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People are increasingly looking to organic systems to provide solutions to these challenges. This report shows how environmental and animal welfare concerns are influencing what we choose to eat in and outside the home. It’s not just the public who are interested in a more organic future; policymakers, retailers, farmers and food businesses are all increasingly keen to learn from organic methods and principles.

Farming, forestry and food choices have been in the hot seat in recent debates, with the spotlight largely on meat. There is no doubt that intensive, grain-fed meat consumption, which is still rising globally, is a major problem. But there is also a danger that we may throw the baby out with the bath water.

Shifting debate

Ruminant livestock have an important role to play in protecting and building soils. They help us make use of grasslands and cover crops which generate fertility and are potential sources of biodiversity.

The debate now needs to shift from ‘what we eat’ to ‘how we produce it’ and to recognise that organic farming systems are a big part of the solution. This is why the Soil Association has explored and promoted the model developed by IDDRI, a French policy research institute, which shows how an agroecological Europe could look. It demonstrates that we could produce enough to feed Europe’s expected population in 2050 healthily, whilst maintaining key exports, reducing the impact of climate change by half and making biodiversity gains.

The IDDRI team used organic yields and techniques in their assumptions. They plan to do a similar exercise for the UK in 2020, which we hope will build policymakers’ confidence that a wholesale move into rotational mixed farming, and away from pesticides and manufactured fertilisers, is both achievable and desirable.

Supporting a flourishing organic market

Meanwhile, markets are moving faster than policy, with the rise in plant-based eating a strong case in point. For farmers, it’s impossibly hard to respond to these sudden shifts, with the need to make cropping, stocking and investment decisions years ahead of products coming to market. The fact that export markets are harder to access with the uncertainty of Brexit still hanging over the UK means it’s difficult, in my experience, to shift surpluses elsewhere.

However, it’s great to see people making values-led choices, and more retailers committing to organic and UK sourcing. From summer 2021, for example, Waitrose has planned to source all their own label and fresh and frozen lamb from the UK.

So the good news is, as this report shows, that organic sales continue to grow well ahead of the overall market. And we expect this to continue. But I have no doubt that there are some choppy waters ahead, and everything to play for in terms of engaging policymakers and citizens to ensure that sense prevails!

The Soil Association will continue to do what we can to make sure that organic farming and food businesses have the support they deserve to flourish and deliver multiple benefits to people and planet.

Helen Browning, Group CEO, Soil Association
Executive summary

The UK organic market continues to grow, year on year, with sales increasing by 4.5% in 2019. That means that £200 million is spent on organic products in the UK every month.

- Soil Association Certification licensees’ sales have surpassed the steady growth of the organic market, with an 8% rise in sales.

- Supermarket & convenience stores’ sales of organic increased by 2.5%.* They have a 64.6% share of sales, compared to 65.8% in 2018. Everyday organic items like carrots, bananas, eggs, yoghurt, tea and milk are delivering the highest share of sales within their respective categories.

- The online and home delivery market is building strength, increasing sales by an impressive 11.2%.

- Organic through independent retailers has increased sales by 6.5%. A huge 82% of independent shops we surveyed were focusing on zero waste in their stores.

- Almost a quarter of the amount the UK spends on organic in foodservice is through the Soil Association’s Food for Life Served Here scheme. Now, £23.2 million is spent on organic through this scheme, up from £19.5 million in 2018. There’s been an 8.3% rise in sales across foodservice, an exciting sector.

- The global organic market continues to grow, reaching 92 billion euros with almost 3 million producers worldwide in 2017. The UK is the ninth largest organic market in the world, dropping from seventh position.

- UK sales of Soil Association Certification certified textiles performed well in 2019, increasing by 10% in 2019. Beauty and wellbeing sales were positive too, up 23%.

- Soil Association Certification research found that there’s been a step change in UK consumers’ concerns about the environment and sustainability, making organic more relevant than ever.

- The UK organic market is on course to grow strongly beyond £2.5 billion by the end of 2020.
2019 growth in sales of organic

- Total organic sales: £2.45 billion
- Total market growth 2019: +4.5%

- Organic sold in foodservice: +8.3%
- Supermarket & convenience stores sales*: +2.5%
- Independent retailer sales: +6.5%
- Home delivery sales, including box schemes: +11.2%
- Beauty and wellbeing sales: +23%
- Textiles sales: +10%
- Licensees’ sales: +8%

*Based on Nielsen RMS data for the Organic category Soil Association Defined for the 12 month period ending 28th December 2019 for the GB total retail market (Copyright © 2020, Nielsen).
The UK organic market at a glance

The UK organic market has grown for the eighth year in a row. Overall sales of organic have increased by 4.5%, with growth across all channels and sectors, from home delivery to beauty and wellbeing. Soil Association Certification licensees have surpassed this steady growth, with an 8% rise in sales.

Organic in the UK is bucking Brexit uncertainty and low consumer confidence. Figures from Euromonitor show a decline in UK consumer confidence. But Nielsen data shows that organic sales growth is more than double that of non-organic. * This suggests that people are still willing to spend more on organic products.

Core organic categories have had a steady year as they have had to compete with unsustainably low prices on non-organic equivalents. Organic produce and dairy have competed with promotions and lower shelf prices, though sales volume is still holding up.

The online market is building strength, increasing sales by an impressive 11.2%. This makes the UK the third largest online buyer of organic in the world, according to the global ecommerce market ranking report from eShopWorld. The increase has largely been driven by Ocado, sales of which have risen by 12%. The online retailer’s partnership with M&S in September 2020 offers more exciting opportunities for organic businesses through this channel.

Successful box schemes are also driving growth in this market. Indeed, online sales for organic are well established, from beauty and supplements, to baby food and essentials like groceries and bottled milk. Home delivery retailers such as Ocado and Milk & More, for example, added significantly to their ranges during 2019. Ocado now has over 4,500 products in its organic range.

Investment in new larger independent stores is helping to increase the availability of organic. In London in 2019, Planet Organic opened a new store in Queen’s Park and As Nature Intended relaunched one in Balham. Other new stores are opening across the UK and traditional health stores and delis are adding to their ranges, according to wholesalers.

The most popular organic items in the UK shopper’s basket are still milk (5.5%), tea (8%), carrots (14%), bananas (9.8%) and yoghurts (7.8%). These are the highest penetration categories for organic.

Organic meets the demand for plant-based diets. Research from Kantar shows that in-home plant-based meals have increased by nearly a quarter (23%) since 2015. A significant number of organic brands are also plant-based. They are benefiting from the extra exposure with increased sales in supermarkets. Conversely, red meat sales through some supermarkets are struggling, yet we predict that better quality meat sales through other channels are benefiting.

