

Contents

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| WELCOME NOTE..... | 2 |
| POLITICAL HOTSPOT | 4 |
| 1 NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS..... | 6 |
| 1.1 Policy | 6 |
| Organic regulation..... | 6 |
| Seeds | 7 |
| 1.2 Food, farming and environment | 8 |
| 1.3 EU Research & Innovation Policy / TP Organics | 10 |
| 2 IFOAM EU DEVELOPMENTS..... | 15 |
| Saying goodbye to our colleagues..... | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| 3 EVENTS | 16 |
| 3.1 Preview of events | 16 |
| 3.2 Review of events | 18 |
| 4 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM EU | 22 |
| 5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS..... | 23 |

WELCOME NOTE

After a lengthy process the European Parliament approved Ursula von der Leyen's team of Commissioners on 27 November. The College of Commissioners took office on 1 December and will be in place for the next five years. For the first time, a woman leads the European Commission and this College of Commissioners has the largest proportion of female Commissioners to date.

The Commissioners whose work is of particular interest for the organic movement are:

- [Janusz Wojciechowski](#), Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development,
- [Virginijus Sinkevičius](#), Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries,
- [Mariya Gabriel](#), Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, and
- [Stella Kyriakides](#), Commissioner for, Health and Food Safety.

During their first days in office, Mr Wojciechowski and Ms Kyriakides attended the EU Agricultural Outlook Conference. At the European Commission's annual conference in Brussels on 10-11 December, key European stakeholders discussed the future of agriculture in Europe and the challenges that lie ahead. On December 11, in parallel, Commissioner von der Leyen presented the European Green Deal to the European Parliament.

Thanks to tireless efforts of IFOAM EU, organic features prominently on the political agenda. It's seen as a key contributor to the European Green Deal – “the area under organic farming will also need to increase in Europe” – and the “Farm to Fork” strategy clearly mentions organic as one of the key sector to promote (see also the political hot spot of this newsletter).

At the EU Agricultural Outlook Conference, Mr Wojciechowski told the audience that he would be setting up an action plan for organic farming in 2020 and that the DG AGRI services were already working on an advanced draft and invited suggestions and proposals. Organic farming is key to “achieving the European Green Deal, making it a key element of the Farm to Fork Strategy.”

His colleague, Ms Kyriakides, insisted that pesticides are “a major concern for our citizens,” and she wants to agree “ambitious targets on pesticides and fertilisers to substantially reduce the risks associated with them”. She also wants to cut the use of antimicrobials in farm animals.

I am happy that the organic principles and the vision of the organic movement have found their way to the political agenda and I would like to thank our members, our board and the office staff for their hard work in doing so.

We will continue the good work and open dialogue that we are having as a movement with the new Commission and their Cabinets. We want to make sure that organic agriculture is part of the solution and plays an important role in combatting the climate and biodiversity crisis we are facing.

Transforming the food system is our vision for 2030. To make this a reality, [three strategic goals](#) guide our work as IFOAM EU. December is always a moment to look at what was done in the past, and I am happy to see that we have worked hard to make our vision becoming a reality. And as you read earlier, we are succeeding!



To bring ‘[Organic on every table](#)’, we have been advocating for [a new Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\) that rewards farmers who do more for the climate and the environment](#). We also worked tirelessly to ensure that the Delegated and Implemented Acts of the new organic regulation that will enter into force in 2021 are suited for the realities of organic production.

Of course, we worked on [the proper implementation of the legislation on Genetically Modified Organisms \(GMOs\)](#), in line with the decision of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in 2018 stating that new genetic engineering techniques are GMOs and should be subject to risk assessment, traceability and labelling.



Our efforts to achieving ‘[Fair play – Fair pay](#)’ include our active follow-up of the legislative proposal on Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs), which resulted in the [official recognition of the legislative under the name Directive \(EU\) 2019/633](#). This as well as [our publication on ‘Taxation as a tool towards true cost accounting’](#), which was launched during the Best Economy Forum in spring this year are major steps towards a fairer and more transparent food and farming system.



Last, but not least, we also worked ‘[Improve – Inspire – Deliver](#)’, the third of our strategic goals. IFOAM EU is involved in many research projects, for example, the [four-year project RELACS](#), researching alternatives for contentious inputs in organic farming. Furthermore, the 2019 edition annual [European Organic Congress](#) focused on ‘Innovation and technology: How organic improves, inspires & delivers’.

In December, our activity peaked with events such as the final event of the [SME Organics project](#), a second very successful edition of [IFOAM EU Meets Business](#) and [TP Organics’ 4th edition of the Organic Innovation Days](#). During the Innovation Days, the Technology Platform for Organics launched the research priorities for the organic movement in the new [Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for Organics and Agroecology](#).

These are just few examples of the work we are performing in Brussels to make Europe More Organic!

Looking ahead at 2020, we will continue working with our members, EU institutions, Member States, like-minded NGOs and other relevant stakeholders to promote organic and make sure that the political agenda can be realised ambitiously. We promise to keep fighting for better policies to combat the climate and environmental crisis.

Wishing you happy holidays and looking forward to meeting many of you in person at Biofach 2020.

Organically,
Eduardo Cuoco

POLITICAL HOTSPOT

European Commission unveils European Green Deal

On 11 December, the head of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen presented the main objectives of the European Green Deal. This long-term strategy will focus on the fight against climate change, circular economy, air and water quality, energy and agriculture. Within this European Green Deal, the Commission pledges to table a farm to fork strategy, an EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and a new EU Forest Strategy.

