

FAIR CT 4405

**NETWORK FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE IN ORGANIC AGRICULTURE
(NAHWOA)**

Abstract for the Final Report
01/01/99 to 31/12/01

Type of contract: Concerted Action

Total cost: 291.066 ECU **EC contribution:** 291.066 ECU

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I. Objectives

1. To provide a joint platform for organisations and institutions involved in organic livestock production, particularly in animal health and welfare research.
2. To create a forum for an on-going discussion on animal production and welfare and their interrelationship within the framework of organic livestock.
3. To provide back-up material for advisory bodies working within organic farming by producing a series of publications from the workshops.
4. To contribute towards the utilization of preventive veterinary medicine, alternative animal health and management practices and animal behaviour and welfare sciences within livestock production systems and towards teaching these issues in agricultural and veterinary education.
5. To increase information availability and sharing on animal health and welfare issues both in organic and conventional livestock production.
6. To promote collaboration between and to contribute towards other EU-funded projects on information sharing in organic agriculture research.

II. Description of work

1. A series of five workshops.
2. Production of a series of four thematic publications from the theme workshops.
3. Editing of a book based on the workshops.
4. Production of a series of recommendations re. common organic standards within the EU
5. Setting up and maintaining an Internet-site for the Project.
6. Setting up and servicing a mailing-list of target organisations.

III. State of progress

The following persons were chosen to the steering committee for the project: Malla Hovi (VEERU, UK – Co-ordinator); Engelhard Boehncke, University of Kassel, Germany; Stig Milan Thamsborg, The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Denmark and Ton Baars, Louis Bolk Institute, Holland.

1. Five workshops were organized in the three project years:

1st Workshop in Reading, UK 4-6 June 1999 (Inaugural workshop)

This Workshop was not thematic and no technical papers were presented. Only representatives of the partner organizations were invited to the Workshop that had the main aim to plan the other project activities, establish final themes for the workshops and set up the working groups. A total of 28 delegates from 13 partner organizations attended the Workshop and three working groups (see below) were set up.

2nd Workshop in Cordoba, Spain 8-11 January 2000

The first theme of the second workshop was the diversity of organic livestock systems within the European Union and the difficulty of developing uniform production standards. The second theme was animal welfare within organic livestock systems.

A total of 71 delegates from 19 countries participated in the workshop.

3rd Workshop in Clermont-Ferrand, France 21-24 October 2000

The general theme of the third workshop was the human-animal relationship in organic livestock systems. The subject was approached from two directions: stockmanship and housing.

A total of 47 delegates from 14 countries participated in the workshop.

4th Workshop in Wageningen, Holland 24-27 March 2001

The first theme of the fourth workshop was breeding and feeding for health and welfare in organic livestock systems. A total of 70 delegates from 16 countries participated in the workshop, in spite of the difficulties caused by the concurrent foot and mouth outbreaks in the UK and Holland.

5th Workshop in Roddinge, Denmark, 11-13 November 2001

The general theme of the fifth and last workshop was positive health management in organic livestock systems. The subject was approached from two directions: preventive measures and alternative strategies.

A total of 50 delegates from 14 countries participated in the workshop.

2. A publications working group was established at the first workshop: Malla Hovi (VEERU, UK); Ton Baars (LBI, Holland); Albert Sundrum (University of Bonn, Germany).
Four sets of proceedings have been published from the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th workshops in paper format and electronically at the project web-site:
Diversity of livestock systems and animal welfare, Proceedings of the 2nd NAHWOA Workshop (eds. Hovi, M. and Garcia-Trujillo, R.) (1 copy attached, out of print; 2 copies submitted previously with the first progress report).

