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## WELCOME NOTE

Dear readers,

On behalf of the European organic movement, I would like to welcome you back after the winter break and wish you a healthy and caring new year. About a year ago, Covid-19 has started changing our lives and I hope 2021 will bring some relief and the possibility to get together with our loved ones.

Despite these challenging times, “the organic market is actually growing,” a trend that had been “constant for years” as stated by German Farm Minister Julie Klöckner during the [virtual awards ceremony of the Federal Organic Farming Competition](#). At the same time, she called for greater promotion for the sector. In this respect, the European Commission’s promotion policy work programme is a very concrete first step to better promoting the benefits of organic and reaching the 25% target of organic land in Europe by 2030. As IFOAM Organics Europe, we will do our best to make sure the organic sector fully uses this important opportunity.

As organisation and movement, we are looking forward to some important political developments, such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This Commission’s proposed text is currently being negotiated by the three institutions in the so-called ‘trilogue negotiations’. As organic movement, we insist that the negotiators include the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies’ targets as an integral part of the next CAP. Otherwise, it will be impossible to achieve the EU Green Deal and avoid the climate crisis.

We are also looking forward to the new European Organic Action Plan (OAP)’s presentation, expected in spring 2021. A comprehensive and well-designed European OAP could greatly contribute to the sector’s development and reaching the target of 25% organic land in the EU by 2030. [Have a look at the organic movement’s ten priorities to boost both organic demand and production through the OAP.](#)

We are also preparing for two Commission studies – one [on new genetic engineering techniques](#) and another one on the options to reform the seeds marketing rules. The study on new GMOs could be crucial in ensuring a GMO-free organic production process. The Commission’s study on the options to reform the seeds marketing rules could be an opportunity to enhance the use of organic seeds in European agriculture. We will keep you, our members, informed with timely updates on our member extranet.

Of course, non-members can also follow our activities on these. As usual, we will be exhibiting at the BIOFACH/Vivaness e-special and are organising timely political [sessions at BIOFACH](#). Our Policy Day on “25% European land in organic by 2030” will take place on 17 February 11:00-12:45 CET. On top of that, we will organise sessions on the EU regulatory changes and its effect on international trade and the future of certification in organics. Also important to note in your planner are TP Organics’ Science Day and the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL)’s launch of ‘The World of Organic Agriculture’, featuring comprehensive data on organic production and retail in Europe.

Later on in 2021, you will hear more from us about [our European Organic Congress](#), the Organic Food Conference (formerly the ‘Organic Processing Conference’), IFOAM Organics Europe meets business and our participation in [IFOAM – Organics International’s Organic World Congress](#).

Also, two projects we are leading are coming to an end: [OK-Net EcoFeed](#) and [LIVSEED](#). Over the past years, we coordinated these multi-actor projects, aiming at 100% organic feed in pig and poultry and



greater use of organic seeds. The [IoF2020](#) and [XF-Actors](#), in which we are representing the organic movement, will also end in the coming months. Are you interested in these project's final events? [Keep an eye on our events calendar](#).

Finally, I would like to inform you that the IFOAM Organics Europe staff will keep working from home in the coming months. I would like to thank them and you all for contributing to making Europe more organic – from the fields, plants, or your homes! As IFOAM Organics Europe, we will continue bringing the organic community together –digitally or in person.

Organic regards,

Jan Plagge  
IFOAM Organics Europe President



## POLITICAL HOTSPOT

### Promoting our organic future: funds available for promotion campaigns

To help realise the European Green Deal's shift to more sustainable food systems, the European Commission earmarked an unprecedented share of 2021's EU promotion policy budget to support the goals of the Farm to Fork (F2F) strategy and develop the organic market.

#### 86 million EUR for campaigns about organic farming

Almost 50% of the promotion funds are reserved to increase the awareness and recognition of sustainable production methods, including organic production. 86 million EUR is allocated for campaigns about organic farming, sustainable agriculture and the agri-food sector's role in terms of climate action and the environment.

Of these 86 million EUR, 49 million EUR are explicitly targeted towards promoting organic production and products. This is good news for the organic sector, as promotion policies are an important tool to increase the demand for organic products.

It is important that the organic sector puts extra efforts into making the most of this opportunity.

#### Using the opportunity the promotion policies offer is crucial

[During the promotion policy info days](#), Christina Gerstgrasser, Head of Unit for Communication and Promotion policy at the European Commission, highlighted that the foreseen budget allocation will be changed if funding streams do not receive enough high quality proposals.

By deciding on whether or not to apply for promotion policy funds, the organic movement will play a role in shaping the budget allocation for promotion policies in the following years. [Have a look at the calls for proposals by the Commission](#).

In the Commission's [press release](#), Agricultural Commissioner Wojciechowski stated that agriculture needs to put a stronger emphasis on sustainability and that promotion policies will be a "crucial tool" to bring change along the food chain and encourage consumers to play their part in the transition towards sustainable food systems. The Commission foresees to keep a high level of support for sustainable practices in the coming years, if it is taken up by stakeholders.

#### Additional information for IFOAM Organics Europe members

The [Annual Work Programme \(AWP\) for 2021](#) in the framework of promotion policies is available on the Commission's website. On our member extranet, IFOAM Organics Europe Members have access to:

- IFOAM Organics Europe's [important Q&A's](#) on eligibility, available programmes etc.; and
- A [summary of the Promotion Policy Info Days](#)

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member who does not have access to our member extranet yet? Are you interested in accessing this information? Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

#### What are promotion policies?

Promotion policies were implemented in 2008 to:

- Enhance the competitiveness of the EU agricultural sector;
- Raise awareness among consumers of EU agricultural products and their methods of production; and



- Increase market opportunities for EU companies.

These campaigns are either run directly by the European Commission, e.g., to develop trade relations or by proposing organisations such as European trade or inter-trade associations or producers' organisations. There is a budget of 182.9 million EUR for 2021.

Do not hesitate to contact [silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio](mailto:silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio) with any questions you may have. Please do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

# 1 NEWS

## 1.1 Policy

### Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

#### **Portuguese Presidency, Member States' recommendations and Berlin's protest: CAP reform is moving forward**

On 1 January, Germany handed over the EU Council Presidency to Portugal. The Portuguese Presidency aims to finalise the CAP trilogues by this semester's end. As Portugal wants Europe to be 'better prepared to face future crisis', resilience will be key to the new Presidency's work. The Social Pillar and enhancement of social, health and education policies will be high on its agenda, possibly with consequences for the ongoing CAP reform. [Read the Portuguese Council Presidency's full programme on its website.](#)

In a bid to increase transparency, Portugal's Agriculture Minister Maria do Céu Antunes promised to publish a 4-column table after each trilogue meeting, to "provide a view of what has already been discussed". This corresponds to one of IFOAM Organics Europe's key demands on transparency, explained in [a common letter with environmental NGOs](#) sent last autumn.

#### **CAP strategic plan recommendations: Members can provide their input**

Parallel to ongoing negotiations, the European Commission published [CAP strategic plan recommendations tailored to Member States](#) a few weeks ago. These country-by-country recommendations are based on national analyses of the state of play, needs and priorities for agriculture and rural areas in relation to Green Deal targets.

To make sure that those recommendations are fully taken into account and that organic farmers are well represented in the participating process, IFOAM Organics Europe will circulate a questionnaire for its members in the coming weeks. We encourage IFOAM Organics Europe members to keep an eye on [the member extranet](#) for updates.

#### **Protests to current CAP reform continue**

In Germany, many actors are disappointed with the current reform. On 18 January, they [demonstrated in front of the Bundestag](#) (German parliament) under the motto 'Agrarwende lostreten' (kick the agricultural turnaround off). "We are fed up with the excuses and delays our government is causing in reforming the farming sector," said Saskia Richartz, the movement's spokesperson. The demonstration was led by hundreds of organic and conventional, small-scale farmers with their tractors. Many more farmers joined demonstrators from across Germany and 12 other European countries (ES, FR, PL, IT, AT, UK, BE, SE, RO, SK, LV and CH). The movement for agricultural reform in Germany and Europe is growing in strength, in particular through cooperation across borders with the Good Food Good Farming campaign. IFOAM Organics Europe is on the Steering Committee of the campaign.