Share of organic sales by channel 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Share of Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supermarkets</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home delivery</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent retailers</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foodservice</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Figures from Euromonitor show a decline in UK consumer confidence.*
2005-2019 UK sales of organic products in GBP (£) millions

Source: Soil Association Market Reports

* Based on Nielsen RMS data for the Organic category Soil Association Defined for the 12 month period ending 28th December 2019 for the GB total retail market (Copyright @ 2020, Nielsen).

** This figure has been adjusted during the year to reflect changes to the dynamic input provided by data sources.
2018-2019 breakdown in product shares of UK food and drink organic market and % change in value*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>% share of food and drink</th>
<th>Year-on-year growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned &amp; packaged</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>+5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat, fish &amp; poultry</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>+6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby food &amp; drink</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confectionery/soft drinks</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>+4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilled foods &amp; deli</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>+15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beers, wines &amp; spirits</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>+32.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakery &amp; cakes</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frozen</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>+15.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on Nielsen RMS data for the Organic category Soil Association Defined for the 12 month period ending 28th December 2019 for the GB total retail market (Copyright © 2020, Nielsen).
Supermarkets

Sales of organic in the supermarket channel are steady and have increased by 2.5%.

It’s been a quiet year for the three supermarkets that have over 65% share of the organic market between them. Organic sales for Waitrose, Tesco and Sainsbury’s have remained steady but face fierce competition from smaller retailers that have performed better this year.

Co-op and discount supermarkets Lidl and Aldi experienced the highest growth in sales of organic in 2018/2019 after extending their listings to satisfy increasing interest. Kantar figures show that sales of organic for Co-op grew by 30% while they increased by over 40% for Lidl and almost 20% for Aldi.

Supermarket sales of organic have been enhanced by the demand for plant-based diets. Retailers have got behind this trend and a significant number of organic plant-based brands are benefiting. For example, in 2019, Waitrose maintained its two-metre chilled fixture for vegan and vegetarian food in many stores. And in September 2019, Tesco launched vegan zones in many of its stores. As a result, organic brands with additional dietary benefits have had extra exposure, creating increased sales through the big three supermarkets.

Soil Association Certification, the Organic Trade Board and key industry players teamed up with Sainsbury’s to run an upweighted approach to Organic September in 2019. Penetration for organic rose to 1.6% during this period, showing the importance of this established annual event in retailers’ calendars.

Waitrose scored a first as it launched its Unpacked store in Oxford in June 2019, followed by three more in September. These stores promoted a number of unpackaged organic products, alongside many innovative packaged items from the Duchy range.

Consumer interest in the trial has been high, confirming the need for more retailer initiatives to reduce packaging.

The main organic products in supermarket baskets continue to be everyday items, where habits are established. Highest penetration items are carrots (14%), bananas (9.8%), eggs (8.8%), yoghurts (7.8%), tea (8%) and milk (5.5%)

Highly respected organic brands are continuing to increase sales in supermarkets by innovating and adding listings to categories. Best performing ambient areas are tea/coffee, cereals, jams/spreads, oils and soft drinks. For fresh foods, it’s eggs, poultry, bananas and chilled convenience foods.

The star performer in supermarkets is organic wine, which increased sales by almost 50% again in 2019. Larger retailers followed the discount supermarkets to extend their range of organic wines in 2019 with great success. Media coverage of this trend is helping consumers become more aware of the ranges on offer, and that there’s no compromise on taste and quality when they buy organic wine.

**At a glance**

- Steady sales of organic continue in supermarkets, rising by 2.5%*
- Plant-based diets are dictating ranges and helping innovative organic products to gain listings
- Organic wine sales through supermarkets are higher than any other category, increasing by 47% year-on-year*, with more than £1 million sold per week on average
Other retail, including home delivery

Organic retail sales outside the main supermarkets has increased by 8.7%. It’s an exciting channel for organic, with independent retailers responding with agility to consumer trends and online offering consumers the broadest variety of organic products.

Independent retailers

A massive 90% of those who completed our Soil Association Certification survey reported an increase in sales of organic during 2019. Independent retailers increased sales by 6.5%. Respondents said the main reasons for this were customers focusing more on health and the environmental impact of their choices. Almost 60% expect sales to rise during 2020, while the remainder think they’ll be flat year on year.

A huge 82% of independent shops we surveyed were focusing on zero waste in their stores. Unpackaged options are becoming the norm for independent shops selling organic. Customers are demanding it. They want the opportunity to refill dry goods and non-food products and to buy loose versions of regular packaged items particularly produce.

Organic is expanding in independent retail in London. In 2019, Planet Organic opened a new store in Queen’s Park, bringing their total to eight in the city, and As Nature Intended relaunched their Balham shop. Plans for independent retail in London are ambitious as organic is now so relevant to the younger, metropolitan shopper.

The three most popular organic brands driving sales of organic in independent stores are Biona, Clearspring, and Pukka. Tofu and other vegan and vegetarian options have been even more popular in 2019, following the plant-based diet trend.

The most successful organic brands and products in independent retail often have other unique selling points, including being vegan, free-from or fermented. Organic products combined with labels like these, are even more appealing in this channel, with kombucha, kimchi and other raw and fermented products selling well. Independents have the edge as they have more opportunity to try out innovative products than supermarkets do and can respond more quickly to their customers’ product requests.

The biggest opportunity for 2020 will be providing products for the changing customer, who wants more organic options with health and diet benefits. There’s fantastic potential to tell the story of these organic products in independent stores, through Soil Association Certification point of sale toolkits.

To find out more, please visit www.soilassociation.org/indies

At a glance

- Sales of organic increased by 6.5% for independent retailers in 2019
- The big player in online sales of organic Ocado has increased sales by 12%
- Other organic retailers are driving sales of unpackaged items in stores and through box schemes, meeting increasing consumer demand for less packaging

Independent retailer sales growth

+4% more than supermarkets
Online and home delivery

This channel has a much higher share of the overall organic food market than it does in general food shopping – 13% versus 8%. This confirms that shoppers know they can find their favourite organic products through this channel. Sophisticated personalised marketing is helping to strengthen customer loyalty. Time saving is key too. IGD research shows that online shoppers save 23 minutes by doing their main food shop online.

Ocado continues to be the biggest player in this channel with the broadest choice. The retailer has had another significant year of growth, with a 12% rise in sales. Ocado has added more lines to its organic catalogue and now has a range of over 4,500. This secures its position as the online one-stop-shop for organic.

Current Marks & Spencer customers will be able to access the broadest range of organic choice in the online market. There should be a much bigger range of organic available through Marks & Spencer stores too. This is a positive step for the retailer as its customer base profile suggests that organic should have a much greater share of sales.

Box schemes are developing to fit shoppers’ needs more effectively. There’s now a choice of everything from smoothie to ‘no potatoes’ boxes. Larger organic box schemes Riverford and Abel & Cole continue to improve sales despite increasing competition in 2019. The businesses are competing head on with other new box schemes such as Boxxfresh and ODDBOX, and recipe box companies like HelloFresh. These non-organic box schemes, particularly recipe ones, are growing and attracting customers who might otherwise stay loyal to organic options.

