

The Organic Food and Farming Targets Bill Campaign

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PRESS RELEASE

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Organic Targets Bill could create 16,000 new jobs

New research released today shows that an estimated 16,000 new jobs could be created if the Organic Food and Farming Targets Bill became law. The jobs would come about if 30% of land in England and Wales converted to organic production methods, as stipulated by the Bill.

Conversion to organic farming results in an employment increase on farms of between 10% and 30% as organic farms are characterised by less external inputs and more on farm activities creating a greater demand for labour.

Using a conservative estimate of 10% for the percentage increase in jobs on organic farms, extrapolations show that with an additional 27% of organic agricultural land, taking us to the target figure of 30% in the Organic Targets Bill, there could be 16,600 new jobs created, of which 8,100 would be full time.

Catherine Fookes, Co-ordinator of the Organic Targets Bill campaign, says: "This Bill is in the interests of the Government and consumers. Organic farming creates more jobs, and could provide a lifeline in some hard-pressed rural areas. Were the Bill adopted, consumers could also have a greater choice of UK organic produce at a reasonable price. The Government should support this Bill."

The release of this information coincides with Apple Day, when over 50 groups around the UK who support the Organic Food and Farming Targets Bill will be encouraging their local MP to support the Organic Food and Farming Targets Bill.

The Organic Food and Farming Targets Bill aims to ensure that:

- A strategy is put in place for the organic sector;
- 30% of agricultural land in England and Wales is organic by 2010;
- 20% of the food marketed in England and Wales is organic by 2010 (i.e. that sufficient marketing and processing infrastructure is in place for the

increased organic food to reach the consumer); organic food becomes more accessible to more people.