based, or work regularly in Wales. There should be the capacity within the team to deliver services in Welsh (*Medium term implementation*)
 - Link OCIS services with the FAS/ Farming Connect (see recommendations in 6.3). (*Medium term implementation*)

5.2 Farming Connect Advisory Services

All recommendations to be implemented in the medium term

- Adapt the FAS/ Farming Connect whole farm plan by including organic specific templates, to serve the needs of organic and converting farmers through Organic Management Plans. These would act as a management tool for the farmer and would meet the requirements of the organic certification bodies and agri-environment schemes.
- A lead consultant, chosen by the farmer, should be assigned to each case.
- OCW will advise farmers on the most appropriate choice of lead consultant and the content and scope of the plan.
- Lead consultants need to be able to bring in additional specialist input if required.

- Require all lead consultants, and where possible those providing specialist input, to be accredited by the Institute of Organic training and Advice (IOTA)
- Encourage farmers to take a lead in the preparation of the plans, and develop a mechanism by which farmers' own plans can be signed off by an accredited advisor
- Build in consultancy time to review the plan on a regular basis. Previous plans should be reviewed at the start of whole farm planning process
- Strengthen the advisory team in key areas, including business management, pigs and poultry and animal nutrition.
- Investigate additional funding sources, including using the augmented OFS payment on the first hectare (£1,000) to offset the cost of the plan

5.3 Linking OCIS and FAS/ Farming Connect

- Administration could be centralised, but OCW must be able to keep in contact and monitor progress of farmers through system.
- Full integration is more difficult as OCIS is an information service linked closely to the Organic Farming Scheme and needs to remain firmly anchored in Axis II, and open to all farmers considering applying for the OFS conversion (i.e. not just those registered with/ eligible for Farming Connect).

5.4 Development Farms

All recommendations to be implemented in the medium term

- Continue to develop programme of events to reflect R&D activity at ADAS Pwllperian and IGER Ty Gwyn if re-established as part of the new UWA/ IGER arrangements
- For horticulture, move the focus away from the specialist vegan system at WCOH and consider developing a mixed farming model at Frongoch
- Since the farms are centred on Aberystwyth, organise a series of events where research staff participate in meetings around the country to communicate information to farmers who are unable to travel to the research farms.
- Seek other sources of funding to augment the Farming Connect activity

5.5 Demonstration Farm Events

All recommendations to be implemented in the short term

- Retain the active demonstration farms (Aberhyddnant, big house, Rhydycriw), but switch the focus to a series of 'one off' events. This will enable us to respond to specific issues quickly, serve the more minor sectors better and cover Wales more effectively from a geographical point of view.
- Recruit in-conversion to farms to the network , and link them to the appropriate discussion groups (see recommendations in 6.6)
- Continue to include training events, seminars and conferences in the demonstration farm activity programme
- Ensure the programme adequately caters for the entire sector, and that long term organic farmers are not disadvantaged by a focus on new converters. Identify the target audiences clearly on event publicity
- Where appropriate, develop a road show approach to events as described for the Development Farms

- Work more closely with producer groups in all sector to develop programmes of activity

5.6 Seminars, workshops and conferences

All recommendations to be implemented in the short term

- Continue to develop a programme of seminars, workshops and conferences
- Support the annual conference which is now established as a key event for Welsh organic producers
- Continue to work with producer group to identify key issues and organise events

5.7 Discussion groups

All recommendations to be implemented in the short term

- Focus on consolidating and strengthening the existing groups. Take a more strategic approach to establishing new groups. For example, use the OCIS database to establish groups in or considering conversion.
- Develop a closer partnership between the discussion groups and OCW, and formally include them in decision making. The Development Centre Support Officers should keep in regular contact with all discussion groups to ensure groups remain engaged and active
- Develop a closer partnership between the groups themselves, for example through a low cost newsletter to all discussion group members detailing the activities of the individual groups.
- Promote a more ‘action learning approach’ to group work and encourage farmers to experiment with new ideas on their own farms