Organic businesses trying innovative approaches are having great success in this channel. Abel & Cole, for example, has launched an office delivery service to reach more customers and establish the brand name in workplace catering. And, Milk & More is successfully delivering organic produce and organic milk: they distributed over £16 million of organic milk in glass bottles to people’s doorsteps in 2019. Also, Farmdrop now has a range of handmade ready meals and convenience food.

Key retailers have still not yet maximised the opportunity for organic online. Most, though, have made choosing organic much clearer on their websites. Waitrose, for example, has a dedicated search function. And Ocado are leading other retailers with their own online choice of organic shops, such as Daylesford and Tree of Life. Much more can be done to promote organic ranges online, especially since informed shoppers remain loyal to this channel.

Online and home delivery is expected to have a 20% share of all UK sales of organic within the next three years. The convenience of fresh organic products with traceable sourcing stories delivered straight to the home is still a winning formula for many businesses. Already, organic sales account for 15% of total sales at Milk & More.

Hot topic - sustainable packaging

Organic independent shops and home delivery retailers are both leading the way in successfully meeting consumer demand for less packaging. Soil Association Certification consumer research (see pages 20 and 21) showed that people are finding it difficult to reduce the packaging they use because larger retailers and brands continue to over-package. That’s despite the fact that more people are trying to recycle their packaging.

- Box schemes with naturally less packaging than supermarket produce, are a natural choice for the packaging conscious consumer
- Independent retailers and supermarkets offer unpackaged and refillable options
- Home delivery retailers, such as Milk & More, provide bottled organic milk on the doorstep
Foodservice and eating out

Organic sales in foodservice, which includes public sector and high street catering, was worth £98.5 million in 2019, a 8.3% rise. Almost a quarter of this amount is spent through the Soil Association’s Food for Life Served Here award holders. Today, £23.2 million is spent on organic in Food for Life, up from £19.5 million in 2018.

Over 2 million Soil Association Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH) meals are now served daily. The improvement programme that has made organic food in the public sector a reality, celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2019. The Food for Life Supplier Scheme also continues to support organic businesses to sell in the public procurement space. Public sector contracts can be challenging to secure but rewards are high as their value is larger and they provide a consistent revenue.

More than 9,000 primary schools are now engaged with FFLSH. Yeo Valley is an example of an organic business that has been successful in the education sector. The company was a Food for Life Supplier Scheme award winner in 2019 and their yoghurt and milk are now found in schools across the country.

Public sector catering

- Soil Association Certification’s Selling into Foodservice report, which launched in 2019, is supporting organic businesses to explore the interesting public – or ‘cost’ – sector catering market for the first time. Read the report at: www.soilassociation.org/suppliersscheme

- Successful organic businesses working with the public sector need to continue to be inventive in helping caterers meet their set menu costs. Public sector contracts are continually being squeezed and challenged on cost. They also need to deliver on higher welfare food products that reduce caterers’ impact on the environment. Innovative suppliers that work with caterers on developing a menu are well-placed to grow their businesses despite this paradox of quality versus cost.

  In 2019, for example, Lower Hurst Organic launched a new organic beef patty with its 30% organic vegetable content from The Organic Pantry. The product has done well in the public sector and it allows caterers to meet their procurement criteria and remain on budget. Oldham Council, as an example, is serving gold Food for Life Served Here menus with over 15% organic spend, meeting budget constraints of as little as 65p per school meal.

- Organic businesses looking to sell into the growing foodservice market in the public sector could benefit from a new government procurement platform. Crown Commercial Services will launch their Dynamic Procurement Platform as a pilot in 2020. The platform aims to make it easier for small and medium-sized businesses to sell their products into schools, hospitals and other public sector settings directly, reducing their complex supply chains.
Around two thirds of people in Great Britain believe that ethical considerations matter when choosing where to eat, according to a 2019 Paymentsense UK report. It found that around a third of under 35s and 30% of young families are prepared to pay more for organic when they eat out. Also, 66% of the population believe that ethical considerations matter when choosing where to eat.

Organic Served Here cafes and restaurants are spending over £5 million on organic food. Organic Served Here celebrates cafes and restaurants with 15% to 100% organic on the menu, awarding one to five stars according to how much organic is served. This year Organic Served Here award holders increased by over 20%, a clear sign that chefs are engaged in making a more sustainable catering operation.

Soil Association’s biennial Out to Lunch survey is putting pressure on more high street retailers to offer organic choices on their children’s menus. The survey is now a regular feature on the casual dining calendar, attracting a lot of media attention. The number of high street chains serving organic food has increased dramatically since the survey first launched in 2013. JD Wetherspoon and IKEA topped the league table of healthy and sustainable children’s meals this year, and 15 chains now include at least one organic item on their menus.

The food-to-go market

- The food-to-go market is expected to double the growth of the wider UK food and grocery retail market over the next five years, according to IGD research. It’s now worth £18.5 billion and offers huge opportunities for organic businesses. To continue strong growth on the high street, organic suppliers need to make new and relevant products available to food buyers.

- Direct meal delivery to customers is broadening the reach of organic for key foodservice operators. In January 2020, Planet Organic collaborated with London restaurant courier service Supper to deliver meals to homes around the city. The organic retailer already sells 10,000 meals a week from their in-store counters. Abel & Cole’s targeted delivery service for London offices, Fed, is also building momentum and making organic available to a wider customer base.

- McDonald’s is the biggest single player in organic foodservice. It accounts for over 10% of sales through its purchasing of organic milk and is growing at a significant rate.

- Coffee shops were the strongest performing foodservice channel in the year to June 2019, according to an Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board report. There’s plenty of opportunity for organic in this channel as customers are increasingly looking to make sustainable choices, with a focus on hot drinks and snacks.

Organic spend in foodservice from 2013 to 2019 in GBP (£) millions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Food for Life spend</th>
<th>Other spend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- January 2021, Planet Organic collaborated with London restaurant courier service Supper to deliver meals to homes around the city. The organic retailer already sells 10,000 meals a week from their in-store counters. Abel & Cole’s targeted delivery service for London offices, Fed, is also building momentum and making organic available to a wider customer base.

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- Coffee shops were the strongest performing foodservice channel in the year to June 2019, according to an Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board report. There’s plenty of opportunity for organic in this channel as customers are increasingly looking to make sustainable choices, with a focus on hot drinks and snacks.
It’s been another year of significant growth in the organic beauty and wellbeing market, with a 23% increase in sales of organic and natural products. That’s the ninth year of consecutive double-digit growth and the third biggest percentage growth in the past decade.

