



Blackbirds Perch, St. Martin's, Isles of Scilly TR25 0QN
Tel:07528 136678

Organic Certification GB-ORG-05
Licence no. G8208

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Scilly Organics sees its environmental policy as a philosophy and practice that is at the heart of our business. We are transparent about what we do and make the following commitments to ensure our business' environmental impact is minimised.

Organic

We have been certified organic for over 16 years. Every year we are inspected by the Soil Association, the UK's largest organic certification body. The inspector checks the whole business, from fields to packing shed to office. The checks are rigorous and ensure that we abide by the Soil Association Organic Standards; we can also face a spot check at any time. Our organic certificate is proudly displayed.

Organic farming is the only method of food production that is controlled by law, at UK and EU levels, and ensures that food is produced in a highly sustainable way. The Organic Standards cover everything from soil management to record keeping, biodiversity protection to packaging and waste.

We are confident that our land management is good for our soils, good for biodiversity and enhances the landscape.

Carbon footprint

Every year we calculate our carbon footprint using the Farm Carbon Calculator. This takes an in-depth look at all the sources of carbon emissions from the business, both direct (such as diesel use) and indirect (the embodied energy in products such as machinery). These are all totalled up and expressed in kg of CO₂ emitted per year. The calculator also works out how much carbon is being absorbed by the biomass and soils on the land. This total is then balanced against the total carbon emissions created.

Scilly Organics' carbon balance is consistently carbon negative – that's to say the hedges, trees and soils on the farm absorb more carbon than all our other activities emit. The latest calculation is available to look at in detail on our website.

Packaging

Where possible we avoid packaging, but with some fruit and veg it is almost impossible to avoid for reasons of transport, presentation or storage.

All our paper bags are made from recycled paper and can be composted. When we have to use plastic carrier bags they're made from thicker grade recycled plastic that can be reused many times.

We have tried and tested compostable corn starch bags and, as yet, have not found a product that provides adequate storage and presentation qualities. Until then we continue to use thin clear non-toxic polythene bags, which can be recycled. We also offer collection of customers' used plastic bags so we can send them for recycling.

Metal, glass, batteries, tyres and thick plastics from the farm are recycled.

Food miles

The produce on our stall has food yards, not miles! We harvest from the field, walk back to the packing shed and put it on the stall – no carbon emitted (well, except from our lungs)!

When we send to other islands we deliver to the quay by bike and it travels on the scheduled inter-island launch, Lyonesse Lady, then is picked up from the other quay by our customer. Not quite zero carbon, but pretty low emissions...and never more than 5 food miles!

Office

Our electricity supply is 100% renewable, from Good Energy. We also have our own solar PV panels at home that produce most of the electricity we need.

Our printer only ever has 100% recycled paper through it – though we try not to print at all if possible. There's always a pile of scrap paper on the desk. Waste paper is usually shredded and added to the compost heap (we don't have paper recycling facilities over here).

We even use pencils made from sustainably produced wood.

Machinery

Most of our machinery, equipment and tools are old and well loved. The tractors are a 16 year old Kubota (45hp), still going strong, and a 6 year old second hand Shire (35hp). All tractor-mounted machinery is old but maintained in working order.

We will never get rid of anything unless it really can't be mended and put back to productive use. You won't find much that looks new!

Paint and oils

Every year we have a certain amount of painting and to do – on both wood and metal. As yet we've not managed to find an environmental metal point, but all our wood paints are non-toxic, made from plant based oils and other natural ingredients. They're a pleasure to work with! We also use linseed and Danish oils on bare wood, which is completely natural and unprocessed.

Suppliers

We aim to buy from small businesses that give good service and keep business away from large faceless corporations. Where possible these will be suppliers with high environmental and social credentials like us.

Waste

The usual range of waste management services sadly aren't available on Scilly due to lack of infrastructure and the cost and logistics of sending bulky low value goods to the mainland.

Our main wastes are cardboard and plastics – nearly all of this is generated from packaging on bought in supplies. Cardboard boxes are re-used for sending orders out in. Any excess cardboard is composted on farm. Hard plastics are recycled, but plastic bags and wrap cannot currently be recycled. We're looking for a place to do that at the moment.

All our crop and other green wastes are composted and returned to the soil.

Transparency

We invite customers to see produce growing for themselves and are open about all aspects of the operation. Our organic certificate is displayed with pride, our carbon footprint is available to see on our website and we are open about all other practices. If you have a question about our environmental policy please don't hesitate to ask us.

Charitable work

We give many voluntary hours to the following organisations through the year:

Transition Scilly is an organisation that promotes positive responses to peak oil and climate change in the local community. This includes local food, renewable energy, low carbon transport and much more.

Organic Growers Alliance represents the interests of, and promotes further uptake of small-scale organic horticulture in the UK.

Farm Carbon Cutting Toolkit works to help farmers and growers across the UK reduce their carbon footprint.

Communication

Everyone who works at Scilly Organics understands the importance of this Policy and undertakes to ensure its implemented during every day activities. We encourage customers to minimise their carbon footprint and environmental impact.

On-going work...

We're not perfect and are always looking at ways to become more sustainable and to use less resources.

Created by Jonathan Smith, 12th April 2019