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WELCOME NOTE

Dear readers,

These are troubling times for Europe and the world. On top of climate and biodiversity crises we now have a war in Europe. It is heartening to see and hear how many in the European organic movement are extending their help – from organic farmers hosting refugees to our colleagues coordinating the collection and driving emergency goods, and from organisations rallying their networks for support to organisations giving their employees extra time to process these events.

At IFOAM Organics Europe, we are playing our part as well. Our staff members are helping where they can and as an organisation we are coordinating with many environmental and social NGOs. We would like to ask you to also let us know what you are doing and how other members can help you. Please email these initiatives to us at communication@organicseurope.bio and/or add them to [an overview file on our member extranet](#) (extranet > [hot topics](#) > [Ukraine war & food security](#)).

At EU level, the war has triggered the agro-industry to strongly advocate against the EU Farm to Fork Strategy's targets. In this light, on Thursday 24 March, the European Parliament issued a resolution supporting the Farm to Fork Strategy as the right policy direction to make European agriculture more resilient and independent. We are carefully positive, saying the resolution is a positive political signal, especially considering the weeks of intense lobbying to undermine the EU's ambition to make agriculture more sustainable. Now more than ever, the Farm to Fork strategy remains the relevant policy direction to adapt our farming system to current and future crises. **The war against Ukraine raises legitimate concerns over price increases and availability of certain agriculture inputs, namely cereals for animal feed and synthetic fertilisers. It also forces us to re-think our food production system to make it more independent from external inputs, less input intensive and more resilient.**

Readers of this newsletter will know that **practical agronomic solutions already exist to achieve these goals**, while ensuring both food security for all Europeans and beyond, as well as profitability for farmers. Incentivising and helping farmers to upscale existing agroecological solutions should be policymakers' priority. With support of the Common Agricultural Policy and the EU Farm to Fork strategy, it is possible to produce healthy food in sufficient quantity without synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, while preserving biodiversity, storing carbon in soils and making our food production more resilient to the increasing impacts of climate change.

Not only the European Parliament's resolution was a positive note, as, together with the European Commissioner for Agriculture, Janusz Wojciechowski, [we opened applications for the EU Organic Awards](#). Please help spread the word about these to your networks! You can forward them our press release and will find many posts on our social media about this.

I would also like to remind you that there is another open possibility for giving more visibility to organic. [Applications to promotion policies are still open until 21 April](#).

Last but not least, we also launched the final version of [guidelines to help organic operators interpret the EU Organic Regulation](#). Every **IFOAM Organics Europe member will have one yearly access for free!** Members of IFOAM regional bodies and IFOAM– Organics International will also benefit from a reduced yearly contribution. The secretariat of each regional body will also get one free yearly access. You will find more information about this [in our earlier article](#).



I would like to call on you to stay strong and united during these difficult times and I'm looking forward to seeing you at one of the many events we are organising [during this Year of Organics](#).

Take good care!

Jan



POLITICAL HOTSPOT

As Russia's war against Ukraine continues to rage, the EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies, key parts of the European Green Deal, have been challenged by some national governments and intensive agriculture lobbies. According to these voices, food security, which is already at risk following trade implications of the war, would be further threatened by the implementation of these strategies.

The war indeed raises legitimate concerns over price increases and availability of certain agriculture inputs, namely cereals for animal feed and synthetic fertilisers. But, according to [IFOAM Organics Europe's letter to Members of the European Parliament](#), this crisis forces us to re-think our food production system to make it more independent from external inputs, less input intensive and more resilient. These are precisely the objectives of the Farm to Fork strategy, which remains more than ever the relevant policy direction to adapt our farming system.

Environmental organisations, economists and researchers, have also highlighted that calls to roll back environmental policies are misguided.

Environmental organisations stress EU Green Deal's potential for environmental and social progress

On 10 March, [IFOAM Organics Europe joined more than 85 environmental organisations](#) to oppose undermining the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies. In a joint letter, the organisations asked European Commission President von der Leyen, Executive Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioners Wojciechowski, Kyriakides and Sinkevičius not to undermine "the environmental and social progress" the European Green Deal can help achieve.

