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WELCOME NOTE

Dear Readers,

About three months after the European elections new Commission President-elect Ursula von der Leyen announced [the final nominees of her new team and their portfolios](#). [The new Commission of the European Union \(EU\)](#) will consist of eight Vice-Presidents including the Vice-President and High Representative for Foreign Policy and Security Policy and 18 Commissioners from all EU Member States. This team, officially known as the College, will steer the work of the European Commission and defend the interests of the European Union under the leadership of Ursula von der Leyen.

Within the coming weeks, the public hearings of the Commissioners-designate in the relevant committees of the European Parliament will assess the Commissioners' suitability for the job. It is only after the European Parliament has given its final consent to the entire College of Commissioners, that the European Council can appoint the European Commission, allowing Ursula von der Leyen and her team to start their work in November 2019.

The European organic movement expectations for the next Commission's priorities

The new Commission intends to focus its work on the changes in climate, technology and demography. In line with this, IFOAM EU expects the new Commission to reform the CAP in way that supports targeted payments, which allow farmers to reduce their impact on the environment and make their farms economically viable instead of subsidising harmful farming practices. [We are calling for 70% of the next CAP budget to be dedicated to environmental and climate action](#). To underline our demands we are part of the [Good Food Good Farming \(GFGF\) campaign\(link is external\)](#) and will be present at its [event in Strasbourg on 22 October](#), where like-minded NGOs, farmers and civil society will urge the European Parliament to act for a better future of European food and farming.

Given the ongoing discussion around Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and their regulation, the European organic movement is asking [the European Commission and the EU Member States to efficiently implement the decision of the European Court of Justice \(ECJ\)](#). In July 2018, the ECJ ruled that new genetic engineering techniques produce GMOs and should be regulated as such, which is crucial for the organic and conventional sectors to remain GMO-free.

To make sure the European organic food and farming sector is well represented towards the new Commission and our demands are heard, we will continue our advocacy work on above mentioned and a range of other topics.

A busy few months ahead

We will dedicate the final month of this year to a range of important and interesting events taking place in Brussels. On 3 and 4 December, [TP Organics](#) will organise the [5th edition of its Organic Innovation Days](#) together with [LIAISON](#) and [XF-ACTORS](#) projects. The event will feature the European Rural Innovation Contest Award Ceremony, workshops on optimising innovation in the organic sector and the launch of the new Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. This publication sets the research and innovation needs for the organic sector until 2027 and guides the new Commission on the implementation of Horizon Europe, the next EU's research and innovation framework programme. [Have a look at the preliminary agenda](#) and [register before 26 November](#).

Furthermore, on 2 December, IFOAM EU will celebrate the successful completion of the 4-year [SME Organics project](#), which aimed at bringing together regional governments, organic food and farming stakeholders including enterprises, universities and research institutes to share best practices that can support the competitiveness and sustainability of organic Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in their regions. Last but not least, we will also host the [2nd edition of "IFOAM EU meets business – Bringing the organic food industry together"](#) on 3 December, bringing together IFOAM EU and companies involved in organic. Visit our website to find out more and [register until 10 November](#).

Sincerely,

Eduardo Cuoco

POLITICAL HOTSPOT

1 THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WANTS A VOTE ON THE NEW CAP IN JANUARY 2020

24.09.2019

After the summer break, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from the Agriculture (AGRI) and Environment (ENVI) Committees got back to work. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) will be very high on the agenda of the European Parliament, and its members recently decided to have a vote in plenary between late 2019 and early 2020.

Back in June 2018, the Commission released its legislative proposal consisting of three reports: the Common Organisation of the Markets (CMO), the Horizontal Regulation and the regulation establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by the Member States. This proposal is now again under scrutiny of the Agriculture and Environmental Committees of the European Parliament. These committees share competences over the CAP reform dossier and need to come to an agreement before the vote in the entire European Parliament. After the vote in the Parliament's plenary, the CAP legislative proposals will be discussed in trilogues. The Commission's proposal foresees the implementation of the reform in the beginning of 2021, but this is likely to be postponed given the complexity of the negotiations.

The environmental ambition of the previous Committees' amendments: ENVI passes, AGRI fails

After analysing the proposal, MEPs submitted more than 5,000 amendments – only for the Strategic Plans report. From January to the end of March, they were the subject of intense discussions between the seven political groups. Among the compromise amendments was IFOAM EU's request to Member States to include an analysis of the organic sector's production, expected demand and needs in their CAP strategic plans. Most of the members of the ENVI Committee voted in favour of this amendment. However, the AGRI Committee, that holds the main competence on the CAP file, did not vote in favour of this. Overall, the text voted by the ENVI Committee was much more ambitious when it comes to meeting environmental challenges and meeting the needs of the organic sector than the final compromise text voted by the AGRI Committee.

The votes in the Committee for Agriculture took place in April 2019, only a few weeks before the European elections. Some positive elements of the AGRI Committee's vote included the rejection of the Commission's cuts in both Pillar 1 and 2, the ringfencing of 20% of direct payments for Eco-Schemes and limiting of the flexibility to transfer money from Pillar 2 to Pillar 1. Nevertheless, the previous AGRI Committee did not question the direct payments model and their intention to attribute minimum 60% of Pillar 1 to these payments shows that the 'business-as-usual' approach prevails. Moreover, by deleting the obligations related to Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs) and limiting the protection of wetlands and peatlands to Natura 2000 areas, MEPs from the Agriculture Committee put conditionality in great danger.

