

Organic Research Centre – Elm Farm 30th Anniversary Appeal



After 30 years at the forefront of the development of organic farming in the UK and internationally, the Organic Research Centre has reached a turning point in its history. We have in place a strong research team working on an expanding range of government and EU-funded projects, fresh leadership at Director and Trustee level, with a clear vision of the future role and direction of the organisation, along with excellent office and meeting facilities. Our special anniversary issue of the Bulletin makes clear our achievements and future aspirations.

At the same time, we face significant challenges. The economic recession has impacted on the ability of donors and charities to support our work. The success of the organic market has distracted attention from many of the real reasons why organic farming is important.

The challenges faced by government, including the economy, climate change and food security, seem so large, and the perceived contribution of organic farming in comparison so insignificant, that our message fights hard to impact the policy agenda. Meanwhile, the lobbying efforts of GM and industrial agriculture are bearing fruit in persuading government that their technology is the only way forward.

Yet the organic/agro-ecological principles on which certified organic farming is based are as relevant as ever. They make a real contribution to improving the sustainability of food production, reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing biodiversity, conserving soils and generally supporting the health of organisms and ecosystems.

In developing countries, these principles enable resource-poor farming communities to increase food production and enhance food sovereignty. In industrialised countries, the total productivity of organic systems, including food, fibre, fuel and ecosystem services, approaches that of conventional systems and is achieved with significantly lower inputs of non-renewable resources.

We are not complacent – there is much potential for improvement. We need more research and effective communication to ensure that best practice becomes widely adopted. Project funding from government and other sources can help.

But to be independent, to be able to challenge the accepted view of things - as we have with Foot and Mouth Vaccination and with GM - and to be able to make the case for an ecological, not industrial farming future, we need your support. Our policy, communications and education work, rooted as it is in a scientific evidence base, also depends on us having a sufficient, unrestricted core funding so that we have the freedom to disagree.

You can help us develop as the UK's leading independent organic research centre by:

- Making a *donation* to our 30th anniversary appeal (please complete the donation form overleaf or you can make an online donation at www.charitychoice.co.uk/donation.asp?ref=3620)
- *Giftaiding* your donation, so that government gives us the tax you have paid as well.
- Making a regular donation via *standing order* (please complete the standing order form overleaf)
- Becoming a *Friend* of the Organic Research Centre, or make a friend a Friend (£25 minimum annual donation – in addition to the Bulletin you will also receive newsletters on our activities, free publications, discounts on specified events and access to special invitation-only events.)
- Donating *Shares* - this applies to many listed shares and unit and investment trusts and as a charitable donation is normally free of capital gains tax
- Leaving a *Legacy* to the Organic Research Centre – by including us in your will, you will be enabling us to continue to develop our work and activities well into the future. As we are a charity, all legacies to ORC are free from inheritance tax.
- *Subscribing* to the Bulletin (excellent value at £20 (£25 overseas) per year for 6 issues)

For further information on any of the above, please contact the Director, Nic Lampkin, on 01488 658298 or e-mail nic.l@organicresearchcentre.com.

Please complete the form overleaf and return to

Freepost Plus RRRH-SAXU-GTXC
Progressive Farming Trust Ltd.
Organic Research Centre – Elm Farm
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RG20 0HR

Organic Research Centre – Elm Farm 30th Anniversary Appeal

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* Delete as appropriate. Bank/Building Societies may not accept Standing Order instructions from some types of account.

Please return the original completed form to the Organic Research Centre at the address overleaf.

Thank you for supporting us!