Human-animal relationship: stockmanship and housing in organic livestock systems, Proceedings of the 3rd NAHWOA Workshop (eds. Hovi, M. and Bouilhol, M.) (2 copies attached; further copies available from the Co-ordinator)

Breeding and feeding for animal health and welfare in organic livestock systems, Proceedings of the 4th NAHWOA Workshop (eds. Hovi, M. and Baars, T.) (2 copies attached; further copies available from the Co-ordinator)

Positive health: preventive measures and alternative strategies, Proceedings of the 5th NAHWOA Workshop (eds. Hovi, M. and Vaarst, M.) (2 copies attached; further copies available from the Co-ordinator)
 - 350 paper copies of each proceedings, 150 of which distributed to 150 organisations and individuals in 13 EU countries via the partner organizations
 - all four sets of proceedings also published electronically at the project web-site www.veeru.reading.ac.uk/organic
3. A book editorial group was chosen at the first workshop: Mette Vaarst (Main editor, DIAS, Denmark); Vonne Lund (SUL, Sweden); Steve Roderick (VEERU, UK) and Willy Lockeretz (Editorial adviser, Tufts University, USA).
A draft copy submitted to publisher and publishing contract signed with CAB International, with a provisional publishing date of June 2002 (2 copies will be provided when book published).
4. An open working group for organic standards was established in the first workshop. Susanne Padel (University of Wales, UK) was chosen to co-ordinate the working group.
 - A document summarizing recommendations on the use of medicines in organic livestock (attached) was produced by the working group in response to the EU Regulation 1804/99.
 - A statement concerning the use of synthetic amino acids and the implementation of animal health planning on organic livestock farms made and delivered to the members of the Commission Committee 14 (attached as an Appendix to the NAHWOA Final Recommendations and Comments).
 - A summary of final NAHWOA conclusions and recommendations prepared for publication in connection with the final report (copy attached, also published on the web-site).
5. A web-site for the project was set up during the first project year at <http://www.veeru.reading.ac.uk/organic/>. The web-site has been regularly updated since its first publication and is regularly visited by some 200 visitors monthly. Proceedings for all four workshops have been published at the web-site that also allows registration for the NAHWOA mailing list.
6. An electronic mailing list of contacts has been set up and is serviced regularly with information on the project activities. The mailing list contains in excess of 320 names at the close of the project. Paper copies of the proceedings of the 2nd Workshop were distributed to a postal mailing list of some 150 organisations and individuals in the partner countries.

IV. Achievements

The main achievements of the project have been the organization of five workshops, the publication of four sets of proceedings from the thematic workshops and the creation and maintenance of the project web-site that has become a central point of information for organizations working in research into organic livestock systems. All these activities have increased the amount of information on animal health and welfare in organic livestock production substantially.

The project has edited a book on organic livestock production and has secured a publishing contract for the book with a major international publisher, the CAB International.

The project has formulated three statements concerning key issues in the development of the EU Regulation 1804/99 concerning organic livestock production (use of conventional veterinary medicinal products, use of synthetic amino acids in monogastric diets and the implementation of formal health planning in organic livestock systems) and submitted these to the Commission Committee responsible for the development of the Regulation 1804/99. The project has also produced final recommendations regarding standard development, training, advice and development and research needs (The Final Recommendations and Comments document attached to this report, with the separate statements as Appendices to this document).

The contacts created within the project have served to produce collaborative research proposals. A total of seven collaborative research proposal from within the partnership have been submitted to the 5th Framework Quality of Life-programme by Feb 2001 and further submissions are planned.

The project has promoted research into animal health and welfare in organic farming within many organizations outside the partnership by a host of invited speakers to the workshops (6 in the 2nd workshop, 9 in the 3rd workshop, 9 for the 4th workshop and 6 for the 5th workshop).

The project had recruited two new partners since the initiation of its activities: FiBL from Switzerland and Teagasc from Ireland. Due to increasing interest in the emerging EU countries in Central and Eastern European countries, links have been created to organizations involved in organic livestock research in Estonia, Poland, Tzech Republic, Slovenia, Croatia and Hungary.

V. Future actions

The final version of the book is due to go to be published in June 2002.

An application for funding for a Network of Excellence in organic livestock production and food safety has been submitted to the EU within the 5th Framework Programme in January 2002.

The co-ordinator has agreed to maintain the web-site and will set up and moderate a discussion group/ mailing list for the partners and contacts in order to maintain the network in the future.

VI. Cost statement

Cost statement for the project is attached.

Reading, March 2002

M. Hovi, NAHWOA Co-ordinator