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## WELCOME NOTE

23 September was a day of celebrations! Besides the autumn equinox, it was the second edition of EU Organic Day. On this joyful day, we celebrated across Europe and in Brussels where eight excellent organic practices received the first ever European Organic Awards.

Rewarding excellence along the EU organic value chain

In Brussels, representatives of a pan-European collaboration handed out the first EU Organic Awards, hosted by the European Commission. I would like to congratulate the eight winners within seven categories:

- Best organic farmer (female): Nazaret Mateos Álvarez (Entresetas) – Paredes de Nava, Palencia, Spain;
- Best organic farmer (male): David Pejic (Zrno eko imanje) – Dubrava, Zagreb County, Croatia;
- Best organic region: Occitanie, France;
- Best organic city: Gemeinde Seeham am Obertrumer See – Salzburg, Austria;
- Best organic bio-district: Associazione Bio-Distretto Cilento – Campania, Italy;
- Best organic SME: Goodvenience.bio GmbH – Magdala, Thuringia, Germany;
- Best organic food retailer: La ferme à l'arbre de Liège – Lantin, Liège, Belgium;
- Best organic restaurant: Lilla Bjers HB – Visby, Gotland Island, Sweden.

You can see impressions of the awards ceremony [in this album](#) and on all social media platforms using #EUOrganic and #EUOrganicAwards. For more information, [read our press release](#) and [the Commission's press release](#). And, of course, besides the winners, there were [also the great examples of those shortlisted!](#)

Those shortlisted can submit their applications again next year, and if your business want to try its luck, you can do so too! Keep an eye on [the EU Commission's website](#) and [our website](#) for more information!

Celebrating organic across the EU

Of course, the awards celebrations in Brussels were only the tip of the iceberg!

I was glad to see so many organic initiatives throughout Europe. There were many events with government officials which our members organised, there were Q&A's with researchers, days dedicated to social media action, the opening of a biodynamic library, and international initiatives like Organic September and #IGrowYourFood that linked up to the EU Organic Day! [Have a look on our interactive map](#) and on all social media platforms using #EUOrganic and #EUOrganicDay.

The EU Organic Day and the Awards are great to help us remember the importance of involving national, regional, and local actors. We need the involvement and engagement of the entire value chain and actors at all levels to make the Organic Action Plan as successful as possible. Only by increasing both supply and demand for organic can we reach the Farm to Fork Strategy's 25% organic target and transition to more sustainable food systems.

I hope to see even more great initiatives from all of you on next year's #EUOrganic Day and Awards.

Don't panic, the future is organic,  
Eduardo



## POLITICAL HOTSPOT

September is the month of the first informal meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture in Prague, Czech Republic. The Czech Presidency of the EU Council started in July and will last until the end of the year. Time to have a look at their priorities in food and agriculture.

The [main priorities of the Czech Presidency](#) are (short-term) food security and the price shocks in food, energy and fertilizer markets, which are a direct impact of Russia's attacks and blockade of supply routes towards Europe but also the rest of the world, including Africa. In reaction to this, the EU has already implemented an action plan to build land- and river-based export routes out of Ukraine towards Europe. Already, grain exports over land are steadily increasing, including organic produce, like sunflower seeds. However, the situation remains fragile.

Despite those short-term measures, the long-term vision of the Czech presidency on addressing this food security crisis is unclear. References to the Farm to Fork strategy remain brief and the Czech Presidency criticizes the limitations associated with targets for pesticides and fertilizers. Doing so, it does not necessarily acknowledge the positive effects on soil protection and biodiversity, and therefore long-term food security that can be achieved through these targets.

Organic agriculture, nor agroecology were not on the agenda of the informal Agriculture Minister's meeting. Instead, in its vision of "sustainability", [the Czech presidency proposes to achieve the Farm to Fork Strategy's goals via genetic engineering](#). The organic sector was not invited to these conversations, while conventional sector associations were present.

Another key topic this year, also mentioned by the Czech Presidency in its agri-food priorities, is the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation (SUR), for which the European Commission published a proposal on 22 June. [Read our detailed article on the SUR](#). The war in Ukraine and the SUR are points that will come back in the next meeting of the EU Agriculture ministers on 17-18 October – chaired by the Czech Presidency. On these topics, and other agricultural topics, **Europe's Ministers of Agriculture will need to prove that they can think in the long-term and not only in quick fixes** in a world that moves from crisis to crisis.



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# 1 NEWS

## 1.1 Policy

### Plant Healthcare

#### Updates on pesticides and recycled nutrients: Regulation (SUR), statistics and data

##### **Sustainable Use of Pesticide Regulation (SUR): Proposal welcome but flawed indicators**

IFOAM Organics Europe welcomed the Commission's proposal on the revision of the Sustainable Use of pesticides Regulation (SUR). It could be a **key instrument to reduce the impact of pesticides on human health and the environment**, fulfilling the ambition of the Farm to Fork strategy, and especially to reach its targets on pesticide reduction. However, **we regret that the Commission proposed to use the Harmonized Risk Indicators** as they are not able to properly assess the use and risk of the plant protection product used ([Read our press release for more information](#)). We also requested a better definition of chemical plant protection products to differentiate the synthetic products from the natural substances.

Members can access our feedback and suggestions for amendments of the proposal [on our member extranet](#).

##### **What comes up on the SUR and pesticides?**

The next step in the approval of this proposed regulation (the so-called [co-decision procedure](#)) is that the European Parliament examines the Commission's proposal. This is why we started advocating the European Parliament. Austrian Green Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Sarah Wiener is expected to deliver the Parliament's Environment Committee's report this autumn.

Members can have access to our suggestions of amendments on [our member extranet](#).

In October, environmental NGOs including Corporate Europe Observatory and Pesticide Action Network Europe are organising the [Pesticide Action Month](#) celebrating the 60th anniversary of Rachel Carson's iconic 'A silent spring'. [Check out the full programme](#).

##### **The Integrated Nutrients Management Action Plan (INMAP)**

In August, we submitted feedback to the European Commission's public consultation on INMAP which aims at suggesting ideas for the Action Plan that the Commission (DG Environment) will publish this autumn.

With the support of our new Task Force on Recycled Fertilizers, **we suggested to put organic farming at the heart of the INMAP** to achieve the Farm to Fork Strategy's target of 25% organic farmland by 2030. We also suggested to ensure a separate collection of waste and provide a certified production process as possible options to facilitate the adoption of recycled fertilisers in the organic sector. We also believe more natural fertilizers should be authorised. Our entire feedback is available to our members on [our member extranet](#).

##### **Our action on the new Regulation on agricultural input and output statistics (SAIO)**

In June, the Council and the Parliament [reached an agreement](#) on the new Regulation on Statistics on Agricultural Inputs and Outputs (SAIO), which could lead to much improved pesticide use data.

On 11 July, IFOAM Organics Europe and 57 other NGOs signed an [open letter calling on Member States and the Commission to adopt, without delay and by the end of 2022, the Implementing Regulation harmonizing the content and format of the pesticide use records](#). We addressed this letter to the Members of Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (PAFF Committee).

#### **Organic movement's feedback on the Farm Sustainability Data Framework (FSDN)**

We also provided feedback to the European Commission's [public consultation](#) commenting on [its proposal on the new Farm Sustainability Data Framework](#) (replacing the Farm Accountability Data Framework or FADN).

We suggested that **economic data collected at farm-level needs to be completed with data on the environmental and social components of farms**, whether for policy monitoring and evaluation or for research. Such holistic approach will help understand the economic, social and environmental impacts of agricultural practices, and to identify which of these practices should be supported to achieve the targets set by the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies.

Our feedback is available for our members on [our extranet](#).

#### **Need more info?**

Please contact [amelie.steu@organicseurope.bio](mailto:amelie.steu@organicseurope.bio) for questions on pesticides and fertilizers.

IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on [the member extranet](#) and background materials in the [arguments database on the member extranet](#) (main messages, arguments/FAQs, visuals & videos). Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for access rights (issues). Do note that we prioritise our members' requests. For information about what you can gain from being a member, read our membership page and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).



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## GMOs

### **Worrying step to deregulating GMOs: EU Agriculture Commissioner says “no controversy about direction” among EU Agricultural Ministers**

The recent Informal meeting of the EU Ministers of Agriculture set a worrying tone for the political agenda regarding Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Under the pretext of climate change adaptation, increasing yield and international economic competitiveness, many ministers encourage the relaxation of rules on new genomic techniques.

#### **Agriculture Ministers, EU institutions and conventional agriculture lobby groups meet...**

From 15-16 September, national Ministers of Agriculture and the Special Committee on Agriculture [held an Informal Meeting in Prague led by the Czech Presidency](#) of the EU Council. The event was focused on food security and the role of EU agriculture and food in sustainable global food production. The event was also attended by the Commissioner for Agriculture, the General Secretariat of the Council, the Chairman of the European Parliament’s Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and other organisations.

#### **... and think less intensive agriculture needs new technologies (read: GMOs)**

Already both the preparatory discussion paper and the [press release](#) leading up to the informal meeting were concerning. These argued that the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies’ targets, including reduced use of pesticides and fertilizers, as well as more nature land area are all leading to a “de-intensification”. New technologies and practices including new genomic techniques (NGTs) should remedy that.

Agribusiness lobbying groups were also present and, unsurprisingly, pushed for the inclusion of GMOs in the long-term vision of ‘sustainable’ European farming. Copa President Christiane Lambert spoke at the Informal Meeting [and said](#): “We can link productivity with sustainability in producing more with lower environmental impact. We welcome Minister Zdeněk Nekula’s initiative in NGTs, low risk substances & precision farming.”

#### **Agriculture needs a systemic change, not quick fixes!**

The embedding of NGTs in a narrative of ‘sustainability’ is an often-used strategy of interest groups that would like to see NGTs excluded from EU GMO Regulation. However, these speculative arguments for the ‘sustainability’ claims. Moreover, [sustainability in agriculture is much broader](#) than the modification of just one or multiple genetic traits. IFOAM Organics Europe has [repeatedly stressed](#) the importance of **a systemic approach to sustainability that considers the whole farm organism with a specific focus on the role of healthy soil.**

#### **But, quick fixes make big promises to deliver (financially)**

Nonetheless, the Agricultural Ministers pushed for easing the current legislative framework on GMOs. The informal meeting’s attendees repeatedly referred to [the economic opportunities, innovation and economic competitiveness](#) that NGTs would bring to the EU agricultural market. Support came from various countries, beyond the vocally pro-GMO Czech presidency, including Sweden, Lithuania, Netherlands, Malta, Ireland, Italy, Hungary, Romania and Belgium. However, some ministers also voiced some concerns. Notably, German agriculture minister Cem Özdemir doubted the long-term sustainability of GMOs, while the Cypriot minister Costas Kadis highlighted other possible sustainable approaches, like carbon farming.



The legislative proposal from the European Commission is expected in the second quarter of 2023. EU Agriculture Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski [said that](#) “there is no controversy about the direction”.

### **New GMOs are also GMOs and should fall under the existing GMO legislation**

While the [Commission claims](#) to base the proposal on scientific evidence and “solid analysis and with respect to public health, environment and in the economic interest of our farmers”, environmental NGOs and IFOAM Organics Europe are sceptical and appeal to the precautionary principle and continued regulation of GMOs. The current thorough risk assessment, labelling, and traceability requirements are key pillars to ensure food safety, consumer choice, and the livelihoods of organic and non-NGT farmers. In light of an upcoming Commission proposal on how to regulate NGTs, these high standards should be upheld, and the EU should not give way to deregulation.

For more information on new GMOs and IFOAM Organics Europe’s work on this issue, please contact [helene.schmutzler@organicseurope.bio](mailto:helene.schmutzler@organicseurope.bio), Policy Assistant for GMOs and Organic Textiles.

IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on [the member extranet](#) and background materials in the [arguments database on the member extranet](#) (main messages, arguments/FAQs, visuals & videos). Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for access rights (issues).

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## Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

### CAP updates: Nine Strategic Plans approved, new derogations, feedback performance framework and future CAP network

#### Approval of CAP 2023-2027 Strategic Plans: Where are we now?

Nine CAP national Strategic Plans out of 27 have been approved by the European Commission: Portugal, Spain, France, Poland, Flanders, Ireland, Denmark, Austria, and Luxembourg.

In June, [ARC2020](#) published [an article](#) referring to leaked letters from the Commission's Directorate-Generals for Environment (DG ENV) and Climate Action (DG CLIMA) in which the Commission's DGs highlight the CAP Strategic Plans' low ambition in terms of climate and environmental measures. This is in line with [our assessment](#) (March 2022) highlighting the lack of support for organic farming in most CAP Strategic Plans.

#### 2023 derogations for crop rotation and maintenance of non-productive areas

On Friday 22 July, the European Commission published [a draft implementing regulation to propose derogations for 2023](#) due to the extraordinary circumstances linked to the Ukraine war— as stated in Article 148 of the CAP 2023-2027 Strategic Plans Regulation. On 25 July, 26 Member States out of 27 [approved](#) these derogations.

They concern the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (**GAEC**) 7 on crop rotation and the first requirement of GAEC 8 on the maintenance of non-productive areas.

For **GAEC 8**, farmers will be forbidden to grow maize and soybean to focus on food production instead of feed production and will have to apply three other requirements. The requirements are: Retention of landscape features; Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season; as an option, measures for avoiding invasive plant species.

The DG for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) estimates show that it could put back 1.5 million hectares in production compared to today. Member States will have the possibility to include (or not include) these derogations directly in their CAP Strategic Plans.

#### Our feedback to two public consultations

On 30 June, we submitted [feedback](#) to the European Commission's [public consultation on CAP 2023-2027 performance framework and data for monitoring and evaluation](#). We called for a thorough assessment of the evolution of the organic farming and farmland in each Member States to evaluate whether Member States are contributing to Green Deal objectives and the targets set under the Farm to Fork Strategy, in particular the 25% target of organic farmland by 2030. We also called on the Commission to highlight the benefits of organic farming on the environment and biodiversity compared to other types of farming. The Commission adopted [the Implementing Regulation](#) on 6 September.

We also submitted another [feedback](#) to the European Commission's [public consultation on the future CAP network](#). Amongst many things, we stressed that, to reach the Farm to Fork target of 25% of organic farmland in Europe by 2030, knowledge exchange and advisory services on organic farming as well as building organic agricultural knowledge and innovation systems (AKIS) are key. We asked to

have a seat in the Advisory Board/AGRI Subgroup on Innovation again – assuming it continues to exist. We will participate to the launch of the CAP Network on 6 October in Brussels.

Involving farmers in organic supply chains: do you want to share your ideas?

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we will participate actively to the [European Network for Rural Development \(ENRD\)'s thematic group](#) which aims at finding solutions to strengthen the positions of farmers in organic food supply chains. If you have any projects and solutions related to this topic, please contact [amelie.steu@organicseurope.bio](mailto:amelie.steu@organicseurope.bio).

For questions on the CAP, please contact [amelie.steu@organicseurope.bio](mailto:amelie.steu@organicseurope.bio).

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Do note that we prioritise our members' requests. For information about what you can gain from being a member, read our membership page and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).



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## Organic Regulations



## Seeds

### European Parliamentarians, NGOs and organic sector discuss seed marketing rules

Before the European Parliament's summer break, the political process reviewing seed marketing rules kickstarted with an event on 22 June. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) Martin Häusling (Greens/EFA), Eric Andrieu (S&D), Norbert Lins (EPP), Dacian Ciolos (RENEW) and Anja Hazekamp (The Left) hosted the event.

Arche Noah, Biodynamic Federation Demeter, Geneva Academy and IFOAM Organics Europe organized the event which served as a platform for seed conservationists, peasant seed systems and the organic movement to share with Members of the Parliament what the seed marketing reform needs to be a success this time.

