

SUMMARY

Horticultural Price Information System

Operated by HDRA and the Soil Association

Introduction

Due to a lack of timely price information in the organic sector the Soil Association is setting up a price information system for organic products as part of the George project. HDRA has previously coordinated a price exchange group at the request of growers in the Sustainable Organic Vegetable Systems Network. Hence the Soil Association asked HDRA to be involved in the horticultural aspect of their price information system.

Aim

The provision of monthly price information on a range of horticultural crops, to help the organic vegetable sector develop successfully and sustainably.

Methods

Data collection

Ex Farm (HDRA contact: Phil Sumption psumption@hdra.org.uk, 024 7630 3517) HDRA will contact participating farmers by telephone or fax to collect ex-farm prices and general trends, during the last week of each month. Figure 1 shows details of the information we would like to collect. The horticultural crops covered will depend on the time of year and the participating farmers.

The group of participating farmers is expected to begin with about 10 but will expand as other people want to join. If the sample becomes large enough, ex-farm prices for different market outlets will be separated.

Figure 1: Ex-farm data collection format

Date: ___/___/_____		Farm: _____	
Crop	Type/Colour	Ex farm price ¹	Unit (e.g. kg or head)
Potatoes - Early			Kg
Potatoes – Ware			Kg
Potatoes – Baker			Kg
Calabrese			Kg
Cauliflower			Head
Cabbage			Head
Leeks			Kg
Onions			Kg
Carrots			Kg
Lettuce			Head

¹ Ex farm price being the gross price, not including packing, haulage etc

In the event that you are the only farm to supply information about a crop are you happy for the price to be shared? Yes No

Comments:

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL AND RESPECTED AS SUCH IT WILL ONLY BE SHARED OUTSIDE OF THE GROUP AFTER AT LEAST A ONE WEEK DELAY

Wholesale and supermarket prices

HDRA will also collect wholesale prices from Soya foods online price lists, and using the Tesco price check and Ocado prices will be supplied for Tesco, Sainsbury, Morrison, Asda and Waitrose (if available). These will be the prices that the wholesaler and supermarkets sell to their customers at.

Data Dissemination

Average and range data will be returned to the participating farmers, by fax or e-mail, the day after collection. The same summary data will be sent to the Soil Association **one week** after collection. The delay is designed to provide a benefit to the participating farmers, by receiving data while it is most timely. If a one-week delay is not deemed sufficient it may be extended.

Farmers would be requested to supply price information for at least two months out of any four in order to receive the statistics every month.

Figure 2: Example of price information system dissemination table, for five sample crops (ex-farm prices falsified to respect confidentiality)

Price Exchange Group Statistics

Date ___ / ___ / ___

Crop	Types included	Ex farm ¹		Wholesale (SF ²)	Retail					
		Ave	Range		Details	Tesco	JS	Morrison	Asda	WR
Potatoes – Early (£/kg)	Orla	0.45	0.41-0.51	Red 1.50 (FR)	New	0.99	0.99	N/F	N/F	1.33
Potatoes – Ware (£/kg)	Romano	0.50	0.40-0.60	Maris Peer, Pentland 0.82 (UK)		0.73	0.86	0.99	0.72↓	1.04 (white) 1.20 (red)
Calabrese (£/kg)		1.41	0.96-2.15	Iced 2.65 (UK) ↑	Broccoli / kg florets	5.12	6.64	N/F	N/F	4.26
Cabbage (£/head)	Pointed, Summer round	0.53	0.47-0.64	Red, white 0.90 (UK new season)	White / kg Green / each	1.59 0.99↓	N/F 1.39	N/F N/F	1.97↓ N/F	1.49 (pointed/head)
Beetroot	Bunched	0.56	0.52-0.66	Bunched 0.52 (UK)	Vac Pack/ kg	2.76	3.96	N/F	1.84	3.58

↓ Indicates the price has fallen from the previous month. ↑ Indicates the price has risen from the previous month (only completed on equivalent crops).
 Ex farm price being the gross price, not including packing, haulage etc unless stated ² Price Soy Foods sell at

COMMENTS: Early potatoes coming to an end. Pest pressure lower than it was earlier in the season (but has impacted on calabrese price).
 Fair Organics are looking for UK growers to supply certified organically grown produce this season, contact Ian or Wayne on 01277 890188 or visit www.fairorganics.co.uk.

THIS INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL