



SID 5 Research Project Final Report

● **Note**

In line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Defra aims to place the results of its completed research projects in the public domain wherever possible. The SID 5 (Research Project Final Report) is designed to capture the information on the results and outputs of Defra-funded research in a format that is easily publishable through the Defra website. A SID 5 must be completed for all projects.

A SID 5A form must be completed where a project is paid on a monthly basis or against quarterly invoices. No SID 5A is required where payments are made at milestone points. When a SID 5A is required, no SID 5 form will be accepted without the accompanying SID 5A.

- This form is in Word format and the boxes may be expanded or reduced, as appropriate.

● **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

The information collected on this form will be stored electronically and may be sent to any part of Defra, or to individual researchers or organisations outside Defra for the purposes of reviewing the project. Defra may also disclose the information to any outside organisation acting as an agent authorised by Defra to process final research reports on its behalf. Defra intends to publish this form on its website, unless there are strong reasons not to, which fully comply with exemptions under the Environmental Information Regulations or the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Defra may be required to release information, including personal data and commercial information, on request under the Environmental Information Regulations or the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, Defra will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality or act in contravention of its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998. Defra or its appointed agents may use the name, address or other details on your form to contact you in connection with occasional customer research aimed at improving the processes through which Defra works with its contractors.

Project identification

1. Defra Project code
2. Project title
3. Contractor organisation(s)
4. Total Defra project costs
5. Project: start date
end date

6. It is Defra's intention to publish this form.

Please confirm your agreement to do so..... YES ☒ NO ☐

- (a) When preparing SID 5s contractors should bear in mind that Defra intends that they be made public. They should be written in a clear and concise manner and represent a full account of the research project which someone not closely associated with the project can follow.

Defra recognises that in a small minority of cases there may be information, such as intellectual property or commercially confidential data, used in or generated by the research project, which should not be disclosed. In these cases, such information should be detailed in a separate annex (not to be published) so that the SID 5 can be placed in the public domain. Where it is impossible to complete the Final Report without including references to any sensitive or confidential data, the information should be included and section (b) completed. NB: only in exceptional circumstances will Defra expect contractors to give a "No" answer.

In all cases, reasons for withholding information must be fully in line with exemptions under the Environmental Information Regulations or the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

- (b) If you have answered NO, please explain why the Final report should not be released into public domain

Executive Summary

7. The executive summary must not exceed 2 sides in total of A4 and should be understandable to the intelligent non-scientist. It should cover the main objectives, methods and findings of the research, together with any other significant events and options for new work.

This project successfully set up a web site called COSI (Centre for Organic Seed Information) address: www.COSI.org.uk

The research collated information from seed companies and organic seed producers on the availability of organic seed of cereals, field vegetables and potatoes. A link was established with the European OrganicXseeds website which maintains an up-to-date list of organic seed availability of varieties of field vegetable, cereals and potatoes within the EU.

The project funded the collection of both organic and conventional performance data for the varieties listed as available as organic seed.

In addition, the site included the following areas:

- ☐ Latest news of interest to organic growers
- ☐ Information on organic standards
- ☐ An organic discussion forum
- ☐ Organic grower survey results

Project Report to Defra

8. As a guide this report should be no longer than 20 sides of A4. This report is to provide Defra with details of the outputs of the research project for internal purposes; to meet the terms of the contract; and to allow Defra to publish details of the outputs to meet Environmental Information Regulation or Freedom of Information obligations. This short report to Defra does not preclude contractors from also seeking to publish a full, formal scientific report/paper in an appropriate scientific or other journal/publication. Indeed, Defra actively encourages such publications as part of the contract terms. The report to Defra should include:
- the scientific objectives as set out in the contract;
 - the extent to which the objectives set out in the contract have been met;
 - details of methods used and the results obtained, including statistical analysis (if appropriate);
 - a discussion of the results and their reliability;
 - the main implications of the findings;
 - possible future work; and
 - any action resulting from the research (e.g. IP, Knowledge Transfer).

The Scientific Objectives

1. *To request and collate information from seed companies and organic sector certification bodies throughout the EU on the production of organic seed.*
Regular Organic Seed Working Group meetings were held throughout this period and information on EU regulations and techniques of organic seed production discussed and minuted on COSI.
2. *To produce an up-to-date list of organic seed availability of varieties of field vegetable, cereals and potatoes within the EU. Where possible the list will provide an indication of seed quantity as well as variety availability.*
Contact was made with all seed companies and lists compiled of varieties available as organic seed. Over 1000 varieties were eventually added to the European OrganicXseeds database.
3. *Establish an effective communication system linking the seed industry, organic growers, UKROFS and certification bodies.*
COSI web site was set up with the capability of exchanging information on organic topics and keeping abreast of legislation changes.
4. *Where possible to provide an indication of the suitability of the varieties listed for UK growing and marketing. Where UK tests have not been carried out a comparison with known controls will be made.*
The COSI database lists comprehensive results for organic variety trial data carried out by NIAB, HDRA, Elm Farm and other centres. In addition, data for organic or conventional trial performance has been added for all varieties where information is available.

The extent to which the objectives have been met.

The COSI web site was created and launched in 2001 and the objectives have been fully met.

Methods used

Consultation with all interested representatives was carried out by post, telephone and twice-yearly meetings with each crop sector. Regular updates and progress reports were given at NIAB, HDRA and Soil Association open days and committee meetings. The web site was developed by Soil Association IT specialists.

Results

Several seed companies attempted organic seed production and most varieties produced were listed on the COSI/OrganicXseeds web sites. Some seed companies were discouraged by the extension of the derogation allowance of EU Regulation 2092/91 which meant that untreated conventional seed could still be used for vegetable crops.

Access to lists of varieties available as organic seed through COSI and OrganicXseeds has been successful but seed companies were unwilling to list quantities of seed available. However a "red/green traffic light" system was set up to indicate whether seed is currently available and for vegetables the option of listing as "available in small packets only" is available.

The Discussion forum was set up and used to some extent but usage should increase in time.
Every variety listed has been researched to enable organic and conventional performance data to be added.
All known organic trial results have been added.

Implications

The web site has been successfully established and support is growing with time.

Possible future work

Maintain support for the site especially the time consuming addition of performance data for each variety.

References to published material

9. This section should be used to record links (hypertext links where possible) or references to other published material generated by, or relating to this project.

Web sites:

Centre for Organic Seed Information (COSI) www.COSI.org.uk

OrganicXseeds: www.organicxseeds.com