### Europe's seed systems are varied & need a segmented approach

One of these elements of success is a legal framework adequately considering the broad variety of seed systems in Europe and the resulting need for a segmented approach. Long-term members of the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development Martin Häusling and Norbert Lins, who have seen a similar process for new rules fail in 2013, reminded the audience and the Commission that this time, a different approach is needed to get to a proposal that will be backed by the majority of the European Parliament. In reaction, the EU Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) presented the progress made and assured the audience that the interests of diversity seed systems as well as the organic sector were included from the start this time.

### Ease seed savers' work & remove barriers marketing seeds to non-professionals

The event, moderated by long-term former Agriculture advisor for the Greens, Hans Lorenzen, covered:

- The scope of the legislation (which activities should be considered as seed marketing in the sense of the law?);
- Pathways for marketing varieties for organic and low-input agriculture; and
- Challenges and opportunities identified by different stakeholders.

The hosting organizations pointed out that the reform should facilitate and stimulate the work of seed savers and remove barriers when marketing seeds to non-professionals.

### Link the EU Organic Regulation and Seed Marketing Rules & create registration criteria for organic varieties

For the organic movement, it is crucial that progress made in the context of the Organic Regulation is integrated in the Seed Marketing Rules and that there are optional adapted registration criteria for Organic Varieties.

As an addition to the classic (organic) variety categories, the proposal of a "diversity variety" category was brought up in several presentations, which would host those plant reproductive material that fall outside of the scope of the classical seed and variety system, such as conservation varieties, varieties with no intrinsic commercial value and heterogeneous populations.

### What lies ahead



We expect a proposal for new seed marketing rules to be published late 2022. The event in the European Parliament can be seen as a first step in the political discussions that will unfold later this year and in 2023.

IFOAM Organics Europe represents the organic movement in this political process to make sure that organic has access to a wide range of varieties and cultivars that are well-adapted and suitable for organic and low-input agricultural systems.

For more information on seeds and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please contact [martin.sommer@organicseurope.bio](mailto:martin.sommer@organicseurope.bio). IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on the [member extranet](#) and background materials in the [arguments database on the member extranet](#) (main messages, arguments/FAQs, visuals & videos). Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for access rights (issues).

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## Biodiversity, soil and water

### European Parliament adopts position on deforestation-free products

The European Parliament has voted on its position on the [Commission proposal for a regulation on deforestation-free products](#). On 13 September, the [position](#) was adopted by the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). In a next step, the Parliament will start negotiations with the Council to reach a compromise on the regulation. The new law would oblige companies to verify under so called “due-diligence”, that goods sold in the EU have not been produced on deforested or degraded land anywhere in the world. Furthermore, the Parliament calls to include human rights provision and respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples as a further requirement.

The position of the Parliament suggests enlarging the scope of the regulation. The initial proposal of the Commission covers cattle, cocoa, coffee, palm-oil, soya and wood, including products that contain, have been fed with or have been made using these commodities (such as leather, chocolate and furniture). The Parliament suggests expanding it to pigmeat, sheep, goats, poultry, maize, rubber, charcoal and printed paper products. For more information on IFOAM Organics Europe’s work on this issue, please contact [hanna.winkler@organicseurope.bio](mailto:hanna.winkler@organicseurope.bio).



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### Public consultation on Soil Health Law is open

The European Commission has opened a [public consultation on the Soil Health Law](#) to which everyone can submit feedback until 24 October. As announced in the EU Soil Strategy, the European Commission will prepare a legislative proposal on soil health by 2023.

Soil health is a cornerstone of organic farming. Transitioning to organic agriculture can contribute to restoring and protecting agricultural soils by strengthening soil carbon sinks, increasing biodiversity, and avoiding undesired effects by prohibiting the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers.

IFOAM Organics Europe welcomes the initiative to develop a legal framework for soil protection and restoration and will also prepare a reply to the consultation.

You can submit your feedback [on EU Have Your Say](#) until 24 October.

For more information on soil and IFOAM Organics Europe’s work on this issue, please contact [hanna.winkler@organicseurope.bio](mailto:hanna.winkler@organicseurope.bio). IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information [on the member extranet](#) and background materials in the [arguments database on the member extranet](#) (main messages, arguments/FAQs, visuals & videos). Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for access rights (issues). For information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).



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## Food policy

### Early feedback 2023 promotion policies reveal potential decrease in funding for organic products

The Commission's decision to ringfence budget for organic products within the promotion policies was welcomed by the organic sector as an important step in the right direction towards further promoting the development of the demand of organic. In the 2022 promotion policies work programme, organic and sustainable agrifood played a major role.

First information on the 2023 programme and the amounts allocated are already coming through. While this is not confirmed, it seems that the Commission might be **shifting away budget from organic multi-programmes** (programmes submitted by more than one Member State) **to so-called sustainable multi-programmes, which could lead to rewarding practices, and not systemic approaches**. It is not entirely clear at the moment what exactly sustainable multi-programmes would be based on. The 2023 promotion policy annual work programme should be published at the end of this year and will provide further clarifications.

Of course, IFOAM Organics Europe will monitor the official promotion policies process and will let our members know about these policies and their evolution. For more information on promotion policies and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please contact [laura.sauques@organicseurope.bio](mailto:laura.sauques@organicseurope.bio).



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### New position paper on nutrition labelling

IFOAM Organics Europe published its new position paper on "Nutrition labelling & Nutri-Score". This publication comes at a time of political change for labelling as the European Commission is expected to propose harmonised mandatory front-of-pack (FOP) nutrition label by the end of 2022. It will do so to empower consumers "to make informed, healthy and sustainable food choices".

#### **A label is not the silver bullet to the rise of non-communicable diseases**

While we welcome the initiative of the European Commission to tackle non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like heart diseases, diabetes or obesity, a FOP label alone will not provide a solution to these systemic challenges. Wider changes in the food environment are needed, like raising awareness about nutrition, the different methods of food production, the degree of processing, prohibiting the advertising of unhealthy products, etc.

#### **The Nutri-Score provides no indication on the naturalness of products**

The Nutri-Score, widely used throughout Europe, fails to adequately assess the naturalness of a food product. Because of this, an ultra-processed fizzy beverage with artificial sweeteners can score a B in the Nutri-Score and a barely processed apple juice a D.

### What about ultra-processed foods (UPF)?

The NOVA classification should be considered in FOP labelling as it informs consumers of the level of processing of food products, which is information that the Nutri-Score does not provide. This information is crucial as UPFs are overly consumed in Europe and linked to developing NCDs.

This new position paper reaffirms the commitment of IFOAM Organics Europe to support a real and broad transformation of the food environment which goes beyond the implementation of a mandatory harmonised FOP label. As IFOAM Organics Europe, we believe that empowering consumers to make informed, healthy and sustainable food choices, requires raising awareness about nutrition but also different methods of production and the degree of processing of food.

Read [the position paper](#) and learn more about IFOAM Organics Europe's work on food policy [on our website](#).

For more information on nutritional labelling and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please contact [laura.sauques@organicseurope.bio](mailto:laura.sauques@organicseurope.bio). IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on [the member extranet](#). Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for access rights (issues).

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### New position paper on sustainability labelling & the Planet-score

IFOAM Organics Europe published its [new position paper on "Sustainability labelling & the Planet-score"](#).

#### Political context

This position paper comes at a time of political change for sustainability labelling. The European Commission is expected to reveal the proposal for a "**Regulation on Substantiating Green Claims based on the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF)**" under the lead of the Commission's Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV), on 30 November.

A second initiative, by the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE), is the **sustainable food systems law**. Expected by the end of 2023, this framework should include principles underpinning a sustainability label.

The Regulation on Substantiating Green Claims may pre-empt political discussions that ought to be had in the context of the sustainable food systems law. Indeed, DG SANTE is likely to, at least, be inspired by the work carried out by DG ENV on PEF, for the sustainability label initiative.

#### Characteristics a sustainability label ought to have



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While we welcome the initiative of the European Commission of fighting greenwashing and providing more information to consumers, the methodology it uses should have some fundamental characteristics. More specifically, it should:

- Support the transition towards more sustainable food systems and a multi-dimensional agroecological approach;
- Be based on science;
- Support the principles of a circular economy;
- Go beyond the environment; and
- Should not be presented as an aggregated score but rather as having different components.

Generally, labels need to be designed within a holistic food policy approach. They should not hinder initiatives or labels that are recognized by consumers and independent institutions and already guarantee a high level of sustainability, such as the organic label.

### **The PEF: Unfit to assess agri-food products**

The Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) is a methodology aimed at evaluating the environmental impact of a certain product, food, and non-food, based on a life cycle analysis (LCA). While it is still relevant for manufactured industrial products, **the PEF methodology is not adequate to assess the environmental performance of agri-food products.**

The PEF was not meant to reflect the reality of complex agri-food systems in a holistic way. When applied to food, PEF gives misleading results, since the more extensive the agricultural practice is, the worse it scores, evaluating products as an indicator of yields. For instance, eggs from hens in cages score better than free range eggs, which in turn score better than organic eggs.

### **An LCA+ approach: the Planet-Score**

The institute of organic agriculture (ITAB) and other actors in France have joined forces to put together a methodology and label that would reflect the true environmental impact of food products: [the Planet-Score](#).

The Planet-Score is based on the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), with two fundamental modifications:

1. An updated method when it comes to certain indicators,
2. A series of additional indicators to reflect those externalities that are not sufficiently taken into account in the LCA methodology (pesticides, climate, biodiversity and animal welfare) through a bonus / malus system.

The Planet-Score is receiving support from consumers: a study carried out on a representative sample of the French population composed of 1,000 consumers showed that **48% of consumers preferred an approach such as the Planet-Score to labels that only show a final score**. It also received wide support from companies (organic and beyond) as **it is being tested by more than 166 including supermarkets** like Carrefour, Auchan and some brands of Danone, and others.

Read the [position paper](#) and learn more about IFOAM Organics Europe's work on food policy [on our website](#).

For more information on sustainability labelling and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please contact [laura.sauques@organicseurope.bio](mailto:laura.sauques@organicseurope.bio). IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more



information on the member extranet. Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for access rights (issues). For information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).



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## Call for healthy school meals – Sign the petition

The Buy Better Food Campaign has initiated [an EU-wide petition for ‘A healthy meal for every child in every EU School’](#). It invites cities and citizens to urge policymakers to put sustainable school meals on the menu and help realise the EU Farm to Fork strategy.

Currently, not all EU schools offer lunch. Better school food would help combat poverty, improve children’s school performance and health. In short, it would help deliver the [European Child Guarantee](#), that wants to ensure that every EU child at risk of poverty has access to their most basic rights.

Peter Defranceschi from ICLEI (local governments for sustainability), one of the Buy Better Food Coalition members, stated “The European Commission told us on several occasions that the time for inspiring them with concrete ideas was now. The #SmallPlateBigImpact Petition is about school food healthy for people and planet and about social justice. Combined with food education on healthy food habits and local food culture, your support can make change happen”. As the academic year begins for many EU schools, [support the ‘A healthy school meal for every child in every EU school’ petition](#). [The petition is also translated](#) in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Polish, Czech, and Greek. For more information about the Buy Better Food campaign, visit [ICLEI’s website](#).



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## Textiles

### New position paper on organic textiles in a context of strong political momentum

IFOAM Organics Europe published its revised position paper [Organic textiles – Protecting the credibility of the organic label](#).

The publication of this paper comes at a time of significant political momentum. The European Commission is implementing the Circular Economy Action Plan and published the [EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles](#) in March 2022. While the latter does not foresee specific actions on the issue of organic textiles, it does foresee reopening the [2011 Regulation on textile fibre names and related labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products](#).



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This could open the door to the protection of organic textiles, more respectful of the environment and workers, at EU level.

### **Textiles, a growing market opportunity**

The paper highlights some more recent data related to textile products and why they should be regulated at the EU level. Specifically, it is important to note the rapid expansion of this market, whose size crossed [USD 37bn in 2018](#). 249,153 tonnes of organic cotton were produced in 2020, a 3.9% growth compared to 2019. The sector expects the production to [grow by 48% in 2021](#).

### **Growing markets, opportunities for greenwashing?**

The paper also refers to more recent data on greenwashing and consumer protection. Greenwashing is a documented phenomenon in this sector. The European Commission [estimates](#) that 42% of the analysed claims in sectors including garment and textile are “exaggerated, false or deceptive”, when other give a [higher figure](#), at around 60%.

At the same time, [Eurobarometers](#) show consumer sensibility over the issue: on textiles, 86% are in favour of an environmental impact and labour conditions labelling, 82% agree that not enough information is available on environmental impacts, and 87% think there should be stricter rules.

### **Regulation, needed to protect organic textiles**

The above-mentioned data and the environmental and social consequences of a status quo, warrant for regulating organic textiles at the EU level. We recall in this paper that farm production of cotton fibre accounts for 16.1% of the world’s insecticides and 5.7% of total pesticides, which results in poisoning of people and the environment. 77 million agricultural workers suffer poisoning from pesticides each year and 83% of manufactured nitrogen fertilisers used on crops end up in the environment.

This new position paper [reaffirms](#) the necessary protection of the term “organic” for textiles at EU level. As IFOAM Organics Europe, we believe that for a textile product to be labelled “organic”, the textile fibre should originate from raw material produced in organic farms according to globally recognised organic farming standards and should also be processed according to a recognised organic textile processing standard that prohibits hazardous and residual inputs according to clear criteria.

We make the distinction between “textiles containing organic fibres” (with minimum 50% organic fibres, with only the traceability of the organic fibres being required and no criteria at the processing stage), and “organic textiles”, produced with minimum 70% organic fibres and processed according to an adequate processing standard.

[Read the position paper](#) and learn more about IFOAM Organics Europe’s work on organic textiles [on our website](#).



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## 1.2 Research and innovation

### Knowledge for organic

#### Transformation scenarios for boosting organic farming & organic – OrganicTargets4EU project starts

The Horizon Europe project OrganicTargets4EU officially started on 1 September 2022. Coordinated by IFOAM Organics Europe, the project aims to support the achievement of the organic Farm-to-Fork targets of 25% organic farmland in the EU by 2030 and a significant increase in organic aquaculture. To do so, OrganicTargets4EU will analyse the key drivers and lock-ins affecting the development of the organic sector and create a range of possible scenarios for achieving the targets.

The project will analyse the best areas to increase organic farming and the socio-economic impacts of these increases in primary production, value chains and markets. It will also provide evidence on the driving mechanisms of organic food demand. OrganicTargets4EU will support advisory services, identify knowledge gaps, and stimulate the exchange of scientific and practice-oriented knowledge. It will expand and promote the [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#) as the main interactive place for organic advisory services. Finally, it seeks to better coordinate R&I investments in the organic sector through the network of CORE Organic.

The results of the project will be discussed in a multi-actor policy dialogue and recommendations will be made for the CAP strategic plans and EU/national organic action plans in the period from 2025-2027 and from 2028 onwards.

OrganicTargets4EU covers a full range of European geographical and organic development contexts, from North-West to Central-East and South. It focuses on 7 EU countries for organic agriculture and 2 EU countries. Each of these focus countries is represented by strong project partners that have close connections with production and value chain actors.

The project website will be launched by December 2022. For further information, contact [bram.moeskops@organicseurope.bio](mailto:bram.moeskops@organicseurope.bio) or [ambra.desimone@organicseurope.bio](mailto:ambra.desimone@organicseurope.bio).



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## Presence of pesticides in the environment – Scientific article out now

After months of work, IFOAM Organics Europe is happy to announce the article [Presence of pesticides in the environment, transition into organic food, and implications for quality assurance along the European organic food chain – A review](#) has been published in the Journal of Environmental Pollution.

The main highlights of the article are:

- Review of pesticide contamination of all major environmental compartments and transition into food;
- Organic produce is at risk of environmental, technically unavoidable pesticide contamination;
- Large uncertainties regarding transition of contaminants into non-target foods.

The article is freely available under a Creative Commons license, so please share it and stay tuned for more developments!

## Background

This article is one of the deliverables of [Developing Organic: Pesticide use and contamination](#), a project we started on pesticide residues in organic products. This project started at the end of 2020, with the contribution of [a good number of sponsors](#). Our scientific partner is FiBL, the world's leading research institute in the field of organic farming.

The project consists of four pillars. The first two are scientific and based on research and collection of data, the 3rd and 4th pillars relate to advocacy activities towards the EU institutions:

1. Understanding the presence of pesticide residues in the environment (soil, air, water) and in the agri-food supply chain.
2. Understanding how Competent Authorities, Control Bodies and organic operators manage residues today.
3. Discussion with all the stakeholders and production of a proposal to the EU Institutions on how to manage residues in organic products;
4. Advocacy work on the horizontal legislation, in a way that it properly considers organic production.
- 5.

For more information about [Developing Organic: Pesticide use and contamination](#), please contact [Berenice.cau@organicseurope.bio](mailto:Berenice.cau@organicseurope.bio).



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## Recognising the benefits of organic farming

Organic farming has countless benefits for the natural environment and society, but they are often overlooked. Maria Lading and Bram Moeskops from IFOAM Organics Europe wrote [an article](#) for Organic Farm Knowledge outlining some of the benefits of organic farming, exploring the role of science, consumers and research and innovation. Read the full article on [organic-farmknowledge.org](http://organic-farmknowledge.org): [Recognising the benefits of organic farming – Organic Farm Knowledge](#).



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## FarmDemo Training Kit helps you organise successful farm demonstration – Available in all EU languages

Do you want to organize a successful farm demonstration? [FarmDemo's Training Kit](#) collects tools, guidelines, and videos that will help organizing a successful farm demonstration. The toolkit will inspire both farmers and other organizers of farm demonstration events to uplift their events, whether on-farm or online. And it is available in all EU languages!

In 6 easy steps, the [Training Kit](#) gives you an overview of the most important elements to considered when you are preparing, delivering, and evaluating demonstrations on the farm. It will increase awareness of the value of farmer-to-farmer exchanges during farm demonstrations.

[Check out the FarmDemo Training Kit in all EU languages.](#)

The FarmDemo Training Kit is the result of a unique collaboration between three European Horizon 2020 projects: NEFERTITI, AgriDemo-F2F and PLAID.

The [NEFERTITI project](#) is an EU-wide connected network of demonstration and pilot farms to enhance knowledge exchange and innovation uptake. It established 10 interactive thematic networks, connected 45 regional clusters of demo-farmers and related actors in 17 countries. IFOAM Organics Europe is a partner in the project. Make sure to follow [@NEFERTITI EU](#) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).



NEFERTITI has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 772705. 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.

## Supporting knowledge exchange between AKIS-actors: EU-FarmBook project launched

This August, the EU-FarmBook project started. Its goal is to support knowledge exchange between all actors active in the national Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) of the European Union. The project will further develop and expand an easily accessible and user-friendly EU-wide digital knowledge platform.



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The EU-FarmBook project follows up on the EUREKNOS and EUREKA sister projects, that have co-created “the network to connect all Thematic Networks” (2019-2021). Examples of such thematic knowledge networks are OK-Net Arable and [OK-Net EcoFeed](#) which IFOAM Organics Europe coordinated.

Just like EUREKNOS and EUREKA, EU-FarmBook is based on the multi-actor approach, aiming to involve farmers, farm workers, agricultural educators, researchers, non-academic experts, public and independent private advisors, supply chain actors, and other actors in agriculture.

Within EU-FarmBook, IFOAM Organics Europe will make sure that the knowledge objects on the platform will suit the needs of organic actors. Furthermore, we will promote the use of the FarmBook platform and link it up to the already existing knowledge platform for the organic sector: [Organic Farm Knowledge](#). Additionally, IFOAM Organics Europe will be involved in the creation of Education and Training material, such as practice abstracts and communication materials such as webcasts, farm cafes and knowledge exchange seminars.

Ghent University coordinates the EU-FarmBook project which will run until the end of 2029, consisting of a consortium of 29 participating organizations.



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## 2 IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE DEVELOPMENTS

### **IFOAM Organics Europe members, do you wonder how we spend your membership fee?**

As part of a membership organisation, it is normal to pay a fee. As this can sometimes get a bit abstract, we have visualised this for you. Please have a look on [our member extranet](#) and learn what we have achieved with:

- Your membership fee
- Sponsorship & foundations’ donations
- The LIFE-grant

For more information on this, please contact [Joanna.wierzbicka@organicseurope.bio](mailto:Joanna.wierzbicka@organicseurope.bio). Contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio) for access rights (issues). For information about what you can gain from being a member, read our membership page and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).



## 20-years of IFOAM Organics Europe in Brussels – Re-live the celebration

On Wednesday 11 May 2022, more than 100 people representing the European organic supply chain, consisting of farmers, processors, retailers, certifiers, including researchers and more, gathered in Brussels to celebrate the 20 years anniversary of IFOAM Organics Europe.

The event started with Eduardo Cuoco, our Director, welcoming the guests and recollecting the growth of organic in Europe in the past years. “The organic movement’s presence in Brussels has grown alongside the number of organic producers and processors in Europe over the last twenty years, and organic farming is now recognised as the leading European project to make our food system more sustainable. The 25% organic target of the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies is a recognition of the benefits of organic agriculture for the environment, farmers, and consumers. Much remains to be done to make agriculture more resilient and in line with planetary boundaries, but the organic movement can be proud of what has been achieved so far for the recognition of its contribution to many European policy objectives. Consumers also trust organic, the fact that the market grew to €44.8 billion proves this. Our director concluded by inviting the evening’s moderator, Rose O’Donovan, Chief Editor of Agra Facts to the stage.

### High level debate with Frans Timmermans: We need to change our ways

Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission joined Rose O’Donovan on stage for a high-level exchange about the European Green Deal. During the panel, the Executive Vice-President addressed his vision saying that: “We need to change our ways to avoid catastrophies, recharge our economy with new energy, so to create better and sustainable jobs as well as creating an international environment based on good and positive relationships on peace rather than on conflict”. Timmermans urged for a long-term view on food security, adding that “There will be no food shortages in Europe”. There is a global food crisis which is not based on food scarcity but rather because “we cannot get enough food from where it’s produced to where it’s needed”.

As Frans Timmermans underlined, the Commission’s commitment of the EU Green Deal to organic comes from their belief in its benefits for the climate, environment, soil, biodiversity, animal welfare and socio-economic benefits. The Executive Vice-President concluded by encouraging the European organic movement to “Keep doing the good work they have been done in the past years”, contributing to solving climate and biodiversity crises.

Watch the video [here](#)

### Panel debate: More organic on the EU market

The second panel covered the topic of ‘More organic on the EU market’ with the motto ‘Empowering citizens and supply chain actors in the transition to sustainable food systems’. Nathalie Chaze, Director of food sustainability and international relations at the EU Commission’s Directorate General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE), affirmed that “We have a lot to learn from the organic movement” when it comes to collaboration. Jan Groen, founder and CEO of Green Organics, reflected on organic farming’s role, affirming that it requires “long-term planning” and as it is dependent on the activities of neighbouring farmers, there are “many variables and regulations that should be considered”.

Pierrick De Ronne, Biocoop’s President, highlighted the importance of a correct labelling system, saying “We started using the Planet Score as we found that consumers wanted to see if farmers used pesticides in the production”. On the same note, De Ronne further emphasized the crucial aspect of transparency for organic retailers in Europe and the need to act and tax harmful practices. For what concerns the 25% organic land target in Europe for 2030, Beate Huber, FiBL Europe’s President, said



that “we need to scale up” and both “push and pull the market and farmland growth”. For this, restaurants and food in public kitchens provide good opportunities.

