

GUIDANCE NOTE: Conversion Options for Dairy Enterprise

Organic management of a dairy enterprise requires special consideration. In the first instance see SOPA Standard 3.2.1. If you are establishing a new dairy enterprise for the first time, please discuss the details in advance with your Certification Officer before any steps are taken to set up this new enterprise.

OPTION 1 - Standard Conversion Fast Track (6-month organic management of dairy animals prior to land completes its conversion)

First Year In-conversion (C1) for the whole farm	Second Year In-Conversion (C2)	Fully Organic
1 st June 2020 – 31 st May 2021	1 st June 2021 – 31 st May 2022	1 st June 2022 Onwards
<p>All aspects of land, grass & crop management must be in keeping with the organic standards e.g. cropping, field inputs, seed.</p> <p>Livestock e.g. cows, store cattle, ewes do not have to be managed in accordance to the full organic standards yet. Although any feedstuffs used must be non-GMO & documentation available to support this. Avermectins should also be avoid as a vet/med treatment. The conversion period should be used as a transition period to gear stock up to organic management to avoid sudden changes when full organic management methods must be employed.</p> <p>Crops & forage grown in the first year of conversion can be used to feed own livestock. However, if any C1 crops are sold off farm in this time period will need to be sold as non-organic.</p>	<p>All aspects of land, grass & crop management must be in keeping with the organic standards.</p> <p><u>Dairy Cows & Heifer Replacements</u> From 1st Dec 2021 (6 months prior to completing two-year conversion period of land) all aspects of management must be in keeping with the organic standards e.g. feeding given must be organically certified or home produced in-conversion feedstuffs and all vet/med use must comply to the organic standards.</p> <p><u>Beef & Sheep Enterprises</u> All other livestock e.g. store cattle, ewes do not have to be managed in accordance to the organic standards yet. Although any feedstuffs used for these enterprises must continue to be non-GMO, documentation available to support this and not available to dairy stock. Avermectins should also be avoid as a vet/med treatment.</p> <p>Crops eligible for C2 status if harvested 12 months after start of conversion and sown prior to land gaining full organic status. C2 crops & forage can be used to feed own livestock or sold to another organic producer although there is a restriction on the % of bought-in C2 feed that can be fed to livestock managed to the organic standards.</p>	<p>Land gains Organic status 1st June 2022. All aspects of land management must continue in keeping with the organic standards.</p> <p><u>Dairy Cows, Heifer Replacements & Calves</u> All aspects of management must continue in keeping with the organic standards. MILK gains organic status 1st June 2022. Calves born to dairy cows after 1st June 2022 can be given organic status and must be managed as such e.g. fed organic milk/replacer.</p> <p><u>Beef & Sheep Enterprises</u> From 1st June all other livestock enterprises must start to be managed in accordance to organic standards. Any beef calves born 12 weeks after the 1st June 2022 (24th Aug 2022) can be given organic status. When ewes are tupped on fully organic land after 1st June 2022 lambs born will be eligible for organic status.</p> <p>Crops sown after 1st June 2022 eligible for organic status.</p>

OPTION 2 - Standard Conversion (without 6-month organic management of dairy animals prior to land completing conversion)

First Year In-conversion (C1) 1 st June 2020 – 31 st May 2021	Second Year In-Conversion (C2) 1 st June 2021 – 31 st May 2022	Fully Organic 1 st June 2022 Onwards
<p>All aspects of land, grass & crop management must be in keeping with the organic standards e.g. cropping, field inputs, seed.</p> <p>Livestock e.g. cows, store cattle, ewes do not have to be managed in accordance to the full organic standards yet. Although any feedstuffs used must be non-GMO & documentation available to support this. Avermectins should also be avoid as a vet/med treatment. The conversion period should be used as a transition period to gear stock up to organic management to avoid sudden changes when full organic management methods must be employed.</p> <p>Crops & forage grown in the first year of conversion can be used to feed own livestock. However, if any C1 crops are sold off farm in this time period will need to be sold as non-organic.</p>	<p>All aspects of land, grass & crop management must be in keeping with the organic standards.</p> <p>Livestock do not have to be managed in accordance to the organic standards. Although any feedstuffs used must be non-GMO & documentation available to support this. Avermectins should also be avoid as a vet/med treatment.</p> <p>Crops eligible for C2 status if harvested 12 months after start of conversion and sown prior to land gaining full organic status. C2 crops & forage can be used to feed own livestock or sold to another organic producer although there is a restriction on the % of bought-in C2 feed that can be fed to livestock managed to the organic standards.</p>	<p>Land gains Organic status 1st June 2022. All aspects of land management must continue in keeping with organic standards.</p> <p>From 1st June 2022 all livestock must also be managed in accordance to organic standards.</p> <p><u>Dairy Cows & Heifer Replacements</u> Must start to be managed in accordance to the organic standards and managed in this way for minimum 6 months e.g. vet/med treatments, feeding, housing, before milk eligible to be given organic status.</p> <p>MILK gains organic status 1st Dec 2022. Milking animals must continue to be managed organically thereafter to maintain organic status of milk.</p> <p><u>Dairy Calves and Beef & Sheep Enterprises</u> Calves (dairy or beef) born 12 weeks after the 1st June 2022 (24th Aug 2022) can be given organic status. Heifer calves born after this period will be eligible for organic status.</p> <p>When ewes are tugged on fully organic land after 1st June 2022 lambs born will be eligible for organic status.</p> <p>Crops sown after 1st June 2022 are eligible for organic status.</p>