Wellbeing remains the all-encompassing driver that transcends the whole organic sector. People are continuing to focus on holistic wellbeing and organic brands are offering solutions to common areas where people struggle, from sleep to anxiety. In our research, 83% of people felt it was better for their health if a beauty or wellbeing product was organic. Many of the key trends driving growth fit with the organic ethos. These include: using mindful ingredients, including food by-products, reducing air pollution, waterless beauty, and transparency.

Organic beauty and wellbeing chimes with consumers that are aligned with the environmental movement that is now in full swing. When GlobalWebIndex asked over 2,300 UK and USA-based web users why they buy eco-friendly products, eight out of 10 said they did so because they care about the environment. We are living in a period of climate crisis, and people are more worried than ever before about the impact of their actions on the planet and future generations.

Our 2019 beauty and wellbeing consumer research found that 56% of people look for logos when they buy beauty and wellbeing products because it allows them to support the causes they care about. Nearly eight out of 10 consumers told us they are more likely to buy a beauty product if it says ‘organic’. Another 64% look for products with recyclable packaging, supporting their effort to do the right thing and make a positive choice.

However, greenwashing remains an issue in the organic beauty and wellbeing market. Shoppers are still unsure whether the claims brands are making have been verified. This is because, unlike organic food and drink businesses, beauty brands are not legally obligated to be certified. Any brand can claim to be organic if it only contains 1% organic ingredients. Soil Association Certification is driving awareness by pushing for transparency in the market and encouraging conscious consumers to look for our logo. We’re working with brands to showcase their organic credentials and encouraging businesses to stock certified organic products. We’re also hosting awareness raising campaigns, events and panels.

Sustainability is a key focus for businesses, brands and politicians in 2020 and beyond – good news for organic beauty and wellbeing brands. Our consumer research found that ‘sustainable’ is the key word 52% of people associate with organic. Mainstream beauty brands now need to review their impact on the world around them and collaborate across the industry on packaging and other environmental impacts if we are to create effective and positive change in the sector. Retailers need to and will stock more certified brands to give assurance to their customers.

For more information about this market, download The 2020 Organic Beauty & Wellbeing Market Report at www.soilassociation.org/beautymarket
With increased demand for organic and natural beauty products, Soil Association teamed up with four other European partners to develop a new standard for organic and natural cosmetics, known as COSMOS. Together, these partners have created one harmonised international beauty standard, which now certifies 80% of the global certified organic and natural market. There are two consumer certification schemes: organic and natural.
Five organic businesses that are making a difference

Certified by Soil Association Certification, these diverse businesses are making an impact in the sector – and beyond.

**Neal’s Yard Remedies**

Neal’s Yard Remedies is an organic pioneer. Ethically sourcing high quality ingredients for its award-winning products is a key component of its success. The business has been certified by Soil Association Certification since 1991 and uses organic ingredients wherever possible.

The business’ certified health and beauty care range gives customers independent verification that products contain the highest organic content possible. “Giving the customer a trusted, well-recognised logo to look for is the simplest way to help them make an informed choice,” says Louise Green, Head of Organic at Neal’s Yard Remedies.

Louise says: “Climate change is only going to become more critical for businesses relying on natural ingredients”.

The business believes that its environmental ethos should be reflected in all areas, including choosing a sustainably focused bank. With the help of a loan from Triodos Bank, Neal’s Yard Remedies will continue to lead as one of the UK’s most innovative organic brands.

**Cafédirect**

Cafédirect has a long history of being a force for good. The social enterprise invests up to 50% of its profits in Producers Direct, a network led by farmers which improves the lives and working practices of 1 million people across the globe.

The business works directly with eight organic coffee growing cooperatives from three countries. At least one-third of its sales are certified organic by Soil Association Certification, reflecting its commitment to the health of the planet.

It’s become increasingly clear that Cafédirect’s smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable to climate change, something the business works to raise awareness of.

They support farmers to use organic fertilisers made from local waste. These are cost effective and reduce the need for expensive and carbon-producing transportation.

Cafédirect is also a Certified B Corporation, a pioneer in the Fairtrade movement. Its focus on an ethical supply chain extends to its financial needs. The business has been a Triodos Bank customer and partner since its ground-breaking £5 million crowdfunding initiative in 2004.
Troed y Rhiw Farm

Troed y Rhiw is a 23-acre farm in West Wales established in 2008 with the help of a loan from Triodos Bank. It’s built around a belief in the necessity of farming sustainably.

Being certified organic reflects the farm’s holistic approach to food production, from habitat protection and creation to the role the farm has in its local community.

The farm has a hyper-local focus, selling directly to the community through a vegetable box scheme, local markets and retail sales to shops and restaurants. Owners Nathan and Alicia are committed to farming with nature and producing healthy food that is good for people and planet. They are happy to have a bank that understands the difficulties of small-scale farming today and a certification organisation that upholds the value of organic practices and holistic food production.

Godminster

Owner and founder Richard Hollingbery started converting Godminster into an organic farm in September 1996. Around three years later, the farm gained full Soil Association organic certification for crops and animals. Since 2000, it has been producing vintage organic cheddar using milk from the farm in Bruton, Somerset.

In 2019, Godminster Vintage Organic Cheddar won a Soil Association Certification BOOM award for being voted as the ‘Nation’s Favourite Organic Product’.

The farm’s logo represents the cyclical nature of Richard’s vision of creating a self-sustaining environment – a delicate ecosystem that can regenerate and flourish, free from the effects of artificial, intensive farming.

Richard says his customers are becoming more concerned about how their food is produced and its impact on the environment. “With uncertainty surrounding the current political position, the UK could see upwards pressure on the price of organic milk, but the future looks set to continue well for organic food,” says Richard.

Locavore

Glasgow social enterprise Locavore has been building a more sustainable local food system since 2011. Since then, the independent retailer has opened a shop, developed a market garden, established a vegetable box scheme and got more people engaged in thinking about where their food comes from.

In acknowledgement of the business’ success, Locavore won Soil Association Certification’s BOOM award for Best Organic Independent Retailer in 2019.

Locavore Managing Director, Reuben Chesters says sustainable farming and finance are central to everything the business does. “Organic certification proves that we are managing our businesses to Soil Association standards, which are widely recognised and externally audited, giving our customers confidence in us,” he says.
Textiles

The textile industry’s significant contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and pollution means there’s pressure to act – and fast. Organic methods are tried and tested, globally applicable, scalable and they provide a solution that is good for business.

The UK organic textile market is growing. There is huge potential for greater growth now that there is more organic cotton in circulation. There are more facilities certified to the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) and the Organic Content Standard (OCS), and increased consumer demand.

UK sales of Soil Association-certified textiles to GOTS and OCS increased in 2019 for another consecutive year, rising by 10% to £45.4 million. Clothing makes up 44% of total sales, an increase of 14%, and worth £16.5 million. Brands such as Frugi, People Tree and Seasalt, that have a longstanding commitment to organic, continue to grow. But there is still plenty of potential for certified organic fashion to become mainstream. The homeware market, which features organic bedding and mattresses, is the fastest growing sector, with a 17% increase in sales.

