



PRESS RELEASE

IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE WELCOMES PROGRESS ON PESTICIDES REDUCTION NEGOTIATIONS

BRUSSELS, 24 OCTOBER 2023 – IFOAM Organics Europe welcomes today's vote of the European Parliament Environment Committee on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation proposal (SUR) but warns that MEPs and Member States still need to fix the misleading indicator to measure pesticide use and risk.

Eduardo Cuoco, Director of IFOAM Organics Europe, said: "Reducing the use of synthetic pesticides should remain a priority for all politicians who care about farmers' and citizens' health, water quality and nature protection, and this is why the organic movement welcomes the efforts of the EP rapporteur Sarah Wiener to ensure progress in these negotiations on the SUR. It is positive that most organic agronomic practices and natural substances are recognized as biocontrol, but we regret that a coalition of demagogic MEPs prevented reaching a compromise to fix the SUR proposal with a reliable indicator that does not lead to artificial reduction and that does not discriminate against natural substances. To ensure the credibility of the SUR and of policymaking, we urge MEPs to finish the job in plenary to fix the SUR with a reliable indicator."

Background on the indicator:

The indicator proposed by the Commission to measure progress towards the Farm to Fork 50% reduction target "in the use and risk of pesticides" is based on the infamous HRI methodology, which has been criticized by the European Court of Auditors, scientific institutions like UBA (German Environment Agency), and civil society for two reasons:

- This indicator gives the impression that Member States reduce pesticides use when it is actually not the case, simply when an active substance is banned at EU level
- This indicator gives the impression that organic farming is the problem rather than the solution, as it discriminates against natural substances, that are used in higher volumes compared to synthetic pesticides.

Ends.

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Background information

Are you interested to know more? [Have a look at the press release we sent on the same topic on 16 October](#) and below resources.

Documents:

- Policy Brief: [Correcting the Farm to Fork indicator - A prerequisite for pesticide reduction in the EU](#) (16 October 2023)
- [An FAQ with general background information](#) (June 2022)
- [GLOBAL 2000's paper](#) showing the HRI-1 systematically overestimates the risk of natural substances used in organic farming compared to synthetic substances (June 2022)
- [IFOAM Organics Europe's note](#) (June 2022) explaining it is possible to build a better indicator on the basis of data on pesticides sales, taking into example [the French indicator NODU](#)

Videos:

- [Explaining the flawed pesticides indicator](#)
- [Organic's approach to plant health care and pesticides regulation](#)

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.

