
Action 14: Develop sampling and analytical methods

What is the content?

Continue the ongoing work in the JRC to develop sampling and analytical methods which can be used in organic farming.

What has been done? What was achieved?

A number of projects with organic content have been commissioned from JRC, including:

- Control of the quality and safety of food and related items (development, validation and harmonization of analytical methods) (2002)
- Food and feed safety and quality (2003)
- Compliance and Control of Agricultural and Regional Policies (2003)
- Evolution of agrofood production systems (2003)

The context is that fraud remains a considerable risk, due to the lack of sound analytical methodology to distinguish organically and conventionally grown crops. For these reasons, the JRC is currently investigating the feasibility to analytically discriminate between organically and conventionally grown crops. Most of the activities are carried out at the JRC-IRMM in the area of organic are covered by the JRC's Institutional budget under the JRC's Action 33004 (Food Safety and Quality). The JRC also participates in a FP6 project, TRACE, <http://www.trace.eu.org/>

What is planned? What is on the way?

The JRC has initiated a systematic study involving the screening of a wide range of methods, on several crops, grown under controlled conditions, in a multi-year feasibility project started in 2004. The key aim is to investigate the feasibility of distinguishing, by analytical means, between organically grown and conventionally grown crops. The last crops were harvested in the autumn of 2007. 2008 will be dedicated to analysis of the samples and a multivariate statistical study, to see if there are any patterns, trends, or significantly significant differences between organic and conventional products, and to make recommendations for which areas to focus further research on. A final report for the feasibility project is expected early 2009.

Further details can be found at:

http://irmm.jrc.ec.europa.eu/html/activities/organic_food_and_sustainable_agriculture/index.htm

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Should the publication of corrigenda becomes necessary, there will be posted at the project website www.organic-revision.org.

ORGAP Project

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Date: 17 July 2007, updated April 2008 (by Nic Lampkin, UWA, including comments from EU Commission)