Concluding, Aina Calafat Rogers, part-time organic farmer and IFOAM Organics Europe’s Deputy Council member, addressed the issue of greenwashing and the need for a legislation, saying that “We don’t call things by their name. Everything can be called sustainable while it’s not”. Watch the video [here](#)

### **Concluding session: The CAP’s role reaching 25% organic land**

Wolfgang Burtscher, Director-General of the EU Commission’s Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) and Jan Plagge, IFOAM Organics Europe’s President Took part to a concluding session about reaching the 25% organic target through a supply chain approach.

Burtscher reminded everyone that Member States’ CAP National Strategic Plans were assessed, and the Commission had sent observation letters. On the same note he added “We looked closely at matches between the target for organic land and the budget attributed to these”. Our Director reflected on the Commission’s 25% organic land target and its importance, adding that “Such target keeps the minds of Member States focused, especially because in many Member States there is no coherence between the CAP National Strategic Plan target and budget.” Watch the video [here](#)

### **Ending the evening with thank you’s where they are due**

Closing the formal part of the event, our Director called several IFOAM Organics Europe sponsors and members to the stage to receive an award for their long-term support and cooperation with the European organic movement. These awards also aimed to symbolically thank the whole European organic supply chain for their constant work for advancing organic knowledge and making Europe more organic.

Did you miss the event? Do not worry, you can experience the event by watching the video recordings on our [youtube channel](#), taking a look at our [Twitter-thread](#) covering all the panel sessions or our [Twitter moment](#), read our press- release, and check out our [website’s 20-year anniversary page](#) for news, updates and pictures.

We would like to remind you that [we are still celebrating our 20-year anniversary throughout 2022](#). If you would like to be a part of this celebration, feel free to send in your written and/or video testimonials. Contact [communication@organicseurope.bio](mailto:communication@organicseurope.bio) Take a look at our Facebook [album](#) for more pictures of the event



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## Help us show that organic is a front-runner in transforming food & farming

To make our [shared Vision for organic in 2030](#) a reality, we collect European initiatives that are [transforming EU food and farming](#) and could inspire others.

We are looking for:

- recent initiatives, not older than 5 years;
- already ongoing;
- implemented in Europe;
- aiming at either: bringing organic on every table, improving organics further, or making the value chains more transparent and fairer.

**Do you have an initiative or a project fitting these criteria?** Submit it by [filling out this form](#). We will showcase the selected initiatives on the website, our social media and in our newsletter ([subscribe](#) to it to stay tuned).

**Do you need inspiration?** Have a look at some of the initiatives already working towards these goals like [organic demonstration farms](#), [cooperative farms](#), [organic farmer networks](#), ...

**Do you want to help spread the word?** Feel free to post about this on social media by copy-pasting [this message](#).



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## Welcoming our new colleagues

### Helene Schmutzler

After her undergraduate studies in International Relations and Organizations, Helene Schmutzler (she/her) proceeded with a M.Sc. in Sustainable Development, where she acquired both ecological and social insights into complex problems.

[Read](#)

### Ilsa Phillips

Ilsa Phillips joined IFOAM Organics Europe as a Research and Innovation Coordinator this September. She obtained both her bachelor's and master's degree from Wageningen University,



specializing in Sustainable Land Management.

[Read](#)

## Laura Sauques

Following her ESC at IFOAM Organics Europe, Laura Sauques joined IFOAM Organics Europe as a Policy Assistant on Sustainable Food Systems. After a bachelor's in law, she obtained a master's in International Trade Relations.

[Read](#)

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## Elena Fazio

Elena has a background in international relations and foreign languages. In the past, she worked in the both the private and public sector, with a focus on communications and public policy. Elena was also part of different associations. She is very passionate about the environment and how it is communicated to the public.

[Read](#)

## Marie Filippovits

Marie describes herself as a 22 year old Austrian with a big passion for climate related politics. She studied Sociology in her Bachelor and has been active with many different political youth groups. Her interest for the field of agriculture has grown in the last years, frequently discussing with friends on the importance of radical change in the global agricultural system to tackle the climate crisis.

[Read](#)

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Kalle Köster



Kalle has a genuine interest in food and its associated cultural aspects. With roots in environmental psychology, he decided to dedicate his time and energy to issues surrounding food systems. This has led him to study Agroecology at the Swedish University of Agricultural Science. Simultaneously he has led and contributed to a multitude of projects concerning the cultivation and consumption of grain legumes in the Swedish context.

[Read](#)

## Hannah Gläser

With background in environmental sciences and sustainability studies, Hannah will join the Projects & Partnerships Unit as a short-term trainee. Her interests lie in the functioning of alternative food networks, public perception on agriculture and the sociology of food. One day she would like to start an organic farm. At IFOAM Organics Europe she is looking forward to getting to know the different partners that support the organisation and learn more about agricultural policy.

[Read](#)

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## Saying goodbye to our colleagues

### Antoine Pauti

IFOAM Organics Europe policy unit says goodbye to Antoine, who joined the team as Policy Assistant for agriculture, environment, and food. He mainly worked on organic textiles and sustainable public procurement. On organic textiles, his work contributed to IFOAM Organics Europe's revised position on the matter, asking for the same legal protection for organic textiles that organic foods already enjoy.



[Read](#)

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### Arianna Bellemo

Arianna joined IFOAM Organic Europe in September 2021 as ESC volunteer. Until June 2022, has been a precious help for the communications team. Hard working, creative and calm, Arianna was always ready to support her colleagues through stressful situations.

[Read](#)

### Rico Heller

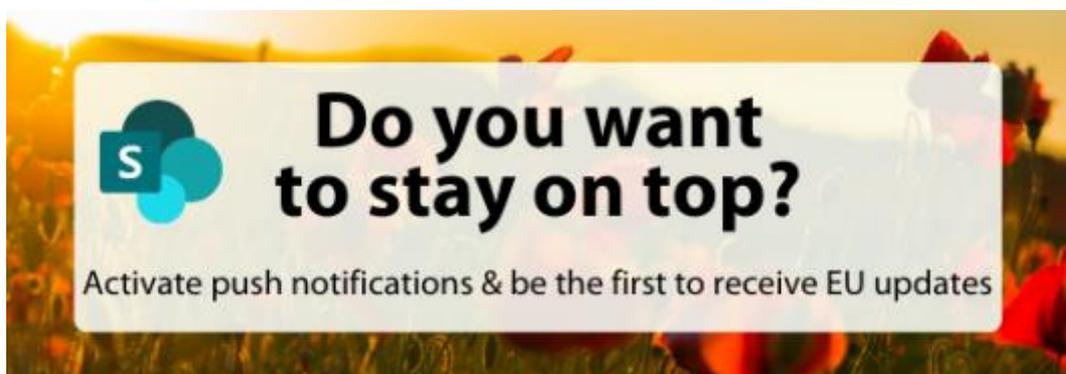
IFOAM Organics Europe's projects and partnerships (P&P) team says goodbye to Rico, a dedicated team member. Rico joined as an ESC volunteer in September 2021 for 11 months. He was a great addition to the team, bringing new ideas and support on many occasions.

[Read](#)

### Laura van Heeswijk

IFOAM Organics Europe's membership and events team is saying goodbye to Laura, who became a wonderful team member in one year of volunteering. Laura's creativity and organisational skills contributed to numerous events, among other Organics Europe Youth Event and the European Organic Congress.

