

THE NEED FOR ORGANIC FARM FORESTRY, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR ORGANIC TIMBER

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The conscious management of trees on farms and eliminating the use of agrochemicals are two means of increasing agricultural sustainability. Both have clear benefits, though either farm forestry or organic agriculture alone is only half way there. It is only a small step from one to the other, making 'organic agroforestry' a complementary, more durable and diversified production system. Both acknowledge the positive aspects of the other, but an integrated approach appears to offer additional advantages.

A further development is towards the certification of organic timber. Conventional plantation and farm forestry routinely use herbicides and occasionally pesticides and fertilizers, and research looking at the uptake of herbicides by woody weeds indicates that what is applied on or near a tree will be deposited in the timber. Such issues are of special concern for example, in tree rows in conventional agricultural fields which may experience numerous spray passes annually, and further investigations are required. The need for an organic timber standard is proposed.