

PRESS RELEASE

## EUROPEAN ORGANIC MOVEMENT REJOICES AWARDS FOR ORGANIC

BRUSSELS, 18 FEBRUARY 2022 – Today, the European Commission, IFOAM Organics Europe, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Committee of the Regions, and COPA-COGECA are launching the first ever EU organic awards – together, as example of a pan-European collaboration. These awards will recognise excellence along the organic value chain, rewarding the best and most innovative actors in organic production in the EU.

The EU Organic Awards are a follow-up to the [Action Plan for the development of organic production](#), adopted by the Commission on 25 March 2021. Eight awards within seven categories will be given out, including best organic farmer female, best organic farmer male, best organic region, best organic city, best organic bio-district, best organic SME, best organic food retailer and best organic restaurant. There will be an award ceremony to announce the winners on the annual [EU Organic Day](#) on 23 September 2022.

Jan Plagge, IFOAM Organics Europe’s President, reiterates that “the EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies put organic farming at the heart of a transition to sustainable food systems, with a target to reach 25% organic land on average by 2030 and with the publication of an EU organic action plan.” He continues: “These EU Organic Awards are a great way to showcase the innovative potential in the EU organic sector. I am particularly happy that the winners will be announced at the annual EU Organic Day, a day that will be an ideal opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the organic action plan.”

Eduardo Cuoco, IFOAM Organics Europe’s Director, adds that “We must not forget the importance of the involvement of national, regional and even local actors to make the EU Organic Action Plan as successful as possible in reaching the 25% organic target and transitioning towards more sustainable food systems.” He affirms that “these awards will inspire those working to make our food and farming system more sustainable, using the potential of organic food and farming. I am particularly happy that we will get to celebrate these awards in the year in which IFOAM Organics Europe turns 20 and at the first actual EU Organic Day. We will take the time to celebrate this at [many occasions](#) with those in our network and our members!”

Applications to the awards will open on 25 March and run until 8 June 2022 (before 25 March, the application form will only be available for consultation). After the application period, a jury consisting of one representative from each of the different organisers and a representative of each of the European Parliament and European Council will shortlist the best candidates. More information [is available on the EU Commission's website](#).

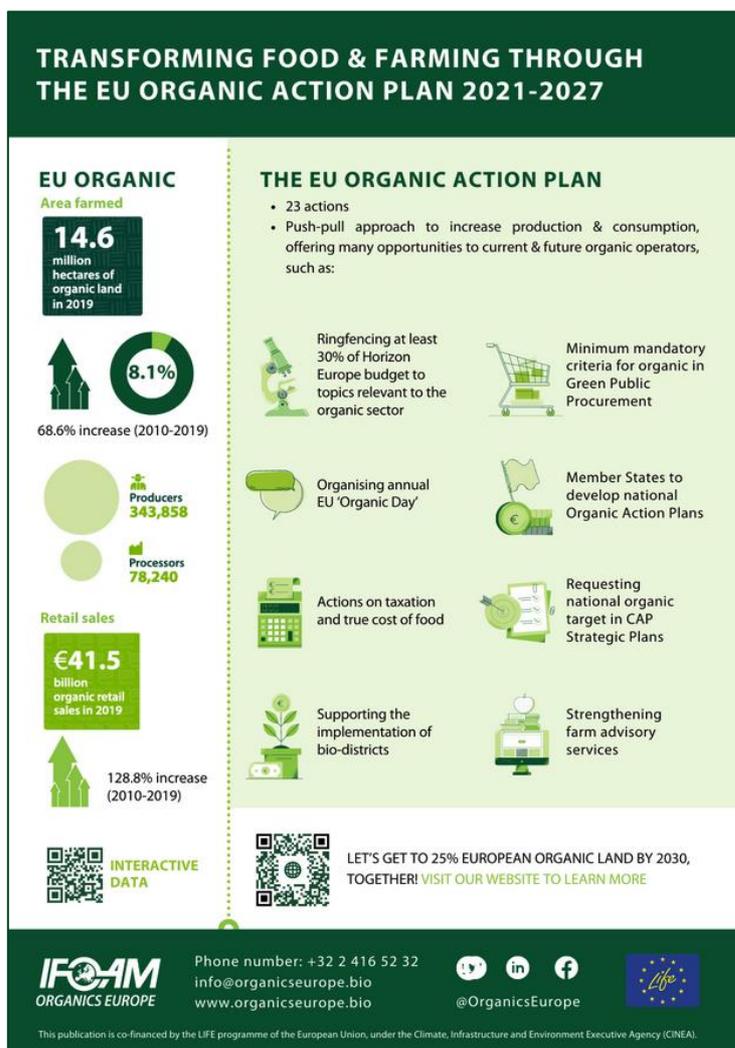
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### Background information

#### Why these awards?

The European Commission identified organic as playing a key role in achieving the objectives of the [European Green Deal](#), the [Farm to Fork strategy](#) and the [Biodiversity strategy](#). For this reason, the Commission has defined



a target of 25% of EU agricultural land under organic farming by 2030 and a significant increase in organic aquaculture.

In support of that target, the Commission has adopted the [Action Plan for the Development of Organic Production](#) in March 2021. This Action Plan takes the approach that, to stimulate organic production, consumer demand for organic products should grow. This requires, amongst other things, increased public awareness of the characteristics and benefits of organic production.

For this purpose, the Action Plan includes the launch of annual awards recognising excellence in the organic value chain. They aim to reward the best and most innovative organic actors, contributing to the reduction of agriculture's impact on the environment and climate, and to the achievement of EU Biodiversity and Farm to Fork strategies. It will be awarded for the first time in 2022.

#### How did these awards come to be?

The EU organic awards are jointly organised by the European Commission, the European Economic and Social

Committee, the European Committee of the Regions, COPA-COGECA and IFOAM Organics Europe. Together with these partners, we have worked hard on setting up selection, eligibility and award criteria (that also refer the organic principles for many categories!).

The jury deciding on the final winners will comprise representatives of the above organisations, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

#### Useful links

- All information about the EU Organic Awards [is available on the EU Commission's website](#) and [IFOAM Organics Europe's website](#)
- [EU Organic Awards Press Release published by EU Commission](#)
- [European Organic Action Plan 2021-2027](#)
- [IFOAM Organics Europe's press release on the European Organic Action Plan 2021-2027](#) (25 March 2021)
- [IFOAM Organics Europe's infographic on the European Organic Action Plan](#)

IFOAM Organics Europe is the European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming. With almost 200 members in 34 European countries, our work spans the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors organisations, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and



consumer advocacy bodies. In 2022, IFOAM Organics Europe is turning 20, IFOAM Organics International 50 and IFOAM Asia 10. [Celebrate the Year of Organics with us!](#)

