

# The Organic Food and Farming Targets Campaign

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Organic Targets Campaign welcomes Government commitment to Organic Action Plan**

The Organic Targets Campaign is claiming victory as one of its key objectives, an action plan for organic food and farming, becomes a reality. The first meeting of the newly formed Organic Action Plan stakeholder forum, chaired by Organic Farming Minister Elliot Morley took place yesterday (Tuesday 16 April). [1]

At the meeting the Organic Targets Campaign urged the forum to include ambitious targets in the Action Plan for an expansion in organic farming in the UK. The campaign will also be seeking commitment in the Plan to improved processing facilities for organic food to help UK farmers get their products on the market and a commitment from retailers to favour British produce. For example more dairy processing facilities could help alleviate the current situation where UK organic milk is being sold as conventional while at the same time major retailers import organic cheese and yoghurt.

The Organic Forum is due to report to Government by the end of July 2002 with its recommendations to increase the amount of organically produced food in the UK. The Campaign Coordinator, Catherine Fookes, who is a member of the forum, said

*"The Organic Targets Campaign is delighted the Government is putting in place an Organic Action Plan. The plan must set ambitious targets so that UK farmers know the Government really is serious about supporting home produced organic food. The plan should help us to move away from the crazy situation where we import the majority of the organic food eaten in the UK. We want to see consumers being able to buy more local organic food and farmers producing and selling more organic produce. Our vision can become a reality with firm action from the Government combined with a new commitment from major retailers to back British farmers "*

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#### Notes to editor

1. The Organic Targets Campaign is supported by more than 100 organisations, with a membership of around 6 million people. Retailers, trade unions, environmental and consumer groups, as well as the majority of back-bench MPs support the campaign. Steering group: Elm Farm Research Centre, Friends of the Earth, Henry Doubleday Research Association, Pesticides Action Network-UK, Soil Association, Transport & General Workers Union, UNISON, WWF-UK. More Information on the Organic Targets Campaign can be found at [www.sustainweb.org/](http://www.sustainweb.org/)
2. The aims of the campaign are for Government to put in place an action plan for organic farming in England with a target of 30% of farm-land to be organic in England and Wales by 2010.

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