There is a significantly growing consumer demand for sustainable fashion. Nearly nine out of 10 people want the fashion industry to be more sustainable, according to e-commerce platform Nosto. ‘Organic cotton’ as an online search rose 52% in 2019 (Lyst), and when Soil Association Certification ran a campaign on organic cotton in October 2019, traffic to our organic fashion pages increased by 130%.

Organic cotton has become more accessible to UK shoppers. In 2019, of 24 UK-based brands, retailers and suppliers surveyed that source organic cotton, eight out of 10 told us they’d increased the volume they source over the last year. In 2020, nearly nine out of 10 forecast an increase in the volume they will source, with greater consumer demand and better availability of organic cotton being the top two reasons why they would do so. There has been a 127% increase in the number of products in the UK sold as organic cotton since 2017, according to a 2019 report from retail technology company EDITED.

Latest statistics show more availability of certified organic cotton to UK companies. This is important because brands and retailers say that availability and cost are the top two barriers to sourcing sustainable fibres at scale (McKinsey Apparel Chief Purchasing Officer Survey 2019). Textile Exchange’s Organic Cotton Market Report 2019 found that organic cotton production had risen by 56% in 2016/17 to be the highest it has been in eight years. Meanwhile, GOTS-certified facilities increased by 15% and OCS-certified facilities are up 16%.

A total of 12 key UK-based brands have now committed to sourcing 100% of their cotton from sustainable sources by 2025. Ted Baker, New Look and Next are among the UK brands who joined the 2025 Sustainable Cotton Challenge in 2019, to which 59 global brands are committed. Part-instigated by the Soil Association, the initiative encourages the continuous improvement of cotton sourcing towards organic. Since ASOS committed to the challenge in 2017, they have increased their number of organic cotton products by over 500%.
For the organic market to thrive, UK shoppers need to better understand that the way textiles are produced makes a difference. Soil Association Certification 2019 research found that while 39% of UK shoppers care about the environment, it’s never occurred to them that their clothes might have an impact on it. Less than a third (32%) of people in the UK check what an item is made of before they make a purchase, but more than half (54%) are concerned about the use of chemicals in clothing. This is a great opportunity for GOTS-certified products, made only using low impact inks and dyes.

The time for organic is now. Momentum is building, but progress is slow and we are running out of time. Only 1% of global cotton is organic - so there’s plenty more progress that needs to be made in this channel. "Preferred cotton" is cotton that is made sustainably and more equitably for farmers. A total of 19% of global cotton is now preferred, 3% of which is organic (Textile Exchange’s Organic Cotton Market Report 2019). Organic at scale requires time and commitment. This is why multi-stakeholder organisations, like the Organic Cotton Accelerator, are capacity building through training farmers and increasing the availability of organic cotton seed (80% of cotton seed is genetically modified).

Beyond sourcing, there is a marketing opportunity - and an urgent need - for brands and retailers to empower their customers to be citizens of the planet. This includes: being curious and informed about what’s on labels, making fewer but better purchases such as organic, and taking citizenship action, beyond just purchasing a product. Soil Association Certification will help organic businesses to deliver on this through marketing platforms like Organic September. GOTS and OCS logos will remain vital signals that organic sourcing claims can be backed up.

For more information about this market, go to www.soilassociation.org/textilescertification

**UK Sales of certified organic textiles in GBP (£) millions est, 2011 -2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sales (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>21.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Source: Soil Association Certification certified sales declarations 2018-2019

** Source: Soil Association Certification certified sales declarations 2011-2019
Today’s consumer and organic

In 2019, Soil Association Certification research found that there’s been a step change in UK consumers’ concerns about the environment and sustainability. It gives organic businesses a renewed opportunity to engage more shoppers in this dialogue and help them make informed choices about actions they can take through the food and products they choose.

What our consumer research revealed

People have never before been more interested and engaged by sustainability. TV programmes like Blue Planet have had a big influence and become amplified and echoed through press and social media, particularly Instagram. Strong visual images, from plastic straws and turtles, to demonstrators blocking our streets, have had a big effect.

More consumers are aware of organic yet don’t fully understand it. Most can recall very basic principles, like less pesticides or chemicals. But there is little understanding, if any, of the detail or strict certification procedures, resulting in some scepticism.

When explained, the organic proposition – “organic is food as it should be” – inspires consumers to want to buy more organic in the future.

Health, convenience, sustainability and value are the key reasons why consumers buy one product over another. But shoppers also have to make sense of many environmental and sustainability credentials when they buy products. They are consciously critiquing the value of claims to build up their own trusted sources.

Shoppers are still frustrated by the limited availability and range of organic, and higher prices. Organic is still often seen as disproportionately expensive and not readily available on shelf.

Communicating organic to today’s consumer

Businesses and brands need to land messages with greater impact so consumers can justify choosing organic. They can do this by: positioning organic as a solution to sustainable living, with clear facts to back this up; and being hard hitting about the negative impact of carrying on the way we are.

The organic industry should speak consistently, together. Businesses and certifiers can consistently emphasise the benefits of organic and that by choosing it, consumers can make a positive environmental impact. Soil Association Certification will work with the Organic Trade Board and the industry on their 2020 campaign to hone the most relevant and powerful message.

Organic marketing needs to be simple, visual and elicit an emotional response. Consumers are faced with lots of products promising environmental and sustainability benefits, so organic needs to cut through clearly.

Urgency is a key message for organic. It’s how we need to produce food and products to thrive in the future. By choosing organic now, consumers can take individual action to manage a sense of powerlessness about environmental and sustainability issues.

At a glance

• The environment, sustainability and health are increasingly important consumer motivators when choosing food
• Simple, visual messaging that elicits an emotional response works for consumers faced with products promising many environmental and sustainability benefits
• Over 85% of UK adults are now buying organic compared to just under 80% five years ago
Who is buying organic?

**The majority.** Over 85% of UK adults are now buying organic compared to just under 80% five years ago.*

**Loyal.** Research shows that 4.8 million shoppers account for 20% of total organic sales.*

**Young.** More than four out of 10 (44%) 18-29 year-olds try to buy organic whenever they can.* This compares to 27% of the total population. For this younger age group, wanting products that are better for the environment is the third most popular reason for buying organic.

**Lucrative and valuable shoppers.** The more money a shopper spends on organic, the greater amount they spend on groceries alltogether.*

**Ethical.** Food and drink spending on ethical products increased to £12 billion in 2018 versus just over £1 billion in 1999**. Organic is a major part of this rising trend.