The war in Europe serves as a reminder that the EU "must shift towards healthy, socially and environmentally friendly farming practices, such as agroecology, organic farming, and agroforestry, which provide the only path to ensuring long-term food security."

Environmental organisations cited the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s report of February 2022 as it highlighted that "while agricultural development contributes to food security, unsustainable agricultural expansion, driven in part by unbalanced diets, increases ecosystem and human vulnerability and leads to competition for land and/or water resources".

Research institute asks support for buyer countries

A day before this letter, the [French Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations \(IDDRI\)](#) recalled that there was a need for "support for the most dependent buyer countries (...), not increased production". [The IDDRI's scientific article](#) focuses on the causes of rising commodity prices, the reality of the challenges to the physical availability of commodities, and possible solutions at European level. In this context, they identified the Farm to Fork Strategy as a response to these challenges and "should not be thrown out for unclear benefits".

At the same time, the investigative media [Lighthouse Reports also explained](#) why the solutions pushed by the industry could "compromise future food security and puts animal feed over food".

300 scientists call for food system transformation

On 19 March 2022, three hundred scientists teaching at leading universities, inside and outside the European Union, linked with institutions including Oxford University, INRAE, Berkeley University, Université Catholique de Louvain and Harvard University, [signed an open letter](#) denouncing "short-sighted suggestions like abandoning sustainable agricultural practices that form part of the EU's



Farm2Fork strategy”. These scientists urgently called for “a food system transformation” to ensure food security.

Commission Communication and Parliament resolution on food security

On 17 March, [IFOAM Organics Europe also sent a letter to Members of the European Parliament](#) in the context of the vote on a Parliament’s resolution on “food security”. With practical examples of farming practices such as crop rotations with legumes, this letter aimed to remind MEPs that “with support from the CAP and the Farm to Fork strategy, it is possible to produce healthy food in sufficient quantity without synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, while preserving biodiversity, storing carbon in soils and making our food production more resilient to the increasing impacts of climate change.”

On 23 March the Commission presented a Communication, and the following day the European Parliament adopted a Resolution on food security. The result of this pressure is that both institutions support adopting derogations for the year 2022 (in the current CAP) allowing farmers to grow crops on “Ecological Focus Areas” (land normally set aside to benefit biodiversity). Importantly, they also resisted calls to question the Farm to Fork strategy as the relevant policy direction. Nonetheless the Commission already postponed the publication of the proposals on Nature Restoration Targets, and on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulations, which were initially planned on 23 March, and are to include a target on pesticides reduction.

More specifically, the Commission Communication [‘Safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food systems’](#). considers that ‘food sustainability is fundamental for food security’. The Communication adds that ‘innovation through research, knowledge, technology, agro-ecology and adoption of best practices can mitigate pressure on input costs without hurting production capacity, leading to long-term progress in productivity to achieve the green transition’. Organic farming is shown as an example of a practice that uses limited amounts of mineral fertiliser and is less exposed to price increases. Moreover, the Commission supports the use of fertilisers in the short-term and ‘is also assessing options for new rules on new genomic techniques, which have the potential to create plant varieties that are less susceptible to changing temperatures and climatic threats, more resistant to plant pests and more efficient in the use of fertiliser’. The Commission will deliver a support package of 500 million euros to support most affected farmers.

The EP Resolution [‘Need for an urgent EU action plan to ensure food security inside & outside the EU in light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine’](#) was voted by 413 MEPs in favour, 120 against and 49 abstentions on 24 March. IFOAM Organics Europe has issued a Press Release on this resolution [here](#). IFOAM Organics Europe will remain vigilant on the attempts to undermine the Farm to Fork strategy and will continue to insist that the sustainability of our farming system is essential for long-term food security.