The newly appointed Commission (first day in office on 1 December 2019) wants to lead the transition towards a climate-neutral economy by 2050 and send a strong message to EU citizens.

IFOAM EU welcomes European Green Deal's recognition of organic and asks for concrete targets in "Farm to Fork strategy" (F2F)

IFOAM EU welcomes the European Green Deal's ambition, specifically the targets about climate-neutrality by 2050 and biodiversity preservation. We look forward to concrete actions to transition the agriculture sector to agroecology. Yet, to make these ambitious goals a reality in the upcoming "Farm to Fork strategy" we need targets to reduce the use of synthetic pesticides, fertilisers and antibiotics in farming.

IFOAM EU also welcomes the Commission's acknowledgement of the central role that organic farming can play to reach the European Green Deal's objectives on biodiversity, climate, and quality food. The EU should set targets to raise the share of organic land in the EU by 2030, and to put its agriculture sector on a transition path to agroecology.

In the short term, IFOAM EU calls on the Council and Parliament to raise the environmental ambition of the new CAP to be coherent with the European Green Deal, by ringfencing 70% of the CAP budget for environmental and climate action.

On the 12th of December, IFOAM EU together with another 29 associations sent [an open letter](#) to Executive Vice President Timmermans welcoming the idea of a farm to fork strategy, while at the same time conveying a number of priority objectives and actions that should be included in the F2F strategy if it is to address the urgent challenges in food systems.

Agriculture & Health Commissioners commit to organic as part of the solution

At the European Commission's annual Agricultural Outlook conference in Brussels on 10-11 December, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Wojciechowski, and Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Ms Kyriakides, made statements that prominently feature organic.

Mr Wojciechowski told the audience that he would be setting up an action plan for organic farming in 2020 and that the DG AGRI services were already working on an advanced draft and invited suggestions and proposals. He said that organic farming is key to "achieving the European Green Deal, making it a key element of the Farm to Fork Strategy.", while Ms Kyriakides stated that she is in favour of "ambitious targets on pesticides and fertilisers to substantially reduce the risks associated with them"

Organic agriculture and agroecology, transforming Europe's agriculture together

Agriculture is at the crossroads of today's challenges, both contributing to climate change, and affected by it. [A wide range of farming approaches such are organic farming and agroecological](#)

practices can be a central part of the solution, just like the Commissioners indicated at the Outlook conference. The organic movement believes that these practices should be further promoted by the EU to achieve the European organic movement's vision of (at least) 50% of farmland managed with organic and agroecological practices by 2050.

Next steps

In the short term, IFOAM EU calls on the Council and Parliament to raise the environmental ambition of the new CAP to be coherent with the European Green Deal, by ringfencing 70% of the CAP budget for environmental and climate action.

The Commission has pledged to publish the European Green Deal in its entirety at the beginning of 2020.

In terms of the Farm to Fork strategy, the Commission has stated that it will launch a public consultation in February-March to consult a wide variety of stakeholders. A finalised version of the Farm to Fork strategy is expected in Spring 2020.

1 NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

1.1 Policy

Common Agricultural Policy

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) negotiations enter a new phase in European Parliament and Council

As Member States are close to reach a deal on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the Parliament's Committee for Agriculture now has a list of articles to reopen, the CAP negotiations are entering a new crucial phase.

Ongoing discussions on money for agriculture in the EU budget (future MFF)

The negotiations between Member States on the next seven-years-budget, the so-called MFF, are entering a new phase. The Finnish Presidency proposed to dedicate 1.07% of the EU's Gross National Income (GNI) to agriculture. This is less than the Commission's proposal of 1.114% and the Parliament's request to increase from the current 1.0% to 1.3% of EU GNI. But while the overall budget is smaller than the Commission's proposal, the budget for agriculture might receive a substantial increase. The Council suggested to increase the budget for rural development by €10 billion compared to the initial figures. These suggestions still need to be agreed with the co-legislators, but this Council position shows that Member States are now ready to go more into the details of the scope and allocations of CAP instruments.

New scope for discussions at European Parliament

On Wednesday 4 December, Members of the European Parliament in charge of the CAP legislative proposals decided on the scope of the new negotiations. After the elections in May 2019, the European Parliament Committees on Agriculture and Rural Development (COMAGRI) and Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (COMENVI) coordinators decided that several articles would be reopened. This would allow newcomers to express their views on the most debated topics such as eco-schemes, ringfencing, and second pillar interventions dedicated to climate and environment. After lengthy discussions on which articles and points to reopen, rapporteurs and shadow-rapporteurs found a consensus on the three CAP files on Wednesday morning.

In terms of procedure, COMAGRI and COMENVI teams are now going to have common shadow meetings, but ENVI shadows will attend the meetings in an observer capacity only. The Plenary adoption of the CAP regulations is expected by June 2020.

IFOAM EU will continue to represent the organic movement's position on this important file. Are you an IFOAM EU member and do you have any question about this? Contact [lena.brisset \[at\] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:lena.brisset@ifoam-eu.org).

GMO & Seeds

Council pushes for study on GMOs and study on seeds legislation & legislative proposal

On 8 November, the Council of the European Union issued two Council Decisions requesting the EU Commission to conduct separate studies regarding the legislation on Plant Reproductive Material and GMOs. The results of these studies could have far-reaching consequences as they could lead to reopening of the current legislations.

