



Organic Market News

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EDITION 29 :: SEPTEMBER 2010

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CLASSIFIEDS

AGISTMENT

Agistment for cattle available:

ACO and USDA NOP certified property
Located at Baralaba, Central Queensland
Country is good quality growing/finishing country
Phone Gavin Bailey on 07 4998 1281
Email: usmile4@bigpond.com

CATTLE AND BEEF

The Organic Meat Company is looking for more supply of certified organic cattle, including USNOP cattle and Australian certified cattle. We have markets for steers, heifers and cows at all weights and fat. Please contact Peter Gall on 0427 545 082.

120 EU NOP Organic Steers

Santa Cross, 370kgs approx.
Organic certification 4544A
Location: Augathella area Qld
Phone John Elmes on (07) 4654 5454
(posted 22/09/10)

GRAINS

Buffel Seed for sale

Gayndah/American mixed, ACO and USDA NOP certified (cert no 10829A)
82% TZ, quality seed harvested Mungallala QLD
Phone Tony Horvath on (07) 4623 6184
(posted 09/09/10)

Oat/medic hay 85/15 mix.

Approx 70 tonne in 8x4x3 squares
"A" Certified Organic
Location: Nhill, Vic
ACO certification: 10414A
Phone: 03 53974242 / 0429400626
(posted 25/08/10)

Jap Pumpkin Seeds for sale

3-4 kilograms in total
20 grams for \$8 (plus postage & handling)
Bulk orders available
OGA certified organic: 360A
Phone Scott Job on 02 6636 4307
(posted 24/08/10)

BEANS, LEGUMES

Soya Beans For sale

Good quality A-Grade 791 variety (2407A)
Approx 50 Tonne
\$930/ Tonne - on-farm price
Greenridge Organics
Region: Far-North Coast
Phone: 02 6663 1154

Soya Beans, contract wanted

Contract wanted for soya beans
Approx 100 Tonne 2011 season
Greenridge Organics
Region: Far-North Coast
Phone: 02 6663 1154

EMPLOYMENT

SITUATIONS WANTED

INTERNSHIP

Yi Han is a Chinese student looking for an opportunity for an internship in Australia in a business environment, preferably a small to medium sized company or organisation. She is currently studying in the Netherlands and is in her 3rd year of a Degree in Agri-business and Trade; her studies include trade, import & export, logistics, marketing and finance. Her native language is Mandarin and she

has strong English and Dutch language skills and is also fluent in Cantonese. Yi Han is available for an internship for 20 weeks from January 2011.

For more information contact Yi Han on: niki.han@wur.nl

INTERNSHIP

Paul-Antoine Trompette is a French student with a Higher National Diploma in plant technology and a Country Planning Degree. He is looking to improve his agricultural background and experience with an internship in Australia. Preference is for work on an organically farmed property, or an Institute of Research, with the opportunity to learn more about agricultural techniques and Australian agronomic features. He has strong English language skills and will be available for an internship from October 2010 to May 2011.

For more information contact Paul-Antoine on: pa.trompette@gmail.com

VITICULTURE SURVEY – help research to help your business

Irina Santiago is collecting data towards her master's research project in Viticulture at the University of Adelaide.

The main objective of this survey is to quantify a typical Biodynamic (BD) operation for vineyards in Australia. Results from the study may be published in relevant industry journals. The identity of any of the participants will not be divulged. All individual information that is provided during the study will remain confidential.

This information will help biodynamic growers to understand the positioning of their vineyards in the industry as the group data will be used to make comparisons with operations of conventional vineyards. It is a research project which will hopefully bring practical hints to help growers improve their management. It may also help encourage people towards more sustainable practices.

The application used to create this survey is called 'Survey Monkey', an internet based software for surveys. The survey is only for vineyards that follow BD practices.

Participants will be automatically entered into a prize draw (half of a case of a mix of BD wines) upon completion of a valid BD Viticulture survey completed online.

To access the survey please click on the following link: www.surveymonkey.com/s/biodynamics

MARKET UPDATE – BEEF

Much of Eastern Australia received some very good, and in some areas unexpected, rain over the last six months. Peter Gall from The Organic Meat Company in Queensland said this was impacting on the availability of cattle at the moment.

“Producers are hanging on to their cattle for longer to finish them better due to this fantastic start to spring. This has meant they are not as readily available as they were a month ago,” Mr Gall said.

He went on to say that he expects supply numbers to improve over the coming months and that by November there will be more finished cattle on the market.

Mr Gall also said that the strong Australian dollar has impacted on actual returns for USNOP meat exports but due to the shortage at present the price paid to NOP cattle suppliers is stable to marginally higher.

STORY – BEEF PRODUCERS

DARK CUTTING BEEF

Beef is prone to 'dark cutting' (DCB); a chemical reaction that sees cut meat darken after exposure to air. According to DPI (NSW), industry estimates 8-10% of meat is affected. When cattle are stressed the incidence of dark cutting is high.