OPTION 3 - Simultaneous Conversion – Land, crops & all livestock to be managed to the organic standards from start of conversion

First Year In-conversion (C1)	Second Year In-Conversion (C2)	Fully Organic
1 st June 2020 – 31 st May 2021	1 st June 2021 – 31 st May 2022	1 st June 2022 Onwards
<p>All aspects of land, grass & crop management must be in keeping with the organic standards e.g. cropping, field inputs, seed.</p> <p>Livestock husbandry must also be in accordance to the organic standards e.g. housing, organic feeding, vet/meds, replacement policy, calf rearing for all groups of stock on farm for start of conversion.</p> <p>Crops & forage grown in the first year of conversion can be used to feed own livestock. However, if any C1 crops are sold off farm in this time period will need to be sold as non-organic.</p>	<p>All aspects of land, grass & crop management must be in keeping with the organic standards.</p> <p>Livestock husbandry must also continue in accordance to the organic standards e.g. housing, organic feeding, vet/meds, replacement policy, calf rearing for all groups of stock on farm.</p> <p>Crops eligible for C2 status if harvested 12 months after start of conversion and sown prior to land gaining full organic status. C2 crops & forage can be used to feed own livestock or sold to another organic producer although there is a restriction on the % of bought-in C2 feed that can be fed to livestock managed to the organic standards.</p>	<p>Land gains Organic status 1st June 2022. All aspects of land management must continue in keeping with the organic standards.</p> <p><u>Dairy Cows & Heifers</u> From 1st June 2022 MILK can be sold as organic.</p> <p><u>Dairy Calves and Beef & Sheep Enterprises</u> Calves (dairy & beef), store cattle or replacements heifers born 12 weeks after the start of the conversion period (24th Aug 2020) still on farm gain organic status with completion of conversion period. Any lambs born since the start of conversion still on farm or born after 1st June 2022 can be sold as organic. For stock to remain eligible for organic status all aspects of their management must comply with the organic standards</p> <p>Crops sown after 1st June 2022 are eligible for organic status. Can be used to feed own livestock as well as sold to another organic producer without feeding % restriction.</p>

Notes:

- All female breeding animals (dairy & beef cows, heifers, ewes, gimmers) on farm before start of conversion or born during and retained for breeding replacements in the conversion period prior to dates for eligible stock to gain organic status will be given converted breeding stock status on the completion of the two year conversion period under either a Standard or Simultaneous conversion. Females classed as converted breeding stock can produce organic produce and be sold onto another organic producer, but please be aware these animals themselves will never be eligible for organic status nor can be sold as such.

- The conversion period should be used as a transition period in preparation for the livestock & cropping moving to fully organic management practices.

- Dairy producers choosing Option 1 - Standard Conversion Fast Track - must submit a detailed feed/nutrition plan and Livestock Management/Health Plan for the dairy enterprise to their SOPA Producer Certification Officer for consideration/approval prior to starting the 6 month fast track conversion period for the dairy animals (prior to reaching 18 months into the conversion period of the land). A Feed Plan, calculated in Dry Matter Intake (DMI), must be completed for the period from the first day of the 6-month conversion period, for a 12-month period, of the year in which milk will be first sold as organic. It is important that this is done correctly, otherwise the sale of organic milk could be delayed. Those choosing Option 2 - Standard Conversion – must submit this information prior to the completion of the two-year conversion period. Those choosing Option 3 - Simultaneous Conversion – must supply this information along with their full farm conversion plan prior to commencing the two-year conversion period.
Failure to submit these plans will delay the issue of an organic certificate listing milk.

- Please remember under organic management at least 60% of the daily DMI must consist of forage with no more than 40% concentrates.

- The above conversion timelines are examples, feel free to move dates around. Keeping in mind that where applicable organic conversion funding requirements will also influence when conversion to organic management needs to commence in the first year of the funding contract.