1 NEWS

1.1 Policy

Organic Regulations

Guidelines to help interpret EU Organic Regulation now online

After a 10-year long process, the new EU Organic Regulation has started to apply on 1 January 2022. The basic Regulation (EU) 2018/848 was published in June 2018, while the secondary legislation was developed in the following 2.5 years, with the last secondary regulation published on the EU Official Journal on 29 December 2021.

For more information on the main changes the EU Organic Regulation brings, please refer to [our website](#).

The new EU Organic regulation: Much more difficult to read

To date, the following secondary legislation has been adopted and published:

- 15 delegated regulations, and
- 7 implementing regulations.

In addition, 7 regulations and 6 corrigenda have been published to correct mistakes of the secondary legislation. This means that **a total of 35 different documents need to be opened and consulted** to have a full picture of the new EU Organic Regulation and other documents will follow in the coming months.

The new EU Organic Regulation also contains many references to other EU horizontal legislations (on food, official controls, fertilisers, flavourings, etc.).

As you will understand by now, reading the new EU Organic regulation is far from easy!

But do not worry, IFOAM Organics Europe developed guidelines to help you navigate such legal labyrinth! Following a process that took a bit longer than we planned, they are finally available on regulation.organicseurope.bio.

How our regulation guide will help you!

As we wrote, there are many references across other (legal) texts, so we structured items to provide clarity:

- The new EU Organic Regulation and its secondary legislation are consolidated by grouping areas. For example, organic food processors find all the requirements relevant to their activities presented in a logical order and without having to open and consult many different legal acts;
- **Definitions and recitals** are available with a single click;
- **Articles of other EU legislations** mentioned in the new EU Organic Regulation are also available with a single click;
- We highlighted **main changes compared to previous EU Organic Regulations**;
- We also provided **comments and explanations** of unclear points or of points where there is room for interpretation.

As of now, 9 chapters have been developed and ready to be consulted and 4 chapters are being finalized:

1. Scope
2. Organic plant production
3. Organic poultry
4. Organic herbivores
5. Organic pigs
6. Organic aquaculture (available soon)
7. Organic beekeeping (available soon)
8. Organic food processing
9. Organic wine
10. Labelling (available soon)
11. Control and certification
12. International trade and imports
13. Group certification (available soon)

We encourage you to provide us with feedback while you are using the guide, please do so emailing us at organicregulation@organicseurope.bio. As you will see, this was (and is) a big amount of work and some things could still be fixed. We welcome your feedback!

What can you find in each chapter?

The legal text is put in a logical order, including basic regulation and relevant secondary regulations.

On the left side, you find the line number. When this number is underlined, you can hover over that number with the mouse and an annotation will pop up showing the legal reference of that text. It will tell you from which regulation and article that text comes from.

In the text, you will find many links (they will be underlined). Those links will open other pop-up windows with:

- Articles of other EU legislations (e.g., wine, fertilisers, etc.), so that you will not need to look for and consult this other EU legislation. Sometimes it happens that such article in the pop up makes references to even other legislations. You will also find the articles of this third legislation in a second pop up;
- Comments explaining the legal text;
- The explanation of what changes compared to the previous EU Organic Regulation or whether that text is brand new;
- If you see a (R), by clicking on it, the recital relevant to that article will pop up as well.

The annexes of the regulation are reported as PDF-document. You can find the simple versions as well as the versions with the Track Changes compared to the previous organic regulation.

How to access the guidelines

(Are you already a sponsor? Find out how to access the guidelines in the next section)

Every **IFOAM Organics Europe member will have one access for free!** Please coordinate internally and let us know whom in your organisation will benefit from this free access- this should be an individual email address (ie. Jane.doe@organicseurope.bio, not info@organicseurope.bio).



If you are [an IFOAM Organics Europe member](#) and you would like more accesses or accesses for your members, a (reduced) contribution will be asked.

Members of IFOAM regional bodies and IFOAM– Organics International will also benefit from a reduced contribution. The secretariat of each regional body will also get one free access. Please email the contact details of this person to organicregulation@organicseurope.bio.

For **non-member, the full price will apply** (see below). Reach out to membership@organicseurope.bio if you have any questions about membership.

Please note that access to the guidelines will be granted to individual's professional email addresses, so for example jane.doe@organicseurope.bio, not jane.doe@gmail.com or info@organicseurope.bio.

Are you interested in getting more accesses for your organisation? **Consider becoming a sponsor and get free access!** Reach out to organicregulation@organicseurope.bio

For access:

1. Go to regulation.organicseurope.bio;
2. More than 1 access in your organisation? You can streamline this process and register and pay for all users at once when you login for the first time- select 'add another account' in the registration window.
2. Register your **professional** email address and information onto the website and choose the category that applies to you (see below table, we will verify this information);
3. Follow the payment instructions that will appear. Payment can be made with PayPal (has an option for Visa and Mastercard);
4. After successful payment, you can login with your professional email address and the password you selected;
5. Bookmark regulation.organicseurope.bio for easy access later.

How to access the guidelines as sponsors

Depending on your sponsorship category, you can have free accesses to these guidelines- 99 for golden sponsors, 50 for silver sponsors and 30 for bronze sponsors.

For access, send us the information of those in your organisation who should have access.

Once we have added you:

1. Go to regulation.organicseurope.bio;
2. Register your **professional** email address and information onto the website and choose the category that applies to you 'Sponsors of the Developing Organic: Regulation Guidelines project';
3. After filling in all your information **using your organisation's address** (so, jane.doe@organicseurope.bio, not janedoe@gmail.com), you will have free access;
4. Bookmark regulation.organicseurope.bio for easy access later.



Who	Price per access
Members of IFOAM Organics Europe	1 st access free
	then €150
Members of members of IFOAM Organics Europe	€150
Members of	
IFOAM Organics International	
IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo	
IFOAM Organic Asia	
IFOAM America Latina	€150
IFOAM North America	
IFOAM Euro-Asia	
IFOAM Southern African Network	
INOFO	
Non-members	€300
Operators from low and mid-income countries (according OECD)	€75

If you still have any questions after reading this or want to receive more information, please reach out to organicregulation@organicseurope.bio.

We want to thank our sponsors who made setting up this guide possible. Without you, it would not be here. If you also want to become a sponsor (and get free access to the guide), please email organicregulation@organicseurope.bio.

THANK YOU

GOLDEN SPONSORS OF OUR PROJECT

DEVELOPING ORGANIC: PESTICIDE USE AND CONTAMINATION



Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Common Agricultural Policy and Common Market Organisation reforms: State of play and what is at stake?

These days are national organic movement's last opportunities to advocate for better support for organic farming in the Common Agricultural Policy national Strategic Plans (CAP SPs) and reach the EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy's targets

Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027 reform & Strategic Plans

All CAP national Strategic Plans have been submitted with Belgium sending its last on Thursday 17 March. Now, the European Commission has three months to send its Observation Letters. **By the end of March, we expect the Commission to send nineteen Observation Letters to the 19 Member States that submitted their plans on time.** The Commission is still committed to approve all the CAP Strategic Plans by 31 December 2022.

In a **Civil Dialogue Group (CDG) on the CAP** on 2 March, our President Jan Plagge presented [our last assessment of the support to organic farming in the CAP Strategic Plans 2023-2027](#). He stressed:

- Low ambitious targets for organic farmland in several countries;
- Insufficient budgets to reach these national targets in some countries;
- Reduced levels of payments for organic in large agricultural countries such as Austria, Germany, France and Spain;
- The lack of proportionality between organic farming payments and the environmental benefits it provides, compared to "light green" measures;
- The difficulty for some organic farmers to have full access to different instruments (like agri-environmental and climate measures, Eco-schemes, investments, active farmer definition, etc.) and/or the reduction of payments they face when they want to combine some instruments (Germany/Finland).
- Reduced "comparative advantage" for organic farming in the next CAP that will disincentivise farmers from transitioning to organic farming (Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Spain...).