Following slaughter, glycogen (glucose stored in the muscle) converts to lactic acid, which then lowers the PH level of the meat. If glycogen levels are low, not enough lactic acid is produced, resulting in a PH level remaining above 6.0; DCB is then likely to occur.

DCB not only causes the meat to look dark and unappealing to the consumer, it also affects the meat further by causing drying out during cooking, decreasing its shelf life and giving it a sticky texture. Several factors can increase the incidence of DCB including severe weather conditions during transportation and poor livestock handling. Livestock that are unweaned, sick, are entire males, and females exhibiting oestrus are also more at risk.

Cattle that are well fed and have been handled with the minimum of stress will have higher levels of glycogen in their muscles, which assists with reducing the risk of DCB.

To date there has been no registered supplement for organic beef producers to give to cattle to reduce the incidence of DCB, although *Generade Premium*, a liquid vitamin and mineral supplement, produced by Animal Innovations (SA) has been used. The product isn't currently registered with BFA as approved for use in organic cattle, although its ingredients have previously been submitted for approval by cattle farmers. **Organic producers must gain approval from their certification office before use.**

For more information on DCB go to: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

PRODUCERS WARNED TO WATCH FOR BLOAT IN CATTLE

A recent media release from DPI NSW has warned cattle producers to be on the look-out for bloat in their animals. Livestock Officer Alastair Rayner said the flush of growth on spring pastures could increase the risk of bloat and pulpy kidney disease.

"Both of these disorders can result in production losses, and can have a devastating impact on beef herds. Bloat can be difficult to manage and a number of strategies may need to be adopted, but pulpy kidney can be prevented with 5 in 1 vaccines," he said.

Mr Rayner said that pulpy kidney disease was brought on by a sudden change in diet, such as lush pasture. This caused bacteria to rapidly increase in the animal's intestine causing toxicity (poisoning) and death, often without any sign that the animal is affected by the disease.

Organic beef producer Robert Lennon of Gundooee Organics in NSW said that he has very few problems with bloat or pulpy kidney disease. He notes however that he has seen stock losses on neighbouring properties.

"Passive management is the best approach. Allow the lush grass to hay off or cut it for hay so the cattle get less lush pasture. Give them a balance of hay and grass so they're not just eating the lush pasture," Mr Lennon said.

Mr Lennon said organically managed land has a more natural chemical balance of nitrites and nitrates which help decrease the risk of livestock being affected by bloat or pulpy kidney disease.

Rick McDougall from Whetstone Organics said that he used to run a reservoir of vegetable oil at the water troughs, but many of the oils are now unusable due to genetic modification. Other oils that are still usable are prohibitive because of their high cost. Currently, Mr McDougall says he manages the problem by not allowing the cattle to crop the lush paddocks.

“We always plant a cereal crop in winter in to our lucerne so that this time of year the pastures are half and half. We have a seven year rotation of cutting for hay for four years, and for the other three years the lucerne is thinned out and mixed with native grasses,” Mr Mc Dougall said.

“It’s become less of a problem the further down the organic track we get and the better condition our soil becomes.”

Organic producers who think they may need to use a vaccine should contact ACO on 07 3350 5716.

NOTICE TO ORGANIC BEEF GROWERS SUPPLYING CANNON HILL

There has been concern recently about Coles accepting organic beef. Convenor of the BFA Standards Advisory Group Dr Andrew Monk said that Coles has definitely *not* stopped buying organic livestock.

“It’s simply that Cannon Hill abattoir is no longer accepting livestock at this point – which means that other certified abattoirs and wholesalers are taking it instead,” Dr Monk said.

All producers who may be affected are advised to ring Coles directly to clarify this situation, or to talk to existing certified abattoirs and wholesalers who remain supplying to Coles,” Dr Monk said.

MARKET UPDATE – LAMB

Organic lamb prices have dropped off slightly to around \$5.90.

“This is partly due to a drop in demand and a good supply of lamb coming through,” Cleavers Livestock Manager Toby Scales said.

Mr Scales went on to say the unexpected and unseasonal wet weather recently has affected lambs in the paddock by delaying growth rates.

Overall the industry is expecting a good year with expectation that in the lead up to the Christmas holiday season consumer demand will increase.

MARKET UPDATE – HORTICULTURE

With the end of winter, the supply of organic broccoli and cauliflower is finishing off in the northern regions of Australia. Jim Davis of United Organics said that the market would now be supplied by growers from Victoria and Tasmania.

“Winter rain has caused crops to grow more quickly and while carrots are in good supply, onions are scarce and expensive,” Mr Davis said.

He went on to say that the market is moving reasonably well, but that demand for organic produce has flattened out and in some areas is not as strong as it has been in the past. Mr Davis says that he thinks this is due to the current economic situation and is also partly due to a seasonal fluctuation.

STORY – HORTICULTURE

WET WEATHER STALLS HARVEST

Horticultural market prices remain level in comparison to previous months, despite the ongoing wet weather conditions making it difficult to supply fresh fruit and veg produce.