Seed legislation and legislative proposal

First, the Council requests the Commission to submit a study on the Union's options to update the existing legislation on the production and marketing of plant reproductive material and a [legislative] proposal if appropriate in view of the outcomes of the [study](#).

The current seed legislation is fragmented among various Directives covering different types of seed and vegetable reproductive material. The last attempt to revise the 'Seed legislation' was made in 2013, but the Commission withdrew its proposal to update the legislation because the European Parliament rejected the proposal. The reason for this rejection was that it was said to have failed in meeting its core objectives such as simplifying the rules and promoting innovation.

On 8 November, Member States pushed again for an inquiry into options to update the legislation. They emphasized that the reasons for the 2013 proposal are still relevant today - these include the complexity and fragmentation of the existing regulation, non-harmonised implementation in different Member States as well as alignment and coherence with other policies. The Commission is supposed to submit the study by 31 December 2020. IFOAM EU will closely follow the process and provide the organic movement's input.

GMOs and new genetic engineering techniques

The second Decision on 8 November requests the Commission "[to submit a study on the Union's options for addressing the legal situation of 'novel genomic techniques'](#)". This study will be "followed up by a [legislative] proposal if appropriate in view of the outcomes of the study".

This request comes after the ruling of the European Court of Justice of July 2018 clarified that all GMOs, old and new, are subject to the EU's obligations for risk assessment, authorisation, traceability and labelling. While [the Court concluded that the European legal framework on GMOs is fit to regulate the new techniques](#), there are practical implications regarding its implementation that need to be clarified according to the Member States.

These concern mainly the development of detection methods & strategies to test imports for the presence of unauthorized GMOs. While Member States ask the Commission to support the national authorities in the implementation of the ruling, some states are not satisfied with the ruling of the European Court of Justice and would like to exempt product from new genetic engineering techniques from the rules regarding safety assessment, traceability and labelling that are defined in the GMO legislation.

[IFOAM EU's press release of 7 November 2019 regarding the Council Decision](#), highlighting the need for the European Commission to take a coordinating role in supporting Member States with the implementation of the law and providing a clear EU mandate and funding for the development of detection methods.



1.2 Food, farming and environment

Protect water: Provide funding for it, implement the Directive and integrate environmental objective

On 11 December, the long-awaited conclusions of the fitness check of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) were made public. They are largely positive, declaring that any lack of progress is due to “insufficient funding, slow implementation and insufficient integration of environmental objectives in sectoral policies, and not due to a deficiency in the legislation:.

The conclusions also reference that: “water policy is very important to European citizens. The public consultation received more than 370,000 responses in total, which is an exceptionally high number”.

IFOAM EU widely agrees with the conclusions of the review of the Water Framework Directive. Thanks to all supporters of the [#ProtectWater campaign!](#)

Save bees and farmers – Sign the European Citizen Initiative now

Today, a European Citizens’ Initiative ‘[Save bees and farmers](#)’ launches. It wants to phase out synthetic pesticides by 2035, support farmers, and save bees and nature. If the initiative gathers one million signatures by September 2020, the EU Commission and Parliament must consider turning the campaign’s demands into law. [1]

90 organisations from 17 EU countries are jointly launching the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI) [Save bees and farmers](#). International scientists have called for an urgent “transformative change” to stop the collapse of nature. A quarter of Europe’s wild animals are severely threatened, half of our nature sites are in an unfavourable condition, and ecosystem services are deteriorating. [2]

Meanwhile, millions of farmers are being squeezed out by unfair prices, the lack of political support and big corporations. Four million small farms disappeared between 2005 and 2016 in the EU. [3]

Sign the petition on savebeesandfarmers.eu if you are supportive of this cause and share the initiative widely in your network! The information is available in more than 20 different languages and on social media using #SaveBeesAndFarmers.

Concretely, the ECI calls on the European Commission to introduce legal proposals to:

- Phase out synthetic pesticides by 2035: Phase out synthetic pesticides in EU agriculture by 80% by 2030, starting with the most hazardous, to become 100% free of synthetic pesticides by 2035
- Restore biodiversity: Restore natural ecosystems in agricultural areas so that farming becomes a vector of biodiversity recovery
- Support farmers in the transition: Reform agriculture by prioritising small scale, diverse and sustainable farming, supporting a rapid increase in agroecological and organic practice, and enabling independent farmer-based training and research into pesticide- and GMO-free farming

Sign the petition on savebeesandfarmers.eu. Have you signed? Share it on social media using [#SaveBeesAndFarmers](https://twitter.com/SaveBeesAndFarmers).

A cross-sector alliance of civil society organisations covering the environment, health, farming and beekeeping runs this campaign. Among others: the European networks Friends of the Earth Europe and the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) as well as the Munich Environmental Institute, the Aurelia foundation (Germany), Générations Futures (France) and GLOBAL 2000/Friends of the Earth Austria.

Do you want to actively promote the initiative or get more information? Please contact [isabella.lang \[at\] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:isabella.lang@ifoam-eu.org)

NOTES

[1] www.savebeesandfarmers.eu

[2] <https://www.ipbes.net/news/Media-Release-Global-Assessment>

Bees and other pollinators in particular are indispensable for preserving our ecosystems and biodiversity. Up to one third of our food production and two thirds of our daily fruits and vegetables rely on pollination through bees and other insects. Yet, they are existentially threatened by constant pesticide-contamination and habitat loss due to industrial agriculture.

