

Organic Farming: Maintenance

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For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#).

Aim

The aim of this option is to support farmers and groups of farmers to maintain organic farming methods in Scotland.

Organic farming seeks to work with natural processes using methods that are designed to achieve a sustainable production system with limited use of external inputs.

These options provide support to farmers or groups of farmers to use organic farming methods and to encourage the expansion of organic production in Scotland to deliver environmental benefits.

Eligibility

Any land that is registered as fully organic with a UK-approved organic certification body is eligible.

You should not include areas of land covering rocks, scree, water, dense bracken etc. We will check this using the same approach we use to check land for the Basic Payment Scheme.

Assessing your land eligibility

You must undertake to continue to farm organically and maintain your land in an environmentally beneficial way for the period of your agreement.

Spatial targeting

This option is available throughout Scotland.

Requirements

- you must comply with the organic standards (as laid out by European Commission Regulations and the UK Organic Products Regulations) as well as the [Organic Production and Care of the Environment Standards](#) as advised in the UK Compendium of Organic Standards for the duration of your contract for the area subject to maintenance for each payment category
- the land must remain registered with a UK-approved organic certification body for the duration of your contract (for the avoidance of doubt, the land registered with the organic certification body must be in the name of the applicant)
- each year of your contract, you must provide a copy of your annual production (Land Parcel) schedule and a copy of your most recent certificate(s) in support of your annual recurrent claim. The certificate(s) provided must cover the whole period of the year of claim. You should send these to us as soon as they are supplied to you by your organic certification body
- if you enter land into the Fruit and Vegetables Maintenance option you must grow a fruit or vegetable crop on that land at least once in the duration of your contract. There is an expectation that land entered under the fruit and vegetables option will grow organic fruit or vegetable crops that are destined for human consumption. You should consider whether you can meet this expectation carefully before selecting the fruit and veg option.
- you should also refer to the [checklist of requirements](#)

Payment

Organic maintenance payment rates per hectare	
Maintenance rates per hectare	Years one to five
Arable	£65
Improved Grassland	£55

Unimproved Grassland / Rough Grazing	£8.50
Fruit and Vegetables	£200

We will pay you for the duration of your contract on each eligible hectare of land entered into the relevant Organic Maintenance option.

Organic maintenance is no longer capped in AECS. While there is no upper limit for land in organic maintenance you must be able to demonstrate that the land is used for agricultural purposes. Applications seeking organic maintenance on large areas of naturally kept moorland or rough grazings may be subject to a value for money assessment by the National Project Assessment Committee. That assessment will consider the agricultural output from the business against the 5 year cost of the application.

A minimum payment of £500 per annum per IACS registered business for maintenance applies.

The description of land categories can be found below:

[Description of land categories](#)

Capital Costs

For clarity, as this option supports the cost of maintaining an organic management system, capital costs are not eligible.

Inspections

The inspectors will check:

- you have valid copies of Organic Certification inspection reports and production schedules
- the land meets the eligibility criteria

Additional guidance

[Supporting guidance is available for this option.](#)

Section	Change
Payment	Added text to explain that while there is no upper limit for land in organic maintenance you must be able to demonstrate that the land is used for agricultural purposes.

Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)

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