[Read](#)



Did you know that, as IFOAM Organics Europe member, you can receive push notifications when we upload member-only news on the extranet? Follow these simple steps:

- Download the SharePoint app to your mobile device (& allow notifications)
- Visit our [member extranet](#) on the same device
- Open the menu in the top right corner & click on 'Follow'

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member and you do not have access to the member extranet yet? Or do the steps above not work? Please check [our FAQ](#) or contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

## 3 EVENTS

### 3.1 Preview of events

#### **Organic Innovation Days 2022: 11-12 October, Flanders and Brussels, Belgium**

This year's edition of the Organic Innovation Days, the only EU event on organic and agroecological research and innovation, will take place as a physical event on 11-12 October, providing a unique opportunity to meet and network with organic stakeholders and EU decision-makers.

#### **Programme highlights**

11 October 2022 at [Inagro](#), Flemish agri- and horticultural research, knowledge and advisory centre (Bus will be organised from Brussels):

Launch of TP Organics' study on living labs and lighthouse farms in the organic sector

Presentations of exemplary cases from different parts of Europe

Networking lunch

Field visit of the Inagro trial farm, which celebrates its 20-year anniversary this year

Innovation workshop "Establishing a network of organic living labs and lighthouses"

12 October 2022 at [BluePoint](#) Brussels:

Keynote speeches on the role of living labs in the conversion to organic agriculture

**High-level policy debate** with the European Commission and experts from the organic sector on the new Horizon Europe instruments: EU Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe' and the European R&I Partnership on agroecology living labs and research infrastructures

Networking lunch

Stakeholder Forum for TP Organics Members

Download the [draft agenda](#) and grab this opportunity to get the latest insights into organic research and innovation at European level. [Register now](#) and stay tuned – find all updates on [the TP Organics website](#)!

To attend the organic social dinner on Day 1, 11 October (at own expense), registration is mandatory.

The **Stakeholder Forum** as a space where all TP Organics Members come together once per year will provide room for discussion and exchange. **If you are a member of TP Organics, please fill in the additional registration form by 13 September.** It allows you to nominate a new TP Organics Steering Committee Member. The elections and presentations of the new Steering Committee Members will take place during the Stakeholder Forum. TP Organics is the European Technology Platform for Organic Food and Farming. IFOAM Organics Europe is a founding member and hosts its secretariat. Visit [www.tporganics.eu](http://www.tporganics.eu) for more information and follow its [Twitter](#) @TPorganics.





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## **SAVE THE DATE – IFOAM Organics Europe meets business: 30 November, Brussels, Belgium**

On 30th November, IFOAM Organics Europe will organise the 5th edition of IFOAM Organics Europe Meets Business. During this event IFOAM Organics Europe's members, their members and companies involved or interested in organic will gather in person and discuss current hot topics.

Topics that we will cover are the:

- Organic regulation,
- Organic market,
- Differences and similarities between organic and regenerative agriculture, and
- Importance of organic principles.

Are you a (partially) organic business or are you interested in venturing into organic? Follow our social media to stay up to date (using @OrganicsEurope) and to register as soon as the registration link is available.



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## 3.2 Review of events

### TP Organics' Science Day: 29 July, Nuremberg, Germany

TP Organics' Science Day 2022 at [BIOFACH](#)'s summer edition was dedicated to digital technology for local and small-scale processing.

Eduardo Cuoco, TP Organics Head of Secretariat kicked the Congress session off by introducing TP Organics, the European Technology Platform's network comprising of 127 members from the entire food supply chain. Its mission is to strengthen research and innovation for organic and other agroecological approaches contributing to sustainable food and farming systems. **Join TP Organics to get the latest research updates, upcoming funding opportunities, brokerage services and more!**

Eduardo Cuoco introducing TP Organics at Science Day 2022 Credits – Maria Gernert

SmartAgriHubs: Fostering digital innovation & free online portal

Digitalisation is one of many tools to transform food and farming. IFOAM Organics Europe is a partner in the Horizon 2020 [SmartAgriHubs \(SAH\)](#) project fostering digital innovation hubs. You can also become part of the [SmartAgriHubs innovation portal](#) and/or learn more about the conditions digital technology has to fulfil to be fit for agroecological practices in the [article on the SAH blog!](#)

Of course, we need to make sure digitalisation processes help transform our food system, in line with the organic and agroecological principles. Find out how in our publication [Agroecology & digitalisation – Traps and opportunities to transform the food system.](#)

Robotics in (organic) agriculture

As first speaker, Grigoris Chatzikostas, Vice-President of Business Development at Impact Venture Studio [FoodScale Hub](#), introduced [Robs4Crops](#), a spin-off project of SmartAgriHubs that is also coordinated by Wageningen University and Research. This Horizon 2020 project implements technologies in large-scale field trials to increase safety and reduce the use of inputs, the overall carbon footprint of food production and pressure on soil while preserving land, among others.

Digital technologies in organic controls

Besides in farming, digitalisation can also be used in other parts of the supply chain. Just like organic farming, retail and trade are also about trust. Bogdan Dreihaupt, Managing Director at Control Union Certifications Ukraine introduced [Control Union](#), a family certification business active in more than 70 countries which is leading in sustainability and agriculture-related standards.

In his presentation, Mr Dreuhayps talked about the challenges and opportunities for organic certification digital technology holds, e.g., streamlining and storing data. Moving forward, and considering recent crises, from COVID-19 to the Ukraine war, solutions include smart data management (documentation checks), quality remote and hybrid compliance audits, application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in risk assessment, benchmarking across different sustainability standards and combination audits (e.g., GLOBAL GAP, EU ORG, USDA NOP).

Research & innovation in EU policies

Elena Panichi, Head of the Organics Unit at the Commissions Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), pointed out that many of the actions foreseen in the EU Organic Action Plan to realise the Farm to Fork target of 25% organic farmland by 2030 relate to traceability and transparency. According to Actions 6, 7 and 14, digital technologies such as AI and blockchain can help strengthen organic certification and support short supply chains.

In addition to digitalisation and IT-related calls for projects, funding opportunities under Horizon Europe also include the Agriculture of Data partnership, which will support sustainable agriculture in the EU, as well as policy monitoring and implementation by using digital and data technologies (in particular AI) in environmental observation (consult the [final partnership proposal](#)).

As future opportunities, the topic "Developing EU advisory networks on consumer-producer chains" to facilitate the upscaling of short supply chains was mentioned, as were the topics on "Sustainable organic food innovation labs" to reinforce upstream sections of the organic food value chains and



“Towards sustainable livestock systems”, which are all part of the next Horizon Europe Work Programme (2023-2024). Ms. Panichi also referred to other European policy instruments like [DIGITALEUROPE](#) (focus on innovation and development, capacity building) and Common Agricultural Policy (focus on application, capacity building, innovation).

Download the presentations on the [TP Organics website](#) and stay tuned for the next edition at BIOFACH 2023 from 14-17 February, which will be about sustainable organic food innovation labs!

If the content of this article resonates with you, consider attending the [final SmartAgriHubs conference](#) from 26-28 September in Lisbon. It will bring together all actors in the field of digitalisation. You can also consider saving the date for TP Organics’ [Organic Innovation Days](#) on 11-12 October in Brussels and at agricultural research and knowledge centre Inagro – [register now to save your free spot!](#) TP Organics is the European Technology Platform for Organic Food and Farming. IFOAM Organics Europe is a founding member and hosts its secretariat. Visit [www.tporganics.eu](http://www.tporganics.eu) for more information and follow its [Twitter @TPorganics](#).



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### **BIOFACH’s summer edition: Inspiring sessions and meeting the sector: 26-29 July 2022, Nuremberg, Germany**

The most important yearly appointment of the organic movement worldwide, BIOFACH took place again in person on 26-29 July 2022. At the fair, organic operators from across the supply chain, organic association representatives and decisionmakers and many more met, exchanged and learned.

This year, our booth moved to the ‘international hall’ 3A, booth 517, where we met many visitors, old and collaborators and our colleagues from IFOAM’s across the world.

Of course, we contributed to the BIOFACH programme with several sessions zooming in on policy, regulation and research which we organized or spoke at. [Our full programme of is available on our website.](#)

Rather than writing a long report, we will share the highlights of each session through the live tweeting we did.

