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Further growth for organic worldwide

Latest statistics of organic agriculture worldwide, released by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and the Foundation Ecology and Agriculture (SÖL) at BioFach in February shows 30.4 million ha are currently managed according to organic standards.

The largest certified organic surface area remains in Australia with 12.3 million ha, followed by China (2.3 million hectares), Argentina (2.2 million hectares) and the USA (1.6 million hectares). Organic area compared to total country surface

area was greatest in Oceania/Australia lead at 42%, Europe and Latin America followed with 24% and 16% respectively. Total organic area grew approximately by 1.8 million ha during 2006. The strongest growth was in Oceania/Australia with more than 600,000 ha, followed by Europe with more than 500,000 ha.

Global market value for organic products in 2006 increased to 38.4 billion USD, five billion higher than 2005. The biggest market is North America followed by Europe, according to *Organic Monitor*. ■

Source: IFOAM

New ruminant feed standards

In the UK, as of 1 January 2008, the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) standard requiring organic farmers to feed ruminants with 100% organic feed was fully implemented. Failure to do so will lead to the loss of organic status of products. The new rules also expect feeds containing any non-organic ingredient to no longer be stored on organic farms.

To help make the change to the new rule an 80% allowance, i.e. a 20% increase from the original 60% allowance, has been approved for organic farmers on their second year of conversion. However, the increase will be withdrawn after December 2008 and at the same time allowance

for second year in-conversion bought-in forage will remain at a maximum of 30%. Permission is still given to licensees who cannot source 100% organic feed for pigs and poultry to use up to the following percentages of non-organic feed on an annual dry matter basis:

- 15% until 31 December 2007.
- 10% from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009.
- 5% from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011.

These percentages can be applied to individual animals or to a group that have the same ration. ■

Source: Soil Association