[3] The rapid decline of both small farms and wildlife is deeply rooted in our current model of agricultural food production that heavily relies on big scale monocultural farming and the use of synthetic pesticides. To make things worse, the EU actively funds this form of agriculture through its current agropolitical agenda and its system of subsidies that favours mass production over small scale and eco friendly farming.

http://www.foeeurope.org/sites/default/files/publications/nyeleni_eca_-_more_farmers_better_food_25.03.2019_0.pdf

NEW POSITION PAPER

Agroecology to be at the heart of the farm to fork strategy

1.3 EU Research & Innovation Policy / TP Organics

Organic Innovation Days 2019: engaging discussions on research & innovation to transform of our food systems & launch of organic research priorities

What are the research priorities and needs of the organic sector in the EU? How can we transition our food and farming sector with the help of organic and agroecological principles?

The [Organic Innovation Days 2019](#) answered these and more questions, [TP Organics'](#) annual Organic Innovation Days welcomed a broad range of stakeholders of the organic sector on 3-4 December 2019 in Brussels. The Organic Innovation Days are a public event that brings together companies and researchers, farmers and farmer organisations, and policymakers. This year's 5th edition of the event took place in collaboration with the [LIAISON](#) and [XF-ACTORS](#) projects, and with support of [Burleigh Dodds Science Publishing](#).

The highlights of Day I of the event included a keynote speech by Alexander Wezel (*ISARA*), one of the key thinkers on agroecology in Europe, presenting pathways towards a diversified and resilient food system. Vincenzo Verrastro (*IAMB*) presented the latest findings of the [XF-ACTORS](#) project on the control of the bacteria *Xylella Fastidiosa* disease in organic olive production and Birgit Wassermann (*Graz University of Technology*) presented the importance of the plant microbiome and its interdependence with human, animal and ecosystem health. Day I ended with an award ceremony to celebrate the 15 ambassadors of the [EU Rural Innovation Contest](#) that were selected by the LIAISON project for their innovative and inspiring activities in the agricultural, forestry and agri-food sector ([video explanation](#)). Among them are the [Green Workshop Wendland](#) (DE) and [Race de Bretagne](#) (FR), the two ambassadors who received a special recognition from TP Organics for their strong outlook on the future and their focus on young farmers and sustainability. On Day II, Raffaele Zanolì (*Università Politecnica delle Marche*) announced the launch of TP Organics' new [Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda for Organics & Agroecology](#). The Agenda identified 29 research priority topics that will help address Europe's food and farming challenges. The document will serve as a basis to advise the European Commission on Horizon Europe, the EU's next research & innovation framework

programme to succeed Horizon 2020. The [full version of the agenda](#), a [summary](#) and a [briefing on Horizon Europe](#) are available in the [Publications section](#) of TP Organics' website.

The event ended with the Stakeholder Forum that united together TP Organics' members to, among others, appoint a new Steering Committee. Find all speakers' presentations and a detailed review on [TP Organics' website](#).



This event is co-financed by the LIFE programme of the European Union, under the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). The sole responsibility lies with IFOAM EU. The EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



This event is financed by the XF-ACTORS and LIAISON projects. The XF-ACTORS project received funding under grant agreement No 727987 and the LIAISON project under No 773418, from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

RELACS project on track: 2nd Annual Project meeting

The second annual meeting of the [RELACS project](#) partners showed that the project started off dynamically and the research in all work packages is advancing. The project already published a policy briefing explaining the organic approach towards inputs and preliminary findings on the use of fertilisers.

The excursion brought us to the Western part of Lyon where we visited an organic dairy cooperative located 1,000 meters above sea level. One of the highlights for the farmers was a visit to the association 'La Fédération des Eleveurs et Vétérinaires en Convention' ([FEVEC's](#)) which builds on close cooperation between veterinary professional and farmers. In the 40 years of having regular, close exchanges between these two parties animal health & welfare considerably improved.

The meeting took place in Lyon, France. ITAB organized it and the [VetAgro Sup Veterinary Campus](#) kindly hosted it.

RELACS seeks to promote the development and adoption of environmentally safe and economically viable tools and technologies to reduce the use of external inputs in organic farming systems.





RELACS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 773431. The information contained in this communication only reflects the author's view.

TP Organics takes part in the Horizon Europe consultation for umbrella organisations

TP Organics submitted a response to the second and final consultation on Horizon Europe, the EU's next research & innovation framework programme that will succeed Horizon 2020. The European Commission launched this consultation to collect feedback on the revised [Orientations towards the first Strategic Plan](#) from umbrella organisations and networks with a cross-border dimension.

Prioritise organic and agroecological approaches

In the response, TP Organics calls for Horizon Europe as a public policy to support all the targeted impacts of Cluster 6, Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment. Research and innovation in Cluster 6 of Horizon Europe should support the transition to sustainable food and farming systems that restore and enhance public health, the climate and environment.

Organic and agroecological approaches that use natural resources efficiently and sustainably, create circular systems and reduce soil erosion and pollution of the environment should be prioritised. By drawing down carbon from the atmosphere into the soil, organic and agroecological approaches reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They contribute to avoiding the worst impacts of climate change, halting the rapid biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems and their services.

Include organisational, social, knowledge and governance innovations

To respond to societal challenges, innovation must look at the broader social impact of technology and consider how and by whom it is used and controlled. The transition to sustainable food systems also requires new societal and cultural models. Therefore, organisational, social, knowledge and governance innovations should be promoted alongside technological ones.