Please contact [lena.brisset@organicseurope.bio](mailto:lena.brisset@organicseurope.bio) for questions on the CAP. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.



## **IFOAM Organics Europe President newly elected Vice-Chair of Civil Dialogue Group on the CAP**

On Thursday 10 December, the Civil Dialogue Group (CDG) on the Common Agricultural Policy elected Jan Plagge, President of IFOAM Organics Europe as Vice-Chair. He chaired the CDG on the CAP for the past two years (the mandate can only be taken twice and is voted on annually).

After the vote, 2020's last CDG discussed the ongoing CAP triologue negotiations. The European Commission's Directorate General of Agriculture (DG AGRI) provided a state of play and updates. Afterwards, an informative session on unfair trading practices and the new vision for the rural area took place.

IFOAM Organics Europe's members can read about the key points of the recent CDG meetings on the [member extranet](#). If you would like more details on any topic, please check out our [civil dialogue groups extranet space](#) and get access to debriefs, minutes and other documents of the CDG meetings.

Should you have any questions regarding Civil Dialogue Groups and/or would like to share relevant information or highlight topics to cover in the upcoming CDGs, please write to [civildialoguegroups@organicseurope.bio](mailto:civildialoguegroups@organicseurope.bio).

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member who does not have access to our member extranet yet? Contact [communication@organicseurope.bio](mailto:communication@organicseurope.bio). Are you interested in accessing this information? Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for details.

## **Organic Regulations**

### **New Organic Regulations & Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and UK published**

Before the application of the new EU Organic Regulation (EU) 2018/848 in January 2022, the Commission needs to adopt many secondary legal acts - implementing and delegated regulations.

Some of them, and some corrigenda, have been published in December 2020 and January 2021:

- [Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1794](#) on the use of in conversion and non-organic plant reproductive material
- [Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/2146](#) on the recognition of catastrophic circumstances and related derogations
- [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/2042](#) adapting dates of already published [Regulation \(EU\) 2020/464](#) to the 1-year postponement
- [Corrigendum](#) to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/1794
- [Corrigendum](#) to Regulation (EU) 2018/848 regarding the list of ingredients

Additionally, a regulation amending the current organic regulations has been published:

- [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/2196](#), amending Annexes III and IV of Regulation (EU) 1235/2008 and including 6 Control Bodies authorised for operations in UK

It is also relevant to mention the [Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and UK](#), also including trade of organic products.



## GMOs

### Detection Cibus' GM-canola: An update

A regulation is only worth so much as it can be enforced. This is why on 7 September 2020, an open source detection test was announced for the first gene-edited crop on the market, SU Canola, a gene-edited rapeseed developed by US company Cibus. [The test was published in the peer-reviewed scientific journal, Foods](#). The work was funded by a consortium of NGOs (including Greenpeace) and non-GM industry food companies. After the test has been released for a couple of months, its time now for an update.

#### Update on the test: What is the significance and why is there a controversy?

SU Canola is a rapeseed engineered with oligonucleotide-directed mutagenesis (ODM), a gene editing technique, to withstand spraying with certain herbicides. Products of gene editing fall within the scope of EU GMO law, according to a [European Court of Justice ruling of 2018](#). Gene-editing refers to a technique that allows to add, delete or change single base-pairs in the genetic code of plants and animals.

If applied, the test would allow national authorities, who are tasked enforcing EU GMO law, to test imports for this GM rapeseed that is grown in the US and Canada and has no EU authorization. This would be a big step forward in ensuring that organic as well as non-organic products do not contain any products that should not be in there.

#### The controversies: Nothing new & not even detecting a GM-organism?

The test stirred up some controversy because of two aspects. First, some seed sector representatives advocating on behalf of the producer of the rapeseed, Cibus, claimed the test does not contribute anything new to the current state of knowledge because it cannot detect the technique with which the crop was engineered. This statement is misleading, as the detection method is the first of its kind allowing national authorities to detect a crop in which genetic engineering was applied to make small changes that have big impacts. In this case, one base-pair was changed to achieve resistance against a spraying with certain herbicides. Besides, the EU legislation does not require a detection method to specifically allow the identification of the genetic engineering method used to produce the GMO, but rather the organism itself.

Secondly, the developer company, Cibus, claims that the rapeseed was not gene-edited, unlike previously stated. This came as a surprise, since the crop was listed as a GMO in the [EU GMO database](#) run by German regulator BVL and Wageningen University, and in the [Clearinghouse](#) of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. So, while the rapeseed was advertised as the first commercial seed product using a gene-edited tool, it is now claimed to be a spontaneous mutation that occurred randomly.

#### Event on 'detecting gene-edited plants in the EU food chain'

On 10 December, Eric Gall, Deputy Director of IFOAM Organics Europe, spoke at the event '*Find me if you can – Detecting gene-edited plants in the EU food chain*', hosted by MEPs Eleonora Evi, Martin Häusling, Anja Hazekamp, Tilly Metz, Sirpa Pietikainen, Gunther Sidl. He highlighted the necessity of sound detection methods like the one presented to maintain transparency in the organic and non-organic chain of food production. In a discussion with the developer of the detection method, a representative of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and a representative of the German Association Food without Genetic Engineering (VLOG), panellists concluded that the detection

method is indeed capable of detecting the Cibus rapeseed. They also agreed that more ambitious initiatives are necessary to detect other products from gene editing that are unauthorized in the EU and that might enter the EU via imports.

**In conclusion: Detecting gene-edited crops is possible & EU GMO law is enforceable for new techniques of genetic modification**

Apart from the fact that these controversies shine a new light on the claims of the developer company Cibus, what can we conclude? The revealed detection method has shown that it is possible to detect gene-edited crops in principle and that the current EU GMO law can be enforced also for products from these new types of genetic engineering. This allows the EU to make sure that no unauthorized foods are entering the EU market and to protect our high standards on food safety. Even if the rapeseed were actually a random by-product of the genetic engineering process that was not intended, this conclusion still applies.

The organic movement and sector will continue providing constructive input in the debate around New Genomic Techniques on which the EU Commission will present a study in Spring 2021.

**Further reading**

- [Letter to Commissioner Kyriakides on open-source detection test for first commercialized gene-edited plant ready for integration in routine EU GMO controls](#)
- [The organic movement's position on new genetic engineering techniques](#)
- [Our work & publications on GMOs](#)



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

**Biodiversity, soil and water**



## Food Policy

### Reaching 25% organic land in Europe by 2030: Ten priorities for the new EU Organic Action Plan

The European Commission is set to publish the next European Organic Action Plan (OAP) at the beginning of 2021. A comprehensive and well-designed European OAP could contribute to the development of the organic sector.



A coherent combination of push and pull measures is necessary to reach the target of 25% organic land in the EU by 2030, as put forward in the EU's Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies.

[Our new leaflet](#) lists the European organic movement's ten priorities to boost both organic demand and production through the European OAP.

How can we achieve this goal? Have a look at [our new leaflet](#) and read more details in [IFOAM Organics Europe suggestions for the new Organic Action Plan](#).



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### Contribute to European organic stakeholder consultation about using technologies in organic food processing

Today, there is a lack of mandatory standards and indicators for organic food processing in Europe. The [ProOrg project](#) addresses this lack by developing a set of strategies and tools (Code of Practice) that can help organic food processors in the selection of appropriate technologies. It will give guidance for making the best choice for careful, minimal and mild processing methods.

Before drafting a Code of Practice for processors, is researching how different stakeholder groups and market actors perceive the benefits or threats of certain (new) processing technologies in the organic sector.

Are you active in organic food processing? [Participate in this survey](#).

The questions are about your opinion, so there is no right or wrong. The survey takes around 15 minutes to complete and is anonymous - your answers will not, and cannot, be traced back to you.

For more information, please visit the [ProOrg project](#) or contact [toralf.richter@fibl.org](mailto:toralf.richter@fibl.org).



