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WELCOME NOTE

Dear reader,

Welcome to our post-summer newsletter. As summer turns into autumn, we embrace the productive months ahead and use this newsletter to update you on developments relevant for EU organic. Among the highlights during this short period are month's publication of the [recommendations of the strategic dialogue on the future of EU agriculture](#), our movement's vision on a piece of EU policy that can make or break this transition: the [Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\)](#) and a [loud and clear call from the food industry to label new genomic techniques \(NGTs\)](#).

Besides this, we have been building bridges at inspiring events, including our annual [General Assembly](#), bi-annual [Youth Event](#), and flagship annual [European Organic Congress](#). In this welcome note we will dive into the highlights of what comes up and what has passed. For more details I would like to encourage you to read on in this newsletter.

Looking ahead: Building bridges & celebrating EU organic

As European organic movement and voice of organic with the EU institutions, we will make sure the new European Parliament and incoming European Commission know our priorities so they are reflected in EU policies and decision-making. Of course, we do in close collaboration with our members!

The best opportunities for that are only a few days away, namely the annual [EU Organic Day](#) on 23 September and the [EU Organic Awards](#) ceremony in Brussels on the same day. In its 2021 [Action Plan for the Development of Organic Production](#), the European Union declared [23 September as 'EU Organic Day'](#) and established the annual EU Organic Awards. As European umbrella for organic, we co-organise the awards and ensure the movement's visibility on 'our' day.

In 2024, our EU Organic Day grew even more, making organic and its innovative approaches more visible through a series of regional, national and international events and campaigns. Get to know what is happening near you and how you can get involved [on our map with initiatives](#) and using #EUorganicDay on your social media of choice. Are you organising an event yourself? Give it more visibility by [submitting your initiative today!](#) We invite you to get to know organic near you and celebrate organic with us – either online or in person and share your pictures using #EUorganicDay.

Of course, we will also be present at the EU Organic Awards ceremony in Brussels. On Monday 23 September, [8 winners will be announced \(out of 24 finalists\) from across the organic supply chain](#) – from farmers, processors, retailers and restaurants to progressive cities, regions and biodistricts. All finalists were preselected by a jury based on their initiative's excellence, innovative character, sustainability and transferability. We already applaud all nominees for their dedication, hard work and commitment to organic's principles. If you know of any initiatives this might apply to, keep an eye on the [awards' website](#) and encourage them to apply for next year's edition (applications will most likely open in March 2025 and past finalists can reapply!).

Looking back: Building a common vision for agrifood's future in Budapest

On 10-12 September, over 250 participants joined our annual flagship event, the [European Organic Congress 2024](#) in Budapest, Hungary. High-level representatives of the EU institutions, national ministries, the Presidencies of the current and upcoming Council of the EU, and Members of the European Parliament exchanged on recent political developments about the new EU political mandate to address current social, environmental and economic crises with a common vision – across the agri-food sector, civil society and the world of science.

We organised this well-timed event with our local partner, Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (ÖMKi) with support of the [Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union](#) and the [Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture](#).



Summarising such well-filled programme in a few sentences is hard, so I would encourage you to read our [main take-aways](#), check [speakers' presentations](#) and get some first impressions in our [photo gallery](#) (or take a deep dive in [our Facebook album](#)). In the meantime, save the date for the European Organic Congress on 18-19 August 2025 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Thank you for being part of our vibrant IFOAM Organics Europe community and network. We look forward to continuing our journey to building a common, more sustainable and resilient future for Europe's agrifood system in which organic continues to lead this transformation.

Remember, don't panic, the future is organic!

Eduardo Cuoco,
IFOAM Organics Europe's Director



POLITICAL HOTSPOT

In June 2024, EU citizens elected a new European Parliament, which [confirmed Ursula von der Leyen as European Commission President](#) shortly after. Prior to her re-election, the President published political guidelines for the next European Commission (2024-2029) providing a strategic roadmap for the coming European Commission. President von der Leyen's guidelines have a place for food and farming. Just this week, President von der Leyen unveiled [new college of commissioners](#), pending positive hearings at the European Parliament.

An EU vision for agriculture and food

According to the guidelines, the Commission's vision will consider ensuring the long-term competitiveness and sustainability of the farming sector within our planetary boundaries. The President also stated the need to ensure farmers with fair and sufficient incomes, emphasizing the need to reward farmers that are working with nature, preserving biodiversity and natural ecosystems.

As European organic movement, we consider this an important step in the right direction and one of our key demands. **Farmers using sustainable production methods, such as organic farmers, should get sufficient payments to reward them for their contribution to preserving and improving public goods** – for example better water and soil quality.

While emphasising the need to build a competitive and resilient agri-food system, the Commission President stressed the Strategic Dialogue's importance. Initiated during her September 2023 [State of the Union speech](#), the Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU agriculture kicked off in January 2024 and, over several months, brought together stakeholders across the supply chain – NGOs, farmers, trade and retailers organisations. They developed [recommendations to address the current challenges farmers are facing](#). The European organic movement actively participated in this dialogue, represented by Jan Plagge, President of IFOAM Organics Europe.

The dialogue succeeded in identifying a common way forward for EU agriculture considering it should be within the planetary boundaries and reconcile environmental sustainability with a fair income for farmers. There is broad agreement that [transitioning to sustainable farming systems is necessary and should pay off for farmers](#). The Strategic Dialogue also recommends a significant reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) so it adequately rewards organic farmers and offers real financial added value for the environmental services they are providing.

The European organic movement looks forward to seeing how the EU institutions will realise the recommendations of the Strategic Dialogue, namely in the EU's 'Vision for Agriculture and Food' which will be unveiled in the first 100 days of the Commission and in Commission President Von der Leyen's continued support of stakeholders' engagement. We also look forward to being involved in the process of implementing these recommendations within the advisory board that will be established by the European Commission.

Can the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) contribute to the EU's vision?

The Commission's vision is in line with organic movement's vision for the future of the CAP. [As European organic movement, we demand a CAP which rewards farmers for their contribution to public goods](#). Concretely, the CAP post-2027 should:

- Support all farmers who want to transform their farms sustainably using a whole-farm approach;
- Adequately reward farmers engaged in sustainability systems, such as organic farmers, for the benefits they already deliver to the environment and society; and
- Ensure the sector's competitiveness.

An ambitious CAP reform is very necessary. Agriculture is a cornerstone of the European way of life, and the current challenges it faces should not be used as fuel to further increase political polarisation. Instead, policymakers should address these challenges collectively, with adequate input from farmers and citizens. [Read the organic movement's vision for a CAP post-2027 that is fit for the future.](#)



IFOAM Organics Europe's manifesto lists [the European organic movement's priorities for the next political mandate](#). One of these is reimagining the CAP so it promotes biodiversity and supports extensive practices, while improving farmers' conditions and reducing their administrative burdens

CAP developments at EU level

Now is the time to weigh in on the future CAP. The Commission will publish the first proposal of the CAP post-2027 sometime mid-2025, just after the publication of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2027-2033.

The Hungarian Presidency announced that working on the agricultural policy is one of [seven overarching priorities of their Presidency](#) and the Council will intensively discuss it the next months, hoping to come to conclusions on the next CAP by December.

Among the recent developments: The Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture did not publish its CAP Declaration during the conference held on 5-6 September, just before the [Hungarian Presidency's informal meeting of agriculture Ministers](#). On 10 September the Ministers discussed a farmer-focused CAP post-2027 towards a *“competitive, crisis-proof, sustainable, farmer-friendly and knowledge-based future EU agriculture”*.

The European organic movement looks forward to continuing collaborating with policymakers to support the transition to sustainable agri-food systems. We see organic farming continue to lead safeguarding the climate, protecting biodiversity and our environment – at the same time increasing food security and the attractiveness of Europe's rural areas.



NEWS

Policy

1.1.1 Organic Regulations

New project will benefit organic operators & contribute to fairer EU Organic Regulation

In June 2024, we kicked off an exciting two-year project that will produce important information for most organic operators! Our mission? Analyse how the [new EU Organic Regulation](#) supports organic operators in reaching the EU's ambitious target of 25% organic farmland by 2030.

Through a quantitative and qualitative study we will research what extra costs organic operators face due to regulatory requirements, some of them perceived as redundant. Our goal is to spark a much-needed conversation about what an ideal regulatory framework should look like to support organic's growth and development.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we have been working on various aspects on this issue for years in our '[Developing Organic](#)' projects. Thanks to the incredible support of pioneering organic companies, our "seed sponsors", this new project became a reality. Their commitment to the cause is a win for the entire organic sector.

A big 'thank you' goes out to:



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Regulation updates: De-alcoholised wine, use organic logo, certificates, compliance & aquaculture

Following the summer break, there are a number of updates on the EU Organic Regulation. From new legal initiatives to delegated acts amending the basic act. Below overview provides you with a summary of the relevant information. Our members find more information on the member extranet.

For access to our member extranet and information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact membership@organicseurope.bio.

De-alcoholised wine

The Commission opened a public consultation on a delegated act [Wine-making – practices allowed under certain conditions to produce organic de-alcoholised wine](#). Our members can read more about the amendment to the horizontal legislation, new section added to the oenological practices and details on updates to authorised practices [on the update on our member extranet](#).

Use EU Organic Logo



On 2 September, the Commission adopted another regulation clarifying [use of the EU organic logo](#). This delegated act amends the EU Organic Regulation's basic act, extending provisions on the EU organic logo's use.

Certificates of inspection & compliant control bodies (CBs)

On 29 July, the Commission adopted a proposal on a [derogation period for the issuance of Certificates of Inspection \(COIs\) and validity of old certificates](#) in third countries. The current proposal kept a deadline (15 October) as end of the derogation period – despite all organic stakeholders calling for an entire calendar year instead of an interim date. [Our members can read what this entails specifically](#) on our member extranet.

The third proposed list of Control Bodies (CBs) operating in third countries and approved under compliance is open for feedback until 9 October [on the Have your say portal](#). For the time being, it lists five more CBs.

Sales from EU to Great Britain

DEFRA recently announced extension of the derogation on the requirement for Certificates of Inspection (COIs) for organic goods entering Great Britain from the EU, EEA and Switzerland. This derogation will be extended with two more years, from 1 February 2025 to 1 February 2027.

Event: Interim assessment on achievements EU Organic Action Plan

On 24 September, the Expert Group on Organic Production, Civil Dialogue Group on Organic Farming and Organic Ambassadors are having a joint meeting. Organised to celebrate [EU Organic Day on 23 September](#), representatives of various EU Member States and sector representatives will assess the EU Organic Action Plan's achievements.

On the list of attendees are IFOAM Organics Europe, representing the EU organic movement, and [TP Organics](#), representing research and innovation for organic and agroecology. We will inform our members in case it is possible to follow the event as observer.

Call to join the IFOAM Aquaculture Forum – EU Coordination (IAF)

Our members are invited to get involved in discussions about organic aquaculture production in our expert platform, the IFOAM Aquaculture Sector Platform.

This group of experienced organic aquaculture producers, certifiers, researchers, and other stakeholders:

- Further develops organic aquaculture and support-related activities;
- Facilitates information exchange between IFOAM members;
- Addresses standards and certification matters;
- Develops positions on issues if the need arises, and
- Advises policymakers and other institutions on matters related to aquaculture.

We are reactivating this group and intensify our work in the coming months and years. The forum wants to continue improving organic to get to more sustainable aquatic systems that foster biodiversity, promote animal welfare and respect all aquatic life – while protecting sensitive habitats, minimising pollution, and enhancing water resources and quality – in a legal framework that allows the organic aquaculture sector to grow.

Those interested can contact lea.bauer@organicseurope.bio for more information.

IFOAM Organics Europe, providing the sector with expertise regulatory expertise

Since March 2022, we are offering [guidelines to help practitioners interpret the EU Organic Regulation](#). These guidelines help readers to navigate the regulation, its implementing and delegated acts and links to definitions, recitals, other EU legislation and more. We will update the guidelines in the last quarters of 2024.

For more information on the EU organic regulation and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please [visit our website](#) or contact lea.bauer@organicseurope.bio. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.



IFOAM Organics Europe members have early access to information on the EU Organic Regulation [through our Interest and Expert Groups](#) and our member [member extranet](#). They also have one free access to the [EU Organic Regulation guidelines](#).

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EU Organic Regulation updates: FAQ on organic rules & second list of compliant control bodies

The Commission has updated its [Frequently asked questions on organic rules](#) with new topics. It now also clarifies questions on:

- Organic certification of various products like algal oil rich in DHA, additives and flavourings, prickly pear oil, cosmetics, plant oils for use in cosmetics, snails, cotton or wool textile fibre, mate and other products listed in Annex I. of Regulation 2018/848 (see chapter 1. Subject matter, scope, definitions);
- Proper labelling of export products and pet food (see chapter 2. Labelling and logo);
- Acceptable flock size for broiler roosters (see chapter 4.3 Livestock); and
- Production rules applicable for organic salt (see chapter 4.9 Salt).

Second list of control bodies recognised for compliance published

The second list of control bodies and control authorities recognised in third countries for the purpose of compliance has been also published. It is available in [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2024/2140](#) of 6 August 2024 amending and correcting Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/1378 as regards the recognition of certain control bodies in accordance with Article 46 of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council as competent to carry out controls and issue organic certificates in third countries for the purpose of imports of organic products into the Union.

This legal act lists 15 new control organisations and makes some corrections to [the first published list](#).

Rejection of last year's rules on organic salt production by European Parliament

The Parliament's almost one-year-old decision rejecting the Commission's proposal on detailed production rules for organic sea salt and other organic salts has been published now in the Official Journal. It is called [Objection to a delegated act](#): detailed production rules for organic sea salt and other organic salts for food and feed - European Parliament resolution of 11 July 2023 on the Commission delegated regulation of 2 May 2023 amending Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards detailed production rules for organic sea salt and other organic salts for food and feed (C(2023)02781 - 2023/2676(DEA)).

We help you navigate the EU Organic Regulation

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Our members get early access to information

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First list of control bodies recognised for compliance published

The first list of control bodies (CBs) recognised for compliance regarding imports from third countries was [published in the EU's official journal](#).

The Commission is rapidly progressing with the other applications, and the second list is in the pipeline – [its first draft is out for public consultation](#).

Below regulations are also under public consultation.

