

# ESTABLISHMENT OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY IN SAMCHEOK, KOREA

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## Introduction

Since the enactment of the Environmentally Friendly Agriculture Promotion Act, Korea has endeavored to foster a sustainable development of eco-friendly agriculture. Nevertheless, a recent survey on organic farms showed that an insufficient know-how about farming techniques (organic seed, crop rotation, soil fertility, prevention of disease and pest, weeding, etc.) remains the largest obstacle to the practice of organic farming.

Until December 2010 when the 2<sup>nd</sup> five-year plan for eco-friendly agricultural development was completed, the government's policy on eco-friendly agriculture was mainly centered upon financial support for eco-friendly farmers, thus there appeared to be a lack of technological development or systemic education policy for organic farming.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> five-year plan for eco-friendly agricultural development which starts in 2011 should give priority to dissemination of organic farming technology and establishment of an education system for organic agriculture.

In Korea, agricultural departments are currently operated by 50 universities (24 national universities and 26 private universities), but there is virtually no university which conducts systemic education about organic farming.

The success of environmentally friendly agriculture depends on eco-friendly farming education and training. Here, the expansion of professional education is of particular importance with its main focus on the reinforcement of a basis for environmentally friendly farming:

- Utilizing the carrot approach for national and private universities to open organic farming-related departments (Dept. of organic food production, organic animal production, organic food processing, etc.)
- Stimulating massive investment in creation of organic agriculture graduate schools and universities

As Samcheok City retains an International Research & Education Center for Organic Agriculture & Fisheries as well as an Experimental Farm, the Samcheok Government is promoting the scheme for reorganizing them into an Organic Agriculture University.

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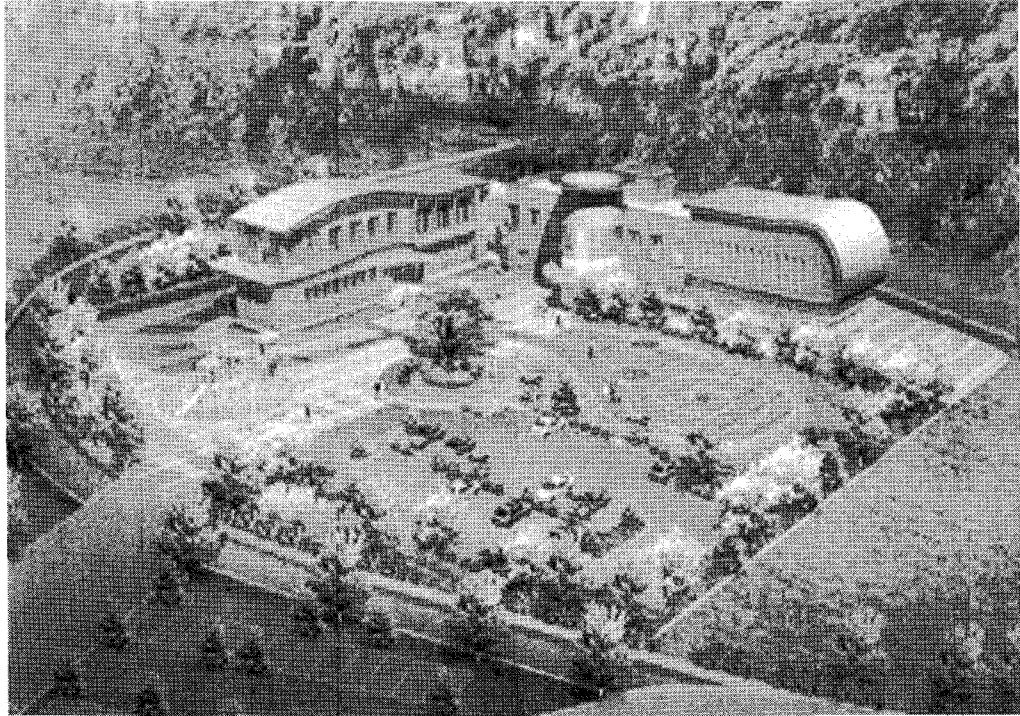


Figure 1: A Panoramic View of the Main Buildings of the Organic Agriculture University

### **Formation and Operation of Organic Agriculture University**

The Organic Agriculture University will consist of a graduate school (Ms and PhD courses), organic agriculture master college (professional bachelor's course), and organic farming school for agricultural return. As a regular course, the graduate school will cover organic crops, organic horticulture, organic animal production, organic aquaculture, organic food processing & marketing, while the organic agriculture master college and organic farming school for agricultural return will be also in operation:

- Graduate School: student capacity for each department - 10 students for a master's course & 5 students for a PhD course
- Organic Agriculture Master College: student capacity for 4 majors under professional bachelor's course - 20 students per major  
→ Separate operation of professional bachelor's program (two-year junior college) and organic master program
- Organic Farming School for Agricultural Return: student capacity for 5 classes - 20 students per class

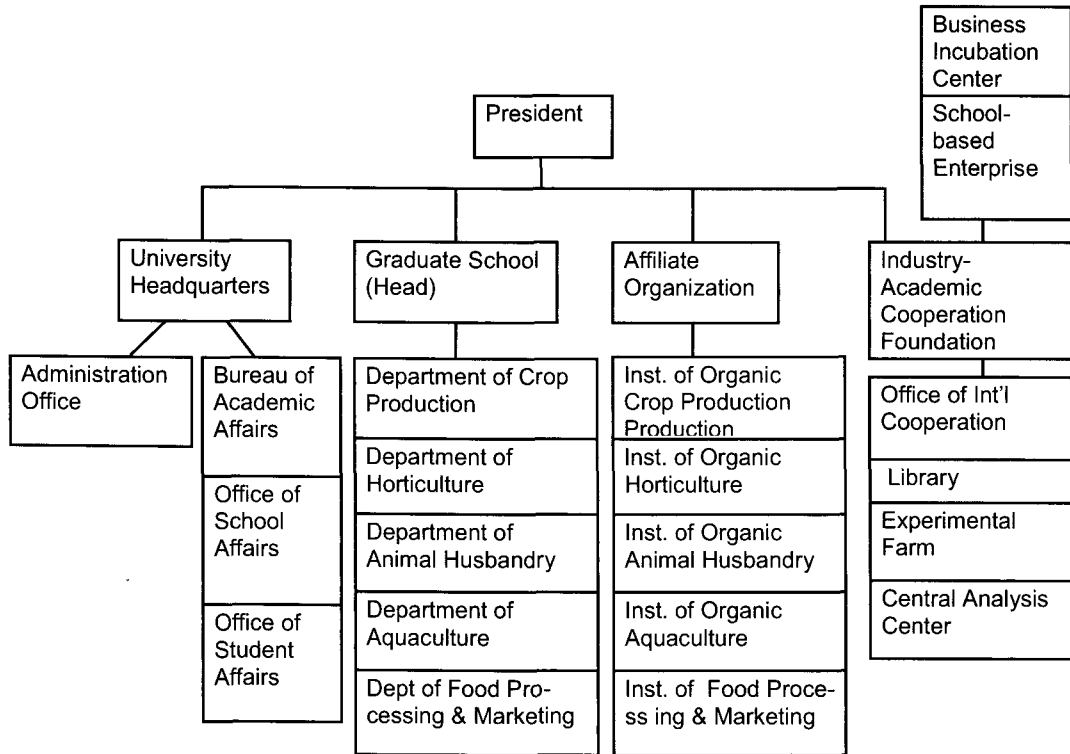


Figure 2: Organizational Structure of the Organic Agriculture Graduate School & University

### Education System and Student Capacity of Organic Agriculture University

The graduate school will consist of a two-year master's course and a three-year PhD course, covering organic crops, organic horticulture, organic animal husbandry, organic aquaculture, organic food processing & marketing.

The organic agriculture master college will offer a professional bachelor's program and a professional master program on four majors in organic confectionary & baking, organic dairy processing, organic meat processing, and organic fermented food. Here, the professional bachelor's course and organic master course will be operated on the basis of two years and six months respectively.