During the CDG on Direct Payments and Greening on 18 March, the European Commission affirmed observations on organic farming will be sent to several countries, not all of them. As IFOAM Organics Europe, we and our members from Poland and France (Dorota Metera and Dominique Marion) asked questions related to organic farming practises in the CAP SPs. As EU organic movement, we also defended agroecological and organic solutions (like less intensive farming practises, non-use of nitrogen fertilizers and pesticides, etc.) to address the short-term and long-term issues raised by the war in Ukraine and reach the EU Farm to Fork Strategy's targets.

Documents of the CDGs are available [on our member extranet](#).

Regarding the CAP secondary legislation, most of the delegated and implementing acts have been voted. The European Commission is still working on secondary legislation for the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS).

Common Market Organisation (CMO) reform

Together with several members, we are currently working on the 'sustainable agreements' set under **the CMO Article 210**. This new article states 'Article 101(1) TFEU (on anti-trust rules) shall not apply to



agreements, decisions and concerted practices of producers of agricultural products that relate to the production of or trade in agricultural products and that aim to apply a sustainability standard higher than mandated by Union or national law'. **The European Commission is expected to provide guidelines by 8 December 2023.**

In this regard, Bioland, Interbio-Nouvelle Aquitaine and IFOAM Organics Europe participated to [a thematic group on sustainable agreements](#) organised by the European Network for Rural Development – an organisation aimed at fostering dialogue between European/national stakeholders and the Commission. We provided concrete examples of the sustainable agreements that can be implemented and **how they could offer compensatory remuneration for farmers and benefit the environment.**

Two public consultations are currently open:

- [Public consultation on the draft revised Horizontal Block Exemption Regulations & Horizontal Guidelines](#) - open until 26 April;
- [Public consultation on Sustainability Agreements in agriculture - guidelines on antitrust derogations \(Common Market Organisation\)](#) - **open until 23 May**

More information and a word about CDGs

For more information on the CAP, the CMO and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on these issues, please contact amelie.steu@organicseurope.bio. IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on [the member extranet](#) and background materials in the [arguments database on the member extranet](#) (main messages, arguments/FAQs, visuals & videos).

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member and you do not have access to our member extranet? Or did you encounter issues logging in? Contact membership@organicseurope.bio.

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

To facilitate our interaction with our members in CDGs and share information with all of our members alike, we have a [space on the extranet](#). It gives you easy access to agendas, presentations and minutes of these meetings, shows upcoming CDGs and provides you with useful links.

Should you have any questions regarding Civil Dialogue Groups, please write to civildialoguegroups@organicseurope.bio.



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GMOs & Seeds

No risk assessment and labelling for eggs and hens of genetically modified origin?

Following an EU Commission statement, it can be concluded that eggs and laying hens that originate from genetically engineered hens may be marketed in the EU without risk assessment and labelling. This has been uncovered by research of the German Biotech Industry watchdog TestBiotech. This would conflict with the EU GMO legislation that prescribes a thorough approval process for GMOs in Europe.

In the concrete case, researchers have used [genome editing to insert genetic material foreign to birds \(transgenes\) into birds](#), with the aim to destroy male chick embryos *in-ovo* (within the egg). The inserted gene can, for example, code for a protein that leads to the death of male embryos within the egg. The patent that has been filed on this system could find its practical application in the production of edible eggs from chicken, turkey, or duck. Male chickens are often killed at the hatchery in egg production. The patent for this technique has also been filed at the [European Patent Office](#).

While scientists aim at reducing off-target effects, meaning that the transgene is inserted in a place where it should not be, these unintended effects of genetic engineering can also happen in this case, as shown by data provided with the patent application. These risks are confirmed by basic research that highlights that offspring from gene-edited animals can suffer from unintended genetic changes.

Keeping this in mind, it is worrying news that the [European Commission does not consider these laying hens derived from transgenic hens, as animals that fall under the remit of the EU GMO legislation](#). The Commission is not questioning the line of the patent applicants claiming the technology is safe. Consequently, eggs produced by these hens would not need an authorization – only the mother hens do. This means in practice that **neither the laying hens nor the eggs would need to undergo any type of risk assessment, which would potentially be able to detect unintended effects**. The [recent example of the gene-edited cattle](#) that did not go as planned is an example of why these controls are a crucial safety net. Furthermore, there would also be no requirement for labelling and thereby offering consumers transparency and freedom of choice.

Knowing that unintended effects can happen, the question remains what the basis for the EU Commission is to come to their conclusion. **IFOAM Organics Europe has been a strong advocate of the precautionary principle and to take potential risks from new genetic engineering techniques (including gene editing) seriously**. The organic movement therefore thinks that they should be risk assessed, labelled and traceability guaranteed, for safety and freedom of choice for producers and consumers.

Techniques that do not rely on genetic engineering and spare the hatched male chicken from being killed, are testing the sex of the embryo inside the egg or the use of ‘all-round’ chicken breeds for which both females and males can be used for egg and meat production, respectively.

For more information on (new) GMOs and IFOAM Organics Europe’s work on this issue, please contact martin.sommer@organicseurope.bio. IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on [the member extranet](#) and background materials in the [arguments database on the member extranet](#) (main messages, arguments/FAQs, visuals & videos). Contact membership@organicseurope.bio 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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Seeds

New rules vegetative plant reproductive material for organic production

While the new EU Organic Regulation officially entered into force on 1 January of this year, not all details were clarified at that point. This included rules of production of seedlings and other vegetative material for organic production.

In the meantime, the European Commission further clarified these rules in a so-called 'Delegated Act' (DA). You find the Delegated Act on the [European Commission's website](#).

One of these gaps with the finalization of the DA on seedlings & vegetative plant reproductive material (PRM). **A new version of this DA provides the long-awaited fix for producers of vegetative PRM (including fruit trees, soft berries & ornamentals).** According to this DA, all organically produced seedlings and vegetative PRM originating from conventional seed and parent plants (if no organic material is available) may be placed on the market with the organic logo. IFOAM Organics Europe views this positively since all production under certified organic conditions should be labelled as organic. Consequently, the DA will ensure the continuation of the production of seedlings and vegetative PRM under organic conditions.

This DA has been shaped by intensive exchanges between the EU Commission, the organic sector and the rapporteur in the European Parliament on the Organic Regulation, Martin Häusling.

IFOAM Organics Europe members can find a detailed description of the changes on the [member's extranet](#).

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

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

Climate Change

Latest IPCC report: Agroecological practices support food security

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has published its latest report [Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability](#). The report addresses the impacts of climate change on ecosystems, biodiversity, and humans, the vulnerabilities, and the capacities and limitations to adapt to climate change.

Human-induced climate change has caused widespread adverse impacts and losses and damages to nature and people. This is very apparent also in our food system where impacts of climate change, such as climate-related extremes, have adversely affected food production and reduced food security globally. Unsustainable agricultural expansion increases the vulnerability of ecosystems and humans.

While agriculture and the food system are under threat by climate change impacts, **the report also presents an array of solutions if we act fast enough** and do not miss the ‘brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all’.

With high confidence, **the IPCC report states that agroecological practices, and other agricultural approaches that work with natural processes, support food security, health and well-being, biodiversity and ecosystem services**. Ecosystem-based approaches are contributing to pollination, soil health, pest control, buffering of temperature extremes and carbon sequestration. However, the potential and trade-offs vary in different contexts. Agroecology can improve the resilience of the food system, support the long-term productivity and reduce the reliance on external inputs. Some practices can also provide mitigation measures.

A transition to organic farming and agroecological practices is key to reduce and adapt to adverse impacts of climate change. Shifting to sustainable food systems must happen now and cannot be further delayed.

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

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Public consultation on the certification of carbon removals open until 2 May

The European Commission has opened a public consultation and call for evidence for the planned proposal on the certification of carbon removals. By the end of 2022, the Commission is expected to come forward with a proposal for a regulation on certifying carbon removals, including rules to monitor, report and verify the authenticity of these removals.