It's up to the new ENVI & AGRI Committees to make sure that the next CAP delivers public money for public goods

After May's elections, the composition of the European Parliament has changed. New MEPs should have their say on the reform process before the vote in plenary, expected in the beginning of 2020. While rapporteurs are not changing for the CMO report (Eric Andrieu, S&D) and the Horizontal Regulation (Ulrike Müller, Renew Europe), the German lawmaker Peter Jahr has been named as the new rapporteur for the key strategic plans portfolio. Concerning this last report, which is the most controversial one, new compromise amendments will be added to the original ones. The AGRI and ENVI committees may work closer together this time to have a comprehensive approach and a common position before the negotiations with the Commission and the Council. This reopening of the negotiations before the

plenary offers a good moment for the European organic movement to present its vision to the newly elected Parliament.

The organic movement's efforts on the CAP reform

While work at the European political level continues, IFOAM EU will continue to provide its expertise to MEPs and experts of the European Commission based on our position '[Towards a post-2020 CAP that supports farmers and delivers public goods to Europeans](#)'. We will also continue working with our national members and European partners to help governments in implementing new instruments. Are you working on implementing these new instruments? Read the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP)'s report on [CAP 2021-2017: Using the eco-scheme to maximise environmental and climate benefits](#).

2 NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

2.1 Policy

GMOs

Detection of food and feed plant products obtained by new mutagenesis techniques (new genetic engineering techniques)

In July 2018, the European Court of Justice ruled that products resulting from new genetic engineering technologies like CRISPR/Cas produce GMOs and should be regulated under the GMO legislation. While this decision was a positive step, a major remaining question is how to detect products resulting from these new technologies. Bullet-proof detection methods are especially relevant for the organic supply chain to prevent contamination of organic products and to maintain the capacity of organic farmers to remain GM-free.

To address this issue, the European Commission mandated the European Union Reference Laboratory for GM food and feed (EURL-GMFF) to assess methods to detect products obtained by new mutagenesis techniques. [The final report on the 'detection of food and feed plant products obtained by new mutagenesis techniques'](#) concludes that current methods are not accurate enough yet to reliably detect, identify and quantify all types of GMOs. This has implications for the degree to which the GMO legislation can be enforced. Conventional GMOs can be detected by a technology called 'real-time PCR'. To identify certain genome-edited plants a significant level of method optimisation and experience is necessary. Yet, this is currently not available. This is a problem because without adequate technology to detect all GMOs, the European regulation on the release of GMOs into the environment and the food chain cannot be properly enforced.

IFOAM EU asked the Commission to start research projects that develop detection methods and strategies for GMOs obtained through new genetic engineering techniques. No new GMOs should enter the market without a detection method available to find it.

For more information about IFOAM EUs position on all techniques of genetic modification, [consult our new GMO leaflet](#) that is part of the 'keep GMOs out of organic' project and [read our position paper on new genetic engineering techniques](#).

Climate Change

IFOAM EU position paper on 'plant reproductive material and the new organic regulation

Following the adoption of the basic act of the new EU Organic Regulation ([Regulation \(EU\) 2018/848](#)), the European Commission started working on the adoption of the delegated and implementing acts. These acts will fine-tune the details of the regulation.

IFOAM EU published a [position paper regarding seeds and plant reproductive material](#). This paper highlights the areas that require more attention and possible actions (see the political hotspot for details)

The new Organic Regulation could be a step forward for organic farmers to access more and diversified seeds and other plant reproductive materials. However, it will depend on how it will be implemented.

Moreover, in December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP). This document is meant to protect the right to seeds to peasant farmers and ensure biodiversity. In April 2019, the Geneva Academy published an academy briefing, "[The Right to Seeds – The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas and the Protection of Right to Seeds in Europe](#)". IFOAM EU was involved in the process of creating this document that highlights steps the EU and the EU Member States can take to better protect the right to seeds in Europe. [Read the full academy briefing](#)

2.2 Food, farming and environment

New fertiliser regulation entered into force

IFOAM EU welcomes today's formal adoption, the publication of [the new Fertilising Product Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1009 in the Official Journal of the European Union](#). As of this date of publication of the Regulation there is a three years transition period until the regulation will enter into force in Europe. This transitional period is needed in order to develop and implement this very technical file.

Read more details about the scope of the new European Fertiliser Regulation in this article we wrote previously and [consult the regulation in the EU's Official Journal](#).

Do you feel the need to change agriculture in Europe too? Join the good food good farming European days of action

Do you want to be part changing the European food and farming sector for good? Join the [European Days of Action Good Food Good Farming](#). The Good Food Good Farming (GFGF) network calls on everyone across Europe to grab your pots and pans, pitchforks and wheelbarrows and organise demonstrations, protests, picnics, markets, festivals and all kinds of creative actions between 1 and 31 October 2019.

As the new European Parliament and Commission start their work, and national governments take important decisions on the reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), it's our moment to rise for policies that respect the rights of people and the planet. So, let's go even bigger, bolder and more colourful in 2019!

