

Rebecca Evans AM
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food
Welsh Government

15 December 2015

Dear Rebecca

Organic production and labelling

As you will be aware, we have been conducting an inquiry into the implications for Wales of the European Commission's proposals for a new regulation on organic production and labelling.

We very much welcome the positive changes proposed to the regulation by the Council and the European Parliament and believe that these changes will be of benefit to farmers in Wales.

There are two issues however about which we remain concerned. These are the failure to include an exemption from certification requirements for small retailers and the European Parliament's proposal to include mass catering establishments, such as hospitals, within the regulation.

Whilst we fully support the principle of ensuring that businesses and public bodies properly use and market organic produce, we have heard concerns from stakeholders that including them within the ambit of the regulation could dissuade them from purchasing local organic produce.

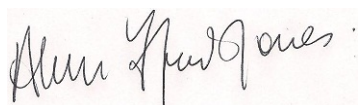
Stakeholders have told us that a number of smaller or medium sized shops currently selling one or two local organic products or lines may be dissuaded from doing so in future if they were subject to full certification requirements. The Organics Trade Board estimates that sales through smaller retailers in the UK account for £10 million each week.



We appreciate that the regulation is now subject to trilogue negotiations between the institutions but would ask that you raise these issues with UK representatives and officials taking part in these discussions.

We would also be grateful for an update from you as negotiations progress.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background, reading "Alun Ffred Jones".

Alun Ffred Jones AM

Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee

