

Biological Farmers of Australia, Media Release 13 January 2010

## **MASSIVE GROWTH SPURT PREDICTED FOR ORGANICS**

Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA), Australia's largest representative group for the organic food and farming industry, says that the recent massive growth predictions for the organic industry reflect data and trends identified in ongoing market research commissioned by Industry.

Organics is being increasingly tipped as the industry of opportunities in Australia, echoing similar positive reports in the US, Europe and other countries. In survey findings released over the past week by independent global industry researcher IBISWorld, organic farming was tipped to be a front-runner in the areas of revenue and employment in Australia.

In its report on the "top 10" growth industries, IBISWorld states that organic farming revenue is poised for a growth spurt, to increase 14.8% in 2010, raising the value to \$430 million. This places organic farming in the top two growth industries in Australia for the coming year. In the next five years revenue is expected to grow at an average rate of 13.4% per year reaching approximately \$760 million in 2014.

IBISWorld General Manager (Australia), Mr Robert Bryant, says that; "While on average organic goods remain more expensive than non-organic produce, higher disposable incomes, coupled with increasing awareness of environmental sustainability and an increase in the range of organic produce available, will see continued growth in this industry.

"Growth will mainly be driven by increases in production, and an increase in consumer demand," Mr Bryant said. "Not only does Organic Farming offer higher returns for farmers, but recent studies suggest it is more resilient and adaptable to changing conditions wrought by climate change - encouraging some farmers to switch from conventional to organic farming."

In a separate IBISWorld report, organic farming, as an employer, is forecast to strengthen from 6.2% in 2012-13 to a phenomenal 11.2% in 2013-14.

In terms of job prospects, Mr Bryant noted opportunities would relate to increased primary production, creating demand for farmers, farm-hands, skilled and unskilled labourers, and itinerant workers such as pickers.

"While many of the jobs created will fall into the category of unskilled labour, there will also be opportunities created for ecologists, biodynamic farming specialists, and researchers," Mr Bryant added.

That organic production is on the crest of a wave comes as no surprise to Holly Vyner, General Manager of the Biological Farmers of Australia.



Quality  
Endorsed  
Company

**BIOLOGICAL FARMERS OF  
AUSTRALIA CO-OP LTD**  
ABN 75 699 664 781

HEAD OFFICE · BRISBANE

PO Box 530 766 Gympie Rd  
CHERMESIDE QLD 4032  
Ph: +61 (0)7 3350 5716  
Fax: +61 (0)7 3350 5996

[info@bfa.com.au](mailto:info@bfa.com.au)

SOUTHERN DIVISION OFFICE

PO Box 503  
NURIOOTPA SA 5355  
Ph: + 61 (0)8 8562 2769  
Fax: + 61 (0)8 8562 3034

[info@bfa.com.au](mailto:info@bfa.com.au)

[www.bfa.com.au](http://www.bfa.com.au)

“We have been watching steady growth in organics for some time now,” she says. “BFA commissioned research in 2008 reported retail sales overshooting the half billion mark (AU \$0.6 billion) and an 80% growth in farm gate sales over four years despite widespread drought.

“This year will see the publication of the 2010 Australian Organic Market Report, independently researched by University of New England on behalf of BFA, building upon 2008 data. This next report will be an important yardstick for measuring organic industry growth over the past two years, and will provide industry members and potential new entrants with an essential guide to trends and opportunities in various sectors within the organic industry.”

Ms Vyner adds that organic farmers are, on average, younger than non-organic farmers, which augurs well for future organic farming growth.

The rise and rise of organic production has an impact beyond the farm gate, according to BFA Director and Standards Convenor Dr Andrew Monk.

“In the marketplace, supply chain capacity is increasing to cope with the expanded demand for and supply of organics,” he says. “The growing number of larger retailers that are now seeking out and stocking increased ranges of organic produce, should assist to grow consumer demand as organic becomes more available and consumers become better educated on the value of organics. In tandem with this has been the growth in popularity of organic farmers market stalls and smaller, local retail.”

Dr Monk says that biological farming is a long-term farming system and that BFA is working to assist in the development of this broader sector, which will in turn continue to assist in the maturation of the organic food and farming industry.

“There will be a challenge in developing and nurturing the skills necessary for wide-scale food production and value adding under organic parameters,” he says. “The recent incredible growth and success of courses such as the certified organic program at Albury, Riverina Institute of TAFE tells us that those skills can be taught but require a significant change in mindset to non-organic farming education and practices. Properly administered, the organic process – agriculture in particular - requires unique sets of skills which can't be learnt overnight. Now is the time to start.”

#### **Resources:**

Ibis World: [www.ibisworld.com.au/pressrelease/pressrelease.aspx?prid=212](http://www.ibisworld.com.au/pressrelease/pressrelease.aspx?prid=212)

Ibis World: Opting for Organic; IBISWorld Industry report X0013 – Organic Farming

Australian Organic Market Report 2008: [www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec\\_ID=259](http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec_ID=259)

Australian Certified Organic Magazine, Spring 2009; Organic Training; Tradition in the Soil

**ENDS**



Quality  
Endorsed  
Company

**BIOLOGICAL FARMERS OF  
AUSTRALIA CO-OP LTD**  
ABN 75 699 664 781

HEAD OFFICE · BRISBANE

PO Box 530 766 Gympie Rd  
CHERMESIDE QLD 4032  
Ph: +61 (0)7 3350 5716  
Fax: +61 (0)7 3350 5996

[info@bfa.com.au](mailto:info@bfa.com.au)

SOUTHERN DIVISION OFFICE

PO Box 503  
NURIOOTPA SA 5355  
Ph: + 61 (0)8 8562 2769  
Fax: + 61 (0)8 8562 3034

[info@bfa.com.au](mailto:info@bfa.com.au)

[www.bfa.com.au](http://www.bfa.com.au)



**Media Contacts:**

**Dr Andrew Monk** Ph: 0429 960 044

**BFA Media Department Jan Nary:** Ph: +61 (0)7 3350 5716 ext. 275

**Recent related news:**

17-12-09: [Organic Crusader protects against unscrupulous organic labelling](#)

16-12-09: [Organic farmers avoid chemical cancer risk](#)

04-12-09: [Organic agriculture, practiced worldwide, could sequester nearly 40% of current CO2 emissions](#)

The BFA is working to improve organic industry growth and education in Australia. Ask about your copy of the Australian Organic Market Report to see how the organic industry is achieving its goals. More information is available at [http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec\\_ID=260](http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec_ID=260).



Quality  
Endorsed  
Company

**BIOLOGICAL FARMERS OF  
AUSTRALIA CO-OP LTD**

ABN 75 699 664 781

HEAD OFFICE - BRISBANE

PO Box 530 766 Gympie Rd  
CHERMESIDE QLD 4032  
Ph: +61 (0)7 3350 5716  
Fax: +61 (0)7 3350 5996

[info@bfa.com.au](mailto:info@bfa.com.au)

SOUTHERN DIVISION OFFICE

PO Box 503  
NURIOOTPA SA 5355  
Ph: + 61 (0)8 8562 2769  
Fax: + 61 (0)8 8562 3034

[info@bfa.com.au](mailto:info@bfa.com.au)

[www.bfa.com.au](http://www.bfa.com.au)

THE VOICE OF AUSTRALIAN ORGANICS