What can you do?

- Organise your own action;
- Share the [GFGF video](#) with the [call to action in various languages](#) within your networks and on social media;
- Tweet, message & share using #GoodFoodGoodFarming and tag @GFGFActionDays;
- Fill in the [GFGF postcards](#) with your demand for the future of the European food and farming system that will be handed to the new Members of the European Parliament in October.

In case you are planning your own event between 1 and 31 October, inform [guenther \[at\] goodfoodgoodfarming.eu](#) so it can be shared with a wider audience. You can [use online banners, posters and other materials](#) to promote your event.

Need inspiration? Have a look at the [Flash Back of 2018](#) to get inspired by more than 60 actions in 19 European countries. For questions and/or any further support you might need, please get in touch with [guenther \[at\] goodfoodgoodfarming.eu](mailto:guenther[at]goodfoodgoodfarming.eu)".

We are looking forward to seeing many of you join the action days!



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'All techniques of genetic modification must be regulated' - the new publication of IFOAM EU available in all official European languages

Organic farming is GMO-free per definition but is endangered by the development of new techniques of genetic modification. If their legal status was at stake for a long time, the decision of the European Court of Justice clarified that new genetic engineering techniques give GMOs and must be regulated as GMOs. Biotech companies are now pushing for the reopening of Directive 2001/18 so new techniques would be deregulated. Such a situation would be unacceptable for the organic sector. To remain GMO-free it is crucial to give the tools to the organic sector to remain GMO free.

To better understand what is at stake and the position of the organic sector, IFOAM EU worked on a leaflet available in all European official languages:

[\[BG\]](#) [\[CS\]](#) [\[DA\]](#) [\[DE\]](#) [\[EL\]](#) [\[EN\]](#) [\[ES\]](#) [\[ET\]](#) [\[FI\]](#) [\[FR\]](#) [\[HR\]](#) [\[HU\]](#) [\[IT\]](#) [\[LT\]](#) [\[LV\]](#) [\[MT\]](#) [\[NL\]](#) [\[PL\]](#) [\[PT\]](#) [\[RO\]](#) [\[SK\]](#) [\[SL\]](#) [\[SV\]](#)

A transposition guide to help you convert the directive on unfair trading practices to national legislation

Readers of this newsletter will have eagerly followed the development of the [Directive on Unfair Trading Practices](#) which was officially passed in April 2019. Over the next two year, it will be transposed into national legislation. As it is a Directive there is a room for manoeuvre on its transposition and implementation nationally.

In order to protect the interests of more vulnerable actors of the supply chains it is important that Member States implement this Directive in the fairest way possible. This is why IFOAM EU and other associations have developed a [transposition guide](#). This guide will provide you with the tools to make sure that the Directive transposes well to national level.

IFOAM EU and the other writers of the guide gave an informative webinar about transposing the Directive. IFOAM EU's members can reach out to [silvia.schmidt \[at\] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:silvia.schmidt[at]ifoam-eu.org) to request a recording of this webinar.

As a small reminder, this Directive prohibits 16 unfair trading practices, including late payments, and protects smaller suppliers from their bigger buyer counterparts. The European Commission's Directorate General for Agriculture has published a very well-made [guidance document explaining the provisions of this Directive](#). Have a look should you be interested in finding out more.

2.3 EU Research & Innovation Policy / TP Organics

Horizon Europe co-design 2021-2024: TP Organics' contribution to the European commission's public consultation

TP Organics submitted a response to the online survey "Horizon Europe Co-design 2021-2024" on future objectives for European research and innovation (R&I). In its response, TP Organics stressed the importance of supporting research focusing on the role that organic and agroecology play in transforming the European food and farming systems towards sustainability.

TP Organics welcomes the specific programme's provisions that Horizon Europe should support research on:

- "The use and delivery of ecosystem services in agriculture and forestry systems applying ecological approaches and testing nature-based solutions from farm to landscape levels for an environmentally friendly agriculture; support to organic farming;" and
- "Agricultural and forestry systems from farm to landscape levels; the use and delivery of ecosystem services in primary production, e.g. through agroecology or through enhancing the role of forests in the prevention of floods and soil erosion".

Organic's contribution to reaching European research and innovation goals

Scaling up organic agriculture and delivering on its potential requires ambitious research and innovation (R&I) programmes. Cluster 6, "Food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment", should aim at building knowledge and developing innovative solutions that will speed up the transition to sustainable food and farming systems. [Horizon Europe](#) will merge Global Challenges and Industrial Competitiveness in one pillar. Safeguards should be put in place to prioritise sustainable development wherever this conflicts with economic growth.

TP Organics welcomes the planned [Mission for Soil Health and Food](#). Better protection of our soils is urgently needed because they are the basis of food production. The mission should support innovation to help practitioners improve soil management. Research must consider the practical implementation of its findings.

Building partnerships to bridge the gap between citizens, R&I and policies

The planned European Partnership "[Accelerating farming systems transition](#)" will be a very important tool to support the upscaling of organic farming and agroecology. To be successful, it is crucial that the partnership builds on experiences of previous partnerships, in particular ERA-NET [CORE Organic](#).