A robust monitoring system must be applied throughout the full project cycle – from the design of calls to the evaluation of proposals and review of projects – to ensure that all clusters of Horizon Europe contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Accommodate for research in European policies & organic action plans

To transform the European agri-food sector, a **Farm To Fork Strategy** on sustainable food along the whole value chain is needed, including a profound revision of the **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**. The new CAP's eco-schemes should contribute to environmental objectives, support farming methods based on agroecological principles and deliver for rural development.

Organic farming can play a vital role in this transformation. Research for organic farming can be strengthened through European, national and regional Organic Action Plans. Research accompanying the implementation of the new CAP should measure its impact on the transition towards more sustainable food systems. New policies should consider hidden costs and externalities and better assess the synergies and trade-offs between agricultural practices, public goods and ecosystem services. Stringent monitoring systems that measure the progress towards sustainability and food security in Europe are required. Food procurement policies should be designed to support young farmers and new entrants, encourage more sustainable production and support rural economies.

Engage citizens in the planning

Finally, TP Organics also provided feedback about the co-design process to address the lack of active engagement with citizens and civil society organisations during the strategic planning process, calling for a concrete roadmap that addresses barriers to societal engagement and pilots robust and innovative approaches such as the well-proven citizens' assemblies.

Background information

During the Horizon Europe strategic planning process, two sets of co-design activities took place between June and October 2019:

1. A web-based consultation open to the broad public to which [TP Organics submitted a response](#). 6,806 answers have been collected between 28 June and 4 October 2019.
2. Meetings and exchanges between the Commission's services and almost 4,000 stakeholders during the [European Research and Innovation Days](#) 24-26 September 2019 ([read TP Organics' review](#)).

These activities fed into a [report](#) and the revised version of the [Orientations towards the first Strategic Plan for Horizon Europe](#). The latter was the subject of this final online consultation.



This communication is co-financed by the European Union, under the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). The sole responsibility for this communication lies with IFOAM EU. The EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

TP Organics launches briefing on Horizon Europe

TP Organics has published a [briefing on Horizon Europe](#) that was officially launched at the [Organic Innovation Days](#). It summarises how the EU's next research & innovation framework programme will work and is available on the [TP Organics' website](#).

With a foreseen budget of 100 billion EUR for the period 2021-2027, Horizon Europe is a key tool to advance research & innovation on societal challenges, including the transition to sustainable food and farming systems that take organic and agroecological approaches as a basis. The briefing informs TP Organics' members and other interested parties about the most important steps in the policy process as well as the position of TP Organics.

The briefing introduces Horizon Europe's structure, key novelties that differ from Horizon 2020 and the anticipated timeline. Moreover, it takes a detailed look at Cluster 6 of Horizon Europe, "Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment". and the proposed Missions and European Partnerships. In its briefing, TP Organics also assesses Horizon Europe, providing key recommendations for policy-makers and raising key concerns, including the introduction of the so-called [Innovation Principle](#). Finally, the briefing calls for better involving civil society in the planning process and agenda-setting of Horizon Europe.

The new Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) and the new Commissioner for Youth & Innovation will play a key role in ensuring that the EU's research and innovation (R&) policies deliver real benefits for society and the environment throughout the 2019-2024 legislature. Together with the [guide](#) for new MEPs, developed by civil society organisations including TP Organics, this briefing will prove a valuable source of sound

background information on EU R&I policy.



This communication is co-financed by the European Union, under the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). The sole responsibility for this communication lies with IFOAM EU. The EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

Share knowledge and connect with stakeholders across Europe by participating in our various knowledge exchange platforms

Do you want to expand and share your knowledge about solutions applied in organic farming? Are you looking for farm demonstration activities in Europe? Are you a farming start-up interested in innovations in food & farming sector?

Connect with the expanding communities in our knowledge exchange platforms. Discover, learn, open a discussion, co-create solutions and share insights and experiences with a wide range of users across Europe.

- **Organic Farm Knowledge**: Sharing knowledge and tools for organic farming

Find out more about organic arable farming and organic livestock husbandry by joining this platform. It hosts a wide range of practical knowledge and tools for organic farmers and advisers that can help improve farming practices.

- **Innovation Portal**: Connecting the network of Key AgriTech stakeholders across Europe

Are you interested in learning more about digital technology and engaging a discussion? Are you looking for a digital solution for your farm? Participate in the SmartAgriHubs Innovation Portal: it's a search engine, a one-stop-shop marketplace, a library, a training platform, a calendar, a network, a matchmaking service and a discussion forum. [Sign up and create a profile](#).

The platform is part of the [SmartAgriHubs](#) project which aims to realise the digitisation of European agriculture by fostering an agricultural innovation ecosystem dedicated to excellence, sustainability and success.

- **FarmDemo**: Innovation through on farm demonstration

Looking for farm demonstration activities in Europe? Check out the FarmDemo platform available in 17 languages. It presents agricultural demonstration activities across Europe and give farmers and innovation actors the possibility to join the growing community of demo farms. [Join and discover the platform](#).

The platform is part of the Nefertiti project which focuses on creating added value from the exchange of knowledge, actors, farmers and technical content between networks. The project boosts innovation uptake and improves peer to peer learning and network connectivity between farming actors across Europe.



Organic Farm Knowledge is a product of OK-Net Arable and OK-Net Ecofeed. These projects have received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreements No. 652654 and No. 773911 respectively.



