

# A bit more about SOPA...

SOPA is an Association of organic businesses. Becoming a SOPA Member means joining Scotland's largest and oldest Organic Association. Incorporated since 8th June 1988, SOPA certifies c.80% of all Scottish organic land and has more than 350 members including farmers, growers, and crofters as well as food processors such as bakeries, drinks, dairies, box schemes and abattoirs.

SOPA membership includes the inspection and certification of a business, as well as additional Member Services provided by our qualified team in Scotland.

SOPA Members are at the heart of the work of the SOPA Members Services Team.

## Our Purpose

To protect, promote and uphold the organic integrity  
of all products produced by our members and  
certified to the SOPA organic standards

The Scottish Organic Producers Association Ltd was incorporated as a company in June 1988 under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, number SP02278R. It is governed under the Rules of the Association, which are registered with the Financial Conduct Authority. SOPA is a Membership Association, governed by a Board of Directors who are responsible for financial security, strategy and governance.

SOPA exists to promote the sustainable growth of its members' organic businesses. By working together we have a stronger voice and can contribute to policy, strategy as well as support each other. With more than 300 members, not just in Scotland but also England, Wales and Northern Ireland, SOPA is a unique organisation with members at its heart.

SOPA was established to provide a focus for organic food producers across Scotland, and is committed to the long-term growth of a viable organic industry infrastructure linking producers, processors and retailers in the interests of the consumer and the environment.

In 2012 SOPA contracted its Certification Body status to SFQC in order to remain compliant with EN45011, the accreditation standard required at the time. In 2015 SOPA took the decision to move its certification services from SFQC to Organic Farmers & Growers (operating as OF&G (Scotland)). OF&G/OF&G (Scotland) have been operating in the UK organic sector since its inception in 1973 with OF&G being the first Control Body approved by the government to certify organic food production in the UK. OF&G (Scotland) are contracted to administer the SOPA Organic Standards to SOPA members

The SOPA Organic Standards are owned by the SOPA Board and OF&G (Scotland) Ltd are approved by DEFRA and independent auditors UKAS to implement the SOPA Organic Standards. The SOPA Organic Standards recognise the unique climate, geography, and social culture of Scottish agricultural practices.

SOPA have a dedicated Member Services team utilising their extensive knowledge of the food and farming industry within Scotland to support and guide SOPA members with day to day questions and advice & mentoring on all organic matters.

# SOPA Principles

Protect, govern, audit, promote and assist our Members' businesses

Provide certification for Scotland's organic producers and processors.

Promote the organic ethos and the benefits of organic produce for the commercial benefit of our members.

Support our members in building financially and environmentally sustainable businesses

Work in a trusting and fair way with all our industry partners.

## SOPA Member Services Team provide these benefits

