

Brussels, 20th May 2021

**Letter to the European Parliament negotiating team on the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation:
Deleting article 13a on organic farming will have drastic consequences for the organic sector
throughout Europe**

As President of IFOAM Organics Europe, the European umbrella organization for organic food and farming, I would like to draw your attention to a key issue concerning the CAP Strategic Plans.

During the CAP negotiations, one of organic farmers' main recommendations was **support for Article 13a as voted by the European Parliament in October 2020**. This new Article 13a, dedicated to organic farming, requires Member States, during the design phase of their CAP Strategic Plans, to:

- Assess the progress of their national organic sector;
- Assess the level of consumer demand for organic; and
- Propose a coherent strategy using CAP instruments to support the sector.

Organic farmers see this addition as an essential provision to reach the 25% target for organic land by 2030 mentioned in both the EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies, and to steer national markets towards consumer preferences, where in many countries organic demand is outstripping production. It would also give farmers the assurance over the stability and predictability of national support frameworks for organic.

However, it seems that the Commission and Council pressured the Parliament to withdraw the amendment setting up Article 13a in the middle of trilogue negotiations. Whereas, in theory, Member States would have the possibility to support organic conversion and maintenance either through rural development measures or through eco-schemes, organic farmers are concerned that the flexibility awarded to Member States in the CAP regulation will lead to a decreased level of ambition. **Therefore, Article 13a represented a safeguard for continued support for organic in all Member States.**

Today, co-legislators send a very worrying message to the organic food and farming movement. **Without clearly requiring Member States to include in their CAP Strategic Plans an analysis of the organic sector's production and a national target to increase the share of agricultural land under organic management, the objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy will not be reached by 2030.**

Hundreds of thousands of organic farmers across Europe are already leading the way to make agriculture fairer and more sustainable and preserve our soils, water, and biodiversity. But the ambition to convert at least one quarter of the farmland to organic farming within the next ten years is only reachable if appropriate support is given to all farmers, beginning with the CAP.

IFOAM Organics Europe therefore urges you to ensure that the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation includes a clear reference to the need for Member States to set a national target and adequate support and budget to develop organic farming at the national level, either by maintaining Article 13a or through

similar provisions, in line with the mandate given to you by the European Parliament plenary vote of October 2020, and with the EU target of 25% organic land by 2030.

Best regards,
Jan Plagge

IFOAM Organics Europe President

