Organic Farming Targets (Scotland) Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

An Act of the Scottish Parliament to require the Scottish Ministers to establish targets for organic farming on agricultural land, and to take steps, including preparation of a plan, to achieve the targets.

1 Principal duties of the Scottish Ministers

5 (1) The Scottish Ministers shall, no later than one year after the day on which this Act comes into force, lay before the Scottish Parliament and publish—

(a) a target for the percentage (being not less that 20 per cent) by area of each category of land mentioned in subsection (2) on which, within 10 years after the day on which the target is published, organic farming is to take place; and the targets shall be known collectively as “the organic farming targets”; and

(b) a plan setting out the measures which the Scottish Ministers propose to take to achieve the targets.

(2) The categories of land are—

(a) arable land;

(b) improved grassland; and

(c) unimproved grassland and rough grazings.

(3) It shall be the duty of the Scottish Ministers to secure the achievement of the targets.

(4) As soon as practicable after the end of each successive year following publication of the plan, the Scottish Ministers shall lay before the Scottish Parliament, and publish, a report describing the progress—

(a) made during that year; and

(b) which they expect to make during the following year, toward achievement of the targets.

2 The plan

25 (1) The plan shall include the matters listed in the schedule and shall relate them separately to each category of land mentioned in section 1(2).
(2) Before preparing the plan, the Scottish Ministers shall consult such persons appearing to them to have an interest in the targets as they think appropriate.

(3) The Scottish Ministers shall from time to time, and in any event within 3 months after the day on which the poll at any general election to the Scottish Parliament has been held, review the plan and, if they think fit, modify it; but—

(a) before modifying the plan they shall consult such persons appearing to them to have an interest in the targets as they think appropriate; and

(b) on modifying the plan they shall lay before the Scottish Parliament and publish a revised plan incorporating the modifications.

3 Interpretation

In this Act—

“agricultural land” means land used for agriculture and which is so used for the purposes of a trade or business;

“agriculture” has the meaning given by section 86(3) of the Agriculture (Scotland) Act 1948 (c. 45);

“arable land” means agricultural land—

(a) on which an arable crop is growing, or has been planted;

(b) which is lying fallow as part of a normal crop rotation (including short term leys); or

(c) which is set aside (in accordance with the provisions of Council Regulation No. 1251/99/EC establishing a support system for producers of certain arable crops and Chapter III of Commission Regulation No. 2316/99/EC laying down detailed rules for the application of that Council Regulation) and which has been land within paragraph (a) or (b);

“improved grassland” means agricultural land—

(a) used for grazing where over one third of the sward comprises, singly or in mixture, ryegrass, coxsfoot or timothy; or

(b) which has been improved by management practices such as liming and top dressing;

“organic farming” means agricultural production by methods which comply with the provisions of Council Regulation No. 2092/91/EEC on organic production of agricultural products and indications referring thereto on agricultural products and foodstuffs, as last amended by Commission Regulation No. 2020/2000/EC;

“plan” means the plan mentioned in section 1(1)(b) (and, unless the context otherwise requires, includes a revised plan published under section 2(3));

“rough grazings” means agricultural land used or suitable for use as grazing containing semi-natural vegetation, including heathland, heather moorland, bog and rough grassland; and

“unimproved grassland” means agricultural land used for grazing or mowing which does not constitute improved grassland or rough grazings.
4 Short title and commencement

(1) This Act may be cited as the Organic Farming Targets (Scotland) Act 2002.

(2) This Act comes into force the day after the date of Royal Assent.
SCHEDULE
(introduced by section 2)

MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PLAN

Interim objectives

1  A statement of interim objectives towards the achievement of the targets.

Resources and financial assistance

2  A statement of the resources (including financial assistance) which the Scottish Ministers propose to provide to achieve the targets.

Other assistance

3  A statement of other assistance (including the provision of information or advice) which the Scottish Ministers propose to provide to achieve the targets.

Markets for and promotion of products

4  Details of the steps which the Scottish Ministers propose to take to—
    (a) encourage the development of the market for products of organic farming; and
    (b) facilitate the promotion and marketing of products of organic farming (including any proposed steps to facilitate the marketing of products in any locality).

Research

5  Details of research which the Scottish Ministers have commissioned, and propose to commission, for the purpose of achieving the targets, and details of the resources required, and those proposed, for such research.

Functions of others

6  Details of—
    (a) the functions which it is proposed that any person other than the Scottish Ministers is to have in relation to the achievement of the targets; and
    (b) the policy of the Scottish Ministers for co-ordinating the exercise of their functions and those of any such person.
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Introduced by: Robin Harper
On: 30 September 2002
Bill type: Member's Bill