A [draft delegated regulation amending Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1698](#) as regards the certification of certain operators and groups of operators in third countries and the controls performed by control authorities and control bodies on their organic products aiming to set a derogation period till 15 October 2025 for the issuance of COIs and for the validity of OP certificates under equivalence to allow a smooth transition to compliance. **As IFOAM Organics Europe, we welcome the transition period but ask for a full calendar year.**

High-risk organic and in-conversion products – import checks and sampling (amendment): [Delegated regulation amending Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1698 and Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2021/2306](#) as regards the import into the Union of high-risk organic and in-conversion products

We help you navigate the EU Organic Regulation

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Pesticide residue management in organic products

Our food supply includes conventional agricultural systems using synthetic pesticides and other agrochemical products. As our agricultural systems are open systems, synthetic pesticides and their likes (are well-known to) often travel by air and ground water and persist in the soil and water for a very long time, negatively affecting what lives and grows in and on these.

It is good that it is increasingly easy to detect pesticides and other pollutants in our food from a technical point of view. Thanks to progress in analytical processes and methods, residues and contaminants in our food are detected even more frequently than in the past.

While organic production does not allow synthetic pesticides, artificial fertilisers or any herbicides, their widespread use by most farmers and the movement of these products creates contamination risks across the supply chain. EU legislation (the EU Organic Regulation) forbids organic operators from using synthetic pesticides, artificial fertilisers and herbicides, ensures regular on-farm checks and defines what organic operators should do to protect consumers in case their products contain pesticides residues. EFSA' reports on pesticide residues in food show there are no residues on 80% of organic food products.

Dealing with residues requires a harmonised approach & further work

In our May 2023 position paper on the management of pesticide residues in organic products we approach this crucial question and propose a harmonised approach to residue management both by organic operators and control bodies/authorities under the relevant rules in the EU Organic Regulation.

Since publishing the EU organic movement's position on this hot topic, we have continued discussions with various EU institutions and have learnt that the implementation of the regulation needs further refinement.

Follow-up: A brief with a practical exercise on pesticide residue management in organic products

In our follow-up work since May 2023 we focused on operators' perspective – among various other aspects to be discussed. At BIOFACH 2024, we had a fruitful session with the European Commission and organic operators where they exchanged on the regulation's relevant provisions and their practical implications.

Our June 2024 paper Management of pesticide residues in organic products – a follow-up brief summarises the session – introducing our approach and putting forward an exercise that assesses which conditions are relevant for operators to eliminate the suspicion of a non-compliance.

Our work on the EU Organic Regulation

Since March 2022, we are offering guidelines to help practitioners interpret the EU Organic Regulation. These guidelines help readers to navigate the regulation, its implementing and delegated acts and links to definitions, recitals, other EU legislation and more. We will update the guidelines in the last quarters of 2024.

For more information on the EU organic regulation and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please visit our website or contact lea.bauer@organicseurope.bio. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.



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1.1.2 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Future CAP needs reform to deliver on the future of food and farming

Representing almost a third of the EU's budget, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is crucial to [shape the EU's common framework for action](#) to reach the EU's environmental goals in the agri-food system. As the report of the 29 members of the [Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU agriculture](#) shows, a transition to sustainable agri-food systems is necessary and there are solutions that work for farmers, nature and society. These recommendations, from across the agri-food sector, civil society and the world of science, bridge the EU's objectives by proposing concrete steps and strategies for implementation.

As European organic movement, we issue a united call [for a CAP fit for the future](#). Our vision and position is that a CAP fit for the future is in line with the Strategic Dialogue's opinion that a transition to sustainable agri-food systems is necessary and there are solutions that work for farmers, nature and society.

To achieve this, the CAP needs an ambitious reform to enable an agroecological transition of Europe's agriculture, while:

1. Supporting all farmers who want to transform their farms sustainably using a whole-farm approach;
2. Adequately rewarding farmers engaged in sustainability systems, such as organic farmers, for the benefits they already deliver to the environment and society; and
3. Ensuring the sector's competitiveness.

Agriculture is a cornerstone of the European way of life, and the current challenges it faces should not be used to exacerbate polarisation but rather be addressed collectively. Read our [press release on the future CAP and our vision on a CAP fit for the future](#).



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Civil society is taking the CAP by storm: What happened, what's next and how to get involved?

The Good Food Good Farming campaign mobilised ahead of the European elections, organising a stunt under the motto [We can't eat promises!](#) in Brussels on Saturday 1 June. Our staff took part in a demonstration calling for climate action and a fair transition of our agri-food systems. Along with NGOs and grassroots movements, all participants gathered at Place de l'Albertine in Brussels, **urging politicians to improve farmers' conditions, halt environmental rollbacks, and strengthen climate policies.**

Action days calling for a just food system transition in October

The Campaign is continuing its actions focusing its [Action Days 2024](#) on the Common Agricultural Policy. Any European event demanding a just transition can register on goodfoodgoodfarming.eu/action-days. There are no



strict rules for the event, everything that is related to good food and farming works: a harvest festival, seed fair, film screening, farm-visit, picnic, protest or public discussion – everything is welcome!

Add your event's voice to the call & use ready-made communication materials

Interested to join? Is it simple: Declare your support and register your event via an [online form](#) . Your event and all the others will be available on an interactive map, a great opportunity to make noise around your own demands for European #GoodFoodGoodFarming!

If you want more information, you can read the campaign's [Call to Action](#) and check the ready-made [communication material](#).

About Good Food Good Farming

The civil society alliance [Good Food Good Farming](#) (GFGF) campaigns for sustainable food and farming across Europe. By bringing together groups and organisations active at local, national and EU level it campaigns to transform EU food and farming policies. IFOAM Organics Europe has been part of the coalition since its inception. The campaign organises annual European Days of Action 1-31 October. Are you interested to learn more or take part? [Subscribe to the GFGF newsletter](#) or [find your national contact for the Good Food Good Farming alliance](#).



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Driving organic growth? [OrganicTargets4EU analysis of CAP Strategic Plans](#)

[The OrganicTargets4EU project](#) analysed current organic agricultural and aquaculture policies, revealing increased support for organic agriculture following legislative initiatives by the 2019-2024 EU Commission.

What was researched?

28 Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) Strategic Plans (2 for Belgium), their associated summary documents, financial agreements as well as 24 EU, national and regional organic action plans were compared with 20 equivalent previous action plans. A similar analysis of the Common Fishery Policy (CFP) and aquaculture policies happened for 9 selected countries.

What were the findings?

In their analysis, Nic Lampkin (Thünen Institute) and Giuseppe Lembo (Fondazione COISPA) observed significant steps in support for organic agriculture within the EU, with the EU Commission leading the charge. All EU Member States have implemented policies to support organic farming, with some, like the Netherlands and France, resuming or enhancing support after previous lapses.

The CAP Strategic Plans include detailed strategies, payment rates, and targets for increasing organic land area, aiming to double supported organic land and nearly double expenditure by 2027/8. Additionally, most Member States have integrated organic action plans that combine environmental and market-focused policies to foster sustainable organic growth.

However, challenges remain, particularly in organic aquaculture, where policy support is behind conventional practices and funding and market structures need further development.

Linear projections suggest that only 15-20% of EU agricultural land might be organic by 2030, short of the 25% target. Despite progress, achieving this goal will require greater effort, resources and a major transformation in support structures especially in research, knowledge exchange, and capacity building across the organic sector. Further work in the OrganicTargets4EU project will formulate clear recommendations for developing organic farming, specifically for the CAP post-2027.

[Read the full report and CAP Strategic Plans' analysis on OrganicTargets4EU's website.](#)



The Horizon Europe project OrganicTargets4EU (2022-2026) aims to help reach 25% of agricultural land under organic farming and a significant increase in organic aquaculture by 2030. IFOAM Organics Europe leads this project which is working on outcomes that will drive the growth and development of the organic sector focussing on policy implementation, evidence-based decision making, increased and coordinated Research & Innovation and increased knowledge sharing. The project results will be discussed in a multi-actor policy dialogue and it will make recommendations for the CAP strategic plans and EU/national organic action plans from 2025-2027 and from 2028 onwards.

Visit [the project website](#) for more information and follow its hashtag #OrganicTargets4EU on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#) or contact ambra.desimone@organicseurope.bio.



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1.1.3 GMOs and seeds

European food industry loud and clear about rigorous labelling of new genomic techniques (NGTs)

376 food businesses from 16 Member States, signed [Food Industry for Freedom of Choice](#), a letter calling for rigorous labelling of NGTs in Europe. The companies cover both organic and conventional and include industry giants like REWE Group, SPAR Austria, dm-drogerie markt and Biocoop.

Loud, clear & united: Food businesses want labelling & traceability of all NGTs

Food businesses urge policymakers to defend their entrepreneurial freedom in the face of [the new genomic techniques \(NGT\) legislative proposal](#), which threatens to eliminate mandatory labelling across the supply chain and for consumers.

The letter reminds policymakers of consumers' widespread scepticism and citizens' demands for transparency. It specifically calls for:

- Labelling and traceability of all NGTs,
- Freedom of choice,
- Fair competitive conditions along the entire value chain,
- Detection methods to underpin the labelling system, and
- Every country's rights to national co-existence measures.

Hungarian Agriculture Minister expresses support at handover

On 3 September, Gunther Weiss, Head of Quality Management at [Alnatura](#) and [Alexander Hissting](#), Managing Director at [Industry Association Food without Genetic Engineering](#) (VLOG) met with István Nagy, the Hungarian Minister of Agriculture and current EU Council President for Agriculture and Fisheries, to convey the industry's concerns and personally hand over the letter.

Minister Nagy showed his support for the companies' demands, saying that he could understand the concerns and was fully behind the demands. At the same time, all other EU Agricultural Ministers received the letter.

Very timely initiative – Feeding into the hot policy debate

The Council of the European Union is currently discussing their position on a new legislative proposal on new GMOs, the so-called "New Genomic Techniques" (NGTs) which would dismantle most of the strict regulatory framework for new GMOs.

Such deregulation would lead to lower biosafety standards and limit food producers and consumers' freedom of choice – as it lacks supply chain and end-of-product labelling.



So far, Member States have not managed to find agreement on this legislative proposal.

More about GMOs – old and new

[Read our webpage on GMOs](#) for more information on the current legal framework, the organic movement's position and the ongoing legislative revision process.

Read companies' stances on this matter and learn more in VLOG's press release: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/en/press/articles/european-enterprises-call-for-rigorous-labelling-of-ngts>

For more information on new GMOs (so called 'new genomic techniques' or NGTs):

- Check out [myths about organic & NGTs](#);
- Read the paper [Sustainability in organic breeding](#);
- Watch [our video explaining what new GMOs are and why we need to keep them labelled and regulated](#);
- Find out about analytical detection methods the [DARWIN project](#) is developing;
- Visit our website page on [\(new\) GMOs](#)

Did not find the information you need? Contact helene.schmutzler@organicseurope.bio for more information. Please do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

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 for access rights (issues).

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[Explainer video: Developing and applying detection methods for plants created with 'new genomic techniques' \(new GMOs\)](#)

The technical research project DARWIN will develop, test, and validate no less than 9 new detection methods and new digital solutions for new GMO crops obtained through new genomic techniques (NGTs).

How? The recent [explainer video](#) and [press release](#) elaborate: "These are the main solutions proposed by DARWIN. Firstly, **detection methods** for NGT genetic changes in plant products will be validated, and their efficacy will be tested through three realistic scenarios. Next, the consortium will employ **AI and bioinformatics** to obtain genetic fingerprints of NGT products. Finally, a **dataspace** will be created to enhance the traceability and transparency of these products.

Why? Currently, the laboratory technologies available to detect genetic engineering changes to living organisms are not working for GMOs that are created using NGTs. So, we do not have the tools to know where these new genomic techniques are and will be used. As we have the right to know what's in our food, we need the development of adequate detection methods & clear labels. [We detail this in our previous article](#). This matters specifically for [GMO-free methods of food production like organic](#).



Check out the [short video](#) for more details!

About the DARWIN project

The [DARWIN project](#) is a highly technological project aiming to develop, test, and validate 9 new detection methods for new GMO crops obtained through NGTs from 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2027. In full, this Horizon Europe-funded project wants to “Transition to safe & sustainable food systems through new & innovative detection methods & digital solutions for plant-based products derived from new genomic techniques, under a co-creation approach” between 2024 and 2027.

This is a crucial project for food and farming systems that want to remain GMO-free. So, as IFOAM Organics Europe we are part of the work package ‘Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) Collaborative Stakeholder Ecosystem’. Together with our partners, we will bring together a diverse stakeholder group in a regulatory and policy roundtable. This will result in policy recommendations in 2025 (based on the roundtable’s results) and a workshop with key stakeholders in 2026.

To find out more about the DARWIN research project [visit its website](#) and follow it on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#).



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Organic seed and planting material databases – LiveSeeding webinar available

On 4 July 2024, the LiveSeeding project organised a learning exchange on organic seed databases, using examples from Spain and Austria’s national organic seed databases, the [EU Organic Seed Router database](#) and [OrganicXSeeds](#).

The meeting fostered cross-country exchange to increase transparency in the organic seed and breeding sector. This was reflected in the participation that ranged from representatives of competent authorities, agricultural ministries, control bodies, seed authorities, seed database manager, breeder and multiplier of organic plant reproductive material (PRM) and organic farming associations.

Presentations during the webinar:

- Miguel Vega García from the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery and Food who presented the Spanish national database [ECOSID](#) on the availability of organic and in-conversion plant reproductive material;
- Kaja Gutzen from the German Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL Germany e.V.) who gave a first presentation on the database [OrganicXseed](#) and how it can be adapted to national needs and a second one on the [EU Organic Seed Router database](#) and new features that will be implemented within the LiveSeeding project;
- Angela Thüringer from AGES Austria who presented the organic seed and planting material database in Austria.

Recording of the webinar [Exchange on organic seed and planting material databases](#) are available.

The [LiveSeeding project](#) is a four-year Innovation Action on organic seed and plant breeding to accelerate sustainable and diverse food systems in Europe, which started in October 2022 and will run until September 2026. It provides science-based evidence and best practice solutions to help achieve 100 % organic seed. To deliver on its ambitious goal, LiveSeeding brings together 37 organisations from a wide range of sectors operating in 16 European countries and can build on the knowledge developed in the [LIVESEED project](#) (2017-2021).



The project has a budget of €6.6 million, funded by the European Union, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). FiBL Europe coordinates this Horizon Europe-funded project and its 37 partners. IFOAM Organics Europe is responsible for stakeholder management.

Learn more about and follow the project on www.liveseeding.eu, [LinkedIn](#), [X](#) and [Facebook](#).



Funded by the European Union, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or REA, nor SERI or UKRI.



UK Research and Innovation

1.1.4 Plant health care

Task force on biocontrol starts its work

IFOAM Organics Europe's new [Task Force on Biocontrol](#) will take up its work in September. The group will discuss this emerging hot topic and help position organic in upcoming debates and legislation dealing with the approval of biocontrol products.

The task force consists of IFOAM Organics Europe's members active on the topic. They will all matters related to biocontrol, such as its definition, different methods and agents, and the current legislation. We will keep our members informed about relevant developments in our relevant interest and expert groups and on our member extranet.

For more information on biocontrol, plant health care and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please [visit our website](#) or contact maria.zintl@organicseurope.bio. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on the task force in [its terms of reference](#) and background materials on the topic in the [arguments database on the member extranet](#) (main messages, arguments/FAQs, visuals & videos). Contact 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.



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1.1.5 Climate change

Positive steps for EU's resilience in Council decisions on nature restoration, soil monitoring law & green claims

On 17 June, European legislation on soil, nature, and environmental labelling took a few steps forward as the Council of the European Union approved the Nature Restoration Law, [despite strong opposition](#).

In a positive turn of events, Member States approved the Nature Restoration Law. While the original text has been modified, its approval is positive for Europe's nature and biodiversity. This was the last hurdle the legislation had to take and it brings hope that we can make agriculture better for nature, emphasising that healthy ecosystems are key to resilient and sustainable agriculture.

The Council also agreed on a general approach to the Soil Monitoring Law, an [important step to the EU's first soil legislation](#). This progress is crucial for promoting healthy soils, which are the foundation of sustainable agriculture. By embracing sustainable soil management practices, like organic farming, we can achieve our goal of restoring soil health in the EU by 2050. The Council will now enter trilogues with the European Parliament.



The Council's stance on the [Green Claims Directive](#) was also positive. As organic movement we believe it is important to tackle greenwashing, so we were glad to see that the Council supports the use of methodologies beyond the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) – which is important as the PEF does not adequately consider the positive and negative externalities of the agrifood system.

For more information on organic and its benefits for climate, nature and soil and IFOAM Organics Europe's work related to this issue:

- Get a visual overview of [organic's many benefits for climate and biodiversity in our infographic](#),
- Read our [document on organic's benefits for climate and biodiversity](#), and
- Check out our [infographics on soil](#) and [biodiversity & climate change](#).

Could not find what you were looking for? [Visit our website](#) or contact hanna.winkler@organicseurope.bio. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

For detailed information on green claims, consult:

- [IFOAM Organics Europe's position paper on sustainability labelling](#)
- [The technical briefing highlighting the limitations of the PEF's methodology](#)
- [Our work on food policies](#) (scroll down and expand 'Food labelling: Sustainability and nutritional labelling')
- Civil society's concerns:
- Our January 2024 press conference [explaining why the Product Environmental Footprint \(PEF\) is a value choice instead of natural science-based](#)
- [An open letter by civil society, farmers, of retailers and processors criticising the PEF methodology applied to food products](#) (March 2022) and a [joint open letter on concerns over PEF methodology for textiles](#) (November 2022)
- [Rapport du CESIAe sur l'affichage environnemental](#) (en français) (November 2023)

Contact silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio for more information about green claims. Please do note that we prioritise our members' requests.



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1.1.6 Biodiversity, soil, and water

The EU has [continent-wide Nature Restoration Law](#)

Today, the [Nature Restoration Law](#) entered into force. The law's objective is the long-term recovery of nature in the EU's land and sea areas. It contains legally-binding targets for all EU Member States to restore 20% of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030, and all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050. It also includes specific targets for agricultural ecosystems.

Two years ago, the Commission laid down the track and published its legislative proposal. Since then, the law encountered many hurdles, taking the forms of [many campaigns attempted to stop this key piece of nature legislation](#). The law's last hurdle was the June Council of the EU Environment Ministers' meeting where, after a month-long deadlock, Minister reached a majority and adopted the negotiated compromise.

In August 2024, it has finally crossed the finishing line! Now it is the Members States' turn. Within two years, have to submit their National Restoration Plans to the European Commission, outlining how they will deliver on the law's targets.

Because of its wide variety of [benefits for biodiversity](#), organic farming should be a key measure to restore nature on agricultural land.



More information on organic and climate:

- Get a visual overview of [organic's many benefits for climate and biodiversity in our infographic](#),
- Read our [document on organic's benefits for climate and biodiversity](#), and
- Check out our [infographics on soil](#) and [biodiversity & climate change](#).

Could not find what you were looking for? [Visit our website](#) or contact hanna.winkler@organicseurope.bio. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

We invite our members to translate our materials and the infographic [Organic's many benefits for climate and biodiversity](#). The source materials for this are available on our member extranet > [hot topics](#) > [Water, soil & biodiversity](#). For information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact membership@organicseurope.bio.



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Biodiversity management in organic greenhouses – Webinar available

In the frame of in the [IPMWORKS](#) project, we hosted [a webinar on greenhouses and biodiversity](#) – the last one in a series on organic practices. Hosting the webinar, Alba Saez, R&I coordinator at IFOAM Organics Europe introduced the topic and its contribution to the EU Green Deal's goals and pointing out that more and more farmers understand the role of biodiversity in farming. Two experts shared their research experience on biodiversity management in organic greenhouses.

Mónica González, part of [Agrobio](#)'s R&D department, started research on the selection of native shrubs to promote the presence of beneficial auxiliary biodiversity in greenhouses in 2010. Mónica gave an overview of biodiversity's role in managing pests and diseases, highlighting that effective biocontrol requires an abundance and diversity of crops' natural enemies – in balance with naturally existing plant species within and outside the greenhouse. She also talked about ecological infrastructures promoting functional diversity, such as hedgerows, biodiversity islands, and cover crops. All information is available in [Mónica's presentation for the IPMWORKS webinar on greenhouses and biodiversity](#).

Jérôme Lambion, agronomist at the Research Group for Organic Farming ([GRAB](#)) focussing on applied research on crop protection in greenhouses continued. sharing his experience in Southern France, an area where greenhouses are the dominant type of organic vegetable production, Jérôme talked about how to integrate service plants in greenhouse horticulture to improve pest control. He presented clear steps to take to manage the functional biodiversity in a greenhouse through habitat management or conservation. These steps included identifying service plants and integrating them into the cropping system through various agroecological infrastructures. [His presentation is available online](#).

If you found this topic interesting, you may also like IPMWORKS' other webinars:

- [#1 on minimising the use of copper in orchards, outdoor vegetable farms and vineyards](#); and
- [#2 on weed control in organic arable farms](#)

These webinars were part of the EU-funded project [IPMWORKS](#). The project promotes the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies, based on a EU-wide network of farmers, who will both progress further in the adoption of IPM – through peer-to-peer learning and joint efforts – and demonstrate to other farmers holistic IPM approaches. IFOAM Organics Europe is a partner in the project.

You can follow [@H2020IPMWorks](#) on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) & [YouTube](#) to stay tuned.





IPMWORKS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101000339. 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.

1.1.7 Food policy

Does organic still have a ring-fenced budget in the EU promotion policy?

The short answer: yes, even though it has been reduced, for SIMPLE projects. No MULTI projects will be funded in 2025.

Due to a reshuffling of the Commission's budget, some of the budget that could have gone to promotion policies will have to be used for other purposes, for example, supporting Ukraine and the next generation EU funds.

So, the Commission had to take some difficult decisions:

- MULTI projects, or projects in which several Member States take part, will not be funded in the 2025 annual working program. Ongoing MULTI programmes will keep on being funded. The same goes for own initiative activities of the Commission, like business trips to promote the EU's food excellence abroad;
- Topics of promotion policy will stay the same for SIMPLE projects (projects in which only one Member State takes part), for example, organic is still a topic funded by the promotion policy budget;
- The budget for SIMPLE programmes for organic was reduced from €14 million (2024) to €10 million (2025) for the internal market. The budget for organic and sustainable for the simple programmes for third countries will remain unchanged: €5 million both in 2024 and in 2025.

The Commission will also provide amendments to secondary legislation:

- Clarifying continuation rules;
- Introducing implementation based on "lump sums" to focus on results. This will not be implemented in the next call, but in two years' time;
- Strengthening commitment of beneficiaries to ensure absence of conflict of interests.

The EU's promotion policy helps EU producers to sell their farm products and open new market opportunities for EU farmers and the wider food industry. To promote EU organic and sustainable agricultural practices, the Commission annually pledges a dedicated budget.

IFOAM Organics Europe's members can [watch session about this on our member extranet](#), providing them with more information about promotion policies and how to apply. For access to the member extranet and information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact membership@organicseurope.bio.



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Sustainable public food procurement without Sustainable Food System law, what to expect?

2023 and 2024 were marked with increasing polarisation of agricultural issues, causing the watering down of progressive environmental legislations in the EU institutions. It is in this picture that the Commission postponed the publication of its [legislative framework for sustainable food systems](#) (SFS law), a flagship initiative related to the Farm to Fork strategy.



Despite NGOs and some political groups still calling for this law, there are no signs that this postponement will not be definitive. If the SFS law would not come to be, this would be a step back for the work on Sustainable Food Systems.

Sustainable public food procurement (SPP), a low-hanging fruit

In her political guidelines as candidate for the Presidency of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen announced a revision of the Public Procurement Directive (last revised in 2014). Now that she is reelected, it is important that the incoming Commission continues this work, as including a mandatory minimum criteria for organic food on the public plate has many benefits – from support to the local economy and (organic) producers to increased job satisfaction for the kitchen staff and from improved school health & performances to saving money while saving the planet.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we have been working intensely on SPP and published a [manifesto for establishing minimum requirements for public canteens](#), together with a coalition of NGOs.

Our members who are interested in this topic are invited to join the Strategic Meeting on Sustainable Public Procurement - fill out the [doodle on our member extranet](#) or contact silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio.

For more information on this issue, have a look at:

- The EU Food Policy Coalition's [Sustainable Public Procurement of food: A goal within reach](#),
- Our leaflet [Making organic products in sustainable public procurement happen](#),
- Our infographics (available in multiple languages):
 - Overall benefits: [Benefits of Sustainable Public Procurement](#),
 - [Why policymakers should consider investing in sustainable public procurement](#),
- The work of the [Buy Better Food coalition](#), campaigning for sustainable food on the public plate, and
- The [SchoolFood4Change](#) project that will provide innovative solutions and tailored, locally adaptable good practices for schools, school meal providers, public authorities, and policymakers, in line with the EU's Farm to Fork Strategy.

Could not find what you were looking for? Visit our [food policy webpage](#) and scroll down to “Food policy: Sustainable Public Procurement” or contact silvia.schmidt@organicseurope.bio. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

We invite our members to translate the infographics we have created. The source materials for this are available on our member extranet > [hot topics](#) > Sustainable Food Systems > [Sustainable Public Procurement](#). For information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact membership@organicseurope.bio.



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Challenges and opportunities facing organic & how policies can be part of the solution

Ahead of the EU elections, our Director, Eduardo Cuoco was interviewed about the current challenges organic faces. In two pieces by Nutrition Insight he [discusses the state of EU chemical-free farming](#) and the [challenges and opportunities facing the industry](#).

As it still stands to date, below you find a write up of this piece.

Nutrition Insight (NI): What specific policy changes do you recommend to EU policymakers and member states to stimulate consumer demand for organic products within the EU?



Eduardo Cuoco (EC): The current [action plan for organic production in the EU](#) (2021) sets the right priorities – it wants to both boost demand and ensure trust in organic and stimulate production at the same time. Our [manifesto ahead of the EU elections](#) echoes this approach. It is impossible to stimulate consumer demand without ensuring those who produce our food receive a fair pay – specifically farmers who provide higher environmental and social benefits should be remunerated accordingly.

To stimulate consumers' demand for organic it is crucial that consumers can make informed choices. This starts by developing policies that show the true price of food and include these in food prices, for example through taxation. Moreover, EU policies should protect consumers from greenwashing. Effective legislation to curb greenwashing should prioritise methodological advancements, steering agricultural policies away from further intensification. For example, [the Product Environmental Footprint \(PEF\) methodology used in the green claims directive is too simplistic to assess agri-food products' environmental impact](#).

Public institutions themselves can also increase consumption of organic products via [Sustainable Public Procurement](#) (SPP). EU legislation should include a mandatory clause setting minimum quotas for organic products in public institutions such as schools, kindergartens, and hospitals. For successful implementation, Sustainable Public Procurement policies must be supported by national and regional targets for organic, national certification schemes at the Member State level across various sectors, and the implementation of education and mentoring programs.

NI: What are some of the benefits of choosing organic in terms of public health, food safety and nutritional content?

EC: First, it is important to state that while many consumers start buying organic food because it does not use synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, it is much more than that. Organic farmers nurse the agroecosystem they work in and make sure it is healthy and resilient – this way they do not rely on external inputs like synthetic pesticides & fertilisers and antibiotics. This makes organic farms richer in agrobiodiversity, including a healthier soil that stores more carbon. On top of that, organic farming brings substantial socio-economic advantages – it revitalises rural economies, creates employment, and promotes healthier lifestyles.

There is promising research associating organic food with better health, but conclusive studies are still ongoing. Studies do confirm fewer pesticide residues and antibiotics in organic foods and numerous studies also link organic food consumption to a lower incidence of chronic diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular conditions. In terms of nutritional content, organic foods may provide modest benefits such as slightly higher levels of certain antioxidants and flavonoids. Additionally, dairy products from organically raised cattle may have increased Omega-3 levels because the cattle consume more grass and alfalfa.

Studies are more conclusive in demonstrating that organically produced foods have lower levels of synthetic pesticide residues and significantly reduced cadmium contamination. However, to fully understand the nutritional advantages of organic foods, there is a need for increased investment in research and innovation, along with comprehensive studies. (Sources supporting the claims in this section can be found at the end.)

NI: Choosing organic products is not solely dependent on wealth or luxury. What measures could make this goal possible?

EC: First and foremost, IFOAM Organics Europe proposes to consider the **true cost of food** – positive and negative externalities (the indirect costs of food production) – resulting from our agrifood system. For instance, the cost on ground water pollution for a hectare of conventional potatoes amounts to €1,298.00, while it amounts to €0.40 for a hectare of organic potatoes. The cost of this pollution is currently borne by the public who pay for water sanitation through taxes. If food were to reflect the prices of “externalities” like this, the price of conventionally produced food would go up while that of organic food would remain largely the same.

Another approach we suggest is to **raise taxes on synthetic pesticides and/or fertilisers**, especially those that are known to have adverse effects on humans and the environment. However, for this strategy to succeed, higher



prices for synthetic inputs must be accompanied by competitively priced alternatives, such as biocontrol products, to prevent cost pressures on farmers. Effective implementation of this approach requires supportive policies and clear communication to underline its rationale. Ideally, this taxation model would favour organic products downstream, benefiting consumers and stimulating demand for organic foods.

In both scenarios, negative externalities are recognised and higher prices are placed on unsustainably produced goods while the price for organically produced foods remain the same.