Sales Manager for the Organic Farm Gate Nick Miall says while market supply in Queensland is still generally good, the wet conditions are directly stalling the harvesting of produce.

“The rain is affecting picking and harvesting schedules . . . it takes a week to dry out, but then you get showers and this causes problems,” Mr Miall said.

Melba Fresh Organic wholesaler Mick Ponte says the situation is much the same in Victoria with the weather proving to be an obstacle for growers.

Mr Ponte does note, however, that despite harvesting difficulties, supply is meeting demand.

“Because of harvesting delays, there is no shortage of markets for the produce.,” he said.

Mr Ponte presses the point that there is an industry need for conventional retailers to buy more organic as overall the demand is slowly decreasing due to consumer association of organic produce with high prices.

“The organic retailer can be a little greedy on their margins, which is an issue we need to address. Consumers are getting the wrong impression that organic isn’t affordable as it should be as the prices are too high. We need a conventional retailer to start buying organic produce so customers have the option to choose conventional or organic,” Mr Ponte said.

Doing her bit in the market, farmer and new entrant to the market as a certified organic wholesaler, Monika Fiebig says her business philosophy is to provide good quality and healthy food at a fair price to as many people as possible.

“I’m an organic grower for South Australia and I supply supermarkets at an independent and local level. I am working very closely with individual stores trying to make produce available at a very fair price,” Ms Fiebig said.

Monika’s Organics supplies a base range of broccoli, carrots, pumpkin, zucchini, sweet corn and beetroot bunches, with spinach, spring onions and silverbeet included in her specialty range. Products are grown, packed and merchandised onsite and Ms Fiebig says her business objective is to ensure produce grown on her farm is kept fresh all the way to the consumer’s table.

EVENTS

BFA EVENTS COMING UP

The next BFA Organic Roadshow will be held at Mulloon Creek Natural Farms (MCNF), in NSW. MCNF is comprised of two properties, both of which are certified as 'A' grade biodynamic. This roadshow offers a wonderful opportunity to see the diverse enterprises that make MCNF such a success.

Having worked with the likes of regenerative farming experts Peter Andrew and Colin Seis, Mulloon Creek's vision is *to be a model of restorative natural agriculture, growing bio-diversity and building environmental capital; to be shared for the benefit of future generations.*

For more information about Mulloon Creek Natural Farms go to: www.mcnf.com.au

For further event listings visit the BFA website events page at www.bfa.com.au.

| DATE | LOCATION | EVENT | DETAILS |
|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 13-16 Oct | Boston, USA | BioFach USA | An Australian stand of organic products will be on display for the first time at the BioFach Boston Expo. Contact (07) 3350 5716 ext 232 / events@bfa.com.au |
| 23 Oct | Brisbane, Qld | BFA AGM | Contact (07) 3350 5716 ext 232 / events@bfa.com.au |
| 23 Oct | Brisbane, Qld | BFA Networking Dinner | An opportunity to meet with retailers, marketers, wholesalers and others. Contact (07) 3350 5716 ext 232 / events@bfa.com.au |
| 30 Oct | Bungendore, NSW | BFA Organic Roadshow | www.bfa.com.au |
| 4 Nov | Launceston, TAS | BFA Organic Roadshow | www.bfa.com.au |
| 6 Nov | Margaret River, WA | BFA Organic Roadshow | www.bfa.com.au |

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE WORKSHOPS

October, November and December see a series of workshops across the eastern states of Australia run by Regenerative Agriculture.

In October, Darren Doherty, the world's most respected keyline practitioner will stage his hugely popular three day Keyline & Carbon Farming workshop. An intensive blend of technical & practical sessions targeted at farmers, professional land managers, consultants, permaculture designers, earthmovers and anyone with a strong interest in sustainable land management and soil creation. 3 days on-site outlining all of the principles and techniques involved with the modern application of Keyline Design.

In November and December, Joel Salatin, from Polyface (of many faces) Farm in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, US, will be the key speaker talking to 'Local Farms and Community' and he is noted for his humorous and engaging presentations. Mr Salatin's two day workshops in Australia will cover a wide range of topics including grass fed beef, relationship marketing, developing local food networks, value added forestry, pastured poultry, whole farm planning and multi-generational family farms.

The two day workshops are FarmReady Approved. For bookings and further information go to www.regenag.com.

| DATES | STATE | EMAIL | PHONE |
|-----------------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 11-13 October | VIC | vic@regenag.com | Ben 0488 031 484 |
| 18-20 October | NSW | nsw@regenag.com | Jo (02) 6374 2529 |
| 25-27 October | QLD | qld@regenag.com | Kym or Georgie 07 4086 8019 |
| 25-26 November | ACT | nsw@regenag.com | Kirsten (02) 6373 7763 |
| 2-3 December | VIC | vic@regenag.com | Ben 0488 031 484 |
| 7-8 December | QLD | qld@regenag.com | Kym or Georgie 07 4086 8019 |
| 10-11 December | NSW | nsw@regenag.com | Kirsten (02) 6373 7763 |