**Environmentally aware.** More than 40% of consumers are concerned about the environment and almost six in 10 consumers say plastic use has affected their decision making when buying food.***

**On trend.** Organic products are becoming more innovative and meet many predicted food trends for 2020. Organic brands are leading on healthy food on the go, satisfying vegan and flexitarian diets and providing healthier choices to conscious shoppers.

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### Organic penetration and frequency growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market penetration</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>83.8%</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Organic Trade Board Study | Kantar’s FMCG Panel | Data to w/c 6 October 2019

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Sources:
* Organic Trade Board Study | Kantar Worldpanel | Data to w/c 6 October 2019
** Co-op’s Twenty Years of Ethical Consumerism 2019 report
*** Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board /YouGov April/May 2019 research
Organic farming

Farmers faced a year of uncertainty in 2019, with many waiting for greater political clarity before making major business decisions. Land statistics reflect this. Total organic land in the UK has seen a small decline, and land in conversion has increased slightly. It is encouraging to see that more people are converting their land to organic production. The Agriculture Bill 2019-20 promises to reward farmers for protecting and improving soils, which is at the heart of organic production.

As we face the prospect of a greater number of imports with varying environmental and animal welfare standards post-Brexit, producing organic food makes good business sense. It offers a point of difference to conscious consumers. We see clear opportunities for farmers who want to engage in short supply chains as organic sales through online and food service channels are growing fast.

According to DEFRA, there were 474 thousand hectares of organic land in 2018, an 8.4% decrease since 2017. This is mainly due to a fall in rough grazing and woodland areas in Scotland. However, DEFRA statistics show a small rise in land in conversion to organic in 2018, the fourth consecutive increase since 2014. This is positive news and aligns with Soil Association Certification data, which indicates a 12% increase in land in conversion to organic in 2019. Farmers are encouraged by consumer interest in how they can take action to reduce their impact on the environment.

### Trends in organic production

Cereals, vegetables and arable crops are the main organic crops grown in the UK. There hasn’t been a significant change in what UK organic land is used for, according to 2018 DEFRA statistics which show that 8% grows organic cereal. While sales of UK-grown vegetables slowed through supermarkets, items like carrots and potatoes still sell a large amount within their category. Organic arable crops are continuing to perform well, bolstered by significant price premiums and innovations in mechanical weeding techniques. Farmers continue to combine livestock enterprises with general cropping, with an increase in high value niche arable products, like organic quinoa, spelt and heritage varieties.

More organic vineyards are coming through conversion this year. The explosion in sales of organic wine, and our changing climate, is encouraging more businesses to explore this interesting market.

Consumer demand for organic eggs and chicken has led to greater availability in supermarkets. DEFRA statistics show the number of total poultry farmed organically in the UK increased by 10% between 2017 and 2018, rising to almost 3.4 million birds. There were double digit increases in sales of organic eggs and organic chicken in 2019.

Organic businesses with short supply chains are meeting consumer demand to shop local and healthily. This includes those with vegetable and meat box schemes and farm-gate sales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>00s hectares</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>Year-on-year change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully organic UK land</td>
<td>484.8</td>
<td>441.1</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in conversion to organic</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>+1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total UK organic land</td>
<td>517.4</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>-8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEFRA Organic farming statistics 2018
Governmental support and payments for organic farming

There’s uncertainty around government support for organic, particularly in Wales and Scotland.

The new Agriculture Bill could mean farmers are rewarded for both productivity and environmental management. The bill prioritises soil health and has provisions to reward farmers who protect and improve soil quality – a positive signal for organic farmers. The Soil Association will continue to lobby the UK government to fully support farmers to adopt nature-friendly, agroecological farming, such as organic.

- The main support for converting to organic in England – the Countryside Stewardship scheme – is continuing in 2020. From 2024, a new five-year system called Environmental Land Management will come in, which is likely to reward land managers for the public goods that they provide.
- In Wales, the Soil Association is working with the Welsh Government on a new Sustainable Farming scheme which could reward farmers for delivering sustainable land management outcomes.
- The Scottish payment system for organic farmers, Agri-Environment Climate Scheme, won’t be taking new applications in 2020 which could deter people from converting to organic. The Soil Association is advising Scottish Government on their future farming and food production policy and the role of organic.
- In Northern Ireland, organic maintenance payments for farmers will continue in 2020 under the Environmental Farming Scheme.

Our research (see pages 20 and 21) found more consumer interest and awareness of the importance of biodiversity within agricultural production systems, and the harm caused to it by pesticides.

Alongside the increased popularity of plant-based diets, organic meat and dairy offer a marketable differential for conscious consumers. This is reflected by DEFRA figures for 2018, which show that organically reared cattle numbers increased by 10%. As only 3.3% of the total UK cattle population is reared organically, there is plenty of opportunity for growth. Soil Association Certification continues to support businesses to better communicate the important role that livestock plays in an organic system, as well as emphasising the benefits of meat from sustainable systems such as organic.
Per capita spending on organic food has doubled in Europe in the last decade. According to the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), in Europe, consumers spent 47 euros on organic food per person annually in 2017. The Swiss spent the most on organic food – 288 euros per capita. Just over half (51%) of Danes buy organic food every single week. Globally, European countries account for the highest shares of organic food sales as a percentage of their respective food markets. Denmark is the first country to surpass the 10% mark and has the highest organic share (13.3%) worldwide.

Sweden are now seeing a slowdown in their organic market. According to EkoWeb, the Swedish market for organic food grew by only 4% in 2018 versus a massive 20 to 40% growth from 2013-2015. EkoWeb puts this down to organic becoming one of many options for sustainable food, competing with other animal welfare and environmental labels. Local food has also had a resurgence and is competing head on with organic.

Brexit uncertainty may have partially contributed to the UK’s drop from seventh to ninth in world sales of organic. It has affected small organic companies’ export business as they are unsure of future requirements for trading with Europe. However, we could see export markets, like Australia, New Zealand and Asia, becoming more attractive destinations for UK organic.

For more information about the effect of Brexit on organic trade, please visit: www.soilassociation.org/brexitforbusiness

The global organic market continues to grow, reaching 92 billion euros with almost 3 million producers worldwide in 2017. However, the UK is now only the ninth largest organic market in the world, dropping from seventh position.

### Key countries for sales of organic (billion euros)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sales est</th>
<th>Growth est</th>
<th>% total global sales</th>
<th>Penetration est</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>47.25B</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>10.91B</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>9.7B</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>7.6B</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3.6B</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2.87B</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Approx size of market converted from UK £ using £1 = 1.17 euros and USD = 0.9 euro. Figures estimated using data from a number of sources including OTA, Agence Bio, FiBL.
USA

USA sales of total organic broke through the $50 billion mark in 2018. The growth rate for organic easily outpaces the general market in the USA. Organic food sales reached $47.9 billion in 2018, an increase of 5.9%. And while sales of organic non-food products jumped by 10.6% to $4.6 billion, total non-food sales were a lot lower at just 3.7% growth.