5.8 Support officers

All recommendations to be implemented in the medium term

- OCW welcomes the proposal for a network of support officers, linked to the development centres, to take on this role of facilitators in the previous phase
- Ensure that all development centres have access to the services of all support officers so that links into local farming communities can be maintained right across Wales

5.8 Development Projects

All recommendations to be implemented in the medium term

- Include development projects in the next phase of Farming Connect
- Increase the farmer participation at all stages of development and implementation process (proposal development, data collection and analysis, drawing conclusions).
- With specific regard to benchmarking:
 - Include another 10 organic farms in FBS data

- For the dairy sector, work out a collective arrangement for Welsh organic dairy producers with

Appendix I: OCIS Questionnaire

Structure

The questionnaire will take the form of a semi structured telephone interview (10 – 15 minutes). The conversation should cover the key points below, but not necessarily limited to them.

Personal details

1. Confirm information on database

Quality of service

2. Was the initial telephone conversation satisfactory? If not why not and what additional information or advice would you like to have had at this stage?
3. Which elements of the information pack did you find most useful and are there specific areas that the information pack did not cover adequately? Score quality of service 1-5.
4. Was the 1st visit a useful introduction to organic farm management How did you rate the advisor? Was the report satisfactory? Score quality of service 1-5.
5. Was the information in the 2nd visit a) Relevant, b) Comprehensive. How did you rate the advisor? Was the report satisfactory? Score quality of service 1-5.
6. Have you, or are you going to convert? If not, why?
7. How instrumental was OCIS in your decision?
8. Besides OCIS, which, if any, other sources of information and advice on organic farming have you used?
 9. Did you progress through the system at an appropriate rate?
10. On reflection, would you have been prepared to part-pay for the advice that you have received from OCIS?. If so how much; if not why not.

Future of Service

11. Should a group meeting be provided instead of the 1st visit?
12. Should a group meeting be provided as well as the 1st visit?
13. Should an outline financial assessment be a standard part of OCIS?
14. If there was one thing you could change what would that be and why?

Support post OCIS (for those who have or are going to convert)

15. What support do you need and how should it be delivered?

Comprehensive organic management plans

Demonstration and discussion group events

'Classroom' based conversion planning courses/ seminars

Technical guides/ literature (specify) – Hard copy, CD or Web

Combination of some of all of the above

Appendix II: Draft outline of an Organic Management Plan

Aspect		Currently delivery	Future Delivery	Time allocation (Days)
Data Collection	<p>Establish Farm Profile and baseline data including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size • Enterprises (stock numbers, cropping areas etc) • Farm Resources (Buildings, machinery, labour etc) • Participation in Agri-environment Schemes • Organic Status (Certified, In conversion, Conventional) 	FC Service Centre	Make better use of farmer time. Information collated by Service Centre/ Coordinator	(1 Hr/ Farmer)
Business Stock take	<p>Summary of current financial position, and explore farmer/ family objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives • Profit and loss • Balance sheet • Enterprise performance • SWOT 	FBDP Business Stock take	FC	1.5
Business Development Plan	Explore future directions for the business, and the impact on:	FBDP Core business plan	FC	1.5
Marketing Plan	<p>Develop marketing strategy to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market research • Marketing channels (Direct, multiples, independent) • Potential outlets • Analysis of strengths and weaknesses 	Principally farmers' own time. Previously some support under FEGs	Farmers' own time.	2
Technical Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil management • Livestock management (stocking rates, housing, grazing policies etc) • Grassland/ crop management (Fertility building, rotations, etc) • Manure management • Pest & disease management • Organic Conversion strategy and timetable (for farmers considering conversion) 	Technical Advice Days OCIS (farmers considering conversion)	FC OCIS(?)	2