The partnership "[Safe and Sustainable Food System](#)" will be crucial to fix our food systems. The organic sector provides safe and healthy food, and hence should be fully integrated. TP Organics highlighted the need to involve citizens and civil society organisations into R&I agenda-setting. This would better align the R&I process and its outcomes with the needs and expectations of society. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a global agenda that must form the basis of Horizon Europe.

The [EU R&I Days](#) on 24-26 September will feature a [policy conference](#) and will be the main forum for collecting input and feedback on the second draft of the Strategic R&I Plan.

What is encouraging or discouraging farmers to use organic seed in the organic supply chains? Findings from Liveseed farmers survey available

The new EU Organic Regulation 2018/848 will apply from 1 January 2021. By January 2036 it will phase out the option for farmers to use untreated conventional seeds, if organic seeds are not available. While this creates an opportunity for the organic seed market to develop, farmers might face a restriction in the choice of varieties if the challenges to use organic seeds are not resolved.

To identify the challenges, the LIVESEED project partner Organic Research Centre (ORC, UK), investigated factors encouraging or discouraging farmers to use organic seeds. This research is the first to consider the farmers' point of view by surveying 839 certified organic farmers across 17 European countries and all crop sectors.

The survey revealed that the following factors are influencing organic seed use:

- Geographical location: Farmers in Central and Northern Europe report a high availability of organic seeds for the varieties they need. Their main source for seed supply are seed companies. Farmers in Eastern and Mediterranean countries often use farm-saved seeds;
- Marketing channels: Farms selling directly to consumers or to organic farms have a higher share of organic seed use than farms that sell to supermarkets;
- Crop sector: The use of organic seeds is higher in arable and forage farms in comparison to fruit-oriented farms;
- Seed quality: Farmers are mostly satisfied with the quality of seed. Some report problems with germination, pests and diseases, but cannot clearly attribute these problems to the origin of the seed.



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SMARTAGRIHUBS launched its innovation portal to facilitate digitalisation for more sustainable agricultural systems

Since its official launch in November 2018, the SmartAgriHubs project has been developing a wide and thriving network to expand digital solutions that help farmers apply more sustainable practices. The project is home to 9 Region Clusters, 140 Digital Innovation Hubs, 28 successful Flagship innovation Experiments and 2,000 Competence Centres. All of these are ready to share their knowledge and unleash the innovative potential of the agriculture sector throughout Europe. The newly launched Innovation Portal is an excellent online tool that connects the farmers, SMEs and technology providers.

How you can join the Innovation Portal?

Are you looking for a digital solution for your farm? Are you part of a project creating a digital solution to the market and are you looking for organisations that can help you with technical and/or business advice? Or are you a stakeholder interested in learning more about digital technology and engaging in discussion? The Innovation Portal welcomes all of you. [Sign up and create a profile on the SmartAgriHubs website](#).



IFOAM EU is part of the SmartAgriHubs project which brings together a consortium of 164 partners in the European agri-food sector. It wants to achieve a greater sustainability of the food and farming system by fostering an agricultural innovation ecosystem.

SmartAgriHubs is a €20 million European project under the Horizon 2020 instrument and brings together a consortium of well over 164 partners in the European agri-food sector. The project aims to realise the digitisation of European agriculture by fostering an agricultural innovation ecosystem dedicated to excellence, sustainability and success.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 818182.

Reducing the use of external fertilisers in organic agriculture – an update from the RELACS project

The main goal of the [RELACS project](#) is to reduce the use of contentious manures and fertilisers in organic farming. This is not an easy task as knowledge about the current use of such inputs is limited.

To counter this issue, the [University of Hohenheim](#), the [University of Copenhagen](#) and the [Research Institute of Organic Agriculture \(FiBL\)](#) performed a comprehensive farm gate nutrient budget study and qualitative interviews. They are interviewing farmers in Germany, Italy, Estonia, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Switzerland and Hungary. In each of these countries, 10 to 20 farms were chosen as case studies, totalling 79 farms.

Preliminary results of this study are available for Germany, Estonia and the United Kingdom. A Delphi panel is currently in place to investigate and discuss topics such as soil fertility, use of external fertilisers in organic farming and possible use of recycled fertilisers from human waste streams. Outcomes will be published on www.relacs-project.eu later this year.

[Read the full news story](#) and follow the RELACS project's development on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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.



Replacement of Contentious 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.

Policy brief on the organic approach to inputs – plant protection products, fertilisers, veterinary drugs and feed additives explained

[A new policy brief offers a clearer picture on the principles and regulations governing the use of different inputs in organic farming.](#) It describes strategies to reduce the use of inputs and obstacles that natural substances face in the current regulatory system.

The policy brief identifies different strategies and obstacles for each type of input, as well as some general problems the sector is facing. The first finding is that the horizontal EU legislations are designed for the evaluation of synthetic substances. More complex natural inputs often behave differently and face difficulties in the authorisation process. The second finding is that the time lag between the recognition of new inputs for organic farming into horizontal legislation and the organic

regulation is often too high. Products may be authorised for use in conventional farming for several years until they are allowed by the organic regulation even though they meet the organic standards. This leads to a disadvantage for organic farmers.

The [policy brief](#) is published in the frame of the RELACS project and is available on the RELACS project's website. Follow other developments of the RELACS project on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). 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.



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Farmer field schools: reducing antibiotics in livestock and improving farming through peer-to-peer knowledge exchange – RELACS news story published

The first Farmer Field School focusing on the reduction of antibiotics in livestock took place in Balbigny, France on 1 April 2019. RELACS' partner Fédération des Eleveurs et Vétérinaires En Convention (FEVEC) organised the event, which was hosted by "La Ferme du Tilleul". The five participating farmers learned about best practices and exchanged knowledge about improving animal and farm health with organic farmer Jean-Yves Lyonnet.

RELACS has summarized the findings of this event in a recently published news story. [Read the news story about the first Farmer Field School](#) and follow other developments of the RELACS project on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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.



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3 IFOAM EU DEVELOPMENTS

New for IFOAM EU members: bi-weekly email with highlights of the coming weeks

IFOAM EU is delighted to announce that as of October, our members will receive an exclusive bi-weekly digest, dedicated to our affiliates and members only. In this email we will share highlights for the coming weeks regarding the organic movement and our advocacy work.

Read about our vision for a sustainable food and farming system in our digital annual report

For the first time, the [IFOAM EU report](#) is available in mobile-friendly format.



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Welcoming our new colleagues

Léna Brisset

Léna Brisset is the new Policy Officer on Agriculture and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) at IFOAM EU. She will be responsible for coordinating the policy activities of IFOAM EU in the environment and agriculture fields, with a focus on the Common Agricultural Policy. Léna will advocate for organic in developments within EU agricultural and environmental policies and contribute to the coordination and implementation of IFOAM EU projects.

Before starting at IFOAM EU, Léna has worked three years as parliamentary assistant to two S&D Members of the European Parliament and was focusing on their activities within the Agriculture and Rural Development committee (COMAGRI). She was responsible for an initiative report of the Parliament on 'a European strategy for the promotion of protein crops'. She has been following the CAP reform since the Commission's proposal in June 2018.

After studying Sciences Po Lille (France) and Aston University (the UK) for her Masters' degree in European affairs with a focus on environmental governance, Léna arrived in Belgium in 2016. She speaks French and English and has a good knowledge of German.

Martin Sommer

Martin joined IFOAM EU in September as the new Policy Coordinator in the field of GMOs, Patents and Seeds. He grew up in central Germany and moved to the Netherlands to complete his studies in International Relations and Biology at the Radboud University (Nijmegen). Martin has intensely studied the development of the EU policy on GMOs for food & feed during his master's Thesis. He continued working on food safety & genetic resources during a traineeship at the Council of the EU, where he further developed his interest and knowledge of regulatory issues at the EU level. Due to his background, Martin is familiar both with the political processes as well as the technical concepts

behind the new genetic engineering techniques and the regulatory challenges that they create. These experiences and his enthusiasm for sustainable agriculture fuelled his interest to advocate for the organic movement. Especially since the organic supply chain is particularly affected by GMO cultivation and issues regarding the availability and patentability of plant reproductive material including seeds. Martin is looking forward to being in close contact with our members on these issues in the working group on seeds.

Francesca Lilliu

Francesca is the new Project and Fundraising Coordinator at IFOAM EU. She is experienced in developing project proposals for international donors and in evaluating EU projects and programmes at the European Commission. Before starting at IFOAM EU, she worked in DG Environment for one year, monitoring the implementation of ongoing LIFE projects and evaluating Rural Development Programmes and State Aids, in close coordination with DG Agriculture. Francesca holds a master's degree in European studies from the University of Florence and wrote her thesis on the implementation of the circular economy for plastic waste in an Italian region. She speaks Italian, English and Spanish and has a good knowledge of French.

Maria Gernert

Maria is the new Research & Innovation Intern at IFOAM EU. She will support the communication and advocacy work on Horizon Europe, the new Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and fundraising for the next European Organic Congress. Maria will also assist TP Organics, of which IFOAM EU hosts the secretariat.

Before taking up this position, Maria was working as a European Solidarity Corps Volunteer in the same unit. During this time she was already involved in the advocacy work on Horizon Europe, the development of the new Strategic Research Agenda as well as the organisation of the Organic Innovation Days 2018 and TP Organics' Science Day at Biofach 2019, next to diverse communication tasks and helping with project management.

Before moving to Belgium in June 2018, Maria completed the master's degree in Sustainability in Service Management and Food Industries at FH Münster - University of Applied Sciences. During her Master studies, she volunteered in the local fair-trade shop's campaigning and public relations group. Maria holds a bachelor's degree in Nutrition, Health, Food Business from HS Fulda - University of Applied Sciences and gained first practical experiences in organic food and farming through WWOOFing in France and an internship in Naturland's public relations department. She is excited to continue to advance the organic movement in Europe and beyond.

Carolina Ferreira

Carolina Ferreira is the new Finance and Administrative Assistant at IFOAM EU. She will be responsible for assisting the unit in the financial and operational tasks. Before taking up this position, she worked as an European Solidarity Corps Volunteer at IFOAM EU's Events and Membership units. Carolina played a valuable role organising the 12th and 13th editions of the European Organic Congresses, among other events. She also helped contributed to IFOAM EU's work for members as well as in other tasks related to its internal structures.