Produce remains the stalwart of this organic industry, offering a gateway for new organic consumers, especially millennials and young families. It accounts for close to 15% of all the produce sold in the USA.

Germany

The second biggest organic market in the world increased sales by 5.5% in 2018. Germany-based supermarkets and discounters have continued to increase their ranges and the country’s organic land area grew by around 8%. Supermarket sales outperformed at over 8.6%, still taking an increasing share of the overall market at 59% (compared to 64.6% in the UK). Organic eggs have the top organic share in their category, accounting for 12% of their market. Milk and oils are also in the top three in terms of organic shares in their category.

France

Sales of organic in France have had steady growth over the last four years, reaching 9.7 billion euros in 2018. Just under half of total sales are through supermarkets, with a number having their own branded organic shops. Carrefour, for example, has over 6,000 organic lines in their hypermarkets and recently opened an exclusively organic store in Lyon. They have plans to open more across France, Poland and Belgium, showcasing unpackaged organic produce among other lines.

Independent retailers and chains, such as Biocoop, have a much larger share of the market in France (36% versus 16.6% in the UK). Grocery has the largest share of overall sales, at 23%, and alcohol accounts for 12% (compared to 3.7% in the UK).

China

Demand for organic food in China has grown considerably in the last two years because of rapid socio-economic development, modernisation and the industrialisation of agricultural food production. Also, recent government policies have favoured organic for food safety.

China is the largest consumer of food products and fastest-growing food market across Asia. It therefore offers immense opportunity for producers that want to increase their land productivity using organic methods.

Italy

Sales of organic in Italy have surpassed those in the UK, giving them a top three slot in Europe, with more than 18,000 processors of organic. The country is now the second largest exporter of organic in the world, after the USA. The export market is worth 2.1 billion euros, almost two thirds the size of the at home market in Italy. Popular export products are tinned tomatoes and wine.

Only 50% of organic sales go through supermarkets in Italy. But this dynamic is changing, with a 10% year on year increase in supermarket sales, compared to a decline in the specialist channel.

At a glance

- Demand for organic is increasing globally. The USA is the biggest market with a 43% share of global sales
- Per capita spending on organic food has doubled in Europe in the last decade
- UK penetration increased in 2019 to 1.6% versus 1.3% level five years ago

51.4% of Danes buy organic food every single week

*Source: Organic Trade Board Study | Kantar’s FMCG Panel | Data to w/c 6 October 2019*
The year ahead

As we move into the next phase of Brexit, 2020 could see reduced uncertainty, and bring a level of stability and consumer reassurance. Yet, with final trade deals still to be clarified, businesses will remain uneasy. Predictions for the organic market to continue to grow strongly beyond £2.5 billion by the end of 2020 are on course. Organic will be more relevant than ever, as planet-centric decision making has taken hold, and customers are making bolder choices that will have a positive impact on the environment.

The UK’s withdrawal from the EU on 31 January 2020 marked the start of a year of preparation and transition for organic businesses. The UK will remain in the EU’s customs union and single market for the duration of the implementation period and all EU rules and regulations will still apply until 31 December 2020. Once a clearer timetable is shared by government, this period could provide better economic stability, with clearer direction for businesses and consumers.

As trade negotiations are taking place, Soil Association Certification is forging ahead with our application to be an EU-recognised third country certifier for the UK. Organic labelling will carry on as normal, and is unlikely to change during 2020. We will continue to support and update organic businesses with as much information as possible, to help with decision making and trading across countries as deals emerge. We anticipate that customers will be even more concerned about the provenance and sourcing of their food to make sure it’s from countries where less intensive farming takes place. Soil Association is lobbying policymakers to maintain our UK food and organic standards which offer the most sustainable solutions.

Environmental issues and climate change will doubtless become core to the corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies of many businesses during 2020, if they are not already. Alarming words such as ‘climate and nature crisis’ are challenging current structures and approaches to everything from packaging and waste, to the impact of our dietary choices on the wider world. Soil Association Certification will support the organic sector to lower the impact of packaging on our planet. We will continue to encourage and support ‘open source’ sharing of ideas around developing better packaging and facilitate collaboration across businesses.

79% of surveyed licensees expect further growth in 2020
The Soil Association will continue to position and promote the ‘eating less but better meat and dairy’ message as part of a move to more sustainable diets and land use. We’ll cite policy research by the IDDRi Institute that models a fully agroecological Europe and a shift to plant-based proteins and higher welfare grass-fed livestock. The younger generation are continuing to desert eating meat. Yet, according to the Vegan Society, just over 1% of people in the UK are vegan. We will advocate that plant-based diets and high quality meat and dairy can both have a role. We support a holistic farming system which will help biodiversity and soils and will play our part in getting the right information out to consumers in a balanced way. We will stress the importance of reducing our dependency on meat from animals fed on grains and proteins grown abroad. The ‘less but better’ debate will also highlight the need to prevent trade deals allowing imports to the UK of products derived from intensive farming practices.

It will be an exciting year for ‘joining up’ marketing and promotional messages for organic across the sector. Following the end of the EU-funded Organic Trade Board (OTB) Feed Your Happy campaign, there will be more flexibility to tailor a UK marketing push to meet rapidly changing consumer needs and the desire to take action to help the climate crisis. The campaign can stress how organic can help people become more sustainable across all aspects of their lives. Soil Association Certification will work with the OTB and others to create a unified voice, focusing on the Organic September campaign in major retailers. Our marketing toolkits will provide consistent messaging which puts sustainability and positive environmental impacts at their core and shows the positive effects of organic choices.

Preparation for the BOOM (Best of Organic Market) awards 2021 will get underway, following their success in 2019. These will give brands and businesses a showcase for their quality and innovative organic products and help celebrate the exciting industry we are part of. You can see the 2019 winners on the inside back cover of this report.

The relevance and appropriateness of organic will resonate more strongly with consumers. They’ll become even more environmentally aware and planet-centric in their decision making. More stability could follow the December 2019 general election and progress towards Brexit may encourage consumer spending and bode well for organic sales. More retailers are also seeing the relevance of agroecological solutions and may place greater emphasis on their organic strategy, as many did in 2019.
Our 2019 consumer research (see pg 20) found that people are making more planet-focused decisions when they do their shopping. Consumers see organic as better for the environment and want to take individual action to balance their sense of powerlessness. Businesses need to consistently emphasise that choosing organic, has a positive impact on the environment.

Social media and TV programmes are having a huge impact on consumer awareness of global issues. Research from organic food company Wessanen found that over a third (37%) of respondents think more sustainably as a result of programmes like the BBC’s Blue Planet. Movements like Extinction Rebellion are also raising the profile of our climate emergency and helping ‘active choices’ become the norm. There’s more awareness of the environmental problems that organic helps to tackle, including soil degradation, and loss of biodiversity.

