

PRESS RELEASE

The EU must accelerate access to biocontrol: IFOAM Organics Europe publishes recommendations to improve the availability of natural substances

BRUSSELS, 20 MAY 2025 – IFOAM Organics Europe publishes today a [position paper on biocontrol](#), calling for concrete actions to improve the availability and uptake of these tools.

“The future legislation on biocontrol must address the needs of organic farmers and ease the registration of natural substances that are allowed in organic production to complement preventive agronomic measures when needed”, said Eduardo Cuoco, IFOAM Organics Europe Director.

“Despite their importance, current regulatory procedures to authorise biocontrol products remain lengthy and unsuitable, therefore hindering their availability. It can take up to 10 years for a new substance to be approved, which is incompatible with farmers’ needs from the ground”.

For now, only a limited number of biocontrol solutions are currently authorised. To respond to these challenges, IFOAM Organics Europe set out a list of recommendations:

- Adopt a harmonised definition of biocontrol,
- Acknowledge the societal interest for supporting biocontrol,
- Adjust EU and national approval and authorisation processes for biocontrol products, and facilitate the use of macrobials in Europe,
- Support institutions for a better implementation of existing regulations,
- Acknowledge weaknesses in market mechanisms and support the uptake of biocontrol products,
- Close the gaps identified by the organic sector with research and public funding for biocontrol tools.

“Decisive policy action is needed to phase out synthetic pesticides to protect farmers health, biodiversity and our water resources. Faster access to agroecological knowledge and to natural substances are essential to support farmers to adapt their agronomic practices and use biocontrol solutions”, said Eric Gall, Deputy director.

As part of their mandates, both the [Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare](#) and the [Commissioner for Agriculture and Food](#) expressed their willingness to accelerate the approval and authorisation of biocontrol solutions.

Biocontrol refers to nature-derived organisms and substances — such as essential oils, (micro)organisms, or semiochemicals — used to manage plant health. In organic systems, biocontrol constitutes a tool among others to address pests, diseases and weeds. Most of the time, preventive and agronomic measures like crop rotation, the choice of variety or the use of natural enemies are sufficient. In fact, only 10% of organic agricultural land requires the use of natural substances in addition to the preventive measures, with some crops requiring more than others, like fruits and grapes.

Read the [full position paper](#) on our website.

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Background documents

- Background briefing on the [organic approach to plant health](#)

Discussion on biocontrol at our upcoming event

- On 26 June, during the [European Organic Congress](#) which will be held in Warsaw (Poland), IFOAM Organics Europe will hold the panel debate “Biocontrol, taxes or targets? What’s the best way to achieve pesticide reduction”. [Register now and take part in the discussion!](#)

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





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