A Portuguese national who moved to Belgium in 2018, Carolina holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Porto in Languages and International Relations. She is currently working towards obtaining an MSc in Management from the Faculty of Social Sciences & Solvay Business School at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. She is fluent in English and Portuguese and has an advanced level of French.

New volunteers reinforcing IFOAM EU

Molly Mathews

Molly is a British national who grew up in Alicante, Spain. She holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from the Rey Juan Carlos University in Madrid, where she wrote her thesis on climate migration in the Sahel and developed a strong interest in climate justice and the effects of climate change on agriculture. Before starting at IFOAM EU, she gained experience at the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response in the awareness-raising and information management team. She speaks English, Spanish, Valencian, has good knowledge of Italian and is currently learning French. Molly is really looking forward to joining the Membership and Events units.

Kaja Gutzen

Kaja is a German national who lived in Denmark for the last year. In her Bachelor 'Nutrition and Food Science', she developed a strong interest in sustainable food production which she further explored in her Master 'Organic Agriculture and Food Systems'. Besides her studies she has on-farm and on-station experience in organic farming. Kaja is excited to have the possibility to work with the IFOAM EU team and to further pursue her passion in organic farming.



The European Volunteer Service is funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. The sole responsibility for the content lies with the author and the communication reflects only the author's view. The National Agency and European Commission are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

4 EVENTS

4.1 Preview of events

Joint session with AqualIMPACT and iFishIENCY at the upcoming EAS conference

9 October 2019, Berlin, Germany

On 9 October 2019, [FutureEUAqua](#) ([link is external](#)), [AqualIMPACT](#) and [iFishIENCi](#) will hold a joint half-day session at the [European Aquaculture Society \(EAS\)](#) conference in Berlin. All three projects will provide an overview on their activities and some of the results available so far. The joint session will highlight the synergies and complementarity between the projects.

Find out more about the joint session on [website of FutureEUAqua](#).



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No 817737.

BIOEXPO Warsaw 2019



11-13 October 2019, Warsaw, Poland

In Poland, the offer of organic products is increasing. There are nearly 1,000 specialised stores offering organic products, all large scale retailers have entire sections of organic food and non-food products, and organic snacks and drinks are increasingly available at gas stations, chemist's, herbal shops or pharmacies. E-commerce sales are also growing and do not exclude the existence of bazaars, marketplaces and purchasing cooperatives. People interested in high-quality food products increasingly find these at restaurants, even though there is still a lot to do to make ecology the norm in hospitality.

The first edition of 'BIOEXPO Warsaw - International Food and Non-Food Organic Products Trade Fair' will mark the start of a new era for organic in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe. 11-13 October 2019, Ptak Warsaw Expo becomes the capital of ecology as the largest event for the Polish organic sector will take place in Nadarzyn, near Warsaw. The fair will showcase certified organic, ecological, natural, fair trade and biodynamic products.

IFOAM EU welcomes and supports this new organic fair as it represents a great networking opportunity for the growing organic community in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe. Our Project, Fundraising & Capacity Building Manager, Ms Joanna Wierzbicka, will represent IFOAM EU. She will be meeting with IFOAM EU members and those interested in discovering more about our work at the EU level.

More information about the event is available at www.bioexpo.pl and on Facebook and Instagram profiles: bioexpo.warsaw.

Natexpo 2019

20-22 October 2019, Paris Nord Villepinte, France

Natexpo, the international trade show for organic products, is the event that is shaping the future of organic. It is organised by and for all the stakeholders in the organic market.

In keeping with a fast-growing European market worth more than 29 billion EUR, the French organic market amounted to 9.7 billion EUR in 2018, a 15.7% increase on 2017.

Reflecting the vitality of this market, this year Natexpo brings together more than 1,000 exhibitors, compared with 851 in 2017, over an exhibition area 25% larger than at the last Paris edition. The ingredients sector is growing strongly, and the frozen sector is making a significant breakthrough. As the only business platform covering all organic categories - food, cosmetics and hygiene, health food and dietary supplements, ingredients and raw materials, services and equipment for retail, household and personal products and services - Natexpo is the annual event visited by the trade's leading decision makers from France and further afield.

With more than 100 talks and workshops, Natexpo covers the hottest topics in the organic sector: the latest cosmetics or ingredients trends, regulations on nutritional claims, an update on the dietary supplements or specialized retail markets, sourcing issues, loose goods, local products, etc.

In a move to place innovation at the centre stage, the exhibition showcases more than 200 new products, 14 winners of Natexpo Awards, an increasingly innovative Organic Incubator and a lab boasting 35 start-ups working in the circular economy and technological eco-innovation. All the trends that will shape tomorrow's organic world emerge here and are deciphered for you by Natexpo: zero waste, zero trace, transparency, loose goods, water-free, happy green, DIY, plant-based products...

For more information and to request your free badge on, go to www.natexpo.com.



Contribute to the 4th European Conference on Copper in Plant Protection

14-15 November 2019, Berlin, Germany

In 2018, the European Commission renewed the approved of the natural substance copper as an active substance in plant protection products for a period of seven years. Due to concerns of the potential negative effects of copper fungicides on soil and water organisms, the EU authorities reduced the maximum applicable dose of copper from 6 kg to 4 kg per hectare per year. Copper has unique properties and it remains essential for organic and integrated farmers to combat fungal diseases. Yet, the negative aspects of copper need ambitious efforts to minimise copper use. In most arable crops, farmers can regulate diseases and pests with clever crop rotation systems. Growing permanent crops like apples, wine and/or hops without relying on synthetic pesticides presents a bigger challenge. Coherent strategies including the enhancement of functional biodiversity, selection of robust varieties and the application of natural substances against pests and diseases can keep plants healthy.

Sharing and discussing innovative ways are crucial to keep plants healthy in organic and integrated plant protection systems. Identifying research and farm management options to further reduce the use of copper are just as important. This is why IFOAM EU, BÖLW and the Julius Kühn-Institut invite you to take part to the European Conference on Copper in Plant Protection on 14-15 November. The Conference takes place at the Julius Kühn-Institut, Königin-Louise-Str. 19, 14195 Berlin, Germany. Are you working on copper in the context of plant protection? Contribute to the conference programme! We are inviting farmers and growers, scientists, regulators, agricultural advisers and others to submit their English contributions. Contribute to our programme with an oral or poster presentation by mailing the title of your presentation to mering@boelw.de by 31 August 2019. A preliminary programme and more information will be online by mid-September. Save the date in your calendar! Remember to also save the morning of 14 November for a pre-event, looking at the future development of plant health strategies beyond copper in organic farming.

For more information and registration [visit BÖLW's website](http://www.boelw.de). We are looking forward to seeing you in Berlin!

The event is part of the project "At eye level: knowledge transfer between research and practice in organic and sustainable agriculture and the food sector" (2015-2019), funded by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture on the basis of a resolution of the German Bundestag within the framework of the Federal Scheme for Organic Agriculture and Other Forms of Sustainable Agriculture. You can find out more about the project at www.boelw.de/wissenstransfer.

IFOAM EU Farmers Interest Group meeting

21-22 November 2019, Finland

The next meeting of the Interest Group of Organic Farmers will take place in Finland, 21-22 November. On 20 November IFOAM EU member Kymen Luomu Osk will organise a pre-event with the participation of the Finnish Council Presidency to discuss the ongoing CAP negotiations. The farmers will then meet one full day, which will be followed by an excursion, during which will visit local organic farms. In case you are interested in the work of the farmers interest group please contact [isabella.lang \[at \] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:isabella.lang@ifoam-eu.org)



Interregional cooperation to design regional organic action plans - SME Organics final event

2 December, Brussels, Belgium

The SME Organics project will come to an end on 2 December 2019. It allowed regional partners from all over Europe to develop Regional Organic Action Plans through tailored funding and policy mixes. By mobilising stakeholders in all participating regions and exchanging experience the project will stimulate the growth of organic Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), resulting in high quality food production, job creation, environmental protection and animal welfare.

The final event in Brussels will feature the lessons learnt over the past four years. This event will highlight the role of European interregional cooperation for designing Regional Organic Action Plans. These plans support the growth of organic SMEs by combining of multiple policy instruments. All project partner regions and the expert supporting partner will participate to the event.

The first part of the event will be dedicated to a keynote speech by Nicolas Lampkin from Thünen Institute. He will provide an overview of the organic sector in the European Union. A representative of the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) will then present the Interreg Europe Programme and how it can support policy learning amongst different regions of the EU. Followingly, the project partners will dive deeper into the role of interregional cooperation and the impact of multi-funded Regional Action Plans for supporting the growth of the organic sector in two panel sessions.

The SME Organics project was funded within the framework of the Interreg Europe Programme and will come to an end on 2 December 2019. The Final Event will be held in Brussels, as a pre-event to [TP Organics' Organic Innovation Days](#). 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).

Bringing the organic food industry together at IFOAM EU meets business

3 December 2019, Brussels, Belgium

The second edition of "IFOAM EU meets business - Bringing the organic food industry together" will take place on 3 December in Brussels, Belgium. With this event, IFOAM EU continues its series of 'IFOAM EU meets business' events which bring together IFOAM EU and companies involved in organic.

First and foremost, this event is a platform for exchange between IFOAM EU and companies interested in organic. The agenda of this event currently foresees ample time to exchange on topics such as the organic regulation and its secondary legislation, as well as certification and integrity of the food supply chain. By December we will have a more detailed idea of the texts of the secondary legislation. Possible subtopics are flavouring, controls and labelling.

More information about the event can be found via the [registration link](#) as well as on [IFOAM EU's website](#). Feel free to forward the registration link to your members who might be interested.

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Register now for the Organic Innovation Days

2019, 3-4 December, Brussels

[Register now](#) for the [Organic Innovation Days 2019](#) on 3-4 December in Brussels.

The Organic Innovation Days gather the organic sector and policymakers to celebrate innovations and discuss future research needs. The 5th edition of the event will create a space for exchanging on how to stay on the cutting edge of research and innovation. This will be illustrated by experiences and lessons learned from the [LIAISON](#) and [XFACTORs](#) projects.

Other highlights of the Days are the [European Rural Innovation Contest](#) that will reward the most innovative organic initiatives, a high-level policy debate, and the launch of TP Organics' new Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda for Organics & Agroecology.

For a detailed programme, visit [TP Organics' website](#).

This year's edition of the Organic Innovation Days is organised by TP Organics, in cooperation with the [LIAISON project](#) and the [XF-ACTOR](#) project. TP Organics is the only European Technology Platform (ETP) for organic food and farming. IFOAM EU hosts TP Organics' secretariat.

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.

Organic World Congress 2020 in Rennes: still time to submit your proposal!

The [Organic World Congress 2020 \(link is external\)](#) (#OWC2020) will take place on 21-27 September 2020 in Rennes, France.

If you would like to share your experiences and ideas with more than 2,000 international professionals and promote your work and organisation, the OWC 2020 is a unique and exciting opportunity to meet and debate with key stakeholders of the global organic and sustainability movement. All organic stakeholders - producers, distributors, scientists, and international representatives - are invited to contribute to one or more of the [6 conference forums](#) that will make up the OWC 2020 program from 23-25 September 2019. Share your experiences, testimonies, innovations, and current work on the following themes:

- [Leadership Forum](#): Discuss and shape the future of the organic movement.
- [Farmers' and Advisors' Forum](#): Share your knowledge, innovations, and initiatives.
- [Science Forum](#): Introduce your work, findings, and research on the organic sector.
- [Supply and Value Chain Forum](#): Share inspiring experiences and address key challenges for the entire value chain (production, transformation, distribution).
- [Culture et Education Forum](#): Discuss the philosophical foundations of and knowledge sharing in the organic movement.
- [Stakeholder Forum](#): Promote a multi-actor approach and improve our ways of working for better organic food systems.

The **new deadline** for proposal submissions and speaker applications is **21 October 2019**. Submit your application via the [online submission platform](#)).

4.2 Review of events

11th meeting of the Mediterranean Organic Action Network meeting

16-18 September 2019, Amman, Jordan

IFOAM EU and CIHEAM Bari organised a workshop on groups of operators in the new organic regulation at the 11th Mediterranean Organic Agriculture Network meeting. The topic of group of operators has been newly introduced at the European level. The workshop aimed to enhance the exchange of technical information on this salient topic within and outside EU member states. Several Mediterranean competent authorities took part to this workshop and the meeting. The meeting took place in Jordan and the theme was the new organic regulation.

Discussing innovative approaches on how to access farmland

10-13 September 2019 in Cergy-Le-Haut, France

A training event in the heart of France on local land strategies offered a space to exchange on legal tools, skills and knowledge on farmland access and preservation. During discussions and workshop, participants exchanged on issues from the European policy level (the Common Agricultural Policy, a possible EU Land Directive) to local solutions such as setting up land trusts and land occupation. Participants from more than 10 different countries, from Norway to Italy and from Ukraine to Portugal, shared their experience with the common objective to improve access to land for organic and agroecological farming practices and to enable people to start farming. IFOAM EU's members can read the full version of this article 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 access to land, contact [isabella.lang \[at\] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:isabella.lang@ifoam-eu.org). Are you an NGO working on this issue? Contact Isabella for a copy of this article.

Engaging various senses is key to a successful farm demo

July 3, 2019, Kessel, Germany

Together with the [NEFERTITI](#) project partners IFOAM EU visited the Organic Field Days in Germany on July 3, 2019. The goal of the visit was to explore the demonstration activities related to arable cropping and horticulture and tease out what works best. The demonstration of crop rotations for the new or converting farmers was among the most insightful demo activities of the day. The technique developed by an organic adviser is simple yet powerful: the crops that could be used in crop rotations are grown in buckets, making it easier to visualize possible rotations in action and the nuances of each crop. The buckets can be transported by the advisor for spontaneous demos and by changing places of the buckets, one can visualize the whole crop rotation succession in one go. Engaging multiple senses - sight, touch, smell, hearing - while talking about the crop varieties allows for meaningful discussions between the participants. It also gives new ideas to farmers who want to enhance their crop rotations. Interested to hear about other best practices in demonstrations? Then check out the [Demo Design Guide](#) at [FarmDemo website](#) and follow the [NEFERTITI](#) project.



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5 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM EU



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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.



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6 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

26-28 September 2019

[Agroecology Europe Meeting](#)

Crete, Greece

26 September 2019

IFOAM EU

Interest Group on Certification and Integrity kick-off meeting (members only)

Brussels, Belgium

11-13 October 2019

[BIOEXPO Warsaw 2019](#)

Warsaw, Poland

20-22 October 2019

[Natexpo 2019](#)

Villepinte, France

14-15 November 2019

[4th European Conference on Copper in Plant Protection](#)

Berlin, Germany

20-22 November 2019

IFOAM EU Interest Group of Organic Farmers' meeting

Helsinki, Finland

2 December 2019

Interest Group of Organic Processors (IFOAM EU members only)

Brussels, Belgium



2 December 2019

[SME Organics final event](#)

Brussels, Belgium

3 December 2019

[IFOAM EU meets business](#)

Brussels, Belgium

3-4 December 2019

[Organic Innovation Days](#)

Brussels, Belgium

12-15 February 2020

[BIOFACH](#)

Nuremberg, Germany

21-27 September 2020

[Organic World Congress](#)

Rennes, France



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