NI: The annual report from the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) noted a contraction in the organic market in 2022. What were the primary factors contributing to this decline?

From 2015 to 2020, demand for organic products doubled, and this growth continued and even peaked during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the pandemic caused supply chain disruptions which lingered. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, prices in synthetic fertilisers and pesticides peaked, leading to further challenges to the supply chain and increased costs for farming methods depending on synthetic fertilisers and pesticides. Consumers experienced not only increased food prices but also inflation – heavily impacting their spending patterns.

While the organic market moderately contracted in 2022, it generally remains as it was before the 2020 peak. Trends from 2019 to 2023 even indicate that the organic market is growing as anticipated, reflecting sustained interest and potential for future expansion in this sector.

NI: Overall, what are the key challenges and opportunities facing the organic industry's competitiveness?

EC: Some of the challenges organic experiences can be considered opportunities, which we address in our [manifesto](#).

Policies should support and reward sustainable farmers

Organic farmers should receive fair compensation and adequate policy support for the environmental and socio-economic benefits they provide. The main funding tool for farmers, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) does not adequately reward farmers who already apply practices with positive environmental benefits contributions, like organic farming. Moreover, it also discourages farmers who want to move away from unsustainable practices.

Consumer awareness

Another challenge and opportunity are the need to improve consumer awareness. It is important to keep legal clarity and avoid confusing consumers with an overload of often misleading green claims and labels. The EU organic logo and other organic certification already represent the most sustainable food choices. Legislation against greenwashing should protect the EU's flagship label and ensure it stands out against environmental claims that are often misused, like "regenerative agriculture". Effective legislation to curb greenwashing should steer agricultural policies away from further intensification, for example, the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) methodology that is too simplistic to assess agri-food products' environmental impact.

Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP)

Procurement is a strategic market development tool to increase the demand for organic, healthy, and sustainable products. Setting mandatory criteria for SPP in all public institutions' canteens (schools, hospitals, etc.) and translating the 'EU code of conduct on responsible food business and marketing practices' into mandatory criteria will increase demand for and financing the transition to sustainable food systems.



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Working together to enable farmers as agile entrepreneurs – European Biostimulants’ summit

13 June 2024, Brussels, Belgium

IFOAM Organics Europe’s Director Eduardo Cuoco spoke at a session [Supporting farmers in times of turbulence](#) at the [European Biostimulants Industry Council \(EBIC\)’s](#) summit. He elaborated on organic farmers’ advantages as agile entrepreneurs, informing the audience that they are innovative, knowledgeable and adaptable, and are used to master new solutions and use the right tools at the right moment.

Why? Organic farmers are truly agile as they invest in their (and our) futures by building a healthy, resilient system as independent from external inputs as possible. Because they do not use synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, they are constant innovators, using a wide toolset from knowledge exchange to digitalisation.

Eduardo ended by stating that, despite steady organic market growth in Europe and the organic logo being widely recognised, organic farmers still face challenges in embracing entrepreneurship. To overcome them they need:

- Technical and financial support for conversion and maintenance – EU policies like the Common Agricultural Policy should reward sustainable farmers and pioneers;
- Robust policies and funding to support educational initiatives and the development of organic farming networks;
- Adequate representation at the political level.

The [manifesto of the organic movement](#) provides more details on how policymakers can improve farmers’ livelihoods and enable their entrepreneurship.



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Research and innovation

1.1.8 Research and innovation advocacy / TP Organics

Get ready for the last part of Horizon Europe & the next framework programme – Organic Innovation Days 22-23 October, Brussels, Belgium

This year's edition of TP Organics' annual [Organic Innovation Days](#) is themed "Preparing for the next programme: Getting organic research & innovation ready for the next political mandate". TP Organics will prepare participants active in organic research & innovation (R&I) for the last part of Horizon Europe (Work Programme 2026-2027) and the next framework programme (FP10).

As the only EU event on organic and agroecological research and innovation, the Organic Innovation Days provide a unique opportunity to get insights, meet stakeholders from across Europe and network with EU decisionmakers. It will take place 22-23 October at the Organic House (Rue Marie-Thérèse 11-3, 1000 Brussels).

[Register now and get ready for Horizon Europe's next work programme.](#)

A closer look at the agenda

This year's innovation days will start with an internal CORE Organic workshop for the [CORE Organic Pleiades](#) partners. This transnational network funding organic R&I is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

The official event will kick off with a key-note by a newly elected Member of the European Parliament who will also join the high-level policy debate in which EU policymakers will discuss the next political mandate's priorities. On the second day, there will be a presentation of the latest scientific evidence about organic's contribution to long-term food security, along with opportunities for organic R&I in the new partnerships [AGROECOLOGY](#) and [FutureFoodS](#).

Participants can share their expertise and thoughts about upcoming priorities for organic research & innovation in an interactive workshop. They will feed into TP Organics' new [Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda](#) (SRIA) for Organics and Agroecology. In the afternoon, the TP Organics Stakeholder Forum will bring together all members of TP Organics to exchange and discuss about EU R&I and funding opportunities, TP Organics activities, experiences and expectations ([separate registration](#)).

Grab your chance to meet organic stakeholders from across Europe and network with EU decisionmakers. [Read the draft agenda](#) and [register now for the Organic Innovation Days 2024](#).

TP Organics is the European Technology Platform for Research & Innovation into Organics and Agroecology. IFOAM Organics Europe is a founding member and hosts its secretariat. Visit www.tporganics.eu for more information and follow its [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) @TPOrganics.



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Provide your input to EU research & innovation priorities for organic & agroecology by 18 August

The [Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda \(SRIA\) for Organics and Agroecology](#) is a key document setting organic and agroecology's research and innovation (R&I) needs to help transition EU food and farming systems.

Make sure your priorities are included and fill in TP Organics' survey – available in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [German](#), [Hungarian](#), [Romanian](#) and [Italian](#) by 18 August. Please share the survey widely in your networks!

The provisional themes of the new SRIA are:

- Elevating organics as the leader in environmental protection and climate change action
- Building an organic plant-based sector



- Ensuring ethical and sustainable integration of animals in organic farming systems
- Providing nutritious and healthy food
- Organic for everyone: Inclusive and affordable
- Digital solutions suited for organic and agroecological systems
- Reviving rural communities through organic farming

Every 5 years, [TP Organics](#) collects the research priorities and needs of the organic and agroecological sector. It then compiles these into the SRIA and uses this for advising the European Commission about its next EU R&I funding programme for research and innovation. Currently, TP Organics is developing a new SRIA for the next EU R&I framework programme succeeding [Horizon Europe](#) (FP10) within the [OrganicTargets4EU project](#) coordinated by IFOAM Organics Europe.

Indicate your priorities for future R&I in TP Organics' survey available in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [German](#), [Hungarian](#), [Romanian](#) and [Italian](#) by **18 August**.

If you have any questions, please contact info@tporganics.eu.

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Knowledge for organic

1.1.9 Spotlighthed project

[Driving organic growth? OrganicTargets4EU analysis of CAP Strategic Plans](#)

[The OrganicTargets4EU project](#) analysed current organic agricultural and aquaculture policies, revealing increased support for organic agriculture following legislative initiatives by the 2019-2024 EU Commission.

What was researched?

28 Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) Strategic Plans (2 for Belgium), their associated summary documents, financial agreements as well as 24 EU, national and regional organic action plans were compared with 20 equivalent previous action plans. A similar analysis of the Common Fishery Policy (CFP) and aquaculture policies happened for 9 selected countries.

What were the findings?

In their analysis, Nic Lampkin (Thünen Institute) and Giuseppe Lembo (Fondazione COISPA) observed significant steps in support for organic agriculture within the EU, with the EU Commission leading the charge. All EU Member States have implemented policies to support organic farming, with some, like the Netherlands and France, resuming or enhancing support after previous lapses.

The CAP Strategic Plans include detailed strategies, payment rates, and targets for increasing organic land area, aiming to double supported organic land and nearly double expenditure by 2027/8. Additionally, most Member States have integrated organic action plans that combine environmental and market-focused policies to foster sustainable organic growth.

However, challenges remain, particularly in organic aquaculture, where policy support is behind conventional practices and funding and market structures need further development.



Linear projections suggest that only 15-20% of EU agricultural land might be organic by 2030, short of the 25% target. Despite progress, achieving this goal will require greater effort, resources and a major transformation in support structures especially in research, knowledge exchange, and capacity building across the organic sector. Further work in the OrganicTargets4EU project will formulate clear recommendations for developing organic farming, specifically for the CAP post-2027.

[Read the full report and CAP Strategic Plans' analysis on OrganicTargets4EU's website.](#)

The Horizon Europe project OrganicTargets4EU (2022-2026) aims to help reach 25% of agricultural land under organic farming and a significant increase in organic aquaculture by 2030. IFOAM Organics Europe leads this project which is working on outcomes that will drive the growth and development of the organic sector focussing on policy implementation, evidence-based decision making, increased and coordinated Research & Innovation and increased knowledge sharing. The project results will be discussed in a multi-actor policy dialogue and it will make recommendations for the CAP strategic plans and EU/national organic action plans from 2025-2027 and from 2028 onwards.

Visit [the project website](#) for more information and follow its hashtag #OrganicTargets4EU on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#) or contact ambra.desimone@organicseurope.bio.



OrganicTargets4EU is funded by the European Union (Grant no. 101060368) and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) (Grant no. 22.00155). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, European Research Executive Agency (REA) or Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI). Neither the European Union nor any other granting authority can be held responsible for them.

1.1.10 Knowledge for organic

[Biodiversity management in organic greenhouses – Webinar available](#)

28 June, online

In the frame of in the [IPMWORKS](#) project, we hosted [a webinar on greenhouses and biodiversity](#) – the last one in a series on organic practices. Hosting the webinar, Alba Saez, R&I coordinator at IFOAM Organics Europe introduced the topic and its contribution to the EU Green Deal's goals and pointing out that more and more farmers understand the role of biodiversity in farming. Two experts shared their research experience on biodiversity management in organic greenhouses.

Mónica González, part of [Agrobio](#)'s R&D department, started research on the selection of native shrubs to promote the presence of beneficial auxiliary biodiversity in greenhouses in 2010. Mónica gave an overview of biodiversity's role in managing pests and diseases, highlighting that effective biocontrol requires an abundance and diversity of crops' natural enemies – in balance with naturally existing plant species within and outside the greenhouse. She also talked about ecological infrastructures promoting functional diversity, such as hedgerows, biodiversity islands, and cover crops. All information is available in [Mónica's presentation for the IPMWORKS webinar on greenhouses and biodiversity](#).

Jérôme Lambion, agronomist at the Research Group for Organic Farming ([GRAB](#)) focussing on applied research on crop protection in greenhouses continued. sharing his experience in Southern France, an area where greenhouses are the dominant type of organic vegetable production, Jérôme talked about how to integrate service plants in greenhouse horticulture to improve pest control. He presented clear steps to take to manage the functional biodiversity in a greenhouse through habitat management or conservation. These steps included identifying service plants and integrating them into the cropping system through various agroecological infrastructures. [His presentation is available online](#).

If you found this topic interesting, you may also like IPMWORKS' other webinars:



- #1 on minimising the use of copper in orchards, outdoor vegetable farms and vineyards; and
- [#2 on weed control in organic arable farms](#)

These webinars were part of the EU-funded project [IPMWORKS](#). The project promotes the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies, based on a EU-wide network of farmers, who will both progress further in the adoption of IPM – through peer-to-peer learning and joint efforts – and demonstrate to other farmers holistic IPM approaches. IFOAM Organics Europe is a partner in the project.

You can follow @H2020IPMWorks on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) & [YouTube](#) to stay tuned.



IPMWORKS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101000339. 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.

Fostering organic farming: Key factors for the development of the organic sector

The organic sector has grown steadily in EU countries in recent years. In 2022, 10.4% of the total utilised agricultural area and 4.5% of the market share was organic. The EU Farm to Fork Strategy sets the ambitious target of reaching 25% organic area by 2030. In the Horizon Europe project [OrganicTargets4EU](#) which we coordinate we want to identify scenarios and initiate a multi-stakeholder policy dialog in support of this target.

To better understand what drives organic sector development, an EU literature review and empirical findings from selected EU countries found that:

- A variety of factors are decisive for the development of the organic sector, among others:
 - Commitment by and continuity in support for organic by policymakers;
 - Combined supply-push and demand-pull measures;
 - Effective communication, collaboration and trust-building;
 - Capacity building for organic farmers through knowledge and innovation system in agriculture (AKIS);
- A food system approach is much needed, specifically:
 - A well-established supporting system across all domains (e.g. policy, farming community, market);
 - Political commitment and determination to translate political vision into action;
 - A more active role for national states in providing public goods.

In [the article we wrote for BioEcoActual](#) you can read more about the findings – in [English](#), [Spanish](#) & [Catalan](#).

About OrganicTargets4EU

The Horizon Europe project OrganicTargets4EU (2022-2026) aims to contribute to the organic Farm-to-Fork targets of 25% of agricultural land under organic farming and a significant increase in organic aquaculture by 2030. Led by IFOAM Organics Europe, the project will drive the growth and development of the organic sector by supporting the implementation of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), the EU organic regulation and the EU organic Action Plan, focusing on evidence-based decision making, increased and coordinated Research & Innovation in organic farming and increased knowledge sharing. The project results will be discussed in a multi-actor policy dialogue and it will make recommendations for the CAP strategic plans and EU/national organic action plans from 2025-2027 and from 2028 onwards.

Visit [the project website](#) for more information and follow its hashtag #OrganicTargets4EU on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#) or contact ambra.desimone@organicseurope.bio.





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Organic living labs develop and test food security & resilience scenarios

Helping to create and support “living labs” (LLs) is an important strategy within EU research and innovation to promote the transfer of useful knowledge into practice – often on a field or farm.

Living labs?

In an agricultural context, the goal of living labs is most often to create a field site or farm for testing and demonstrating new farming techniques, or equip an existing farm with the right tools and equipment to do so. A living lab is a place that farmers, advisors and other groups can visit and learn from directly, becoming a part of the larger LL community themselves.

In the [ECO-READY project](#), which seeks to create a real-time surveillance system for emerging threats to food security and biodiversity as well as knowledge-based resilience strategies, 10 living labs have been selected through an open call and evaluation process during the spring of this year (2024). They represent 10 different countries from across Europe’s climatic regions. Two of the ECO-READY living labs are focused fully on organic farming, one in Denmark and the other in the Czech Republic. In this article we will highlight these organic LLs and our collaboration with them so far.

Developing scenarios for modelling food security

But first just a wee bit of background on the goals of the collaboration with the living labs. ECO-READY has chosen the years 2030 and 2050 as the future anchors around which to develop possible future scenarios for agriculture and food production. Each LL was asked to choose 5 agricultural products important in their region and to identify drivers of change or potential shocks to the current system, with climate change and extreme weather being the two most obvious.

With these products and drivers as the starting point, the LLs met individually with small groups of ECO-READY partners to co-develop 5 food security scenarios each. The scenarios will serve as the basis for modelling led by a team of ECO-READY experts at Wageningen University with support from others at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC). They can include both challenges & risks as well as opportunities.

The goal of the modelling is to project how each of the scenario storylines could play out, looking ahead to 2030 and 2050. It will look at how the production of the selected products of each LL will be impacted and explore the overall impact on the larger food system. Most importantly, possible mitigation and resilience strategies may be identified, which will serve as a basis for policy recommendations as well as actual field experiments or trials to be tested in the living labs. All the key insights and project outcomes will be available to anyone through the ECO-READY Observatory, a mobile and web application that is the project’s primary tangible output.

OK, without further ado, let’s meet these organic pioneers!

LivOrganic, Denmark

Four Danish organisations comprise this living lab:

- 1) The Institute for Food Studies & Agri Industrial Development (IFAU) brings experience in applied social sciences with agri-food systems, value chains and food markets, and leads the LivOrganic lab.
- 2) Aarhus University’s [Department of Agroecology](#), which brings expertise in climate change modelling and scenarios, precision farming tools and arable crops.



- 3) [Organic Denmark](#) frames the Danish organic community from farm to fork and provides expertise in organic farming and framing policy recommendations.
- 4) Lastly MAA.C ApS, an SME that specialises in promotion and outreach for organic products and gathers the network [Bio Aus Dänemark](#) to connect producers with markets.

LivOrganic has chosen to focus on milk & dairy, apples, potatoes, spring barley, oats, sugar beet, and rapeseed – a few more than 5, which reflects their enthusiasm. In their proposal for the ECO-READY living-lab call, they framed their main objective as follows: “To organize a sustainable thematic living lab in Denmark to investigate the impact from climate change, biodiversity, agronomy and markets on actors’ decision to enhance or reduce organic food production, thus food security.” In doing this, LivOrganic will position themselves to address two central dilemmas: i) the use of farmland for food production versus other purposes and ii) the use of crops and other agricultural products for food or non-food purposes.

The group also highlights the issue of the lack of data – both environmental and socio-economic – for many organic crops and products. In their work with ECO-READY, they aim to help fill these data gaps. The literal grounds for doing so include a 5-hectare state-of-the-art experimental site operated by Aarhus University, as well as the fields of 10 growers who will be invited to participate and supply additional critical data and practical feedback. On the socio-economic side of the equation, LivOrganic will engage students, farmers, companies, food processors, wholesalers, & retailers, consumers, and policy makers in a variety of targeted events and activities during the two-year collaboration with ECO-READY. This multidimensional approach to gathering data will aid both in disseminating the project as well as provide a useful tool for aligning academia, industry and policy actors.

Scenarios

LivOrganic and ECO-READY partners (including IFOAM Organics Europe) co-developed a varied set of scenarios, each of which “describes an “anticipated future and the assumed impact on organic agricultural production.” In brief, the questions at the heart of the different scenarios are:

- How will predicted changes in temperature and precipitation affect the products selected by the living lab? One scenario examines increased precipitation and higher temperatures in the winter season, affecting dairy, sugar beet, and potato sectors; a second focuses on warmer temperatures and periodic risk of drought in the summer season.
- How can biodiversity benefit agricultural production? LivOrganic lists many benefits and examples, such as actively reducing pests and fungi, achieving resilience through intercropping and mixed livestock-crop farms, diversifying the market through introduction of new and heirloom varieties, and buffering against extreme weather events.
- How will national-level land-use regulations that incentivise farmers to take land out of production and use it instead for nature restoration or energy production (e.g., solar farms) impact organic farms and their decision making?

LivOrganic emphasised that these scenarios are a “first draft”, a starting point, and that they are still to be validated by Danish organic farmers in their community, and possibly refined. Upcoming activities organised by LivOrganic include one workshop co-developed with young organic farmers to define the future of organic farming in Denmark and another that will bring organic producers to the table to discuss production in the context of future climate change.

Living Lab PROBIO, Czech Republic

The PROBIO Living Lab is coordinated by [Czech Organics](#), s.r.o., who is represented in the project by its founder, Jan Trávníček. Czech organics is a young, rapidly developing company providing complex advisory services and research on organic farming in the Czech Republic. The second partner is [Ekofarma PROBIO](#), s.r.o., a 371-hectare working organic farm established in 2007 and also an official demonstration farm of the Czech Ministry of Agriculture since 2018. The farm has long been involved in applied research on organic farming. Michael Vrána is the current farm manager and will be involved in the collaboration. The third official member, with a very



similar yet *dashingly* different name, is [PRO-BIO](#), obchodní společnost (trading company) s.r.o. The PRO-BIO trading co. was established in 1992 and is one of the biggest organic food processors in the Czech Republic. The company is currently collaborating with more than 100 domestic farmers and is a producer of certified organic seeds. Adam Brezáni is involved in both Ekofarma PROBIO and PRO-BIO trading Co., and will represent them in ECO-READY.

The PROBIO living lab partners are located in the Velke Hosteradky agricultural area in the South Moravia region which, due to the local climate, is one of the most drought-prone areas of the country and consequently has seen significant soil erosion. In the collaboration with ECO-READY they will focus on pork, buckwheat, spelt, alfalfa, and crimson clover.

In addition to organic-certified practices, Ekofarma PROBIO and partners have reintroduced and cultivated heritage varieties of cereals and buckwheat to better adapt crop production to climate change and to prevent further degradation of soil quality. They identify for their region gaps, data requirements, and how they will help to address them through the collaboration with ECO-READY and beyond. Most of the gaps are related to lack of data or resources at the *local level*. As examples, a lack of data on the impacts of various environmental and climatic factors on crops grown in the region, insufficient knowledge-and-technology transfer amongst the local farming community due to a lack of advisors, and insufficient opportunities for collaboration at local and regional level.

Already in their proposal, PROBIO touched on potential policy recommendations related to their five chosen products. For example, “policy incentives for adopting climate-smart practices in pig farming”, “policies that encourage perennial grass-clover mixtures, such as subsidies for crop rotation that include, for example, clover or alfalfa”, and “policies that support the development and adoption of resilient spelt varieties.” We as IFOAM Organics Europe will work closely with the living labs on these policy recommendations – a key project outcome.

Scenarios

The Czech Republic has been experiencing warmer winters and summers, with overall less but more intense rain, resulting in drier conditions on average. These trends are projected by the IPCC to continue and intensify in coming decades.

To start addressing these current and future challenges, PROBIO and ECO-READY partners will focus on modelling and experiments around five main scenarios:

- 1) The status quo: What will the situation likely be in 2030 and 2050 for the 5 selected products?
- 2) Extreme weather fluctuations and their impacts
- 3) Sustainable practices that can mitigate against extreme weather events, such as enhancing soil health and biodiversity
- 4) Organic market disruption caused by “economic/trade matters, inflation pressures, combined with increasing prices of farming
- 5) Contribution to the sustainability of local organic supply chains by “seeding organic stewards” through education programmes, as well as revamping policies around organic farming.

Impacts and promising mitigation & adaptation strategies will be investigated for all scenarios.

To conclude, we are delighted to have these two passionate organic living labs involved in the ECO-READY project, and we are looking forward to continuing our collaboration in earnest now that the summer holidays are behind us. [This map lists all ECO-READY Living Labs](#), including descriptions and more info.

About the ECO-READY project

The Horizon Europe-funded [ECO-READY](#) project wants to serve policy, farms, enterprises, consumers, and society. It will assess drivers of climate change affecting food security and biodiversity across Europe. Understanding the EU’s food system vulnerabilities will allow the project to develop scenarios which will be tested by a network of



10 Living Labs. As project partner, IFOAM Organics Europe has been involved co-creating the scenario development methodology and promoting the first round of a Delphi-study to identify local challenges and interests around food security, biodiversity, and climate change.

Between 2022 and 2026, its 18 partners from 11 countries (and 10 Living Labs) will make the knowledge they produce available frequently and consistently through an e-platform and mobile application, the ECO-READY Observatory. Follow the project's developments on [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#) & [Facebook](#).



This project has received funding from the European Union's HORIZON-CL6-2022 research and Innovation programme under grant agreement N°101084201

IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE DEVELOPMENTS

Updates for members

Building our members' capacity, also after the EU elections

"Let's Discuss Organic" webinar: EU policymaking and advocacy

A new European Parliament is settling in and the new European Commission is scheduled to officially start its work on 1 November. What better moment for a refresher or to learn about EU policymaking and advocacy?

If you're unsure of who is responsible for what between the Parliament, the Council or the Commission or how they work with each other, join our first post-summer "Let's Discuss Organic" webinar on 5 September 2024.

Besides this webinar, we also summarised Paul Holmbeck's masterclasses on developing organic's national capacity and organic policies.

All this information is available [on our member extranet](#).

Does this sound interesting to you but you aren't an IFOAM Organics Europe member? Contact membership@organicseurope.bio. They are available for your membership-related questions and extranet access rights (issues).

EU Organic Day communication toolkit

This year we are providing our members with positive messages and visuals they can use on their social media accounts and/or website to promote EU Organic Day. Where we have the in-house capacity, we are providing these in the languages our colleagues speak.

All materials are available on our [member extranet > hot topics & resources > EU Organic Day](#). This communication toolkit is available to members only.

For member extranet access rights (and issues), please contact our colleagues at membership@organicseurope.bio.

Let's make organic visible: Sharing EU Organic Day initiatives

The EU Organic Day is coming up on 23 September, and it will be the perfect occasion to celebrate organic and its positive impacts on the environment, health, and society.

Are you organising a national / local event to celebrate EU Organic Day?

Please [submit the initiatives and events you and your members / partners will be organising](#). We will give these initiatives visibility on our webpage and social media.

[Check out our interactive map with initiatives](#) – We are updating it on a rolling basis.

Are you still unsure about what you will be organising? Or about what is a 'good' initiative? Find inspiration:

- On our [member extranet > hot topics & resources > EU Organic Day](#),
- In the [EU Organic Day initiatives' map on our website](#),
- Or contact us at communication@organicseurope.bio for questions.

Do you have an initiative that is transforming food and farming, but isn't centred around EU Organic Day? Consider submitting it to www.euorganic2030.bio, our website collecting initiatives that are transforming food and farming.

About the Let's Discuss Organic series



Let's Discuss Organic is more than just a webinar series exclusive to IFOAM Organics Europe's members. It is a community of passionate individuals dedicated to promoting organic food and farming's active role in the transformation to a sustainable food system.

These webinars are an opportunity for our members to access first-hand information about EU-related policies and activities from Brussels-based experts.

Were you unable to attend or missed a previous session? All presentations and recordings are accessible on our [member extranet](#) > [hot topics](#) > [member-only updates](#) > [Let's Discuss Organic](#) so you can re-watch the webinars and review the content at your convenience.

About EU Organic Day

Officially launched in 2021 by the European Parliament, the Commission, and the Council of the European Union, this day represents the occasion to, among others, assess trends in consumer demands, continue raising awareness of organic in the supply chain and finally, define new targets for the future of organic in Europe. Every year, many of our members celebrate organic – in person, online and according to their own flavours. So, we want to ask: what are your plans for this year's 23 September?



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CDG meeting on organic farming: Agroforestry, plant protection & compliance

24 May 2024, online

Organic stakeholders exchanged with the Commission on synergies between agroforestry and organic, plant protection products and the regulatory switch from equivalence to compliance during the May Civil Dialogue Group (CDG) on organic farming.

Our members shared their expertise on various subjects like the state of the Organic Market, Sustainable Public Procurement and the benefits of organic's approach to plant health. Our members find a debrief, presentations and agenda on our member extranet > [Civil Dialogue Group](#) > Meetings documents.

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member who does not have access to our member extranet yet? Contact membership@organicseurope.bio.

How do Civil Dialogue Groups (CDGs) work and how can you get involved?

The European Commission's Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) regularly consults and discusses policy options with stakeholders in the Civil Dialogue Groups (CDGs). IFOAM Organics Europe's office staff, members and experts are part of all groups relevant for organic production to ensure the organic's voice is heard.

Option 1: Assigned member

Assigned members of a CDG can attend CDG meetings and have the right to take the floor. They are assigned following a short and easy application process. IFOAM Organics Europe members who are interested in a seat in the CDGs can write to civildialoguegroups@organicseurope.bio. Following your application, our Board assigns the selected members for a two-years mandate.

Option 2: Observer

It is also possible to join CDG meetings as an observer (online). We make the observer link available to all our members on member extranet > [Civil Dialogue Group](#) > Events.



Information for IFOAM Organics Europe's members

IFOAM Organics Europe's members can read about the key points of the recent CDG meetings on the [member extranet](#). If you want to get more details on any topic, please check our [civil dialogue groups extranet space](#) and get access to debrief, minutes and other documents of the CDG meetings.

Should you have any questions regarding Civil Dialogue Groups and/or would like to share relevant information or topics to cover in upcoming CDGs please write to civildialoguegroups@organicseurope.bio.

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member who does not have access to our member extranet yet? Contact membership@organicseurope.bio for access rights (issues).



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Task force on biocontrol starts its work

IFOAM Organics Europe's new [Task Force on Biocontrol](#) will take up its work in September. The group will discuss this emerging hot topic and help position organic in upcoming debates and legislation dealing with the approval of biocontrol products.

The task force consists of IFOAM Organics Europe's members active on the topic. They will all matters related to biocontrol, such as its definition, different methods and agents, and the current legislation. We will keep our members informed about relevant developments in our relevant interest and expert groups and on our member extranet.

For more information on biocontrol, plant health care and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please [visit our website](#) or contact maria.zintl@organicseurope.bio. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on the task force in [its terms of reference](#) and background materials on the topic in the [arguments database on the member extranet](#) (main messages, arguments/FAQs, visuals & videos). Contact 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.



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Call to join the IFOAM Aquaculture Forum – EU Coordination (IAF)

Our members are invited to get involved in discussions about organic aquaculture production in our expert platform, the IFOAM Aquaculture Sector Platform.

This group of experienced organic aquaculture producers, certifiers, researchers, and other stakeholders:

- Further develops organic aquaculture and support-related activities;
- Facilitates information exchange between IFOAM members;
- Addresses standards and certification matters;
- Develops positions on issues if the need arises, and
- Advises policymakers and other institutions on matters related to aquaculture.



We are reactivating this group and intensify our work in the coming months and years. The forum wants to continue improving organic to get to more sustainable aquatic systems that foster biodiversity, promote animal welfare and respect all aquatic life – while protecting sensitive habitats, minimising pollution, and enhancing water resources and quality – in a legal framework that allows the organic aquaculture sector to grow.

Those interested can contact lea.bauer@organicseurope.bio for more information.

IFOAM Organics Europe, providing the sector with expertise regulatory expertise

Since March 2022, we are offering [guidelines to help practitioners interpret the EU Organic Regulation](#). These guidelines help readers to navigate the regulation, its implementing and delegated acts and links to definitions, recitals, other EU legislation and more. We will update the guidelines in the last quarters of 2024.

For more information on the EU organic regulation and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please [visit our website](#) or contact lea.bauer@organicseurope.bio. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

IFOAM Organics Europe members have early access to information on the EU Organic Regulation [through our Interest and Expert Groups](#) and our member [member extranet](#). They also have one free access to the [EU Organic Regulation guidelines](#).

For access to our member extranet and information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact membership@organicseurope.bio.



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Need inspiration communicating organic's benefits for the **climate and **biodiversity**?**



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.



Like the visuals and infographics on our website?
As our member, you are welcome to translate them into your own language
Contact communication@organicseurope.bio

Updates about the organisation

Welcoming our new colleagues

Karim Jouhari

Karim is TP Organics' new Advocacy Officer. He holds a professional qualification in Corporate Communications and Event Management from IHECS Academy Brussels, a Master of European Interdisciplinary Studies from College of Europe (Natolin, PL), a Master of History from Université Catholique de Louvain (BE) and a Bachelor of History from Facultés Universitaires de Saint-Louis (Brussels, BE). In 2020, Karim joined a consultancy in Brussels as a Communications & Public Affairs Consultant where he gained extensive experience in communication, networking and EU Research & Innovation project management related to agriculture while working with various clients. Joining TP Organics as an Advocacy Officer, Karim looks forward to contributing to promoting organic and agroecological approaches within European R&I agenda.



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Silvia Carocci

Article: Silvia is IFOAM Organics Europe's new Personal and Office Assistant. She is a Master's graduate in Political Science and International Relations, with three years of work experience in campaigning and public affairs. After an internship at the Italian Delegation at Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), she worked as a Technical Secretariat for the Bid Committee of Rome's candidature to Expo 2030. Silvia is passionate about EU policies and motivated to advocate for political change. She has always been aware of organic farming as responsible consumer, and wants to contribute to reaching IFOAM Organics Europe's vision. At IFOAM Organics Europe she is taking up the role of Personal and Office Assistant to the Director.



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Saying goodbye to our volunteers

Lumi Hultkrantz

Our Events & Membership team thanks Lumi for her great work during her 7-month ESC experience. Her innovative ideas greatly contributed to the success of Organics Europe's 2024 Youth Event in Bari, Italy. Lumi took great ownership of the event and coordinated the programme, communicated with attendees and hosted the event. She also coordinated our series of "Let's Discuss Organic" member-only webinars and supported the team with other tasks.

Maelis Juvin

Maelis was a great addition to the Project & Partnerships team during her 7-months as ESC volunteer. She contributed to the good management of our funding work, learning first-hand how to develop proposals and reports. With her fresh ideas and creativity, Maelis contributed to new communication approaches to sponsors and foundations. In her free time, she engaged with the Belgian rural community, helping farmers and participating to local farmers networks. We are happy that she volunteered with us and wish her a bright future!

Rebeca Gonzalez



Rebeca, a young professional from Barcelona, volunteered as ESC in our Research & Innovation unit for 7 months. She supported TP Organics, the European Technology Platform for Research & Innovation into Organics and Agroecology in its communication and events. We thank Rebeca for her motivation and contributions.



The volunteering project is funded by the European Solidarity Corps programme of the European Union. The sole responsibility of the content lies with the author and communication reflects only the author's view. The National Agency and the European Commission are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

Giulia Kessous

Giulia was part of our team an Erasmus student for 6 months. With her previous experience in organic and her motivation, she greatly contributed to the policy team's policy and advocacy work. Giulia worked on several topics including water and climate, and was instrumental in creating an advocacy toolkit for IFOAM Organics Europe's members. We will miss her professionalism, high-quality work and passion for organic. We wish her all the best in her new personal and professional adventures!



EVENTS

Preview of events

24 finalists highlight excellent examples of EU organic from field to fork

23 September 2024, Brussels, Belgium

On 19 July, [the EU Commission revealed the finalists of the 2024 EU Organic Awards](#), the EU-wide yearly initiative recognising organic actors who have developed excellent, innovative, and inspiring projects that advance organic food and farming. This year, 24 finalists from 12 EU countries were selected across 8 different categories.

The EU Organic Awards, launched in 2022 as part of the [Action Plan for the Development of Organic Production](#), aim to recognize excellence throughout the organic value chain. These awards not only showcase the best in organic farming but also raise awareness of organic practices and increase the visibility of the EU organic logo. Now in its third edition, the 2024 Awards feature seven categories, with eight individual awards to be presented. The awards are jointly organized by the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Committee of the Regions, IFOAM Organics Europe, and COPA-COGECA, with the support of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

The winners of the 2024 EU Organic Awards will be announced at an official ceremony in Brussels on September 23, coinciding with the celebration of the annual [EU Organic Day](#). Established in 2021 by the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Council of the European Union, EU Organic Day is a key event that promotes organic farming as a model for sustainable development. It also serves as an opportunity to assess Europe's progress towards its goal of having 25% of agricultural land dedicated to organic farming by 2030, as well as trends in consumer demand and the implementation of the EU Organic Action Plan.

This year's finalists of the EU Organic Awards in each category are:

Best organic farmer (female)

- Blagovesta Vasileva, [The wild farm \(ДИВАТА ФЕРМА\)](#), Gorno Pole, Eastern Rhodopes, Bulgaria
- Caroline Devillers, [Bel Go Bio](#), Hollogne-sur-Geer, province of Liège, Belgique
- Reinhild Frech-Emmelmann, [Reinsaat GmbH](#), St. Leonhard am Hornerwald, Lower Austria, Austria

Best organic farmer (male)

- Gianpaolo Mancini, [Il sentiero del Riccio](#), Sicignano degli Alburni, Salerno, Italy
- Tommi Hasu, [LuomuMattinen](#), Oravala, Kouvola, Finland
- Benny Schöpf, [Kartoffelkombinat](#), München, Bavaria, Germany

Best organic region

- [Comunidade Intermunicipal do Alto Tâmega e Barroso](#), Chaves, Portugal
- Comunidad autónoma de Castilla – La Mancha, Spain
- [South Savo](#), Finland

Best organic city

- [BioStadt Bremen](#), Germany
- Cascais, Lisbon district, Portugal
- [Las Rozas](#), Community of Madrid, Spain

Best organic “biodistrict”

- [Distretto del Cibo Monregalese-Cebano](#), Cuneo, Piedmont, Italy
- [Bioregião de S. Pedro do Sul](#), Viseu district, Beira alta, Portugal
- [Sörmland Bio-district](#), Sörmland, Sweden

Best organic food processing SME (Small and Medium Enterprises)

- [Biologon GmbH](#), Hochfilzen, Tyrol, Austria



- [Gino Girolomoni Cooperativa Agricola](#), Isola del Piano, Montebello, Marche, Italy
- [Organic veggio food GmbH/SOTO organic specialities](#), Bad Endorf, Bavaria, Germany

Best organic food retailer

- [BIOGAST GmbH](#), Zwettl, Lower Austria, Austria
- [Coolanowle Organic Meats](#), Ballickmoyler, County Laois, Ireland
- [SAIFRESC](#), Catarroja, Valencian Community, Spain

Best organic restaurant/food service

- [B2 Bio pur GmbH](#), Binsdorf, Baden-Württemberg, Germany
- [Biohotel St. Daniel](#), Štanjel, Primórska region, Slovenia
- [Kalf & Hansen](#), Stockholm, Sweden

Do you know of any projects that would be fit to apply for the next edition of the EU Organic Awards?

[Documents with practical guidelines](#) are available in all official EU languages. For more information about the previous winners of EU Organic Awards:

- Articles about past [EU Organic Awards winners on our website](#),
- On social media using #EUOrganic,
- 2023: [Videos winners #EUOrganic Awards 2023](#) and [our article](#),
- 2022: [Videos winners #EUOrganic Awards 2022](#), and [our article](#).

Further information about the candidates, the selection criteria, and the awards in general can be found on the [EU Organic Awards](#) webpage.



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Natexpo 2024: The organic sector meets in Lyon

23-24 September 2024, Lyon, France

Since 2018, Natexpo has been organised every two years (even-numbered years) in Lyon, in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes. This is no coincidence as it has been France's leading region in numbers of organic processors and third in terms of organic production. Lyon is a dynamic and attractive regional capital also close to European markets, making it the ideal place to host this event.

Natexpo 2024, taking place on 23-24 September, will offer the opportunity to discover local companies, illustrating the region's vitality and innovative flair.

A revamped programme of plenary talks and content themes

For its 2024 show, Natexpo is taking a fresh new perspective to offer ever more efficient responses to key issues facing the organic sector. [Natexbio](#) invites you to the "Stage" (La Scène) for two days of discussions with economic and political decision makers. Designed as the show's nerve centre, the forum is reserved for thematically relevant plenaries and themes. Local market players, institutional representatives, retailers, producers, processors and political figures will discuss and debate the sector's trends and challenges.

This edition will cover several themes, including our environment, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), commercial and out-of-home foodservices, consumer trends and market changes, and communication trends. Talks followed by debates will bring together political and institutional leaders and organic companies covering their priorities and business challenges.



[Bio Linéaires](#) and its experts will take their annual residency in the Organic Trends Forum, addressing the hottest topics for organic shops: new generations of organic brands, how to recover after the crisis, French and Belgian distribution, and consumption... The full programme is available on natexpo.com

Retail: Turnout from all links in the chain

The entire supply chain will be present, meeting up and exchanging views and experiences, making Natexpo a must-be in the organic calendar.

In the **Institutionals Village**, you will be able to meet the representatives of the trade associations making up Natexbio: Cosmebio, Forebio, Synabio, Synadiet and Synadis Bio as well as [La Maison de la Bio](#) and [Agence Bio](#). In a brand-new development, the **Organic Retailers Village** is making its debut under the auspices of [Synadis Bio](#). The main chains from specialist retail will be there to showcase their commitments.

Independent retailers will also be present. This year Natexpo is launching the operation **Local Shops**, a tailored programme to help independent shop owners get the most out of their exhibition experience through content, training and business meetings, in association with Bio Linéaires. They are also offered accommodation to assist them in organising their trip.

Large retail also has its role to play and is invited to join in through the operation **Bio Connexion by Natexpo** to meet the producers and manufacturers who could revolutionise their organic sections.

Exhibitor trends: What's new at Natexpo?

Astonishing results are noted in **plant innovations**. More than half of French people have reduced their meat consumption in recent years, and nearly half of them for ecological reasons. For many years, plant-based food brands have been innovating to offer alternatives to meat products. The names are intriguing, and the results are up to expectations!

Things are also moving in the **drinks** department: organic brands are constantly developing unexpected recipes with increasingly original and delicious ingredients. A far cry from excessively sweet soft drinks, we are seeing a wave of imaginative blends, fermented beverages and alcohol-free spirits, which can be discovered at Natexpo.

For both food and non-food products, Natexpo exhibitors are ramping up their resourcefulness to make new products from **downgraded foodstuffs**, by-products or raw materials destined to be thrown away. No more unsold products without a solution, no more unnecessary packaging: that's the principle of these brands that are shaking up the segment!

Another trend worth highlighting is **fairtrade**. The fairtrade market in the specialist organic retail sector is worth €266.7 million, just over 11.9% of products with a barcode on the specialist organic market. While fair trade once applied to very specific ingredients, such as chocolate or sugar, it is now well represented in numerous departments, in particular fresh and chilled. Labels (Fairtrade Max Havelaar, Bio Partenaire, Fair for Life, Agri Éthique France, Bio Équitable en France, etc.) are an advantage and can complement local sourcing: although some products come from far away, they allow people to make a decent living through their work while protecting biodiversity thanks to strict specifications. And that is not incompatible with local sourcing! Nearly 1,500 "Origine France" fair trade products were marketed in 2023, of which 81% organic.

Discover the full trends unveiled in the Natexpo Journal with a presentation of exhibitors' innovations, available at www.natexpo.com

Natexpo 2024 at a glance

- A new, shorter and more effective format: 2 days, weekdays only (Monday/Tuesday)
- 6 exhibition sectors: Organic Food, Cosmetics and Hygiene Products, Dietary Supplements, Ingredients and Raw Materials, Eco-friendly Home Products, Services and Equipment for Retail and Brands.
- 20% of new exhibitors
- 12 winners of the 2024 Natexpo Awards



- A simplified offer: 2 stand options and a 10% reduction for all exhibitors who are members of the Cosmébio, Forébio, Synabio, Synadiet and Synadis Bio trade associations,
- Innovation with an incubation area: The Seeds Village & The Big Splash, The New Products Gallery, The Natexpo Awards
- Business: 3 operations dedicated to retail – the Organic Retailers Village, Local Shops and Bio Connexion by Natexpo.
- Content: The organic sector takes centre stage
- Conviviality: Natexpo Tchín-Tchín, a festive and musical aperitif on the Monday evening

[Order your visitor badge on natexpo.com](https://natexpo.com) and be part of the experience.

Advisory services & advisors, join our [OrganicAdviceNetwork](#)

25 September 2024, online

We invite agricultural and rural advisory services and advisors with interest and competences in organic agriculture to join the [OrganicAdviceNetwork](#).

On 25 September 2024 we will present the project's activities and possible levels of engagement.

Do you want to know more about [OrganicAdviceNetwork](#)? Are you interested to participate in project activities or discuss potential collaborations? [Register to join us online](#) on 5 September 2024 from 10:00-11:30 CEST.

About the [OrganicAdviceNetwork](#)

The [OrganicAdviceNetwork project](#) will create and animate a network of advisors and advisory services for the organic sector across Europe. It will do so via in-person and online trainings and courses on a wide variety of agricultural topics to help conventional advisors or young graduates interested in becoming organic advisors. Organic advisors with different levels of experience will exchange with their peers. The project will also research the finance and business-side of establishing a European network of organic advisory services.

Advisory services from 14 European countries are involved in the project but **all types of organic advisors and advisory services willing to join the network and/or attend the trainings are very welcome!**

As IFOAM Organics Europe we lead on this project. For more information, please contact claire.morelle@organicseurope.bio and stefano.orsini@organicseurope.bio.