FarmDemo has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 727388 (PLAID), No. 728061 (AgriDemo-F2F) and No. 772705 (NEFERTITI).



The SmartAgriHubs project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 81818.

2 IFOAM EU DEVELOPMENTS

Get inspired by a Belgian farm incubator & French social enterprise - New initiatives that are transforming food & farming!

To 'Improve – Inspire – Deliver', the farm incubator 'Froidefontaine' in the countryside of Belgium provides tools for producers, transformers and other people passionate about the development of a farm full of life. Think about access to land, infrastructure, finance, accountancy, administrative support, as well as marketing support. The regenerative and agroecological farm currently hosts a variety of sustainable producers, ranging from cider to potatoes, vegetables, chickens, honey and natural colours extracted from flowers who collaborate and share these resources. For visitors, the farm offers a range of high-quality organic products, educational activities and boarding facilities. [Those who are active in the region and interested in the being part of the farm with their own project can apply to become part of the Froidefontaine farm.](#)

The social enterprise ETHIQUABLE works on 'Fair Play – Fair Pay'. They developed a code of conduct based on 24 criteria on organic peasant agriculture and fair trade. 'Paysans d'Ici' involves 11 French cooperatives. Their 33 products are sold in supermarkets all over France. On average, 49.8% of the price of a local, fair and organic peasant products returns to the producer group. This ensures a decent income and livelihood for the producers. The success of the products in France shows that consumers demand greater transparency and fairness in the value chain. It also shows that rules adapted to a local context and shorter value chains can contribute to increased transparency of a product from production to consumption. This ensures fair pricing and support for organic peasant farming and leads to improved livelihoods in the global South.

Read more about these and other initiative on euorganic2030.bio. Do you have an initiative that is transforming food and farming and that is less than four years old? [Submit it now!](#)



This communication is co-financed by the LIFE programme of the European Union, under the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). This communication only reflects the views of the authors and its sole responsibility lies with IFOAM EU. The EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

Welcoming our new colleagues

Ambra De Simone

Ambra is a Plant Biologist with extensive research experience and a strong intercultural background. She carried out her PhD at the University of Leeds in the UK within the European Consortium Ecoseed (FP7). During that time, she collaborated with 11 research institutes across Europe to improve seed quality traits and sustain European agriculture while facing a context of climate change. After her Post Doc at the life sciences research institute VIB in Gent she stepped out of academia to get involved in EU projects management. She is passionate about organic food and farming and is thrilled to join the IFOAM EU's team. As a R&I project coordinator she will be involved in the support and coordination of the OK-Net EcoFeed, ReMix and BioFruitNet projects.

3 EVENTS

3.1 Preview of events

EcoFruit – European Conference on Organic Fruit Growing

17-19 February 2020, University of Hohenheim, Germany

[Ecofruit, the European Conference on Organic Fruit Growing](#) is the 19th edition of a conference bringing together European researchers and consultants working on topics related to organic fruit growing. “Ecofruit” gives an opportunity to communicate and discuss the latest research results connected to organic fruit growing and improv of the production system.

IFOAM EU is a proud patron of the Ecofruit Conference.

Organic World Congress

21-27 September 2020

We are now just 11 months from the 2020 Organic World Congress! Host city Rennes, France will receive thousands of visitors from September 21-27, 2020 for this emblematic event – the largest organic gathering in the world! But did you know that in the days leading up to the congress, some delegates will also participate in one of eight, topic-specific pre-conferences? Interested in joining but don't know which one to choose? No problem, we have created an overview to help you!

[RECEIVE AUTOMATIC OWC 2020 EMAIL UPDATES](#)

- **Policies Driving Sustainability in Agriculture**
- Applying the concept of true cost accounting in policy making
- Using the power of public contracts
- Developing organic and agroecological action plans
- Building a Community of Practice and linking it with related networks
- Increasing awareness of strong connections between sustainability and ethical values of organic food systems

Date: 21 September 2020



Read More: [Policies Driving Sustainability in Agriculture](#)

- **Symposium on Biodynamic Research – The Farm Organism as a Holistic Approach?**
- Biodynamic research
- Farm organisms – Ecosystem services, Resilience, Animals on farms
- Smallholder agriculture

Date: 21-22 September 2020

Read More: [Biodynamic Research – The Farm Organism](#)

- **Organic Animal Husbandry Systems – Their Performances, Potential, Possibilities and Challenges**
- Organic husbandry in a farming system approach
- Animal-friendly, sustainable feeding and grazing systems
- Breeding programs and strategies
- Animal welfare approaches and strategies
- Animal health and use of bioactive medicinal plants
- Role of animals for optimizing plant production systems and global agricultural production
- Organic livestock products and marketing organic livestock practices
- Importance of livestock to healthy soils, pastures, ecosystems, nutrition

Date: 21-22 September 2020

Read More: [Organic Animal Husbandry Systems](#)

- **Publish or Perish – Intensifying and Qualifying Scientific Publication of Organic Agriculture Research**
- 'How To' for scientific publishing in peer-reviewed journals, publication standards, technical procedures and research marketing
- Introduction to ISOFAR (International Society on Organic Agriculture Research)
- Research on organic agriculture

Date: 21 – 22 September 2020

Read More: [Publish or Perish](#)