Animal health and welfare	Develop plan in conjunction with vet including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish baseline information and identification of problemsTargets for improvementDevelopment of a strategy for improvementCollection of data for monitoringReview and evaluate at least annually to identify if target achieved – set new targets and devise new strategies for continual improvement.	Farmers' own time	Farmers' own time	2 days (Plus daily monitoring)
Resource management	Develop management plans in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">NutrientsWaterEnergy	EOR Specialist days Tir Cynnal management plan	Tir Cynnal, Other Axis II funding?	1
Environment issues, including preparation of a conservation plan (required by organic standards)	Identify environmental resources, risks and opportunities on the farm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify habitatsIdentify risks and actions to minimise themIdentify opportunities for enhancement of environmental resourcesIdentify relevant aspects of organic standards and OFS agreementsInvestigate Tir Cynnal or Tir Gofal options. Examine the implications of running agri-environmental agreements togetherWaste management (plastics etc.)	EOR OCIS (Farmers considering conversion)	Other Axis II funding?	1
Family and Social Issues	This will not be a 'stand alone' section, but the following considerations should be taking into account when preparing the other sections of the plan <ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased focus on farmer and family objectivesIdentify family members, family's stage in the 'family cycle'.Family considerations. (e.g. Farmers with small children, in particular will want to spend some time with them)Child care issuesHolidaysIdentify whether the farmer/ family has off farm employment, and how this impacts on the farm system in terms of time/ labour availableSuccession issues / planning			
Review of plan	Take into account changes e.g. stocking rates, input prices, market prices etc	Not funded	FAS	1 (annually)

Appendix III: Development Farm Events, 2002 – 2007

	No. Events	Enterprise	Events	Total No. Attendees
ADAS Pwllperian	7	Beef & Sheep	Effective Sheep Parasite Control; Animal health; Livestock & the landscape Alternative crops; Propagating hedgerow trees; Technical guide: Organic Beef & Sheep production in the Uplands (Draws heavily on the work at ADAS Pwllperian, with supporting data on financial performance of the sector and farmer case studies)	195
IGER Ty Gwyn	9	Dairy	Viable Solutions for organic dairying; maximising milk from forage, oats (17 th Oct 2002). Technical guide Organic Dairy Farming (Draws heavily on the work at IGER Ty Gwyn, with supporting data on financial performance of the sector and farmer case studies).	283
Welsh College of Horticulture	2	Horticulture	Conference 'Is there a Future?'; Seed and variety issues for horticultural crops	53
Total	18			531

Appendix IV: Demonstration Farm Events, 2002 - 2007

Farm & Location	No. Events	Enterprise	Events	No. Attendees
Aberhyddnant, Brecon Powys	8	Beef & Sheep	Silage Options; Post Harvest Meeting; Winter Feeds; Minerals; Diets for Beef and Sheep; Crimping; Composting manure	155
Big House Farm, Pendine, Carmarthenshire	5	Dairy	March Milk; Working smarter not harder; Dry cow management; Slurry spreading; Dairying and money in the bank	92
Cannon Farm, Welshpool	8	Beef & Sheep	Arable Cropping Options; Environment and the consumer; Cereal Harvest; Cross compliance & feeding (Beef & Dairy); Practical conservation; introduction to organic farming; breeding and performance recorded rams;	165
Great House Farm, Usk, Monmouthshire	3	Poultry (eggs)	Organic Egg Production; Adding value to organic egg products; Establishing a commercial egg enterprise	53
Groes Bach, Denbighshire	5	Dairy, Beef	Cereals, Slurry and CAP Reform, Balancing enterprises on mixed organic farms; costs/benchmarking; YFC meeting; Animal health;	180
Maesterran, Machynlleth	1	Beef and Sheep	Grassland management/ Organic Beef & Sheep production and marketing	119
Penpont, Brecon	10	Horticulture	Management of high value crops; Marketing; Meeting the demands of market and soil; Crop covers & mulches; Managing Pests & Diseases; Soil Fertility; Plant raising; Protected cropping; Horticulture & the environment	156
Porth Amel, Anglesey	5	Beef, sheep, poultry (eggs) horticulture	Practical conservation; local marketing; organic egg production; Horticulture- Seeds and weeds; pre-lambing/ calving management	108
Rhydycriw, Tywyn	2	Beef & Sheep	Arable rotations; Crimping	17
Slade Farm,	9	Beef & Sheep	Homoeopathy; Clovers & grass; Spring cereals; Protein Crops; Winter housing and feeding; Managing OFS and Tir Gofal agreements	131
Total	56			1166