Day 1: Policy day with the Commission, German government and Members of the European Parliament

Day 3: Youth, certification, new GMOs, and carbon farming

We started off day 3 attending an [engaging session and a young panel, talking about youth in organic](#). This session could not come more timely, as we had our first Organics Europe’s Youth Event in Frick, Switzerland 31 August-1 September. If this sounds interesting to you, you can still [check out what we learned during the youth event](#).

Following the youthful session, we had a session, organized by our Interest Group on Organic Certification and Integrity, about the future of organic certification

Together with the audience, we raised many questions about what the future could bring!





We also spoke [at a session by BÖLW](#) on new GMOs and their place in organic. Speakers to this session agreed that new GMOs should fall under the existing GMO regulation – as the European Court of Justice ruled in 2018. Later that day, our session on carbon farming tackled many issues related to organic’s potential to mitigate climate change, concrete actions the sector is already taking and an interesting [report by Ecovalia showing how organic farming in the Mediterranean outperforms other types of agriculture in its climate resilience](#) (currently only available in Spanish).

Day 4: TP Organics’ Science Day

Before travelling back, we still attended [TP Organics’ Science Day to discuss digital technologies for local and small-scale processing](#). This hands on session showed practical examples of the opportunities digitalisation can offer. For a full report, [read more in our newsletter](#).

Of course, we did not only organise sessions. We also celebrated our 20th birthday, IFOAM – Organics International’s 50th and IFOAM Organics Asia’s’s 10th! [Thank you to BIOFACH for wishing us well](#) and to our colleagues at the other IFOAM’s for sharing such nice celebration!

You still have the time to [celebrate with us throughout 2022](#) and to add your voice to the [#YearOfOrganics!](#)

### **Organic and You(th): Re-imagining the future of food: 31 August-1 September, Frick, Switzerland**

We are facing a global climate and biodiversity crises and a war in Europe. It seems discouraging. However, at the first edition of our Organics Europe Youth Event, we heard the voices of the future, and they are overflowing with imagination and hope! Agriculture, organic, and organic youth are part of the solution – as participants in our event demonstrated.

Here are some of the **key take-aways** from our two days of imagination, connection and questioning the current food system at the [Organics Europe Youth Event](#) in Frick, Switzerland.

1. Our panel on market actors, politics and youth opened with food for thought on the current situation. The panellist agreed that we need social, economic, and political innovation and that it is important consumers know how their food is produced and who produces it, so it is better appreciated.
2. In their discussion, the opening panel discussed collaboration between the value chain. The main question they raised was “Should the organic movement be bold or pragmatic in its direction?”

3. Our keynote speaker, Rob Hopkins, inspired the audience. Climate change obliges us to re-imagine the future and be bold. Change is a community effort, and together we can realise a transformation if we are brave when we set our goals and empower our imagination. Be ridiculous!

4. Participants set their imagination to work in open-space discussion groups. They shared their perspectives on gender and sexual-based discrimination in agriculture, argued about how to make organic food accessible to everyone, and created ideas on how to support the Ukrainian organic sector.

5. During the inspirational hour, young entrepreneurs shared their courageous examples to transform the food system and the lessons they learned along the way. We remember the power of community, learning by doing and not giving up.

6. Joe Slater, in his closing keynote, challenged the audience on the moral obligations of sustainable agriculture; while Prof. Dr. Johanna Jacobi taught us that agroecology is much more than just biodiversity stripes next to conventional fields, it represents a social movement as well!

7. Some memorable things we take away from the event: Albert Einstein on his bicycle (trips), young people's hope and entrepreneurial spirit, the beautiful surroundings & vegan and fair chocolate.

8. More than 150 participants from all over Europe and the world attended our first-ever youth event which made the event a real pioneer in the organic sector! The furthest travellers came from Iran, Ukraine, Georgia, and Algeria.

9. A heartfelt 'Thank you' to our sponsors, funders, speakers, co-organisers, technical consultants, members (and bingo enthusiasts)! You made this event one to remember!

10. Last but not least, event attendees genuinely connected through visionary discussions and inspirational thoughts centred around the focal questions of *How can we do differently & How can we do better in our food system* resulting in a sense of togetherness by the end of the event. Thus, we would like to thank You(th) for making this event a success!

Couldn't attend the event, but curious about the memorable moments of it? Have a look at our [Instagram account](#), our [Twitter moments](#) or listen to [FiBL Focus' podcast](#) to learn about the opening panel on building sustainable food systems.

Stay tuned for the next edition of the Organics Europe Youth Event by subscribing to our newsletter at [www.organicseurope.bio/newsletter](http://www.organicseurope.bio/newsletter) and following [@OrganicsEurope](#) on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). IFOAM Organics Europe will post updates about the youth event using #OEYE2022 and #OrganicYouth.

Feel free to [contact events@organicseurope.bio](mailto:events@organicseurope.bio) if you have any questions.

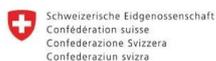
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### SANA exhibition in Bologna: 8-9 September, Bologna, Italy

Our Director, Eduardo Cuoco, colleagues were at the SANA exhibition in Bologna on 8-9 September to meet our Italian members and discuss the latest EU policy developments and IFOAM Organics Europe's contributions to these.

On 8 September, Eduardo was involved in a roundtable on EU policies organized by [Rivoluzione Bio](#). This was an occasion to discuss EU policies supporting the development of organic, like the European Organic Action Plan, and those that are hindering it, like sustainability labelling. Aside from the current EU policies, Eduardo also focused on policies for the future, like true cost accounting. In the afternoon, he joined the Coldiretti seminar "Organic Made in Italy in Europe: agricultural development and markets". The focus of the seminar was an analysis of the market perspectives provided to organic farmers nowadays. The following day, Eduardo gave a speech on "Digital and technology 4.0: the future of organic agriculture in Europe" during the BIOCEREAL 4.0 conference. In the speech he presented the current status quo of digitalization in organic agriculture and the perspective on the future.

### SmartAgriHubs final event: 26-28 September, Lisbon, Portugal

SmartAgriHubs is coming to an end this year and had its **final event** in Lisbon from **26 to 28 September**. The first day of the SmartAgriHubs event was reserved to its members. The community gathered and discussed the achievements and challenges of the project.

The second and third day, the SmartAgriHubs ecosystem opened its door to the European agricultural and digital innovation community.



On Tuesday, 27 September, the focus of the SmartAgriHubs final event was on synergy with other European projects and prominent actors in the digitisation of agriculture. On the programme were keynote speeches, pitches by the EU projects and workshops on digital innovation in agriculture.

On this day, there were several contributions by IFOAM Organics Europe. Eduardo Cuoco, Director of IFOAM Organics Europe, gave a keynote speech about “Digitalisation in organic agriculture – where we are and where we go”. Moreover, IFOAM Organics Europe held a workshop on how digitalisation can support agroecology.

On Wednesday, 28 September, participants took part to more workshops on digitisation of agriculture and networking in the marketplace. SmartAgriHubs also organised a farm trip to one of its Flagship Innovation Experiments.

You can find more information about the event and the detailed programme [here](#).

The Horizon 2020 project [SmartAgriHubs](#) aims to consolidate and foster an EU-wide network of Digital Innovation Hubs to enhance digital transformation for sustainable farming and food production. IFOAM Organics Europe is a project partner in the project. You can follow SmartAgriHubs on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#) or visit the project’s website [www.smartagrihubs.eu](http://www.smartagrihubs.eu).



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.

## 4 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

11-12 October 2022  
[Organic Innovation Days](#)  
Flanders&Brussels, Belgium

30th November 2022  
[IFOAM Organics Europe](#)  
[Meets Business 2022](#)  
Brussels, Belgium

2022  
[10-year anniversary of IFOAM Asia](#)  
[20-year anniversary of IFOAM Organics Europe](#)  
[50-year anniversary of IFOAM Organics International](#)





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

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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.



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For further information contact your national board member or the office in Brussels.

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