## 1.2 Research and innovation

### Knowledge for organic

#### From lab to field: RELACS' first project video on new plant protection products replacing copper in organic viticulture

In their commercial vineyard in Frick, Switzerland, FiBL carried out 16 treatments of new plant protection products against mildew in organic viticulture. Three of the tested products used copper, the remaining 13 were replaced by pilot products, one of them based on larch extract.

To evaluate their effectiveness, FiBL interviewed managing vintner Andreas Tuchschnid who shared his practical experience with the new products. According to him, the products are effective, easy to apply, smell better and cause less irritation. On top of that, it prevented leaf burn, occasionally occurring when applying copper.

[Watch the video](#) and learn more about the results and follow other developments of the [RELACS project](#) on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

RELACS' project coordinator [FiBL \(Research Institute of Organic Agriculture\)](#) produced RELACS' first project video.



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.*

#### Stimulating digital innovations – The SmartAgriHubs' RESTART and EXPAND calls are still open!

As Europe continues facing the Covid-19 crisis, it must further stimulate developing digital innovations which can tackle the challenges the agri-food sector is facing. The SmartAgriHubs project investigated the possibilities for funding research that helps our sector. Open calls were launched in May 2020 as an immediate RESPOND to the crisis. Now, [SmartAgriHubs](#) is following-up with the RESTART and EXPAND open calls, addressing the agri-food economy on the medium term.

SmartAgriHubs will assign up to 5,000,000 EUR funding to the RESTART and EXPAND open calls, addressing Digital Innovation Hubs supporting diverse stakeholders in the agri-food economy and specifically SMEs as drivers for digital innovation.

**Why participate should the organic sector take part?**  
Digital innovations implemented throughout the organic value chain have a huge potential to contribute to the current and future societal challenges.

Are you a Digital Innovation Hub, or any other form of public-private partnership for innovation? Are you involved in one or more innovation experiments addressing the consequences of Covid-



19? And are you looking for potential funds to support your project? [The open call is your opportunity](#).

SmartAgriHubs' open call is also a unique chance to connect with a wider community and exchange on latest knowledge and expertise.

### **Who can participate?**

Digital Innovation Hubs (DIH) as defined on the [SmartAgriHubs website](#)<sup>1</sup>, based in one of the EU Member States or a H2020 Associated country<sup>2</sup>.

### **How to participate to the RESTART and EXPAND open calls?**

#### RESTART the economy around food systems

This open call will focus on **hackathon type of activities** that will RESTART the economy around the agri-food related sectors and affected food systems. The objective is to generate ideas for potential Innovation Experiments that can be realised by related teams and that go beyond initial conceptual implementations.

Proposals could realise hackathons, challenges and datathons that have a direct as well as an indirect impact to mitigate effects of the corona/Covid-19 or similar (future) pandemics.

[Check the RESTART open call fiche for more information](#).

#### EXPAND the network

The major amount of funding will be assigned to **the implementation of programmes by DIHs to support the realisation of Innovation Experiments**. This shall specifically contribute to the expansion of the network of DIHs and Competence Centres (CCs) as well as making available new knowledge and results from digital innovation activities.

The EXPAND open call is specifically targeting at DIHs as the main proposers facilitating the realisation of innovation experiments. Key characteristics to submit an eligible proposal for the EXPAND the Network open call:

- The funding that is provided by SmartAgriHubs is exclusively available for developing, maturing, and providing Digital Innovation Hub innovation services
- For being eligible to receive this funding, DIHs need to support one or more Innovation Experiments (IEs) with their services.
- The overall proposal budget shall assign a maximum of 20% for DIH service provision and a minimum of 80% for realising the supported Innovation Experiment(s)-
- The maximum of 20% for DIH service provision can be requested as funding from SmartAgriHubs, where the 80% should be mobilised by additional public or private sources.
- One DIH could ask for a maximum of 100,000 EUR funding in total from SmartAgriHubs in one or also several proposals.

[Check the EXPAND open call fiche for more information](#)



Are you eligible? Register to the [SmartAgriHubs' Innovation Portal](#). It will give you access to all information needed and direct communication to the community if any questions on the application arise. After that, [start applying!](#)

### Proposal submission and timeline

Proposals are called under a continuous submission scheme. They can be submitted for evaluation until closure of the open call (July 28<sup>th</sup> 2021) and will be evaluated in batches at regular points in time. Currently the following dates are planned for evaluating delivered batches of proposals:

- **Next batch evaluation of submitted proposals: before 17 February 2021.**

### Any questions about the open call?

Read the [call documents](#) on the dedicated page of the SmartAgriHubs Innovation Portal.

Check the FAQ and leave your question on [the SmartAgriHubs Open Call forum](#) or check if the Q&A webinar recording on SmartAgriHubs [YouTube](#) channel answers your question.

· Digital Innovation Hubs as defined on the Smart Agri Hubs website are public-private partnerships for innovation, providing a mix of different services to their clients. These include technology services such as R&D, provision of lab facilities, testing and validation are mainly the domain of the competence centres. Innovation ecosystem support services include community building lobbying, brokerage, knowledge sharing and advocacy.

· See the full list of eligibility criteria in the Programme document on [the SmartAgriHubs Innovation Portal](#).



SmartAgriHubs is a €20 million EUR project under the Horizon 2020 instrument and brings together a consortium of 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.

IFOAM Organics Europe's role is to connect the dots between SmartAgriHubs and the organic sector, disseminate project outputs and communicate key messages during the project run.



*SmartAgriHubs has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 818182. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

## Coming soon: EU router database for organic seed

The launch of the EU router database's for organic seed is approaching! This database will :

- Simplify access to international organic seed markets for organic farmers and growers;
- Reduce administrative burdens for national authorities and seed suppliers;
- Help harmonize the use of databases in the EU and help the European Commission receive more harmonized data on organic seed supplies and information on derogations.

Stay tuned for news about the launch in February! We will post about this on [LIVESEED's website](#) and [IFOAM Organics Europe's website](#). Follow us on social media to be the first to know: @LIVESEEDeu on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and @OrganicsEurope on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).



The database was developed in the framework of the Horizon 2020 funded project LIVESEED. LIVESEED aims to boost organic seed and plant breeding across Europe. IFOAM Organics Europe and FiBL-Switzerland coordinate the project with 50 partners covering 18 EU countries.



*LIVESEED has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727230 and the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation under contract number 17.00090. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

## FarmDemo training kit: Helping farmers organise farm demonstration events

Horizon 2020 projects, AgriDemo-F2F, PLAID and NEFERTITI developed the **FarmDemo training kit** for organising farm demonstration events. It collects tools, guidelines and videos that help farmers and other organisers setting up a successful farm demonstration, both on farms and online.

The NEFERTITI project further developed the training kit and updated it with the latest materials on organising farm demonstration events, such as practical guidelines, tools, and inspiration from practice. The training kit will enhance skills and builds capacity among farm-demo organisers, enables the practical implementation of innovative demo practices on the farm and increases the awareness on the value of farmer-to-farmer exchanges during farm demonstrations.

On 11-12 December 2020, the Training Kit was presented to a wide range of European actors interested by on-farm demonstration during a webinar organised by NEFERTITI. [Rewatch the webinar](#) and [get in touch](#) if you have questions or interesting experiences to share.



The NEFERTITI project aims to establish an EU-wide connected network of demonstration and pilot farms to enhance knowledge exchange and innovation uptake. IFOAM Organics Europe is a partner in the project.



*This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 727205. FarmDemo guide: This guide is the result of a strong collaboration between the 3 FarmDemo projects. These projects received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreements N° 727388 (PLAID), N°728061 (AgriDemo-F2F), and N°727205 (NEFERTITI).*



## 2021 is the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, let's celebrate!

The United Nations' General Assembly declared 2021 the [International Year of Fruits and Vegetables \(IYFV2021\)](#).

The IYFV2021 is a great moment for us as movement to raise awareness on the importance of fruits and vegetables. They are key in human nutrition, food security, health, and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This year also offers a unique opportunity to inform the policy debate on sustainable development. It and mobilize resources to improve healthy and sustainable food production through innovation and technology and reduce food loss and waste.

As [our colleagues at IFOAM – Organics International put it](#), “For many, fruits and vegetables remain inaccessible due to their cost; they are often more expensive than unhealthy snacks and junk foods. Yet they are fundamental components to maintaining overall good health. The IYFV slogan highlights the importance of fruits and vegetables in contributing to good nutrition. Ensuring that fruits and vegetables are available, accessible, and affordable to everyone is fundamental in achieving food security and combatting malnutrition, and everyone has a role to play.”

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we coordinate and take part in a range of research projects and thematic networks. These projects are key for developing the organic sector and transforming our food systems towards sustainability. Here is a recap of some projects through the lens of the IYFV2021:

- [BIOFRUITNET](#) addresses the issue of fruits by strengthening the competitiveness of European organic fruit production. It does so by creating strong knowledge networks, focusing on organic pome, stone and citrus fruits;
- [RELACS](#) aims to find alternatives for inputs considered contentious in organic farming systems - notably alternatives for copper in grapevine or apple and mineral oil in citrus or greenhouse production;
- [Internet of Food & Farm 2020 \(IoF2020\)](#), coming to an end, has explored the potential of the Internet of Things-technologies for European food and farming. Organic trials and use cases have been researching new technologies for farmers to guarantee a continued supply and deal with disease and pest control – they involved [grapes](#), [olives](#), or [tomatoes](#);
- [XF-actors](#) answers the urgent need to improve prevention, early detection and control of Xylella fastidiosa, a plant bacteria causing a variety of diseases. Xylella fastidiosa has a huge impact on agriculture, affecting notably olive cultivar and stone fruits – plums, almonds, cherries;
- [LIVESEED](#) seeks to improve transparency and competitiveness of organic seed and plant breeding and encourage greater use of organic seed. Research activities cover five crop categories, including leguminous crops, vegetables and fruit trees, considering different farming systems and pedoclimatic zones across Europe. A series of [cross visit webinars](#) have been produced in summer 2020, in which you can learn more about [traditional and innovative fruit production in Germany](#), the [technical aspects of apple breeding in Switzerland](#) or [research activities in fruit and berry cultivation technique at FiBL](#).

Interested to learn more? Have a look at IYFV2021's [official website](#), watch IFOAM Organics International's (member of the steering committee of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables) to hear organic farmers from India and Kenya speak about their experiences growing fruits and vegetables.



## The Organic Farm Knowledge platform: a unique resource for the organic sector

The [Organic Farm Knowledge](#) platform stimulates the exchange of knowledge among organic farmers, farm advisers and scientists. It provides and promote a wide range of tools and resources with the aim to enhance productivity and quality in organic farming across Europe. The platform covers a variety of themes spanning from crop production to animal husbandry, seeds and breeding.

New tools such as practice abstracts, videos and online courses are regularly created and disseminated via the Organic Farm Knowledge newsletter and social media. Check out the latest tools on the platform provided by the OK-Net EcoFeed project: “[Guide for assessing the protein quality in soya feed products](#)” and the video “[Feeding organic laying hens with insects](#)” and do not hesitate to leave your comments.

To further facilitate the practical knowledge exchange among organics interested parties, the Organic Farm Knowledge platform together with OK-Net EcoFeed are currently compiling a list of specialized organic advisory or related services. [The list of Advisory Services on Organic Farm Knowledge](#) is regularly updated. Additions should be sent to [Dr. Helga Willer](#).

[Subscribe](#) to the newsletter to receive periodic updates via email, and do not forget to follow the Organic Farm knowledge platform on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the news and events.



*OK-Net EcoFeed has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 773911. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

The poster features a stylized illustration of a farm landscape with a tree, a cow, and rolling hills. Below the illustration, the text reads: "ORGANIC FARM KNOWLEDGE", "Exchange of knowledge among farmers, farm advisers, and scientists", "Tools and resources about organic farming", "Virtual meeting place for cross-border learning", and "The toolbox available in multiple languages!". At the bottom, the website address "www.organic-farmknowledge.org" is displayed. A small logo for "Organic Farm Knowledge" and the European Union flag are also present.



## 2 IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE DEVELOPMENT

### New contact details for member access requests

IFOAM Organics Europe members with issues accessing [our member extranet](#) can now contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) with their questions. We have made this change to streamline all membership requests. Looking forward to hearing from you!

### Exclusive for members: IFOAM Organics Europe Meets Business recording 2020 is available!

IFOAM Organics Europe meets business 2020 took place online for the first time. [IFOAM Organics Europe's members can now view the recordings](#) until 1 March.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of IFOAM Organics Europe Meets Business took place on 8-9 December 2020. More than 80 participants from all walks of the organic supply chain and beyond tuned in.

The event focused on exchange of knowledge and experiences on political and sectorial developments and their impacts on the organic value chain. Experts analysed the changes the new EU organic regulation will bring. More details about the event [are available on the event's webpage](#).

SAVE THE DATE for this year's edition! The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of IFOAM Organics meets business will take place 9-10 December 2021. We have already started working on it and it will probably be held virtually. [Subscribe to our newsletter](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) to stay in the loop.



*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 for this event lies with IFOAM Organics Europe. EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

### 25% target of organic land by 2030: Challenges and priorities for Central and Eastern Europe 15 December 2020

On 15 December 2020, IFOAM Organics Europe organised its Expert Group for Capacity Building in Central and Eastern Europe's annual roundtable. It brought together 10 participants from 8 countries from the region.

Participants discussed their national challenges and priorities for achieving the Farm to Fork strategy's target of 25% organic land by 2030, updated on the state of their organic market, and informed IFOAM Organics Europe on advocacy needs to develop organic further.

Some of the main hurdles in developing organic the group's members highlighted are:

- A lack of consumers awareness on the benefits of organic;
- The subsidies-based system in many countries;
- Under-developed organic processing system; and
- The non-mandatory aspect of the 25% target, which does not pressure national governments to push for concrete actions.



The members highlighted that, in some countries, even though the share remains high in comparison to the EU average, the share of organic farmland tends to decrease. Such is the case in Estonia.

The second part of the roundtable provided a media workshop by Kristin Karlsson. The workshop gave the participants an opportunity to combine theory and practice on better comprehending media and approaching journalistic interviews.

The meeting's report and minutes are available for IFOAM Organics Europe's members and/or organisations from a Central and Eastern European country. Message [berenice.cau@organicseurope.bio](mailto:berenice.cau@organicseurope.bio) for these.

Do you want to send any feedbacks or inputs on the challenges to achieve the 25% target of organic land in your country in the CEE region? Please contact [berenice.cau@organicseurope.bio](mailto:berenice.cau@organicseurope.bio).

### #thefutureisorganic

We invite IFOAM Organics Europe members who want to get inspired for the year ahead to read Michaël Wilde, Director at Bionext's, post [on our member extranet](#).

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member who does not have access to our member extranet yet? Are you interested in accessing this information? Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for details.

**ORGANIC ON EVERY TABLE**

**IMPROVE INSPIRE DELIVER**

**FAIR PLAY FAIR PAY**

**HAVE AN INITIATIVE THAT TRANSFORMS FOOD AND FARMING? VISIT  
EUORGANIC2030.BIO TO SEE INSPIRING EXAMPLES AND SUBMIT YOUR OWN!**

**IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE**

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

**Are you making Europe more organic? Share your initiative transforming food and farming systems with us and inspire others!**

The organic movement is a front-runner when it comes to setting the stage for fair, environmentally conscious, healthy and caring food and farming systems across Europe and the globe.

To achieve the European organic movement's ambitious and [shared Vision for organic in 2030](#), IFOAM Organics Europe is collecting successful initiatives and projects that are [transforming food and farming](#) and that can be an inspiration to other food and farming actors and policy-makers.



[Submit your initiative now](#) if it is not older than five years and addresses one of the following aspects:

- **Organic on every table:** initiatives and examples that make organic widely available and recognised
- **Improve – Inspire – Deliver:** initiatives and example that develop organic further and inspire others
- **Fair Play – Fair Pay:** initiatives and examples to achieve more transparency and fairness in the value chain

If your initiative is in line with our vision, we will upload it to [EUorganic2030.bio](#) and promote it on our social media using #EUorganic2030.

Need inspiration? Have an initiative? [Visit EUorganic2030.bio](#)



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

### **They make it happen! Crete's Culinary Sanctuaries Educational Network protects Crete's national heritage**

All over Europe, citizens are working to make food and farming systems fairer, environmentally conscious, healthy and caring.

In Greece, Nikki Rose, a Greek-American journalist, seminar director, and pro chef, founded Crete's Culinary Sanctuaries (CCS) Educational Network, an award-winning 'school without walls'. CSS protects Crete's invaluable natural and cultural resources by stimulating exchange of ideas and creating local initiatives to support organic farming and other sustainable livelihoods.

CCS is an all-local network of archaeologists, ecologists, organic farmers, heirloom seed savers, chefs and beekeepers that organizes interactive educational programs focusing on raising awareness on the country's heritage (culture, nature, organic agriculture, traditional cuisine) and the need to protect it.

The sanctuary has received awards from National Geographic, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as well as the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and is now working on a documentary highlighting Heritage Protectors in Crete.

Read more about this initiative on [euorganic2030.bio](#). Do you think it is inspiring? Share it on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Find out what other European initiatives are transforming food and farming in Europe on social media using #EUorganic2030.

Learn more about this and other initiatives that are transforming food and farming in Europe and get inspired on [euorganic2030.bio](#).





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## **They make it happen! Enriching plant genetic diversity by bringing landrace varieties back into people's gardens and plates**

Are you a researcher, producer, breeder or simply interested in organic seeds? Get inspired by the Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (ÖMKi)'s project on Hungarian tomato landraces on organic farms.

Due to industrialized agriculture, which mainly uses modern breeds and hybrids, all tomato landraces had disappeared from public production in Hungary by 2012. ÖMKi's participatory research project reintroduces landraces most suitable for organic production and enriches genetic biodiversity of Hungarian farmed plants and preserves the country's valuable agricultural heritage.

Over the past two years, more than 16,000 'Landrace Tomato seedlings' have been sold. To keep up with the growing demand, about 20,000 seedlings will be supplied in spring 2021, bringing landrace varieties back into people's gardens and onto their plates.

Read more about this initiative on [euorganic2030.bio](https://euorganic2030.bio), and share it on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Find out what other initiatives are transforming food and farming in Europe on social media using #EUorganic2030.

Learn more about this and other initiatives that are transforming food and farming in Europe and get inspired on [euorganic2030.bio](https://euorganic2030.bio).



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## **Saying goodbye to our colleagues**

### **Caterina Berardi**

We are saying goodbye to IFOAM Organics Europe Internal Communications and Membership Officer Caterina Berardi.



Caterina started as Internal Communications and Operations Coordinator and grew into Officer, taking on more responsibilities in the membership area.

She was responsible for internal communications with our Board & Council, as well as supporting & developing IFOAM Organics Europe membership. She worked on several General Assemblies, contributed to our member extranet development & worked hard to maintain strong relationship between IFOAM Organics Europe team in Brussels and our members across Europe.

We would like to thank Caterina for her commitment to IFOAM Organics Europe's work. She will be missed by the office team.

### **Thomas Haselberger**

We are bidding goodbye to IFOAM Organics Europe's Policy Assistant Thomas Haselberger. Thomas will continue working in food and farming sector as Agriculture Researcher at Land Schafft Leben in Austria.



Thomas started his contribution to the European organic movement as European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteer and grew into Policy Assistant, working on climate change, biodiversity and animal welfare, and participating in the coordination of IFOAM Organic Europe's farmers group. Thomas was also involved in the Erasmus+ project on Innovative Land Strategies and helped coordinate the IFOAM Organics Europe's Interest Group of Organic Farmers.

We will miss Thomas and would like to thank him for his commitment to IFOAM Organics Europe's work. He will be missed by the office team and his colleagues from the policy team.

## 3 EVENTS

### 3.1 Preview of events

**Register now for our public event “GMOs and gene editing in agriculture: the benefits of regulation”**  
10 February 2021, online

How does organic & non-organic food and farming avoid contamination with GMOs? Why is it so relevant for food production that GMOs are regulated? Which disruptions can be expected from gene editing and new genetic engineering in general?

These are the questions and topics we will discuss on 10 February from 10:00-12:15 CEST. [Register on time to secure your spot!](#)

#### **Discussing new genetic engineering techniques: Politically timely**

With the study of the European Commission on practical aspects surrounding the application of the European Court of Justice ruling on ‘New Genomic Techniques’ expected for spring 2021, the topic is again high on the agenda of EU policymakers. At our event, we will showcase the benefits and necessity of the EU GMO Regulation for food & farming, including organic.

Upcoming genetic engineering techniques such as gene editing, require Europe to combine old and new strategies to protect its environment and biodiversity and enable organic and conventional non-GMO farming as well as consumer freedom of choice.

This event will present practical strategies of the organic sector to ensure maintenance of its high standards in every part of the food chain. It will also give an outlook on how the EU can continue to maintain transparency in certified organic and non-organic farming and food production and how regulation plays an essential role in this.

The discussions in the event are particularly relevant for organic and non-organic farmers, processors, retailers as well as stakeholders affected by EU agriculture biotechnology policy & regulation. Registration is open now and for [everyone](#).

#### **What will we talk about**

Our event consists of two sessions – one on smart practices and a panel discussion.

##### Part 1: Smart practices, 10:00-10:35

Presentation of practical strategies of the organic and conventional sectors and how regulation has played and will play an essential role in this. We will hear from:

- Steven Jacobs, Organic Farmers & Growers, UK. Steven will inform us about contamination guidelines, market implications and the role of good regulation in preventing contaminations.
- Yves Bertheau, scientist and expert on GMO detection, France. Yves will explain more about the feasibility of detection strategies for products from new genetic engineering techniques.

##### Part 2: Panel discussion, 10:45-12:15

Discussion on the status quo of the EU GMO Regulation, future scenarios of its implementation in the light of novel products and its relevance to trade, retail and different production systems, including organic farming.



There will be a diverse panel, including organic & non-organic farmers, retailers, scientist and a reaction from the EU Commission (tbc). There will be room for questions from the audience.

These are the questions and topics we will discuss on 10 February from 10:00-12:15 CEST. [Register on time to secure your spot!](#) Interpretation from French to English will be available.



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### **Join IFOAM Organics Europe at Europe's biggest trade fair for organic**

17-19 February 2021, online

[BIOFACH 2021](#) is just around the corner! The yearly event gathering the organic movement will take place from 17-19 February 2021, in a new digital format due to Covid-19 developments.

### **IFOAM Organics Europe at BIOFACH**

Once again, IFOAM Organics Europe joins BIOFACH/Vivaness as exhibitor and takes part in BIOFACH's Congress programme.

17 February, 11:00-12:45 marks our main event: **Policy Day - 25% European land in organic by 2030.** In 2020, the European Commission launched the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies to present a new vision for sustainable food and farming systems. They placed organic at its heart and proposing an ambitious but achievable objective to reach 25% of organic land in Europe by 2030. With its high-level panel involving policy-makers and key stakeholders, Policy Day will discuss how the new EU Organic Action Plan, the Organic Regulation (EU) 2018/848 and the CAP need to be adapted to upscale organics.

### **IFOAM Organics Europe will be organising the following events:**

- 17 February, 12:00-13:00 CET: New Plant breeding Techniques and Organic Farming: scientific, regulatory and consumer issues (LIVESEED project event)
- 18 February, 16:00-17:30 CET: EU Regulatory changes and its effect on International Trade
- 19 February, 15:00-15:45 CET: The future of certification in organics

For all details on our events at BIOFACH, visit [our website](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and stay tuned!

If you enjoy our BIOFACH sessions, remember to check out [TP Organics'](#) Science Day, an event dedicated to research in organics, on 19 February from 11:00-12:45 CEST. It will bring together organic operators, researchers, European Commission representatives and national government funding organic research to discuss organic food processing during an interactive session. Also have a look at



the sessions organised by IFOAM Organics International, featuring the Food Policy Forum for Change, the World of Organic Agriculture and more.

### **BIOFACH 2021 goes digital**

Participants will have the opportunity to discuss important topics, learn from each other, share their passionate interest in organic food, and pass on knowledge at the trade fair. Visiting professionals will be able to meet organic producers from the organic market and be inspired by the sector's latest trends, through company and product presentations, awards, presentations and lectures on various themes and product ranges, Congress events and other networking and dialogue formats.

Dedicated to the focal theme « Shaping Transformation. Stronger. Together. », this year's Congress will focus on the transition towards more environmentally friendly business methods and nutrition and will discuss how the transformation of the food supply can be better advanced by collaboration among various transformation movements.

For more information on the event, visit [the BIOFACH/Vivaness website](#).



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### **Save the date: The organic movement meets online at BIOFACH 2021 Policy Day to discuss “25% European land in organic by 2030”**

17 February 2021, online

Organised by IFOAM Organics Europe in collaboration with BIOFACH, the **Policy Day under the title 25% European Land in Organic by 2030** will take place online on Wednesday 17 February from 11:00 to 12:45.

2020 was an important year for sustainable food and farming systems, with the publication of the European Commission's Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies, placing organics at its heart and proposing an ambitious but achievable objective to reach 25% of organic land in Europe by 2030.



During the session, high-level policy makers and stakeholders from the organic movement will provide insights into how this target can be achieved by adapting the new EU Organic Action Plan, the Organic Regulation (EU) 2018/848 and the CAP to upscale organics.

Following the opening speech from European Commissioner for Agriculture, Janus Wojciechowski, the panel will welcome:

- Eduardo Cuoco, IFOAM Organics Europe's Director, who will moderate the discussion.
- Wolfgang Burtscher, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG Agri, European Commission.
- Aina Calafat Rogers, International Project Manager, SEAE
- Thierry Stoedzel, CEO, ECOCERT France
- Jan Plagge, President, IFOAM Organics Europe

For more information on the event, visit [the BIOFACH/Vivaness website](#).



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### **'Innovating for organic food processing', TP Organics' Science Day at BIOFACH 2021**

19 February 2021, online

TP Organics' Science Day will take place on 19 February from 11:00-12:45 at BIOFACH 2021. It invites organic operators and other interested stakeholders to discuss organic food processing in an interactive session. Those interested can buy a ticket in the BIOFACH [TicketShop](#).

With the European Commission starting to regulate organic processing methods, many operators need to better understand the background and concepts to qualify a processing technology as compatible with the organic regulation. Horizon Europe, the EU's next research & innovation programme, will start in 2021. Opportunities for organic companies in the first Work Programme of Horizon Europe (2021-2022, Cluster 6) and the new Partnership for Safe and Sustainable Food Systems (expected start in 2023) will be presented.

This year's edition of Science Day will bring together researchers, European Commission representatives and national governments funding organic research. The audience will learn more about funding opportunities for the organic sector, and organic food companies in particular, and current research on organic processing at European level.

You will also get inspired by two [CORE Organic](#) research projects that contribute to improve organic food processing: [SUSORGPLUS](#) and [ProOrg](#) will share their experiences and ideas for further research.

- SusOrgPlus aims to improve the drying processes for organic products in terms of sustainability and product quality.
- ProOrg is about developing a set of strategies and tools (Code of Practice) that can help organic food processors in the selection of appropriate technologies, providing guidance for making the best choice for careful, minimal, and mild processing methods. This way it will contribute to sustainable innovation and competitiveness of the organic food industry, while



guaranteeing high-quality food products with a limited number of additives and technological aids and a reduced impact on the environment.

Download the programme of Science Day on the [TP Organics website](#). To register, buy a ticket in the [TicketShop](#). About 2 weeks before the start of the BIOFACH / VIVANESS 2021 eSPECIAL, you will receive an invitation for 'onboarding', explaining registration. More information is available on the [BIOFACH website](#) and the [FAQ for visitors](#).



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**Save the date: Final event of the Internet of Food and Farm 2020 project**  
16-18 March 2021, online

As the [Internet of Food and Farm 2020 \(IoF2020\)](#) project is coming to an end, it is time to celebrate its legacy. We are convinced that during these times, there is no better way to do this than with all of you. This is why we are working on [a digital event on 16-18 March](#) to meet, debate and exchange knowledge from a safe distance. Registration for the event will open soon.

One of the most important aspects of IoF2020 is its innovation ecosystem of agri-tech stakeholders all over Europe and beyond. This will be reflected in our program, featuring interactive sessions from all of them. On top of that, you can expect multiple workshops held by the project consortium and use case partners alongside contributions from external experts who became companions along the way.

Besides numerous networking possibilities, the event will address three main aspects, relevant for our project and the agricultural sector alike:

- State of the art technology,
- Lessons learned during the project's research, and
- Self-sustaining ecosystems of research and innovation.

All consortium partners are delighted to invite you to celebrate the closing chapter of IoF2020. To ensure that your participation will be an enlightenment as well as a pleasure, we also dedicate some time to entertainment. This includes, among other activities, a multi-media spectacle including our IoF2020 cinema room filled with short movies about our use cases.

Make sure to mark the date in your calendar since good things come to those who wait, but better things come to the ones who innovate and think ahead.

Registration for the event will open soon. Make sure to follow @IoF2020 on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#), and [visit the event website](#) to stay tuned about the latest updates and program.



The [Internet of Food & Farm 2020](#) project is a large-scale pilot under Horizon 2020 investigating and fostering large-scale implementation of the Internet of Things in European food and farming. [IFOAM Organics Europe is a project partner](#) and represents the European organic movement.





*IoF2020 has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 731884. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

**Save the date: XF-actors project's final event and 3<sup>rd</sup> European Conference on, Xylella Fastidiosa**  
26-30 April 2021, online

The 3rd EFSA European Conference on *Xylella fastidiosa* and final meeting of the [XF-ACTORS](#) project will be held online between 26-30 April 2021, under the motto: **Building knowledge, protecting plant health.**

The event will comprise of XF-ACTORS' meeting, the European conference and a stakeholder session. A parallel e-poster session will be held online.

Presentations and discussions will take stock of the results from research that has taken place since *X. fastidiosa* was first detected in Europe in 2013. During this period, scientists have filled knowledge gaps on the distinctive elements of the outbreaks in the EU, consolidated a resilient network for monitoring and testing, and achieved results that have supported and influenced the activities of researchers, stakeholders and policy makers.

The conference programme will reflect the multidisciplinary strategy that has been pursued in research. Sessions and discussions will include the latest findings, data and knowledge on *X. fastidiosa* as a pathosystem, including host plants, vectors, ecosystems, possible control solutions, and its environmental and socio-economic impact.

The conference will cover the most recent results of research on:

- Pathogen biology, ecology and genetics;
- Epidemiology and modelling of *X. fastidiosa* diseases;
- Host plant-interactions and search for resistant/tolerant germplasm;
- Surveillance and early detection tools; Vectors biology and control;
- Endophytic microbial resources and their potential applications for *X. fastidiosa* control;
- Sustainable management strategies for prevention and reduction of the impact of *X. fastidiosa* diseases.

Registration will open in January 2021 on [XF-Actors' website](#).

The meeting of XF-ACTORS, the [EU Horizon 2020](#) research project devoted to this plant pathogenic bacterium, will precede the conference organised by [EFSA](#) and the XF-ACTORS project. Major EU research initiatives tackling *Xylella fastidiosa* like [BIOVEXO](#), [CURE-FX](#), [ERC MultiX](#), [EUPHRESCO](#), [EUROXANTH](#), and [Life Resilience](#) contributed to the event.



XF-ACTORS is a project under the Horizon 2020 instrument and brings together an international consortium of 29 partners. The project aims to establish a multidisciplinary research program to answer the urgent need to improve prevention, early detection, and control of *Xylella fastidiosa* disease.



IFOAM Organics Europe's role is to promote the project outcomes to all relevant stakeholders in the organic sector and ensure information about the project and its result reaches all relevant actors in Europe.



*XF-ACTORS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727987. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

### **Join the global organic movement at the Organic World Congress 2021**

6-10 September 2021, Rennes, France

On 6-10 September, more than 2,500 organic stakeholders, farmers, researchers and policymakers will address questions around resilience, societal transformation, health, and food sovereignty during the [Organic World Congress](#).

With more than 600 speakers selected from an incredible 800+ applications, [six conference forums](#), workshops and pre-conferences, the [#OWC2021](#) will offer a truly global and diverse space, inspiring positive change through knowledge exchange and the formulation of organic solutions. Plenaries facilitated by recognised international speakers will bring fresh insights on challenges and potential solutions, putting today's issues into perspective.

The organisers are committed to maintaining this 20th edition of the Organic World Congress in a safe, inclusive way. To this end, the OWC2021 will be both an in-person and virtual event. We will adapt its format in line with WHO directives and French national health and safety measures.

[Stay tuned](#) for more information soon!

## **3.2 Review of events**

### **BIOFRUITNET 1<sup>st</sup> online seminar: Boosting innovation in organic fruit production**

3 December 2020, online

The BIOFRUITNET project has launched a series of webinars to boost innovation in the European organic fruit production. The first event was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020, during which BIOFRUITNET experts presented the latest solutions applicable to the EU organic citrus, stone and pome fruit crops.

Vincenzo Verrastro (CIHEAM-IAMB) proposed the use of sweet orange essential oil or plant extracts as a valid alternative to the contentious use of mineral oil for pest control management in citrus. Concerning organic pome management, Markus Kelderer (Laimburg) synthesised the most efficient agronomic measures to overcome the Sooty mould, a major challenge for organic apple growers. Finally, Michael Friedli (FiBL) showed promising results in regulating the black cherry aphid (*Myzus cerasi*) in organic table cherry production.

About 100 participants from different European countries joined the discussion. The first part of this series of webinars was a perfect opportunity to share and expand knowledge in organic fruit production where the solutions are often either only locally known or only available in the scientific



sphere. BIOFRUITNET is planning further future webinars to keep boosting innovation and facilitating knowledge sharing among the European organic fruit growers.

Check the [BIOFRUITNET website](#) and follow us on our social media: [Facebook](#) , [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).



*BIOFRUITNET has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 862850. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

### **Organic processors come together for second annual general meeting**

7 December 2020, online

Associations of processors and traders, as well as processing and trading companies, came together on 7 December for the second annual general meeting of IFOAM Organics Europe's Interest Group of Organic Processors and Traders (IGOP).

Participants discussed the IGOP's priorities for 2021, which include anticipating and discussing issues related to the revision of the EU Organic Regulation, regular exchanges about organic market development in IGOP members' respective countries as well as developing a position on substantiating claims and the product environmental footprint (PEF).

Participants also talked about what organic processing means and which direction should be taken in this respect. For example, should organic be as natural as possible or should it try to mimic conventional products only with organic ingredients. Finally, participants discussed the product environmental footprint (PEF).

#### **About our IGOP**

IFOAM Organics Europe's Interest Group of Organic Processors and Traders (IGOP) is one of IFOAM Organics Europe's four interest groups. [Our interest groups](#) provide direct input from the different sectors in IFOAM Organics Europe's organisation. They formulate policies and positions relevant to their sector.

IFOAM Organics Europe's members can access [a list of its current members](#) and [the terms of reference](#) on the member extranet.

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member who is:

- Active in processing and/or trade interested to become part of the IGOP? Contact [silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio](mailto:silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio);
- Having issues accessing the member extranet? Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

#### **IFOAM Organics Europe Meets Business online – a successful event!**

8-9 December 2020, online

On 8-9 December 2020, 80 participants, from all walks of the organic supply chain and beyond, joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of IFOAM Organics meets business. This event focuses on exchanging knowledge and experiences on political and sectorial developments, their impacts on the organic value chain, as well



as the changes that the sector will be confronted with after the entry into force of the new EU Organic Regulation.

Interesting and inspiring sessions as well as a smooth progression from the technical point of view resulted in a successful event!

The full agenda can be consulted [on our website](#). Below a summary of the event.

Attendees of IFOAM Organics Europe meets business can watch recordings of the event on Hubilo until 9 January 2021. To do so, they can click the login link, go to the agenda item they would like to watch and click 'Watch now'. We will make the recordings available to IFOAM Organics Europe members on the member extranet in the coming weeks.

### **8 December – Political Day: Farm to Fork strategy, the organic market and Brexit**

The event kicked off with welcoming words by Eduardo Cuoco, IFOAM Organics Europe Director. This introductory session was followed by a session on the role that organic can play in transitioning towards more sustainable food systems, especially in the light of the Farm to Fork (F2F) and the EU biodiversity strategies. The exchange between Alexander Beck (AöL), Charles Pernin (Synabio) and Silvia Schmidt (IFOAM Organics Europe) highlighted that the F2F ambitions are currently not integrated enough into EU agri-food policies. The speakers proposed solutions like more sustainable and organic green public procurement, revealing the true cost of food and modernizing eating habits to reach the 25% target of organic land by 2030.

After a virtual networking coffee break using thematic tables, participants gained insights into organic market developments. Linked to this, representatives of different parts of the supply chain provided their ideas on how to reach 25% organic land. The speakers were representatives of [IFOAM Organics Europe's Interest Groups](#): Kurt Sannen (Bolhuis) represented farmers, Sarah Compson (Soil Association) processors & traders, and Lukas Nossol (Dennree) retailers. They highlighted the importance of being a value-driven movement, the need for financial incentives and a strong coordination across the sector to further develop the market.

As Brexit talks were high on the agenda, the event featured a session on Brexit. Thomas Parry-Jones, Head of Agriculture, UK mission to the EU and Lee Holdstock (Soil Association) gave a state of play of the effects of Brexit on trade on organic products, and replied to questions about the possibility of an equivalency agreement still being in reach between the EU and the UK.

### **9 December – Technical Day: The EU Organic Regulation, trade & control and integrity of the supply chain**

The second day started with a session on the new EU Organic Regulation by Emanuele Busacca (IFOAM Organics Europe), Johanna Stumpner (AöL) and Michel Reynaud (Ecocert, board member of IFOAM Organics Europe). The speakers addressed the legislative process, flavourings, cleaning and disinfection.

The session on the new organic regulation was followed by two discussion tables to interactively explore policies related to organic in an. One of the discussion tables focused on 'International trade & control and certification' where participants exchanged with speakers Michel Reynaud (Ecocert) and Emanuele Busacca (IFOAM Organics Europe) on how to improve supply chain and import integrity.



The second discussion table covered food & labelling rules. Participants engaged with Roberto Pinton (Assobio) and Alexander Beck (AöL) about animal welfare labelling, the NutriScore and more.

The day ended with an update on '[Developing Organic: Pesticide use and contamination](#)' the project led by IFOAM Organics Europe by Marian Blom (Bionext and IFOAM Organics Europe Vice-President) and a wrap-up by our Director, Eduardo Cuoco.

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If you have any feedback regarding the event, we are eager to hear it! Please contact [silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio](mailto:silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio) for content-related issues, or [event@organicseurope.bio](mailto:event@organicseurope.bio) for technical-related issues.



*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 for this event lies with IFOAM Organics Europe. EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

### **Annual meeting of IFOAM Organics Europe's Interest Group on Certification and Integrity**

15 December 2021, online

On 15 December, 30 members of IFOAM Organics Europe's Interest Group on Certification and Integrity (IGOC) met online for their second annual meeting.

The online general meeting was divided into two parts. In the first part, the IGOC steering committee (SC) provided detailed presentations of ongoing work on integrity of the organic supply chain and the future of certification.

The second part was based on IFOAM Organics Europe's survey results on non-physical verification of compliance. In three parallel workshops, participants:

- Exchanged about relevant digital tools for non-physical verification of compliance and their purposes;
- Listed non-physical verification of compliance's main challenges and proposed solutions - based on participants' experiences;
- Discussed the minimum requirements of verification of compliance to overcome current and future challenges.

For further information on this meeting, please do not hesitate to send an email to [meriam.ghedira@organicseurope.com](mailto:meriam.ghedira@organicseurope.com). Do note that we prioritise members' requests.



## About our IGOC

IFOAM Organics Europe's Interest Group Certification and Integrity (IGOC) is one of IFOAM Organics Europe's four interest groups. [Our interest groups](#) provide direct input from the different sectors in IFOAM Organics Europe's organisation. They formulate policies and positions relevant to their sector.

IFOAM Organics Europe's members can access [a list of its current members](#) and [the terms of reference](#) on the member extranet.

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member who:

- Has certification activities or are relevant actors in the integrity of the organic supply chain?  
Contact [emanuele.busacca@organicseurope.bio](mailto:emanuele.busacca@organicseurope.bio)

Is having issues accessing the member extranet? Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

## EUREKA Winter Consortium Meeting & personas validation workshop

12-14 January 2021, online

On 12-14 January 2021, the Horizon 2020 EUREKA project's winter consortium meeting took place. This project will boost the EU's agricultural knowledge base by connecting all multi-actor projects. To achieve this, EUREKA will use a new, centralized, open-source knowledge reservoir tentatively titled 'FarmBook'. IFOAM Organics Europe is a project partner and engaging the organic sector in the FarmBook's development, making sure the new platform meets the organic actor's needs.

### Developing an organic persona for the FarmBook

Well-developed personas will form the basis of the development of both the FarmBook and communication strategies. On 19-20 January, the project partners developed expert workshops to validate the created personas. IFOAM Organics Europe featured organic farmer persona Marta, part of the early majority of innovators. She likes to network and is innovative, communicative and passionate, believing in what she does. In terms of finding information, easy access to subsidies is crucial for her.

### Report back: Work on the FarmBook

During the meeting, the participants presented progress in the different Work Packages and the future FarmBook's prototype. To match this new e-platform with end users' needs, farmers, foresters, advisors, policymakers etc., the project developed personas, each covering a scope of needs. The participants, including experts from the organic sector, also presented the outcomes of the expert workshop in December to validate the knowledge objects from all multi-actor projects that were collected and analysed in Work Package 1.

While farmers value demonstrations and audio/video material most, they also cited networks, a database with expert contacts (advisors) and farmers interested in research projects, subsidies and market information as well as government policies (information about legislation, regulations and funds) as important.

Another recurrent suggestion regarding the FarmBook was 'organic'. There will be an option to filter the search results according to 'systems' (for each sector). The question of governance of the future FarmBook was addressed as well. The focus will be on self-sustenance through uptake by the community. IFOAM Organics Europe will play an active part in reaching out to organic farmers as a relevant 'EUREKA archetype', that is, a group of end users for dissemination and exploitation.



### What is next?

At the end of March/beginning of April, user tests will take place to ensure information on the platform can be found easily.

Interested? Contact [laurens.vandercruyssen@leapforward.be](mailto:laurens.vandercruyssen@leapforward.be), service designer at Leap Forward & EUREKA partner.



Read on [EUREKA's project website](#), [Twitter](#) & [Facebook](#) accounts.



*EUREKA has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 862790. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

### What role does urban and peri-urban agriculture play in city food systems in the context of COVID-19 and climate change?

21 January, online

[FoodSHIFT2030](#) presented a webinar on the role of urban and peri-urban agriculture in city food systems and how they face crisis such as climate change and Covid19. Three initiatives presented their contributions.

Starting off, [FoodSHIFT2030's Avignon Lab](#) stressed their objective to reduce food waste in uniting public canteens, a butcher apprenticeship school, and local meat producers through the AGRILocal online platform. In a nutshell, local meat producers sell their production to the butcher school to train the butcher students, and afterwards, the meat is given to 37 public canteens to ensure the preparation of their 650,000 annual meals. Their goal is to supply the public canteens with 20% local products and 38% organic ones. Learn more about their initiative [by reading our previous article](#).

In Barcelona, the 2021 world capital of sustainable food, [FoodSHIFT2030's Barcelona Lab](#) puts urban agriculture and technical innovation forward as solutions. The Barcelona Lab created over 120 urban gardens and the FabCare Challenge App to help citizens find information about sustainable food and nutrition. They also manage ROMI-Robotics for Micro-Farms, which sets up a series of technological tools to help micro-farms (<0.1-0.5 ha) be more efficient and competitive to face large industrial farms. They dedicate a lot of research to find solutions to minimize energy and water consumption, and make the system more economically viable.

Finally, [Edible Garden City's](#) Director explained that Singapore faces a lack of space to produce food, as only 1% of land is allocated to farming (for 5.6M inhabitants) against 25% in the 1960-1970's (for 1.6M inhabitants). 90% of the food consumed is imported from abroad, which puts the country in a situation of food insecurity. To face this, as well as the land degradation and biodiversity loss, the city launched an urban redevelopment plan including over 220 pesticide-free urban rooftop gardens managed by local communities.



Learn more about all these initiatives by [watching the webinar](#).



FoodSHiFT2030 is a Horizon 2020 project promoting food systems innovations in nine cities across Europe. More information about the nine FoodSHiFT Labs is available [on the FoodSHiFT2030 website](#). Follow the project on social media using @FoodSHiFT2030 on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

IFOAM Organics Europe contributes to the conceptual framework for further development of governance strategies and food policy strategies. We will also disseminate project outputs within the organic network and at our main events.



*FoodShift2030 has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement number 862716. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

### **Solutions for sustainable feeding and animal welfare in organic farming – Research projects contribute**

25-26 January 2021, online

Organic farmers strive to feed their animals with feed produced at or near the farm while ensuring animal well-being. In a joint conference, four research projects, [OK-Net EcoFeed](#), [PPILOW](#), [FreeBirds](#) and [POWER](#), presented solutions helping farms to implement these objectives in practice.

Bram Moeskops, IFOAM Organics Europe, coordinator of OK-Net EcoFeed said “Adopting a multi-actor approach, all four projects worked with farmers, advisers and researchers to improve animal welfare, identify sustainable feed sources and improve ration-planning for organic pigs and poultry.”

Anne Collin, INRAE, coordinator of PPILOW explained that PPILOW “Evaluates animal welfare according to the One Welfare concept.” Anne elaborated “This concept considers animal welfare, economic, environmental, and social impacts including human well-being. The one welfare concept recognises that animal welfare, biodiversity and the environment are interconnected.”

Stefan Gunnarsson, SLU, coordinator of FreeBirds added that “Keeping layers and broiler chickens outdoor promotes bird welfare and health. Yet, outdoor production comes with challenges such as sanitary threats or predator pressure. Researchers and practitioners need to work together to find solutions.”

Anne Grete Kongsted, Aarhus University, coordinator of POWER elaborated that the POWER project is looking for solutions in pig production: “We look for practical solutions in the most prevalent organic pig production systems and we evaluate new practices developed by creative farmers across Europe.”

The conference showed access to knowledge is crucial for farmers wanting to improve their practices. That is why [Organic Farm Knowledge](#) was created. This online platform hosts a wide range of tools and resources, including almost 100 tools in the theme animal husbandry. [The ration-planning tool](#) developed within the OK-Net EcoFeed project is an example of such a tool. It allows calculating a balanced ration based on the composition of organic feedstuffs and the nutritional needs of slow-growing breeds.



## More information

Bram Moeskops, Research & Innovation Manager, IFOAM Organics Europe



*OK-Net EcoFeed has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 773911. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

## 4 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE

### IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE MAIN SPONSOR 2021

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



## 5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

10 February 2021

[GMOs and gene editing in agriculture: the benefits of regulation](#)

Online

17-19 February 2021

[BIOFACH](#)

Online

18 February 2021

[Learning towards Access to Land](#)

Online

8-10 March 2021

[EUCARPIA-LIVESEED Conference -Breeding and seed sector innovations for organic food systems](#)

Online



16-18 March 2021

[Internet of Farm 2020 \(IoF2020\) final event](#)

Online

23 March 2021

[ReMIX final conference](#)

Brussels, Belgium

20-22 April 2021

[Best Economy Forum](#)

Online

26-30 April 2021

[XF-ACTORS final event](#)

Online

6-10 September 2021

[Organic World Congress 2021](#)

Rennes, France

9-10 December 2021

[IFOAM Organics Europe Meets Business](#)

To be determined



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