- **Seed Ambassadors: Building an International Network to Advance Organic Seed Systems**
- Celebrating culinary diversity and exploring the potential to breed for taste and flavor
- Plant breeding methods, approaches, and models for supporting the transition to truly sustainable food systems
- Participatory plant breeding and seeds as commons as tools to integrate biodiversity in society
- Supporting the growth and success of the next generation of organic plant breeders and seed ambassadors
- Innovating a systems approach for organic plant breeding to reflect IFOAM principles, addressing the needs of people and planet

Date: 22 September 2020

Read More: [Seed Ambassadors](#)

Improving Transparency Along the Supply Chain and the Relevance of Organic Farming Statistics

- Global data on organic agriculture
- International trade data for the European Union and the US: status and issues
- Perspective of exporting countries
- Traceability tools and the role organic farming statistics can play in their improvement

- Recommendations for tools, actions, interactions, innovations, models, and policies to improve data availability, transparency, and fraud prevention

Date: 22 September 2020

Read More: [Improving Transparency Along the Supply Chain](#)

30 Years of PGS Development: a Root and Branch Appraisal

- PGS implementation and adaptation in cultural contexts
- Marketing approaches
- Participation, motivation, and strategies for ensuring economic viability of PGS initiatives
- Government recognition and donor support
- Scope of quality guarantee
- Benefits of and challenges for upscaling PGS
- Creation of international PGS networks
- Best practices for technology, knowledge building, and continuous improvement
- PGS strategies for building and managing knowledge
- How PGS initiatives are using digital tools to support social innovation

Date: 21 September 2020

Read More: [30 Years of PGS](#)

CSA and the Organic Movement: What's (in) the Share?

- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Local and Solidarity-based Partnerships for Agroecology (LSPA)
- Community Supported Fisheries (CSF) and their mapping around the world
- Advocating for CSA and LSPA at local and international levels
- Presentation of study results for CSA and LSPA social integration

Date: 21-22 September 2020

Read More: [CSA and the Organic Movement](#)

3.2 Review of events

4th European Conference on Copper

14-15 November 2019

Innovative projects and initiatives dealing with general questions on plant health care in organic farming and copper reduction met in Berlin to discuss for two days. Soon, you will find a collection of all the [presentations at the homepage of BÖLW](#).

Policy coordinator Isabella Lang presented a [policy briefing](#) which aims at better explaining the organic approach towards input to policy makers and the informed public. Isabella stressed that nature conservation and biodiversity can and should go hand in hand with agricultural production if we have a correct environmental risk assessment of inputs. She also pointed out that, besides its intrinsic value, biodiversity is a quality and precondition for the well-functioning of the organic plant health care strategy as it promotes beneficial insects, broader genetic varieties and faunal and floral diversity. This briefing was developed in the course of the RELACS project.

IFOAM EU is currently involved in a working group by DG SANTE. This group is looking into specific protection goals for the environmental risk assessment of plant protection products.

[IFOAM EU's members can read more about the current developments regarding copper authorisation on the IFOAM EU member extranet.](#)

For more information about membership, contact [IFOAMEU_membership \[at\] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:IFOAMEU_membership@ifoam-eu.org).

For more information about IFOAM EU's work on animal welfare, contact [isabella.lang \[at \] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:isabella.lang@ifoam-eu.org).



RELACS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 773431. The information contained in this communication only reflects the author's view.

Organic farmers meet in Finland

21-22 November 2019, Härmän Rätö, Finland

After a meeting in the Czech Republic earlier this year, the IFOAM EU Interest Group of Organic Farmers headed northwards to Finland. No snow but many saunas with lake views awaited us around the meeting venue Härmän Rätö, an innovative, organic hotel.

Almost 30 farmers from 15 countries discussed the possible content of a climate and biodiversity action plan of the organic movement from a farmer's point of view. In line with this topic we visited the experimental farm of Tuomas Mattila, a regenerative carbon farmer who practices mixed cropping systems, agroforestry and strongly reduced soil tillage. During lunch we had delicious reindeer soup at a rural small shop over which we discussed the many similarities between organic and regenerative farming.

Also on the agenda of the group was an exchange and update about the current Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) negotiations and the different situations regarding the state-of-play of the national work. The farmers also discussed the organic regulation, namely the definition of factory farming in different countries.

Does this sound interesting to you? Join us for our annual farmers breakfast at Biofach on 14 February 2020 at 09:30, location to be decided. You can also email [isabella.lang \[at \] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:isabella.lang@ifoam-eu.org).

Organic processors meet at IGOP meeting & IGOP annual general meeting

2 December 2019

December was an exciting day for the Interest Group of Organic Processors (IGOP). After a morning meeting about the latest developments of the new organic regulation on topics like cleaning and disinfectants and flavourings, the first IGOP annual general meeting took place in the afternoon.

The technical IGOP is composed of associations of processors and traders, so the IGOP annual general meeting is an opportunity for companies, members of IFOAM EU or members of members of IFOAM EU, to have their say about IGOP's and IFOAM EU's future work.

In a world café setting, participants had the chance to contribute to the IGOP's and IFOAM EU's work plan, to identify the future challenges for organic and share their ideas on putting organic forward as a solution to current societal and environmental issues.

Regarding the latter world café, recurrent themes were to uphold the integrity of organic and the organic supply chain, to become better at communicating the benefits of organic, as well as to focus on other issues linked to organic, such as packaging, which can contribute to the sustainability of a product.

We already look forward to the next IGOP annual general meeting for some more exciting and fresh ideas on how to bring the organic journey forward in the context of processing and trading!

