



100% organic feed

– Developing sustainable 100% organic feed strategies for pigs and poultry

ICOPP



Aim of the project:

To produce economically profitable feeding strategies based on 100 % organic feed across Europe, which will supply poultry and pigs the required level of nutrients in different phases of production and support high animal health and welfare.

Introduction

The aim is to produce economically profitable feeding strategies with the ingredients produced organically and sourced within Europe rather than relying on protein imports and feed supplements of non-organic origin. The local 100% organic feeds must provide the required level of nutrients for different phases of production thus supporting high animal health and welfare, while being economically and environmentally sustainable. The project involves 13 partners across 10 countries in central and northern Europe.

Background

This project is looking into the problems faced by farmers in meeting the future requirement to feed organic pigs and poultry on 100% organic feed. Up until now organic pig and poultry (monogastric) production systems have been allowed to use feed ingredients of non-organic origin. There is concern that a move to a 100% organic diet may not supply sufficient sources of certain essential amino acids, and there is very little experience and limited information on the implications of a shift in feeding strategy to 100% organic.

Benefits of the project

Through cooperation between 13 partners across Europe, an extended knowledge of the characteristics of different local feeds will be brought together. Their wider impact on growth, health and welfare and the environment will be used to produce feeding strategies which comply with the organic principles for high animal welfare and environmental concerns whilst maintaining production economy. The results of desk studies and experimental work will be drawn together to give a comprehensive overall look at what Europe can grow to feed our monogastric animals in a way which is sustainable; both for the environment and the economy.

The results of this project will be of benefit to organic farmers, their advisors, the organic supply chain (feeds on the one hand and pork and poultry producers on the other), organic certification bodies and policy makers.



Expected results

The main result of the activities for the sector is that appropriate feeding strategies are developed that better comply with the principles of organic farming, comply with the requirement of 100% organic feed for monogastrics, and at the same time is profitable and ensures an improvement in environmental impact and animal welfare compared with the current prevailing systems. Specifically, the project will provide:

- Improved knowledge of availability and nutritional value of underutilized or new organic feed ingredients per animal category with a focus on local feed resources.
- Improved understanding of the possible benefits of roughage inclusion in relation to nutritional and behavioral needs as well as its impact on health and welfare.
- Understanding how direct foraging in the outdoor area can contribute to meeting the animal's nutritional needs.
- Assessing the economic and environmental consequences of increased reliance on local organically produced feed.
- The research and development will result in appropriate feeding strategies established for organic farming with 100% organic feed, which is profitable, has low environmental impact and high animal welfare.

Expected long-term impacts

The wider impact foreseen is that the organic poultry and pork sector will be able to grow from its current relatively low extent.

Target groups

The main target groups, both within partner countries and across Europe are organic farmers, their advisors, the organic supply chain (feeds on the one hand and pork and poultry producers on the other), organic certification bodies and policy makers.



Main activities

Organic feed production throughout Europe will be assessed with regard to availability and suitability as feed components for monogastrics by using existing land-use databases and interviewing national organic sector bodies, feed mills, national authorisation bodies, and scientists. The feeding value of novel feed resources will be evaluated by a common methodology. A range of feeding experiments will be carried out with pigs (sows, piglets and finishers) and poultry (layers and broilers), clustered around concentrate feedstuffs, roughage, and foraging. Finally, an integrated impact assessment will identify a number of generic systems based on local 100% organic feed that are 'optimized' according to differences in local feed resource availability and agro-ecological conditions throughout Europe.

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Related projects

"Development of integrated livestock breeding and management strategies to improve animal health, product quality and performance in European organic and 'low input' milk, meat and egg production" www.lowinputbreeds.org

"Superb and Marketable Meat from Efficient and Robust Animals" http://www.icrofs.org/Pages/Research/organicrdd_summer.html

Project dissemination

Numerous national producer magazines and forums

Websites: www.thepoultrysite.com and www.thepigsite.com

Scientific journals :

Animal Feed Science and Technology; Animal; Livestock Science; Poultry Science

How to reach the endusers

The project will produce technical and practical articles and guides for producers, advisors, the feed and meat supply chain and organic standards regulatory bodies to support the application and transfer of knowledge into the practical farming environment. These will be available in various formats including electronically and as a series of end-user friendly technical guides. All project results will be published in English and country specific research results, as well as the overall implications and recommendations, will be disseminated in national languages of the project participants.

Further information

This project is funded via the ERA-net CORE Organic II by national funds to each partner. CORE Organic II is a collaboration between 21 countries on initiating transnational research projects in the area of organic food and farming. In 2011, CORE Organic II selected this project and 10 more for funding.

Read more at the CORE Organic II website: <http://www.coreorganic2.org/ICOPP> and in Organic Eprints: <http://orgprints.org/view/projects/ICOPP.html>.

