

PRESS RELEASE

NEW ORGANIC DATA: GROWTH CONTINUED IN 2020 BUT POLICY SUPPORT ON STATISTICS AND CAP ESSENTIAL TO REACH EU TARGETS

BRUSSELS, 15 FEBRUARY 2022 – Today, the Research Institute on Organic Agriculture (FiBL) published their yearly statistics on organic in the world and in Europe – in collaboration with IFOAM Organics Europe and International. The elaborate collection of data in [The World of Organic Agriculture 2022](#) shows that, **in 2020, organic recorded a record growth. Organic land in the EU grew to 14.9 million ha**, although at a slower rate than in the previous years. **The EU organic market marked a record increase of 15.1%, reaching €44.8 billion.**

In the EU, more than half of organic land is concentrated in 4 countries: France, Spain, Italy and Germany. France is the new champion among EU countries and now hosts the largest organic agricultural area (2.5 million ha) - followed by Spain and Italy (with respectively 2.4 and 2.1 million ha). The highest number of organic producers is active in Italy (71,590), followed by France (53,255) and Spain (44,493).

The EU market for organic reached a value of €44.8 billion, making EU the second largest market, after the USA, and followed by China. The EU's market champion is Germany with a market valued at €15 billion, followed by France with €12.7 billion and Italy with much smaller market of €3.9 billion.

For the European organic movement, improving knowledge and data collection on organic farming systems is crucial to increase organic production and consumption and achieve the targets set in the EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies. The Statistics on Agricultural Inputs and Outputs (SAIO) Regulation, currently under negotiations between the co-legislators, is an opportunity to collect more data on organic agriculture, which should allow for a better understanding of organic farming performances. A reliable and comprehensive set of data on organic production can also encourage new investors to enter the organic supply chain and accelerate conversions and market access.

Looking at the organic data, Member of the European Parliament, Petros Kokkalis, rapporteur of the Regulation on Statistics on Agricultural Inputs and Outputs (SAIO) commented: "The SAIO Regulation is the opportunity to provide for precise and reliable data on organic agriculture. We need to be able to monitor and evaluate the EU target to reach 25% of agricultural land under organic farming by 2030".

IFOAM Organics Europe's Director Eduardo Cuoco added: "The growth of organic farming in the EU has been impressive up to 2020, but it is fragile as it is partly dependent on public policy support, and the current negotiations on the CAP Strategic Plans bring a lot of uncertainties. The case of France, which currently holds the Presidency of the EU Council, is striking: it now boasts the largest area of organic land in the EU, but the government's plans to stop CAP payments rewarding organic farmers for the public goods they deliver risks putting a halt to the growth of the past years."

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Background information

The data show that **the potential for further growth of organic is there, provided the EU boosts its organic production and consumption with adequate policies**. The EU and its Member States can develop EU organic through the following policies, as highlighted in the new EU Action Plan on organic farming:

- **National CAP Strategic Plans** are an opportunity for EU Member States to set measures properly supporting the development of organic production, such as schemes for maintenance of/conversion to organic, Eco schemes dedicated to organic under the CAP's first pillar, strong agri-environmental and climate measures under the second pillar and investments; the European organic movement is currently highly concerned by the lack of proper support to organic in many draft CAP Strategic Plans, including in France;
- **National Organic Action Plans:** Member States can also elaborate national Organic Action Plans to support the consumption of organic food products via strong promotion policies towards consumers and the development of sustainable public procurement;
- **Regulation on Statistics on Agricultural Inputs and Outputs (SAIO):** Improving knowledge on organic farming systems is a condition to increase organic production and consumption. The SAIO Regulation, currently under negotiations between the co-legislators, is an opportunity to collect more data on organic agriculture, which should allow for a better understanding of organic farming performances. A reliable and comprehensive set of data on organic production can also encourage new investors to enter the organic supply chain and accelerate conversions and market access;
- On top of the relevant policy mix and financial support to increase both production and demand for organic products, the conversion to organic farming must also be supported by **trainings and well-funded Farm Advisory Services** to increase farmers' knowledge. The lack of knowledge available of organic farming is a brake on the conversion to organic whereas easy and practical tools can be implemented to solve this issue.

The data mentioned in this press release refers to the 27 Member States of the European Union (EU). FiBL also collected global and European data. [Have a look at their World of Organic Agriculture 2022 page for all information.](#)

France

With 2.5 million hectares of organic farmland in 2020, France became the country with the largest organic surface in Europe. Nonetheless there is a gap between the organic production and the demand growth for organic. As France currently holds the Presidency of the EU Council, and the [2022 European Organic Congress](#) will take place in Bordeaux (France, on 16-17 June), France should be leading by example on fostering the development of its organic sector.

The European organic movement is concerned by the lack of support to organic in the French CAP Strategic Plan submitted to the European Commission at the end of December 2021:

- Firstly, the scheme for the maintenance of organic farming has been withdrawn, which will not incentivize more farmers to convert to organic farming given they will not receive subsidies after the end of the conversion scheme (a five-year contract);
- Secondly, instead organic farming will be remunerated under an Eco scheme, but at the same level than the so-called High-Environmental Value (HVE) standard, despite scientific evidence and reports published during the past months proving HVE provides much less environmental benefits than organic farming.

Overall, the draft French CAP Strategic Plan will not enable conversion to organic farming to benefit from a comparative advantage, compared to less ambitious environmental schemes, and this will not ensure the development of organic farmland in France up to its own target to reach 18% by 2027.

Further reading

- [The World of Organic 2022](#): Read the Research Institute for Organic Agriculture (FiBL)'s press release and browse The World of Organic 2022

- [IFOAM Organics Europe report assessing the measures and budgets to support organic agriculture in Members States' draft CAP Strategic Plans](#) (CAP SPs) (18 November 2021). The analysis, based on organic farmers associations' feedback across 19 countries, shows that unless draft CAP national Strategic Plans are significantly improved in several Member States, the new CAP will not contribute to a significant development of organic farming in the EU.
- [IFOAM Organics Europe study estimating the national targets for organic production and the budgets necessary to reach them](#) shows the EU should dedicate 3-5 times the current amount of CAP budget dedicated to conversion & maintenance of organic farming from 2023 on (29 June 2021)

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!](#)