Wrapping up four years of interregional cooperation on Organic Action Plans

2 December 2019, Brussels, Belgium

The final event of the SME Organics project gathered regional partners from all over Europe in Brussels. They discussed the outcomes of the project, the Regional Organic Action Plans stemming from it and the impact on the growth of organic Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the region.

Eduardo Cuoco, IFOAM EU Director, and INTIA's General Manager Juanma Intxaurrendieta kicked off the event with a welcome address. Then Nicolas Lampkin, Organic Policy consultant from Thünen Institute, delivered a keynote speech in which he provided an overview of the organic sector in the European Union. Anne-Cecile Renard of the Interreg Europe Programme continued with a presentation on how the Interreg Europe Programme supports SME competitiveness strategies. Later, Natalia Bellostas from IntiaSA and Project Coordinator at the Interreg Europe Programme and SME Organics shared the lessons learnt during the SME Organics project.

After a coffee break the event closed with two discussion panels. The first focused on the experiences of the project partners regarding interregional cooperation and was moderated by Eric Gall, IFOAM EU Policy Manager. The last panel of the day was moderated by Roberta Mancica of the Lombardy region. In this panel the participating partners shared their experiences on the impact of the Multi-Fund Regional Action Plans to support the growth of the organic sector in their region.

The SME Organics project was funded within the framework of the Interreg Europe. The project partner regions are Navarre (ES), Puglia (IT), Lombardy (IT), New Aquitaine (FR), Aargau (CH), North-West (RO), Lodzkie Region (PL), Seinäjoki (FI). The expert supporting partner is IFOAM EU (BE)



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

SME ORGANICS seeks to improve policies and programmes under the Investment for Growth and Jobs goal in order to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the SMEs in the organic sector of the participating regions. The project aims both at enhancing entrepreneurship but also at supporting the existing SMEs in improving their performance in order to enforce the growth capacity of the entire organic regional sector in regional, national and international markets.

IFOAM EU meets business: The organic sector and companies involved in organic exchange



Brussels, Belgium, 3 December 2019

The colourful programme of the third LIVESEED cross visit led the team to various stations along the At the 2nd edition of IFOAM EU meets business , almost 60 participants joined this event, aimed as a platform for exchange between the organic sector and companies involved in organic and open to the whole supply chain. Participants included organic pioneers and new entrants into the organic sector.

Sarah Compson, the chair of IFOAM EU's Interest Group of Organic Processors (IGOP) chaired the meeting. IFOAM EU's director Eduardo Cuoco opened the day by presenting the work of IFOAM EU and the organic movement's vision. Sarah continued presenting the work of the IGOP, and Paul Holbeck from organic Denmark gave an inspirational overview of the organic market in Denmark and how companies contributed to its impressive development.

The new organic regulation could not be absent during such an event which is why Alexander Beck from AÖL, Michel Reynaud from Ecocert and Emanuele Busacca from IFOAM EU gave an overview of the changes that the new organic regulation will introduce, in particular for international trade, certification, and processing rules.

After lunch, Marian Blom from Bionext and IFOAM EU Vice President gave a presentation about the state of play and current developments regarding findings of pesticide residues in organic products. She called on those present and active on the topic to contribute to IFOAM EU's 'Developing Organics: Ensuring a favourable environment for organic operators'¹. Lee Holdstock from Soil Association then gave an update on Brexit and what a potential no deal would mean for companies selling in and from the UK.

Finally, participants joined one of two discussion tables, either on international trade & control and certification or on food and labelling. At both tables, participants held lively discussions with interesting interventions.

Given the continued interest by participants for an event that brings different actors around the table, IFOAM EU already looks forward to organizing the 3rd edition IFOAM EU meets business in 2020.

Last but certainly not least, IFOAM EU would like to thank Biofach for being the exclusive sponsor of IFOAM EU meets business!

BIOFACH2019
into organic



¹ Are you active on this topic and keen to contribute? Contact SupportUs@ifoam-eu.org for more information.

IFOAM EU member Edouard Rousseau from INTERBIO Nouvelle Aquitaine speaking at European Parliament hearing on the CAP reform

Brussels, Belgium, 4 December 2019

Vice-President of INTERBIO Nouvelle Aquitaine, Edouard Rousseau, held a speech during the hearing of the European Parliament's on the reform of the Common Agriculture Policy. His expertise on organic value chain and market structure was very appreciated by Members of the European Parliament in the context of the reopening of negotiations around the Common Organisation of the Markets (CMO) regulation. In his presentation, Mr Rousseau insisted on the need to improve transparency in pricing, and fully include organic farming in the CMO framework. He also reminded the European deputies of the organic sector's wish to have more precise production data and organic volumes at European level.

4 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM EU

IFOAM EU KEY SUPPORTERS 2019

The contributions of sponsors allow IFOAM EU to focus on its most important work – representing organic stakeholders. This funding is a means to co-finance IFOAM EU events, projects and publications and is a highly valued contribution to our work.



wessanen





5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

17-19 February 2020

[Ecofruit Conference](#) – International Conference on Organic Fruit Growing
Hohenheim, Germany

12-15 February 2020

[BIOFACH 2020](#)
Nuremberg, Germany

21-27 September 2020

[Organic World Congress](#)
Rennes, France



This newsletter is co-financed by the European Union under the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). The sole responsibility for this communication lies with IFOAM EU. The EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided