



The future is in our hands

Organic Trust Australia – Research and Education



Prospectus

*Donations are
tax-deductible*

The organic market is dynamic

Revenue from organic farming in Australia is expected to be \$733.8 million in 2015-16, up from \$695.1 million, an estimated increase of 5.6 per cent.¹

According to the same report, 'Rising health consciousness has contributed to the strong performance of organic farming. Other reasons consumers are turning to organic produce include a desire to avoid pesticides, environmental concerns and increasing accessibility'. Growth is expected to continue strongly as consumption is said to become more mainstream, with the two major supermarkets involved in the market.

Worldwide, estimates of retail values of organic products were reported as having grown from US\$15.2 billion in 1999 to \$28.7 billion in 2004, \$54.9 billion in 2009, and US\$80.0 billion in 2014.²

According to the same source, consumer demand for organic products is concentrated in North America and Europe, which comprised over 90 per cent of total global sales, though only one third of total organic farm land.

Much of the organic produce from Asia, Latin America and Africa is exported. In the Australian organic market, fruit and vegetables are important and dairy is increasingly an important sector. Organic beef is mainly exported.

Government research funding for organic agriculture in Australia is at present at an all-time low.

With your help, Organic Trust Australia - Research and Education is ideally positioned to increase the resources available for research and education in this dynamic industry, and to co-ordinate and focus investment in the best areas.



1. IBISWorld industry report X0013, as reported on <http://media.ibisworld.com.au/2016/01/19/ibisworld-reveals-the-industries-set-to-fly-and-fall-in-2015-16-2/>.

2. Sahota, A. (2016), 'The global market for organic food and drink'. In: Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM), 'The World of Organic Agriculture – Statistics and Emerging Trends 2016'.

You are invited to participate

Organic Trust Australia - Research and Education (OTARE) invites you or your organisation to invest in the Trust.

The Trust was established to enable the organic industry, and all others interested in organic farming, to invest in scientific research and education relevant to organic and bio-dynamic management systems.

As consumers and society in general seek improved health and environmental outcomes from the food system, an increasing awareness of environmental benefits of organic farming will help drive the market for organic food and foods produced from more natural and environmentally compatible farming systems, both here and overseas.

In order to fully capitalise on this global demand, Australia needs to invest in research and education to help develop robust, cost-effective food supply chains that deliver high quality food products and ingredients and provide farmers with decent livelihoods. OTARE will help Australia to become a significant world organic food supplier by targeting research and education programs that address challenges to organic food and farming systems development.

Your investment will accelerate the development and uptake of organic farming practices within Australia, thereby underpinning the long-term sustainability of Australia's food

Board of Trustees

Tim Marshall (chair) *30 years' experience with organic standards, certification and inspection, in Australia and another 30 countries. Past key roles in NASAA, IFOAM, OFA and Acres Australia. Currently author, trainer and consultant.*

Dr Paul Kristiansen *Lecturer at UNE in Agricultural Systems, specializing in horticulture, weed ecology and management, organic (& alternative) farming systems, experimental design and analysis.*

Ms Liz Clay *Organic vegetable farmer; Chair Gippsland Climate Change Network ; formerly: IFOAM World Board member; Chair West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority; Chair Victorian Organic Industry Committee – VOICe*

Dr Sarah Wheeler *Associate Professor Wheeler is a researcher at the Centre for Global Food & Resources, University of Adelaide. She has expertise in economics in the areas of irrigated farming, organic farming, water markets and water scarcity.*

Past Board Members

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Mr Terry Hehir *Organic dairy farmer; Chair Organic Dairy Farmers of Australia; Nuffield Scholar.*

Dr Els Wynen *Agricultural Economist: economics of organic farming, marketing, trade, environment & farming systems, research.*

Organic farming provides solutions

Agriculture in general has been a major contributor to the main environmental problems of our time, including soil degradation, water and air pollution, decreasing biodiversity and climate change. Agriculture need not cause such problems, and world-wide many farmers are discovering that organic farming can be part of the solution, rather than the cause.

Modern industrialized agriculture is based on very simplified ecosystems that are quite unlike the ecosystems that supported human-kind for millennia. They require large inputs of potential pollutants including pesticides and synthetic fertilizers to control pests and diseases and provide adequate nutrition for plants and animals. Organic farmers, together with scientists from around the world, are learning how to take a more ecological approach to managing productive farming systems. They are working in harmony with nature, rather than attempting to control nature. In organic agriculture, not only are synthetic inputs banned, but organic practices also focus on stimulating the biological processes in the soil, so that deterioration of the soil is actually reversed. Stringent organic standards require the producer to identify any potential environmental threats, and take action to address them, for instance by maintaining or establishing areas of native vegetation.

When synthetic inputs are banned, other methods must be employed to manage the nutrient and pest issues. More often than not, a combination of practices is needed to be able to deal with the issues at hand. Some examples are given by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (2002)¹:

Soil management practices include increasing humus content and biological activity as well as meeting mineral deficiency of soils, by means of:

- crop rotations, deep- and shallow-rooted plants, different crops requiring different nutrients;
- growing green manure;
- application of rock dust, manure, crop and agro-industry residues, household waste, compost;
- appropriate soil tillage.

Pest, disease and weed management practices include:

- crop rotations to minimise survival of pests which can infest the next crop;
- crop breeding for resistance to diseases and pests and enhanced competition against weeds;
- strip cropping, to moderate spreading of pests over large areas;
- manipulation of pH and soil moisture (with irrigation or soil surface management);
- manipulation of planting dates;
- adjustment of seeding rates, to crowd out weeds or avoid insects;
- use of appropriate plant varieties and livestock breeds for local conditions;
- implementation of stock culling programs, emphasis on genetic resistance to certain diseases;
- use of stock buying programs which minimise the import of diseases on to the farm;
- biological control methods, to encourage natural enemies of pests by providing habitat or by breeding and releasing them in areas where they are required;
- trapping insects, possibly with the use of lures such as pheromones;
- biological pesticides in which the active ingredient is short-lasting, and which may be produced locally.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/AC116E/ac116e02.htm>

What you might gain as a donor to the Trust

As a donor to Organic Trust Australia - Research and Education, you contribute to the long-term environmental health and prosperity of Australia. You may:

- play a role in setting and implementing the investment strategy of the Trust;
- authorize exclusive research and development projects designed to give a competitive advantage to your business;
- receive additional funding from other sources for your research project, through the Trust's intervention;
- share in benefits gained from the development of:
 - training programs, best practice protocols, process manuals and new talent;
 - patents, licences and spin-off company equity;
- gain access to supply chain partners and marketing information;
- have opportunities to utilise networks created by the Trust for product development, testing commercialisation, technology transfer and marketing;
- have preferential access to licences for intellectual property developed by the Trust;
- obtain naming rights for special funding such as scholarships;
- receive public recognition on the Trust website.

Why support this Trust?

Organic Trust Australia - Research and Education:

- is a charitable trust: donations are tax deductible – your donations go further in advancing the cause of organic agriculture;
- can use your funds to help leverage other contributions for research from third parties (e.g. the Australian Research Council Linkage Program that brings together business investors and university researchers);
- has a brokerage role, e.g. assists investors to find appropriate researchers;
- negotiates with Research and Development organizations to co-operate and co-ordinate research;
- is part of international research co-operation, liaising with the EU, the International Society of Organic Agriculture Research (ISO FAR) and the Organic Research Centres Alliance (ORCA).

Organic Trust Australia - Research and Education is in a good position to:

- lobby government about policy, for instance to change policies detrimental to organic farming or to increase funds for research and education;
- achieve increased funding for research and education by negotiating on Australia's behalf with international sources such as:
 - Forum for European-Australian Science and Technology (FEAST), Erasmus and Socrates programmes;
 - Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Myer Foundation, Pew Charitable Foundation;
- attract untied funding from investors who are interested in research into environmental topics;
- be active in:
 - more general education and industry development, not research *per se*;
 - facilitating or initiating education on a sector basis.

Why we need organic research and education

Research and education will underpin the future development of organic agriculture in Australia, just as it does in many other countries. Funds for this are limited, so it is important that investments be made wisely. OTARE supports research that recognises the unique climate and soils of Australia, and the need to develop markets for Australian farmers. At the same time, it supports the organic industry in accessing and making use of information of a more generic nature which is developed overseas.

The Trust carefully considers which topics can be (and are being) researched in other countries (such as nutritional qualities), and which issues are specific to Australia and therefore need researching here (such as applied technical, financial, economic, and environmental impacts under Australian conditions; supply chain issues; export market information; Australian policies).

OTARE supports research and education that will:

- remove barriers to organic conversion;
- enhance organic system productivity;
- establish economic, environmental and social performance benchmarks for organic farming;
- develop, demonstrate and validate integrated organic farm management systems;
- understand and optimise soil biology for improved Australian organic crop, horticultural and pasture production and environmental performance;
- evaluate, develop, validate and commercialize farmer-friendly soil inputs and methodologies;
- improve international competitiveness through better value chain coordination;
- enable commercialisation and market development for research and commercial partners' products;
- educate and train students and industry practitioners in organic science and technology;
- develop scientific and commercial capacity to utilise and further develop organic systems science;
- educate the community and conventional food suppliers about the benefits and value of organic food production and supply.

How you can participate

- **Donations** not tied to particular projects (*see facing page*)
- **Investment funding** tied to projects of your own choice*
- **Individual bequests**

* If you are interested in discussing options for investment funding for projects of your own choice, please email us at info@organictrustaustralia.org.au

To make your tax-deductible donation to the Trust

You can donate on-line on: www.organictrustaustralia.com.au
where you can find details of specific projects to which you may wish to donate.

OR:

Copy and email this form to info@organictrustaustralia.org.au

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Email

Telephone (.....).....



Direct credit paid into Bank Australia (formerly Bank Mecu or MCU)

BSB 313140 | Account number 12048725

Account name Organic Trust Australia – R&E

Amount paid \$

My reference

Note

**We will send you a receipt as soon as we have processed your payment.
We thank you for your support.**

“ Organic agriculture enhances soil structures, conserves water, mitigates climate change, and ensures sustained biodiversity.

Through its holistic nature, organic farming integrates wild biodiversity, agro-biodiversity and soil conservation, and takes low-intensity farming one step further by eliminating the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and genetically modified organisms (GMOs), which is not only an improvement for human health (food quality) and agrobiodiversity, but also for the associated off-farm biotic communities. ”

The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements



Contact OTARE

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