

<p>Code 5N50423 Version 0.10 Updated 19/10/2017</p>	<p>Title <b>Organic Farming Principles</b></p>	<p>Level 5</p>
<i>Programme Module Aims</i>		
<p>The purpose of this module is to equip the learner with the knowledge, skill and competence to apply organic farming principles to the production of organic produce, to meet market requirements and approved organic standards in compliance with European Union (EU) and Irish legislation.</p>		
<i>Programme Module Requirements</i>		
<p>This module is an elective component of the Level 5 Certificate in Agriculture</p>		
<i>QQI Component to which the programme will lead</i>		
<p><b>QQI Component Certificate in Organic Farming Principles</b></p>		
<i>Learning outcomes: on completion of this course, the student should be able to:</i>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outline the origin and development of the organic movement including the diversity or organic approaches and the range of certifying bodies</li> <li>2. Explain the principles of organic production</li> <li>3. Outline regulations (standards) for organic production</li> <li>4. Describe organic soil fertility practices</li> <li>5. Describe soil amelioration techniques with organic production</li> <li>6. Outline organic grassland management techniques</li> <li>7. Describe weed, pest and disease control in organic crops</li> <li>8. Describe organic livestock management systems</li> <li>9. Assess the economic viability and market opportunities for organic production including EU and national supports</li> <li>10. Outline the procedures involved in converting from a non-organic to an organic production system</li> <li>11. Outline the key aspects of an organic production plan</li> <li>12. Plan a production programme to organic standards in accordance with conversion principles</li> <li>13. Complete the documentation required for conversion to an organic production system</li> <li>14. Manage a crop using organic principles</li> </ol>		
<i>Indicative Syllabus Content</i>		
<p><b>1. Outline the origin, development and principles of the organic movement including the diversity of organic approaches and the range of certifying bodies (LO1 &amp; LO2 - 2 hours)</b></p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Definition of and background to Organic Production</li> <li>1.2 Principles of organic agriculture</li> <li>1.3 Current organic production regulation</li> <li>1.4 Role of Organic Certification Bodies</li> </ol>		
<p><b>2. Outline organic regulations for: (LO3 - 4 hours)</b></p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Organic Livestock production systems</li> <li>2.2 Organic Crop production systems</li> </ol>		
<p><b>3. Describe organic soil fertility and soil improvement techniques: (LO4 &amp; LO5 - 3 hours)</b></p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Soil composition</li> <li>3.2 Nutrient sources on organic farms</li> <li>3.3 Nutrient and manure management on organic farms</li> <li>3.4 Benefits of managing soil fertility and improving soil</li> </ol>		

<b>4. Outline organic grassland management techniques</b>	<b>(L06 - 3 hours)</b>
4.1 Role of red and white clover and other legumes 4.2 Establishment methods and management of clover & legume swards 4.3 Weed management on organic grassland farms	
<b>5. General Principles of Crop Husbandry and Rotations</b>	<b>(L07 - 3 hour)</b>
5.1 Crop rotation its role and benefits 5.2 Varieties used 5.3 Crop nutrient requirements & post sowing management 3.5 Weed control 5.4 Integrated pest and disease management	
<b>6. Describe organic livestock management practices including</b>	<b>(L08 - 3 hours)</b>
6.1 Animal Health and Welfare 6.2 Breeding 6.3 Nutrition 6.4 Housing Requirements 6.5 Production targets	
<b>7. Assess the economic viability and market opportunities for organic production including EU and national supports</b>	<b>(L09 - 3 hours)</b>
7.1 Markets for Irish organic produce 7.2 Cost / benefit of conversion to organic production 7.3 Organics support schemes 7.4 Organic farm case study	
<b>8. Understand the organic conversion process</b>	<b>(L10, L11, L12 &amp; L13 - 2 hours)</b>
8.1 Procedures involved in converting from a non-organic to an organic production system 8.2 Organic conversion plan 8.3 Application process for conversion to an organic production system 8.4 Record keeping and inspection process	
<b>9. Manage a crop or livestock system using organic principles</b>	<b>(L14 - 2 hours)</b>
9.1 Assess a grass sward for weeds, grass and clover content 9.2 Recommend appropriate management of grass and clover 9.3 Recommend appropriate weed control measures or 9.4 Assess internal parasite burden in a herd or flock by taking and submitting faecal sample for analysis 9.5 Interpret lab results 9.6 Recommend appropriate control measures for internal parasites	

<i>Teaching and Learning Methodologies</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participatory theory and practical lessons</li> <li>▪ Handouts</li> <li>▪ Farm visits</li> <li>▪ Case Study</li> </ul>
<i>Assessment Methods and Guidelines</i>
<b>Each assessment type must be passed.</b>

## Examination Theory 40%

There is one written exam based on sections 1 to 7 with 20 short questions (1% each) and 4 structured questions (5 % each).

This exam must cover all sections mentioned.

## Skills / Practical Assessment 20%

There is a practical skills assessment based on section 9.

All practical skills are to be delivered by the tutor.

All practical skills are to be assessed.

List of practical skills:

1. Assess weed infestation levels & Assess crop performance  
or  
Assess internal parasite burden in a herd or flock & assess animal performance based on given faecal analysis results.
2. Identifying & recommend suitable control measures.

## Assignment 40%

There is an assignment based on section 8.

The assignment consists of the completion of the following:

- Understanding of supports for Organic Farming (10%)
- Plan outlining proposed on farm changes required to convert to organic farming (30%)

**Grade:** Unsuccessful 0 – 49%, Pass 50 – 64%, Merit 65 – 79%, Distinction 80 – 100%

### *Recommended reading and other learning media*

1.	DAFM organic farming webpage: <a href="https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmingsectors/organicfarming/">https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmingsectors/organicfarming/</a>
2.	Teagasc Guidelines to Organic Farming
3.	Teagasc Farm Management Handbook
4.	Teagasc Grassland Management on Organic Farms
5.	Teagasc Nutrient Management on Organic Farms

### **General Syllabus Information**

Full time/ Part time hours	Allocated Marks		Credits and Examinations		
<i>Total made up of:</i>	<b>50</b>	<i>Continuous (Practical)</i>	<b>20%</b>	<i>Level</i>	<b>5</b>
<i>Directed (Theory)</i>	<b>19</b>	<i>Project/Assignment</i>	<b>40%</b>	<i>Number of Credits</i>	<b>5</b>
<i>Directed (Practical)</i>	<b>6</b>	<i>Examination</i>	<b>40%</b>	<i>Number of Exams</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>Self directed (Assignment)</i>	<b>10</b>	<i>Total</i>	<b>100%</b>	<i>Duration of each Exam (mins)</i>	<b>60</b>
<i>Self directed (Additional Study)</i>	<b>15</b>				
<i>Alternative delivery modes</i>					
<i>Distance</i>	<b>50</b>	<i>Directed</i>	<b>11</b>	<i>Learner effort (Self Directed)</i>	<b>39</b>