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Total	56			1166

Appendix V: Other On-farm Events 2002- 2007

	No. Events	Enterprise	Events	Total No. Attendees
Nant Clyd, Aberystwyth	1	Poultry, Horticulture Sheep	Organic egg production in mixed farming	30
S & J Organics, Llanpumpsaint	1	Poultry (Meat)	Production, processing and marketing of organic poultry (Meat)	51
Aran Lamb, Cwmonnen	1	Sheep	Production and processing of organic mountain lamb	30
Penrhiew	2	Pigs	Organic Pig Farming	22
Painscastle	2		Composting; Organic conversion	48
Rhoslefain	1	Beef & Sheep	Organic conversion	25
Mentroluest	1	Horticulture	Leek and potato variety trials	8
Primrose Farm	2	Horticulture	Biodiversity in Horticultural systems; Sustainable energy use	10
Rogerston	2	Arable, Beef, Sheep	Minimum tillage; Rotation Planning	28
Steynton Farm	2	Dairy	Organic conversion	31
Total	15			283

Appendix VI: Analysis of on-farm event evaluation forms

Farm	No Forms	Content and organisation scores	New ideas implemented																				
Aberhyddnant,	36	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good & Excellent</td> <td>27</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	0	0	0	Adequate	0	0	2	Good	4	4	2	Very Good & Excellent	27	27	28	17 (47%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	0	0	0																				
Adequate	0	0	2																				
Good	4	4	2																				
Very Good & Excellent	27	27	28																				
Big House	37	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>9</td> <td>9</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Excellent</td> <td>27</td> <td>27</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	0	0	0	Adequate	1	0	2	Good	9	9	8	Excellent	27	27	27	26 (70%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	0	0	0																				
Adequate	1	0	2																				
Good	9	9	8																				
Excellent	27	27	27																				
Cannon Farm	67	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>17</td> <td>19</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good & Excellent</td> <td>48</td> <td>48</td> <td>48</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	0	0	0	Adequate	1	1	1	Good	17	19	18	Very Good & Excellent	48	48	48	44 (59%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	0	0	0																				
Adequate	1	1	1																				
Good	17	19	18																				
Very Good & Excellent	48	48	48																				
Great House Farm	18	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>3</td> <td>0</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Excellent</td> <td>12</td> <td>15</td> <td>12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	0	0	0	Adequate	0	0	0	Good	3	0	3	Excellent	12	15	12	14 (77%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	0	0	0																				
Adequate	0	0	0																				
Good	3	0	3																				
Excellent	12	15	12																				

Farm	No Forms	Content and organisation scores	New ideas implemented																				
Groes Bach	49	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>45</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>8</td> <td>12</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good & Excellent</td> <td>42</td> <td>37</td> <td>34</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	45	0	0	Adequate	0	0	0	Good	8	12	14	Very Good & Excellent	42	37	34	27 (55%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	45	0	0																				
Adequate	0	0	0																				
Good	8	12	14																				
Very Good & Excellent	42	37	34																				
Maesterran	56	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>35</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>20</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good & Excellent</td> <td>32</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	35	0	0	Adequate	2	0	1	Good	20	5	4	Very Good & Excellent	32	3	3	3 (5%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	35	0	0																				
Adequate	2	0	1																				
Good	20	5	4																				
Very Good & Excellent	32	3	3																				
Penpont,	86	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>60</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>16</td> <td>28</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good & Excellent</td> <td>52</td> <td>46</td> <td>47</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	60	0	0	Adequate	2	1	1	Good	16	28	27	Very Good & Excellent	52	46	47	60 (70%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	60	0	0																				
Adequate	2	1	1																				
Good	16	28	27																				
Very Good & Excellent	52	46	47																				
Porth Amel,	57	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>40</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>14</td> <td>11</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good & Excellent</td> <td>35</td> <td>34</td> <td>32</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	40	0	0	Adequate	3	5	4	Good	14	11	13	Very Good & Excellent	35	34	32	29 (51%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	40	0	0																				
Adequate	3	5	4																				
Good	14	11	13																				
Very Good & Excellent	35	34	32																				

Slade Farm,	91	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>10</td> <td>15</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good & Excellent</td> <td>57</td> <td>52</td> <td>45</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	0	0	0	Adequate	2	1	1	Good	10	15	22	Very Good & Excellent	57	52	45	33 (36%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	0	0	0																				
Adequate	2	1	1																				
Good	10	15	22																				
Very Good & Excellent	57	52	45																				
Other on farm events	76	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Content</th> <th>Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adequate</td> <td>0</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>27</td> <td>23</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Excellent</td> <td>56</td> <td>59</td> <td>57</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Organisation	Content	Information	Poor	0	0	0	Adequate	0	3	2	Good	27	23	25	Excellent	56	59	57	42 (55%)
Category	Organisation	Content	Information																				
Poor	0	0	0																				
Adequate	0	3	2																				
Good	27	23	25																				
Excellent	56	59	57																				
TOTAL	573		295 (51%)																				

Appendix VII: Workshops, seminars and conferences, 2002- 2007

Workshop	No Events	Description	No. Attendees
Horticultural producer workshops	8	Pest & disease and soil management, soil fertility, composting CSA Horticulture	153
Consultants Training Day	5	Use of Organic Conversion planning software; understanding Organic Farm Business	7
Red Meat Seminars	3	Workshops for processors and producers	77
Organic One stop shops	7	Events for producers considering conversion involving key organisations in the sector	80
CPD for vets	2	Workshops to raise organic awareness of approaches and issues specific to the organic sector	22
Animal health	3	General health issues; parasitology courses; animal health planning	64
Conversion Planning Plus	4	Workshops linked to OCIS to support farmers in conversion	41
OCW annual conferences	4	Themed national event for organic producers. Key topics included; 'Organic Farming - More Farmer friendly?'; Future of the sector; Organic Farming post CAP reform; Empowering Producers'	608
Nutrition workshops	3	Surgeries for organic livestock farmers on nutrition issues and the challenges of feeding 100% Organic Diets	12
Study tour (dairy beef & sheep);	2	Joint tour with Cornish Cornish group to visit range of organic beef and sheep farms in W. England	27
Renewable energy roadshow events	4	Series of events based on ADAS/ CALU information on renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency	86
Dairy conference	1	Conference held for organic dairy farmer at Aberystwyth	64
Benchmarking	3	Evening events to raise awareness of the importance of financial benchmarking	79
Total	49		1262

Appendix VIII: Organic discussion group meetings, 2002 - 2007

Group	No. Events	Enterprise	Topics	Total No. Attendees
Cambrian Organics– South	6	B&S	Forage and Feed Quality; Internal parasite management (including FecPak); Forage, diets & beef quality; Minerals & trace elements; Inward investment priorities	77
Cambrian Organics– North	9	B&S	Animal Health Plans; Composting; Internal parasite management (including FecPak); Silage; Organic potato varieties; Visit to Food Centre Wales (Horeb)	97
Clettwr Growers	8		Co-operative marketing; Protected cropping; Soil fertility; Grants for Growers; Value added processing; Water cress production; Visit to Food Centre Wales (Horeb)	48
Graig Farm East Powys	3	B&S	Farm IT; Livestock health plans; Worm control	62
Graig Farm South Powys	2		Farm IT, Benchmarking	16
Graig Farm North Powys	4		Ethical Banking; Crimping cereals; Electronic identification	49
Graig Farm North Wales	2		Farm IT; benchmarking	28
Graig Farm South West	3		Science with nature; Electronic identification	58
Graig Farm South Wales	1		Grading lambs	5
Llanidloes	1	Horticulture	Seed and variety trials/ issues	18
Pembrokeshire Organic Group	42		Growing protein; Organic egg production; CAP Reform; Ethical banking; Dairy processing; CAP Reform; Saw Mill visit; Farm IT; Cereals, pulses 7 animal feeds; Composting/recycling; Silage clinic; Renewable Energy; Permaculture; Worm control; Managing TB; Organic standards & certification; Renewable energy; Sustainable building; Organic horticultural production; Agritourism; hemp production	351
Nags Head	8		CAP Reform; Animal Health; Protein crops; Nutrition; Herbage Seed Project; Whole crop silage; Renewable energy; Succession Planning; slurry;	116

