



# Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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## ***Organic farming on the increase***

The area used for organic farming increased by almost 20% between 1999 and 2000, reaching a total area of over 25 000 hectares. This represents a mere 1.3% of the total area used for agriculture according to the survey on organic farming in 2000 conducted by Statistics Netherlands. The increase was mainly in grassland, and in organically grown arable crops. The survey shows that Flevoland is the province producing the biggest share in ecological farming.

### ***Dairy farming leader***

The increase in organic farming is mainly due to the fact that a number of dairy farmers switched to organic production methods. Farmers holding dairy cattle make up 60% of the 25 000 hectares of organic farmland in the Netherlands. It concerns mainly grass land for grazing cows, sheep and goats.

There is also a considerable increase in chicken and pig farms. These holdings usually make relatively intensive use of the land, so that their share in the total organic farming is small. In 2000 about 0.4% of the chicken and pig farms used organic means of production.

The share of organic horticulture has also increased substantially. However, in terms of land area used organic horticulture is not very big yet.

### ***More biological crops***

The land area used for growing organic crops in 2000 was up 20% on 1999. There has also been a major increase (30%) in the area of organically produced crops grown in the open.

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**Table 1**

Land area used for organic farming 1986-2000			
	Holdings	Area	
		Hectares	% of the total area of agricultural land
1986	278	2 724	0,1
1989	359	6 544	0,3
1990	399	7 469	0,4
1991	439	9 227	0,5
1995	521	12 789	0,7
1996	554	14 334	0,7
1998	705	19 661	1,0
1999	786	21 511	1,1
2000	906	25 531	1,3

**Table 2**

Organic farming per province, as a percentage of the total area of agricultural land													
	Groningen	Friesland	Drenthe	Overijssel	Flevoland	Gelderland	Utrecht	N-Holland	S-Holland	Zee-land	N-Bra-bant	Lim-burg	Nether-lands
1998	0.5	1.3	1.2	0.6	5.3	0.8	0.8	1.5	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.3	1.0
1999	0.7	1.4	1.2	0.8	5.2	1.0	1.0	1.5	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.3	1.1
2000	0.8	1.8	1.8	0.9	5.7	1.2	1.5	1.8	1.0	0.5	0.6	0.6	1.3

**Table 3**

Organic farming by use of cultivated land			
	Area		
	1999	2000	growth 2000 on 1999
	hectare	hectare	%
Arable crops	6 661	7 597	14
Grassland	12 834	15 257	19
Horticulture in the open	1 590	2 060	30
Horticulture under glass	43	83	93
Fallow land	365	521	43
Fast- growing timber	19	13	- 32
Total	21 511	25 531	19