Funded by
the European Union



OrganicAdviceNetwork is funded by the European Union (Grant no. 101134850) and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) (Grant no. 23.0639, 101134850). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, European Research Executive Agency (REA) or Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI). Neither the European Union nor any other the granting authority can be held responsible for them."

Civil society is taking the CAP by storm: [What happened, what's next and how to get involved?](#)

Europe, 1-31 October 2024

The Good Food Good Farming campaign mobilised ahead of the European elections, organising a stunt under the motto [We can't eat promises!](#) in Brussels on Saturday 1 June. Our staff took part in a demonstration calling for climate action and a fair transition of our agri-food systems. Along with NGOs and grassroots movements, all participants gathered at Place de l'Albertine in Brussels, **urging politicians to improve farmers' conditions, halt environmental rollbacks, and strengthen climate policies.**

Action days calling for a just food system transition in October



Rue Marie-Thérèse 11 – 1000 Brussels – Belgium – Phone: +32 2 280 12 23 – Email: info@organicseurope.bio

The Campaign is continuing its actions focusing its [Action Days 2024](#) on the Common Agricultural Policy. Any European event demanding a just transition can register on goodfoodgoodfarming.eu/action-days. There are no strict rules for the event, everything that is related to good food and farming works: a harvest festival, seed fair, film screening, farm-visit, picnic, protest or public discussion – everything is welcome!

Add your event's voice to the call & use ready-made communication materials

Interested to join? Is it simple: Declare your support and register your event via an [online form](#) . Your event and all the others will be available on an interactive map, a great opportunity to make noise around your own demands for European #GoodFoodGoodFarming!

If you want more information, you can read the campaign's [Call to Action](#) and check the ready-made [communication material](#).

About Good Food Good Farming

The civil society alliance [Good Food Good Farming](#) (GFGF) campaigns for sustainable food and farming across Europe. By bringing together groups and organisations active at local, national and EU level it campaigns to transform EU food and farming policies. IFOAM Organics Europe has been part of the coalition since its inception. The campaign organises annual European Days of Action 1-31 October. Are you interested to learn more or take part? [Subscribe to the GFGF newsletter](#) or [find your national contact for the Good Food Good Farming alliance](#).



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Join Europe's organic leaders at the Nordic Organic Food Fair

9-10 October 2024, Stockholm, Sweden

The international trade fair [Nordic Organic Food Fair](#) is a must-attend event for organic stakeholders and certified organic businesses. [Free registration is now open](#) for the first Stockholm edition this October, after over 10 successful years in Malmö. Use this prime opportunity to connect with like-minded industry leaders and explore cutting-edge certified organic products.

Here's why you should make the journey to Sweden. First and foremost, the event is Europe's leading trade fair for certified organic products. It provides an unparalleled platform to discover products across multiple sectors. Exhibitors range from established industry giants to innovative start-ups, ensuring that you'll encounter a diverse array of food, drink, health, beauty and household products. Additionally, international pavilions featuring products from Organic Sweden, Organic Denmark, Pro Luomu, KRAV, and other major organic certifications add to the global appeal.

The show also features the [Big Nordic Organic Debate](#), providing a key platform to discuss the future of organic standards and practices across Europe. Coupled with data-driven sessions and panel discussions across two seminar theatres, you'll gain insights that are directly relevant to your business and the broader European organic movement.

Finally, the event's central location in Stockholm offers easy accessibility for European participants. Scandinavia continues to lead the way in the organic and sustainable movement, so don't miss it! Whether you're seeking to discover new certified organic products, engage in high-level debates, or expand your business connections, the Nordic Organic Food Fair is the show for you. With free registration now open, this is the time to secure your spot.

[Register for free](#) and grab the opportunity to be at the heart of organic innovation and networking this October.



Get ready for the last part of Horizon Europe & the next framework programme – Organic Innovation Days
22-23 October, Brussels, Belgium

This year's edition of TP Organics' annual [Organic Innovation Days](#) is themed "Preparing for the next programme: Getting organic research & innovation ready for the next political mandate". TP Organics will prepare participants active in organic research & innovation (R&I) for the last part of Horizon Europe (Work Programme 2026-2027) and the next framework programme (FP10).

As the only EU event on organic and agroecological research and innovation, the Organic Innovation Days provide a unique opportunity to get insights, meet stakeholders from across Europe and network with EU decisionmakers. It will take place 22-23 October at the Organic House (Rue Marie-Thérèse 11-3, 1000 Brussels).

[Register now and get ready for Horizon Europe's next work programme.](#)

A closer look at the agenda

This year's innovation days will start with an internal CORE Organic workshop for the [CORE Organic Pleiades](#) partners. This transnational network funding organic R&I is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

The official event will kick off with a key-note by a newly elected Member of the European Parliament who will also join the high-level policy debate in which EU policymakers will discuss the next political mandate's priorities. On the second day, there will be a presentation of the latest scientific evidence about organic's contribution to long-term food security, along with opportunities for organic R&I in the new partnerships [AGROECOLOGY](#) and [FutureFoodS](#).

Participants can share their expertise and thoughts about upcoming priorities for organic research & innovation in an interactive workshop. They will feed into TP Organics' new [Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda](#) (SRIA) for Organics and Agroecology. In the afternoon, the TP Organics Stakeholder Forum will bring together all members of TP Organics to exchange and discuss about EU R&I and funding opportunities, TP Organics activities, experiences and expectations ([separate registration](#)).

Grab your chance to meet organic stakeholders from across Europe and network with EU decisionmakers. [Read the draft agenda](#) and [register now for the Organic Innovation Days 2024](#).

TP Organics is the European Technology Platform for Research & Innovation into Organics and Agroecology. IFOAM Organics Europe is a founding member and hosts its secretariat. Visit www.tporganics.eu for more information and follow its [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) @TPorganics.



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Organic businesses, we are working on a new event just for you
14 November 2024, online

We are proud to introduce a new event: the Organic Food Forum. Taking place for the first time this November, the forum will provide a platform for organic businesses to connect, explore collaboration, share best practices and get insights on the many opportunities the organic sector has to offer!

The Organic Food Forum will combine the strengths and networks of our two previous business-specific events: the [Organic Food Conference](#) and [IFOAM Organics Europe meets business](#).



Do not worry though, the Organic Food Forum is keeping the most important elements of both events:

- Expert speakers and thought leaders from the organic industry;
- A focus on networking and peer-to-peer exchange on topics relevant to the industry;
- A balanced mix of organic businesses, from organic pioneers to businesses new to organic; and
- Representation across the organic supply – producers, processors, traders, and retailers.

Stay tuned for updates [on our website's event page](#) and [by subscribing to our newsletter](#).

21st Organic World Congress in Taiwan

2-4 December 2024, Taiwan

Every three years, the global organic movement meets at the IFOAM [Organic World Congress](#) (OWC) and holds [its General Assembly](#).

The Organic World Congress brings together thousands of organic farmers, producers, researchers, advocates, and policy experts from around the world. [Get informed about registration](#) and programme

The OWC provides inspiration and momentum for all those taking part and is seen as a leading event for the global organic sector. It has a long history, spanning back to 1977, and has been a key meeting place of the organic movement ever since.

Explore Organic World Congress via www.owc.ifoam.bio.

Review of events

Working together to enable farmers as agile entrepreneurs – European Biostimulants' summit

13 June 2024, Brussels, Belgium

IFOAM Organics Europe's Director Eduardo Cuoco spoke at a session [Supporting farmers in times of turbulence](#) at the [European Biostimulants Industry Council \(EBIC\)'s](#) summit. He elaborated on organic farmers' advantages as agile entrepreneurs, informing the audience that they are innovative, knowledgeable and adaptable, and are used to master new solutions and use the right tools at the right moment.

Why? Organic farmers are truly agile as they invest in their (and our) futures by building a healthy, resilient system as independent from external inputs as possible. Because they do not use synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, they are constant innovators, using a wide toolset from knowledge exchange to digitalisation.

Eduardo ended by stating that, despite steady organic market growth in Europe and the organic logo being widely recognised, organic farmers still face challenges in embracing entrepreneurship. To overcome them they need:

- Technical and financial support for conversion and maintenance – EU policies like the Common Agricultural Policy should reward sustainable farmers and pioneers;
- Robust policies and funding to support educational initiatives and the development of organic farming networks;
- Adequate representation at the political level.

The [manifesto of the organic movement](#) provides more details on how policymakers can improve farmers' livelihoods and enable their entrepreneurship.



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[Biodiversity management in organic greenhouses – Webinar available](#)



28 June 2024, online

In the frame of in the [IPMWORKS](#) project, we hosted [a webinar on greenhouses and biodiversity](#) – the last one in a series on organic practices. Hosting the webinar, Alba Saez, R&I coordinator at IFOAM Organics Europe introduced the topic and its contribution to the EU Green Deal's goals and pointing out that more and more farmers understand the role of biodiversity in farming. Two experts shared their research experience on biodiversity management in organic greenhouses.

Mónica González, part of [Agrobio](#)'s R&D department, started research on the selection of native shrubs to promote the presence of beneficial auxiliary biodiversity in greenhouses in 2010. Mónica gave an overview of biodiversity's role in managing pests and diseases, highlighting that effective biocontrol requires an abundance and diversity of crops' natural enemies – in balance with naturally existing plant species within and outside the greenhouse. She also talked about ecological infrastructures promoting functional diversity, such as hedgerows, biodiversity islands, and cover crops. All information is available in [Mónica's presentation for the IPMWORKS webinar on greenhouses and biodiversity](#).

Jérôme Lambion, agronomist at the Research Group for Organic Farming ([GRAB](#)) focussing on applied research on crop protection in greenhouses continued. sharing his experience in Southern France, an area where greenhouses are the dominant type of organic vegetable production, Jérôme talked about how to integrate service plants in greenhouse horticulture to improve pest control. He presented clear steps to take to manage the functional biodiversity in a greenhouse through habitat management or conservation. These steps included identifying service plants and integrating them into the cropping system through various agroecological infrastructures. [His presentation is available online](#).

If you found this topic interesting, you may also like IPMWORKS' other webinars:

- [#1 on minimising the use of copper in orchards, outdoor vegetable farms and vineyards](#); and
- [#2 on weed control in organic arable farms](#)

These webinars were part of the EU-funded project [IPMWORKS](#). The project promotes the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies, based on a EU-wide network of farmers, who will both progress further in the adoption of IPM – through peer-to-peer learning and joint efforts – and demonstrate to other farmers holistic IPM approaches. IFOAM Organics Europe is a partner in the project.

You can follow [@H2020IPMWorks](#) on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) & [YouTube](#) to stay tuned.



IPMWORKS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101000339. 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.

[Organic seed and planting material databases – LiveSeeding webinar available](#)

4 July 2024, online

On 4 July 2024, the LiveSeeding project organised a learning exchange on organic seed databases, using examples from Spain and Austria's national organic seed databases, the [EU Organic Seed Router database](#) and [OrganicXSeeds](#).

The meeting fostered cross-country exchange to increase transparency in the organic seed and breeding sector. This was reflected in the participation that ranged from representatives of competent authorities, agricultural ministries, control bodies, seed authorities, seed database manager, breeder and multiplier of organic plant reproductive material (PRM) and organic farming associations.



Presentations during the webinar:

- Miguel Vega García from the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery and Food who presented the Spanish national database [ECOSID](#) on the availability of organic and in-conversion plant reproductive material;
- Kaja Gutzen from the German Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL Germany e.V.) who gave a first presentation on the database [OrganicXseed](#) and how it can be adapted to national needs and a second one on the [EU Organic Seed Router database](#) and new features that will be implemented within the LiveSeeding project;
- Angela Thüringer from AGES Austria who presented the organic seed and planting material database in Austria.

Recording of the webinar [Exchange on organic seed and planting material databases](#) are available.

[The LiveSeeding project](#) is a four-year Innovation Action on organic seed and plant breeding to accelerate sustainable and diverse food systems in Europe, which started in October 2022 and will run until September 2026. It provides science-based evidence and best practice solutions to help achieve 100 % organic seed. To deliver on its ambitious goal, LiveSeeding brings together 37 organisations from a wide range of sectors operating in 16 European countries and can build on the knowledge developed in [the LIVESEED project](#) (2017-2021).

The project has a budget of €6.6 million, funded by the European Union, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). FiBL Europe coordinates this Horizon Europe-funded project and its 37 partners. IFOAM Organics Europe is responsible for stakeholder management.

Learn more about and follow the project on www.liveseeding.eu, [LinkedIn](#), [X](#) and [Facebook](#).



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UK Research and Innovation

Building resilient food futures across generations – Organics Europe’s Youth Event take-aways 8-9 July 2024, Bari, Italy

The [second edition of the Organics Europe Youth Event \(OEYE\)](#) was held at CIHEAM Bari, Italy, on July 8-9, 2024. This vibrant and exciting event provided an inspiring platform for meaningful exchanges on topics crucial to the organic and like-minded movements. It marked a significant milestone in our effort to mobilize, unite, and engage the new generation within the European organic movement, fostering a supportive community where young people can collaborate and find inspiration.

Participants at the event had the opportunity to delve into a variety of discussions, lectures, and interactive sessions led by prominent figures in organic and sustainable agriculture. Notable speakers included Ronald van Marlen, General Director of NaNa Bio, and Dr. Vandana Shiva, a renowned environmental activist, food sovereignty advocate, and scholar. Their contributions, along with those of other experts, helped illuminate critical aspects of organic agriculture and resilient food systems. After the event, participants had also the opportunity to join two excursions to an organic olive oil mill and an organic pasta factory to witness first-hand Italian organic production.

The event was a fertile ground for generating important insights and considerations about the future of organic farming. Both speakers and participants shared visions and ideas, providing valuable guidance for the future of the organic movement.