Group	No. Events	Enterprise	Topics	Total No. Attendees
NW Growers	5	Horticulture	Composting; Seed and variety trials/ issues; Soil Fertility; Marketing; Growing your Business; poly tunnels;	79
Welsh Black	6	Beef & Sheep	Feeds; Marketing; Organic Farming Scheme updates	185
Monmouth Organic	17	Beef Sheep, Dairy	Trace Elements; CAP Reform; Weeds in Root crops; Crop rotation; Internal parasite control; winter vegetable production; homeopathy; Animal handling	303
Chirk Organic group	5	Dairy	Homoeopathy for Dairy; Cross Compliance and environmental issues; Managing high yielding cattle; Mastitis	47
Llanerchaeron	4	Dairy	Nutrition; Feed regulations; Establishing a buying group	28
Bro Dyfi	12	Beef & Sheep	Internal parasite management (including FecPak); Rationing & feed regulations; Alternative crops; Animal Health Plans; Grassland management; Finishing lambs on chicory; Cooperative marketing; Arable Silage & Silage analysis	114
Livestock marketing	2	Beef & Sheep	Benchmarking	33
Total	140			1714

Appendix IX: Development projects 2002- 2007

Project	Authors
Organic tree propagation under Welsh nursery conditions March, 2007	David Frost & Aldwyn Clarke ADAS Pwllpeiran
Alternative forage crops for finishing lambs, 2007.	Dr Barbara McLean, ADAS Pwllpeiran
Livestock breeds and organic farming systems, 2007.	Pauline van Diepen, Barbara McLean & David Frost, ADAS Pwllpeiran
Fit for the Future- Environmental benchmarking, 2007	Sue Fowler, Organic Centre Wales
Quality of organic plant propagation media, 2007	Tony Little, Organic Centre Wales
The use of composted woodchip as a substrate for growing varieties of edible mushrooms, 2006	David Frost & Aldwyn Clarke, ADAS Wales
Organic Horticultural Seed in Wales: A survey of varieties grown from organic seed (2003 - 2006)	Tony Little, Organic Centre Wales
Controlling ectoparasites on Welsh organic sheep farms.	Barbara McLean & David Frost, ADAS Pwllpeiran
Improving market intelligence for organic dairy production in Wales, 2003	Jake Hancock and Rob Haward, Soil Association
100% organic livestock feeds - preparing for 2005, 2003	Jake Hancock, Soil Association; Richard Weller & Heather McCalman, IGER
Improving market intelligence for organic red meat in Wales, 2003, updated 2007	Anna Bassett, Soil Association, 2003
Organic red meat development in Wales, 2003	Anna Bassett, Soil Association 2003
Improving knowledge of pest and weed control in organic crop production in Wales, 2003	David Frost, ADAS Pwllpeiran, 2003
Improving market intelligence for organic horticulture in Wales, 2004	Rob Haward & Michael Green, Soil Association
Organic horticultural seed trials in Wales , 2004	Paul Robertshaw, Welsh College of Horticulture & Roger Hitchings, Organic Centre Wales
Ultraviolet blocking greenhouse polythene covers for insect pest control on organic crops, 2004	Leigh Morris, Welsh College of Horticulture,
Improving the availability of organic forage seed (interim report), 2004.	Athole Marshall & Heather McCalman, IGER
Potato blight (<i>Phytophthora infestans</i>) field demonstrations, 2004.	David Frost, ADAS Wales
Developments in pest control for organic crop production in Wales, 2003	David Frost, ADAS Wales