Organic farms have around 50% more wildlife, and organic grain fields have up to seven times more bees.

Farming organically is better for biodiversity. Over 40% of insect species are declining while one in three mouthfuls of our food is dependent on pollinators. We need to protect vital insect engineers by encouraging nature-friendly farming. Organic farms are having a positive impact on the environment.

Organic farms are more resilient to climate change. There is more carbon in the soil than in plants, trees and the atmosphere combined. If the soil is a carbon sponge, organic soils are nearly twice as “spongy”. Organic soils also store twice as much water, helping to protect against flooding.

An organically farmed Europe can feed a growing population a healthy diet. In 2020, French policy research institute IDDRI will develop its 10-year model for the UK to transition to a more sustainable way of farming. It will look at what the UK might be producing, importing and exporting as part of a Europe that can produce enough to feed its expected population healthily in 2050.

Organic agriculture directly contributes to at least seven of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and supports at least two more. That’s according to a FiBL review that references the SDGs, 17 global goals to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

Find out more visit www.soilassociation.org

Now is the time for organic

Our 2019 consumer research (see pg 20) found that people are making more planet-focused decisions when they do their shopping. Consumers see organic as better for the environment and want to take individual action to balance their sense of powerlessness. Businesses need to consistently emphasise that choosing organic, has a positive impact on the environment.

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Box schemes and other organic businesses naturally use less packaging, a priority for the conscious consumer. This is a promising point of difference for many organic businesses, which can be amplified in their marketing. For example, Abel & Cole advertise that there is 92% less plastic in their fruit and vegetable boxes. Independent zero waste shops selling organic are also meeting this demand.
Triodos Bank and the organic sector in 2020

“Given the UK’s plan to leave the EU in 2020, it’s likely to be an uneasy 12 months for businesses, including those in the organic sector, as new EU trade arrangements are negotiated.

For our sector specifically, we can expect the Agriculture Bill and the Environment Bill to finally move forward. One of the biggest challenges will be making sure the UK government provides the vision for a sustainable agricultural system, undiluted by its trade agreements. Economic growth should not be the sole goal.

A time of change provides scope for intervention. I believe that opportunities will arise to debate, discuss and raise awareness of the food and agricultural sector’s impact on the environment. As a community of organic producers and growers, we need to be agile and ready to stand up for the long-term benefit this approach has for society and the planet. That’s a systemic transition from the current production-focused systems towards one that is ecologically and socially resilient and based on balanced ecosystems, a healthy society and inclusive prosperity.

The Soil Association, with numerous others, has worked hard to make sure organic is established and trusted in the UK. We need to continue to build on this, with ambition. An important message to now convey is that organic offers a route to long-term sustainability, while still having capacity to provide for a growing population. It is a system for the benefit of all.

As it has done for the past 25 years, Triodos Bank UK will be proud to support farmers, producers and businesses working in the organic and agroecological sector throughout this new decade.”

Simon Crichton
Food, Farming and Trade Team Manager, Triodos Bank UK
Find out more at: www.triodos.co.uk
About Soil Association Certification

We’re the UK’s largest organic certification body, working both nationally and internationally to offer a range of organic and sustainable certification schemes across food, farming, catering, beauty and wellbeing, textiles and forestry.

The Soil Association Certification team supports 6,000 businesses, 3,500 of which are certified organic, and we license over 70% of organic food on sale in the UK.

We carry out inspections and award organic certification to farms and businesses that meet our standards. The certification schemes we offer are recognised and trusted by consumers and businesses around the world and our technical and certification support are market leading.

By certifying with Soil Association Certification your business will be able to take advantage of these exclusive benefits:

- Access to our award-winning marketing campaigns, including Organic September, Organic Christmas and Best of Organic Market (BOOM) Awards
- Free print and digital marketing materials to help you communicate the benefits of organic
- Market, consumer and industry insight through reports, briefings and industry forums, including opportunity to attend our annual Trade Conference, organic learning days and representation at the UK’s largest food and drink trade shows
- Support with integrity and supply chain transparency through reports, insight and access to technology trials
- Access to new routes to market through trade and consumer shows, and meet the buyer events. Also access into selling into foodservice supply chains through meet the caterer days
- Participation in regular webinars regarding policy, trade and standards
- Technical expertise and customer service from our highly experienced teams.

Find out more about certification

Obtaining certification provides assurance to your customers that your products or enterprises are meeting some of the highest available standards. If you would like to discuss which type of certification is right for your business, please:

Call: 0300 330 0100
Email: goorganic@soilassociation.org
Visit: soilassociation.org/certification
About this report

This report is compiled using data from a number of sources, including Nielsen Scantrack, licensees, caterer and retailer surveys and contributions from key partners within the industry. We are grateful to all those who have contributed in any way, and particularly to Triodos Bank, which have supported the report.

The report is available free to licensees at: www.soilassociation.org/download. For non-Soil Association Certification licensees, the report costs £100+VAT.

Best of Organic Market (BOOM) Award Winners 2019:

Best of organic ....

Dairy
Godminster Vintage Organic Cheddar

Fresh Produce
Bothenhill Organic Asparagus

Bakery
Daylesford Organic Beetroot Sourdough

Snacks
Nairn’s Organic Super Seeded Oatcakes

Confectionery
Original Beans, Zoque 88% Spirited Dark Chocolate

Chilled & Frozen
Tideford Lentil & Spinach Dhal Soup

Meat & Poultry
Higher Hacknell Organic Lamb Cutlets

Pantry
Hembridge Organic Raspberry Jam

Baby & Children’s Products
Lower Hurst Organic Beef & Carrot Meatballs

Alcoholic Drinks
Davenport Wines 2017 Diamond Fields Pinot Noir

Non Alcoholic Drinks
Brocton Leys Organic Apple Juice

Specialist Diet
Clive’s Pies Organic Creamy Mushroom Pie

Scottish Product
Island Bakery Lemon Melts

New Organic Product
Pip Organic Rainbow Fruity Lollies with Cheeky Veg

Eating Out
Riverford Field Kitchen

Independent Retailers
Locavore, Glasgow

Box Schemes
Riverford

Online Retailing
Ocado

Supermarkets
Sainsbury’s

Innovation
The Organic Pantry

Export Company
Clearspring

Packaging Initiative
Arla Foods Organic Eco Cycle Bottle

Marketing Campaign
Yeo Valley Kefir marketing campaign

Food Blogger
Kathy Slack, @gluts_gluttony

Organic Farmer
Jo and Tim Budden, Higher Hacknell Farm

Nation’s Favourite Product
Godminster Vintage Organic Cheddar

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At Triodos Bank we actively support an ecological and socially resilient food and farming sector.

We finance the UK’s leading organic businesses and many others, providing local, sustainable and nutritious food for all.

Find out more at triodos.co.uk/organic