A one-year organic farming school for agricultural return will provide five courses such as organic horticulture, organic animal husbandry, organic food processing, organic medicinal herb, and organic fermented food.

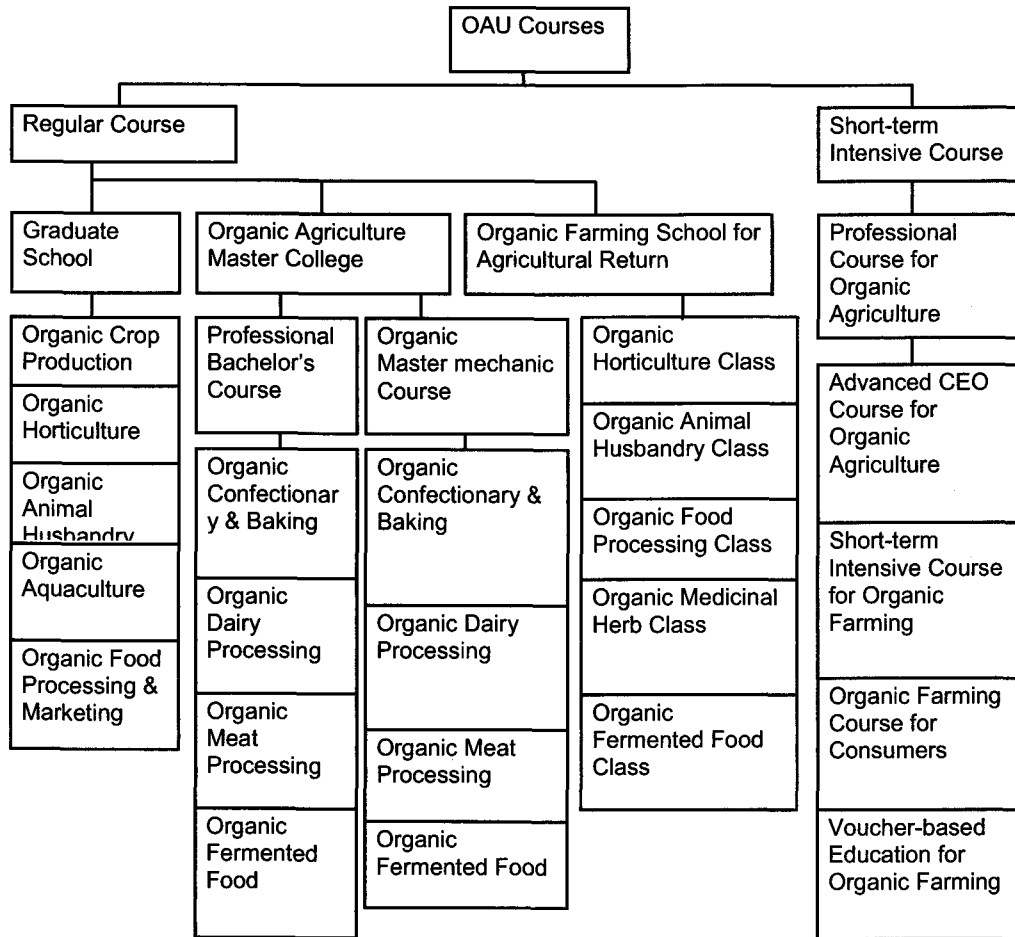


Figure 3: Course Formation of Organic Agriculture University

## Conclusion

Samcheok City with some 70,000 citizens have already completed the construction of an International Research & Education Center for Organic Agriculture & Fisheries plus an Experimental Farm funded entirely from its municipal budget (KRW 19.8 billion = 18 Million \$). However, it has not yet obtained approval for the establishment of an Organic Agriculture University. In Korea, the opening of an Organic Agriculture University is an essential prerequisite not only for the quantitative and qualitative development of organic farming but also for the sustainable growth of secondary and tertiary industries.

Samcheok City hopes to be designated as an educational cooperation organization of the International Society of Organic Agriculture Research (ISO FAR) and open a National Organic Agriculture University by the end of 2013 through close cooperation with the central government (the Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries & the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology).

## **Literature**

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