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RIRDC RESEARCH

Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

Going Organic: Organic livestock production. A conversion package for organic livestock production in the rangelands of western New South Wales.

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Organic products are the fastest growing food sector worldwide. Growth of new farms, products and consumers has been steadily increasing over the last 20 years. In the last 10 years, the rate of growth has consistently increased in all of the advanced economies. Market analysis forecast annual growth rates between 10% and 30% around the world. The United States Department of agriculture expects the organic industry to be worth US\$100billion by 2010 in America, Europe and Japan. Major international food corporations are developing organic product lines.

The Australian organic sector is worth between \$250-\$400 million per annum at retail level and demand outstrips supply. Domestic production is increasing at between 6-15% per annum and consumption is growing at between 25-40%. The balance is imported. Rising domestic and overseas demand for Australian organic products is prompting more conventional farmers and processors to consider and adopt organic systems. This information is for producers wishing to convert to organic production and for producers already involved in organic production but keen to diversify their production, suggesting possible strategies and pathways for moving forward.