We selected 10 key takeaways that best reflect the main messages and themes explored during the event. These takeaways were selected also based on input provided by participants at the event:

1. Over 130 young (potential) future organic leaders from all over Europe and the world joined the youth event in Bari, committed to building a more resilient and sustainable food system. Their enthusiasm and dedication to making the world a better place were evident throughout the event, as they actively engaged with speakers and shared their visions for the future of organic agriculture. We are grateful to all participants for their inspirational presence and hope they returned home motivated and inspired.
2. Our panel on organic, agroecology, biodynamic, and regenerative agriculture showed that all these farming systems share key principles and want to regenerate our soils and make food production more sustainable. We already collaborate with many of these actors, and we seek positive collaboration with those who don't have a legally defined standard but share similar goals and are not being used for greenwashing purposes.
3. Biodistricts also have a sustainable farming approach and make local economies more resilient, fostering rural community development. Participants learned about examples from Italy and Germany and their potential to create jobs, preserve traditional farming knowledge, and transform rural areas into vibrant communities.
4. Dr. Vandana Shiva highlighted organic's pivotal role in ecological activism, encouraging everyone to take action, and highlighting how individuals have the power to build a robust movement for a resilient food system. She also called on the audience to empower young people and actively engage in this effort.
5. Access to knowledge is crucial for young organic entrepreneurs. Because organic is knowledge-intensive, open knowledge exchange and innovation are essential for organic businesses, particularly for those new to the sector. Policies can encourage this! [Read more in our manifesto](#).
6. Ronald van Marlen emphasised the organic sector's need to reclaim its narrative, positioning organic practices as a powerful driver of positive change in both society and agriculture. He also underscored the importance for organic to remain at the forefront of a wider social movement, highlighting its potential as a socio-economic model contributing to health, environmental protection, and fairness in agriculture.
7. Ensuring the organic movement's progress requires having the right people in the right positions. We need forward-thinking leaders and conscious policymakers who are willing to address the challenges faced by our food systems. Generational renewal plays a pivotal role in this endeavour, and active youth participation promises a vibrant future for organic.
8. The event highlighted the importance of nurturing diversity and open-mindedness within the organic movement. By embracing different voices, perspectives, and approaches, and aligning with allied movements, we can strengthen our impact.
9. (Organic) certification is an important instrument of transparency and the only way not to succumb to greenwashing. Certification can safeguard the rights of consumers and organic producers and ensure that sustainability is no longer just a tagline for companies.
10. Our youth event was more than learning by attending panels. Participants could connect and network during coffee breaks and networking apéro, joined a yoga session, quizzes, and games, and sweated it off during a dance hall animated by local folk music artists!

Looking ahead, we remain committed to motivating, inspiring, and empowering young people to make a significant impact within the organic movement.

Couldn't attend the event, but would like to take a peek of its memorable moments? Have a look [at our Instagram account](#).

Stay tuned for the next edition of the Organics Europe Youth Event by subscribing to our newsletter at www.organicseurope.bio/newsletter and following [@OrganicsEurope](#) on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

Feel free to contact events@organicseurope.bio if you have any questions.



Our Organics Europe Youth Event excursions were made possible by



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Building the future of EU agrifood – Encouraging high-level statements at congress' first day
10 September 2024, Budapest, Hungary



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Following [the Strategic Dialogue for the future of EU agriculture](#)'s recommendations, many agrifood stakeholders, high-level policymakers, civil society and the organic movement continued discussing and building the sector's future.

Opening by the Hungarian Minister of Agriculture

In his opening remarks, Dr. István Nagy, Hungarian Minister of Agriculture, both highlighted organic's contributions to making the world better every day and stressed its role as leading model of sustainable farming.

Following the Minister, organic sector representatives Jan Plagge, IFOAM Organics Europe's President, and Dora Drexler, Managing Director at the Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (ÖMKI), highlighted [organic's role as bridge-builder](#) and innovator beyond technology.

High-level exchanges on the EU agrifood's common future

Following the opening, high-level representatives of the EU institutions and national ministries exchanged on recent political developments about the new EU political mandate to address current social, environmental and economic crises.

Farming organisations discuss the CAP's potential

We continue building a common vision for the EU agrifood's future, taking a deep-dive into the [Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\)](#) with representatives of the EU Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, farmers and agri-cooperatives (COPA-COGECA) and young farmers (CEJA).

Since 1962, the CAP has played a crucial role in developing European farming. To date, 31% of the EU budget still goes to the CAP. EU and national policymakers' decisions about which farming systems and practices to promote through the CAP directly shape the kind of food system we have in the EU.

As European organic movement, we believe that a CAP fit for the future is in line with the Strategic Dialogue's opinion that a transition to sustainable agri-food systems is necessary and there are solutions that work for farmers, nature and society.

This is why we published the organic movement's vision on a CAP fit for the future on 10 September. This vision urges that [the CAP needs an ambitious reform to enable an agroecological transition of Europe's agriculture](#), while:

1. Supporting all farmers who want to transform their farms sustainably using a whole-farm approach;
2. Adequately rewarding farmers engaged in sustainability systems, such as organic farmers, for the benefits they already deliver to the environment and society; and
3. Ensuring the sector's competitiveness.





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“A movement building bridges” & other takeaways from the European Organic Congress 2024

10-12 September 2024, Budapest, Hungary

Following the summer break for many, harvest time has begun. This is visible in farmers’ produce reaching our forks and in governments being formed. At EU-level, the outgoing European Commission recently presented its report of the [Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture](#), guiding the next European Commission’s Vision for Agriculture and Food.

The 2024 edition of the [European Organic Congress](#) could not have been timelier. High-level representatives of the EU institutions, national ministries and Members of the European Parliament exchanged on recent political developments about the new EU political mandate to address current social, environmental and economic crises with a common vision – across the agri-food sector, civil society and the world of science. [Our recap of the first day elaborates on this.](#)

What are our main take-aways as organisers?

1. In three words: Engagement, consciousness, and political agreement. The organic movement is a bridge-builder across generations, nations, agricultural practices & practitioners, supply chain actors, movements, researchers and policymakers at various levels.
2. Dr. István Nagy, Hungarian Minister of Agriculture, both highlighted organic’s contributions to making the world better every day and stressed its role as leading model of sustainable farming ([a thread](#)).
3. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) should change before it can transform agriculture. It must support and reward both farmers who want to transform their farms sustainably as well as those already delivering – at the same time ensuring the sector’s competitiveness ([a thread](#) and [organic’s vision](#)).

4. While the EU organic market is a mixed picture across countries and consumers spent less on food overall in 2023 than before, organic consumers remain willing to buy organic products and there is value growth in many EU markets ([a thread](#)).
5. Opportunities for organic: Setting minimum criteria for organic in sustainable public procurement ([infographics](#)), empowering consumers ([a thread](#)) & international trade ([a thread](#)).
6. Threats to organic and small and medium-sized businesses: New genomic techniques and patents on them reduce growers', breeders' and consumers' freedom of choice ([a thread](#) and [infographic](#)).
7. It is crucial to ensure farmers' livelihoods and to lower the burden that rules and regulations – which should benefit them – often put on them.
8. EU research and innovation priorities and dedicated funding (Horizon Europe) can stimulate a transformation of our food and farming system by creating networks for knowledge exchange and 'real life' laboratories like living labs and lighthouse farms.
9. Many organic practitioners are working tirelessly to provide us with healthy and fair food that was produced with the environment and workers in mind. Examples of excellence along the organic supply chain is awarded annually in the [EU Organic Awards](#) and extra visible on [EU Organic Day](#) on 23 September.

Relive the 2024 European Organic Congress:

- X with [#EOC2024](#)
- [Facebook photo album](#)
- [Congress website with available materials and presentations](#)

Our next European Organic Congress will take place on 18-19 August 2025 in Copenhagen, Denmark.



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INSPIRING EXAMPLES

These organic practitioners are an inspiration for food and farming

A farmer creating new organic varieties to combat biodiversity loss, a city setting up food production sites where people from different backgrounds can gather, and a retailer reducing its reliance on external inputs. These are just some of this year's finalists of the EU Organic Awards [initiatives which are showcasing excellence across the supply chain](#).

In this article we briefly highlight the EU Organic Awards' finalists. The winners will be unveiled on 23 September during an award ceremony on the EU Organic Day. It is possible to watch the livestream on the [European Commission's dedicated webpage](#) or on their social media accounts ([on X](#) or [Facebook](#)).

Farmers

The female farmers shortlisted for this year's EU Organic Awards are:

- Blagovesta Vasilieva who is manager and co-owner of the Bulgarian [Wild Farm](#), a family beef farm with 1,600 animals established 30 years ago. They have an on-farm organic slaughterhouse and processing workshop;
- Caroline Devillers who manages the [Bel Go Bio](#), the first Belgian farm to harvest big volumes of organic sweet potatoes and garlic with large, professional storage capacity and a unique cooperative structure;
- Reinhild Frech-Emmelmann who founded the Austrian plant-breeding farm [ReinSaat](#) in 1998 with the firm conviction that organic, GMO-free seeds can sustainably improve the quality of life and nutrition of all people.

Their male counterparts are:

- Benny Schöpf, chief vegetable grower and head of cultivation at the German [Kartoffelkombinat](#). He is coordinating the farm and cooperative, and plans, organises and implements cultivation;
- Gianpaolo Mancini, owner of [Il sentiero del Riccio](#), a small-medium sized farm in Italy. A certified organic farm for more than 31 years (and the first one of the area), he mainly produces organic wine, olive oil, and honey;
- Tommi Hasu, who took over the Finnish family farm [LuomuMattinen](#), dating back to the 16th century and under organic production for nearly 30 years. On an area of 630 hectares, Tommi primarily grows gluten-free organic oats, peas and canola, and raises beef cattle since 2017.

City, regions & biodistricts

The following cities are finalists for the EU Organic Award of best organic city:

- The German [BioStadt Bremen](#) has an agricultural area of around 8,300 ha within the city limits, which is farmed by just under 140 small to medium-sized family farms. It became an organic city in 2015, following a successful grassroots movement;
- The Cascais municipality in Portugal implemented a strategy to encourage the production of locally-grown organic food, promote sustainable consumption habits, provide education for sustainability, foster entrepreneurship, and enhance social inclusion;
- The Spanish municipality [Las Rozas](#) has a local Sustainable Strategy aiming to make food systems fair, healthy, and environmentally friendly which involves providing orchards to local citizens, in which they can grow their own vegetables.

2024's shortlisted best organic regions are:

- The Portuguese [Comunidade Intermunicipal do Alto Tâmega e Barroso](#) (CIMAT), a pioneering bio-region in Portugal, composed of six municipalities working together to promote sustainable economic, social, and environmental development;
- The Spanish Comunidad autónoma de Castilla-La Mancha which promotes organic agriculture and livestock through various actions, such as subsidies to producers, promotion and communication and the synergies;



- [South Savo](#) in Finland, which has been promoting organic since the beginning of the millennium. Its systematic cooperation in the development of the organic food sector, involving businesses, administration, research, development, advisory services and education is unique.

The shortlisted [biodistricts](#) – regions or districts creating an alliance of organic farmers, rural actors, business actors and local authorities, who decide to work together and put organic in the centre of the development model – are:

- [Distretto del Cibo Monregalese-Cebano](#) in Italy which aims to promote development based on the principles of sustainability and involving all components in line with the EU Farm to Fork strategy: natural capital, human capital, productive capital, social capital;
- [Bioregião de S. Pedro do Sul](#) in Portugal which is a district focused on aligning tourism and agriculture with health and sustainability. Known for hosting the largest thermal baths in Portugal, the region emphasises organic farming to ensure high-quality local food systems for both residents and visitors;
- [Sörmland Bio-district](#) in Sweden which encompasses two regions and 21 municipalities, with 20% of its agricultural land being organic. It supports a diverse network of organic farms, processors, retailers, and educational initiatives.

Food processing SMEs, retailers & restaurants / food services

Shortlisted businesses for the organic award of best food processing SME (Small and Medium Enterprises):

- The Austrian [Biologon GmbH](#) which specialises in organic hand-mixed muesli and traditional baked crunchies. This Tyrolean family business is dedicated to producing high-quality products from controlled organic cultivation;
- The Italian [Gino Girolomoni Cooperativa Agricola](#) manufactures and markets of organic products with pasta production at its heart. They apply the model “from seeds to your table” and their production chain is totally organic, making Girolomoni unique in Italy;
- The German [Organic veggie food GmbH/SOTO organic specialities](#) has been producing organic veggie food that is 100% organic plant-based convenience specialties. Since 1988 they are paying attention to natural ingredients without using any additives or fillers and use minimal processing.

Organic retailers selected as finalists for their innovative approaches:

- [BIOGAST GmbH](#) created "MeinBioMarkt", an Austrian innovative shop concept that focuses exclusively on organic food in the widest possible variety and of the highest quality. The shop provides a platform for small scale organic producers with around 14,000 organic products;
- [Coolanowle Organic Meats](#) sells a vast selection of over 150 different organically certified meat cuts and products. The Irish farm's onsite organic meat processing facility processes their meat for direct sale to its customers;
- [SAiFRESC](#) was founded by three farmers in Spain in 2011. They transitioned from conventional to organic farming, developing the agroecological model "SAiFRESC". They sell 70 organic products, grown on 30 hectares, including citrus, fruits, herbs, and vegetables.

And last but not least, organic restaurants and food services on the list of nominations for the EU Organic Awards:

- [B2 Bio pur GmbH](#), a German restaurant with "farm to fork" approach integrating production, distribution and consumption of organic food. Their strategy includes in-house production, regional supply chains and a local cooperative;
- [Biohotel St. Daniel](#), a Slovenian hotel and role model for sustainability for organic farmers, producers, and restaurants that applies the core values of organic and fair trade practices. Their want to achieve 100% organic, sustainable, and fair-trade practices in a tourism business;
- [Kalf & Hansen](#) have organic and sustainability principles at the heart of their business. They purchase exclusively organic, seasonal products, prioritising local sources whenever possible and believe everyone should have access to affordable organic meals. They are one of the few players in the Swedish food system to offer a fully organic menu.

About the EU Organic Awards



The annual [European Organic Awards](#) reward excellent and innovative actors in the organic value chain. The EU Organic Awards are jointly organised by the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Committee of the Regions, COPA-COGECA and IFOAM Organics Europe, with support of the European Parliament and of the Council. The awards ceremony takes place on [the official EU Organic Day](#).



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MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE

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IFOAM Organics Europe's partners



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

23 September 2024

[EU Organic Day](#)

Europe

23 September 2024

[EU Organic Awards ceremony](#)

Brussels, Belgium

23-24 September 2024

[Natexpo 2024](#)

Lyon, France

25 September 2024

[OrganicAdviceNetwork meeting](#)

Online, Teams

1-31 October 2024

[Good Food Good Farming Action Days 2024](#)

Europe

9-10 October 2024

[Nordic Organic Food Fair 2024](#)

Kistamässan Stockholm, Sweden

22-23 October 2024

[Organic Innovation Days](#)

Brussels, Belgium

14 November 2024

[Organic Food Forum](#)

Brussels, Belgium

2-4 December 2024

[Organic World Congress](#)

Taiwan

11-14 February 2025

[BIOFACH 2025](#)

Nuremberg, Germany

18-19 August 2025

[European Organic Congress 2025](#)

Copenhagen, Denmark

IFOAM Organics Europe's members will find early and more information about member-only events in our [member extranet calendar](#). If the direct link does not work, scroll down on the landing page until you see 'Network: Events and meetings'



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