Feedback to the public consultation can be submitted on the European Commission's ['Have your say' website](#) until 2 May. IFOAM Organics Europe will also prepare a reply to the consultation and publish it once submitted.

In our previous feedback regarding the carbon farming initiative, we have stressed the importance of not just focussing on carbon sequestration but also considering other environmental impacts of the land use sector such as nitrate leaching into groundwater, air pollution, soil health or biodiversity loss. **It is essential that carbon farming does not only deliver on increased carbon sequestration but ensures at the same time benefits for climate adaptation, biodiversity and other environmental objectives.** Furthermore, the contribution of organic farming to increased carbon stocks in agricultural soils should be recognized.

For more information on carbon farming, climate change and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please contact hanna.winkler@organicseurope.bio. IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on climate change 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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Plant health care

Commission delays proposal for Regulation on the sustainable use of pesticides

On 23 March, the European Commission was supposed to publish a proposal for a Regulation on the Sustainable Use of pesticides (SUR). Instead, the Commission published a [Communication on safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food systems](#), which sets out EU measures to address the impacts of the war in Ukraine on agricultural markets. The SUR postponement decision came after weeks of lobbying from the private sector lobby to water down and undermine the Farm to Fork strategy's ambition.

For IFOAM Organics Europe, postponing the SUR is a misuse of the current situation and a political mistake. **We regret that this decision strengthens the misconception that food security depends on the use of synthetic pesticides.** On March 21, we co-signed a [joint letter with Civil Society Organizations](#) calling on the Commission to stand by its commitment to the EI Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies and not to postpone the publication of the much-needed SUR proposal.

The Commission has only indicated that the SUR proposal will be published by the end of the summer 2022, but a precise date is still pending. As IFOAM Organics Europe, we will push the Commission to



officially present a new publication date within the briefest delays. We will also advocate that the Commission maintains an ambitious reform, including strong and legally binding targets to reduce the use of synthetic pesticides, with appropriate new indicators to measure progress in pesticide reduction, and a clear recognition of the role of organic farming in reducing dependence on synthetic pesticides as well.

Please contact mathilde.calmels@organicseurope.bio for questions on pesticides and IFOAM Organics Europe work on the SUR. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests.

You can find more about pesticides and plant health 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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Expert on recycled fertilisers? Join our Task Force on Recycled Fertilisers

The indicative calendar of the European Commission for the first half of 2022 mentions the launch of a “Nature restoration package” on 23 March. This package includes two legislative initiatives:

- A proposal for a revised Directive for a Sustainable Use of pesticides (SUD), and
- A proposal for a Regulation establishing nature restoration targets.

The SUD will be the main lever to achieve the Farm to Fork Strategy's target for a reduction of pesticide use by 50% by 2030.



IFOAM Organics Europe has:

Advocated to make this target legally binding in the revised SUD, an option that has also been explored in the study commissioned by the Commission – which will support the impact assessment of the revision of the SUD, which will also be published on 23 March;

Argued to prioritise organic farming to reach the pesticide reduction target; and

Questioned the prominence of new technologies, like drones and precision farming, in the policy options assessed by the consultant in charge of the study supporting the impact assessment.

If the Commission respects its calendar, 23 March will launch the co-decision process on the SUD. It is likely that the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety will be responsible for this dossier in the European Parliament, while in the EU Council, it will be the Environment Ministers.

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).

Please contact mathilde.calmels@organicseurope.bio for questions on pesticides and natural inputs. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests. For information about what you can gain from being a member, read our membership page and contact membership@organicseurope.bio.



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Biodiversity, soil and water

Soil Health Law: Organic movement's contribution to public consultation

60-70% of soils in the EU are not healthy and the EU still lacks a comprehensive soil protection policy. In the Soil Strategy, presented last November, the European Commission announced a proposal for a Soil Health Law by 2023. Soil health is a corner stone of organic farming and common organic farming practices contribute actively to improved soil quality. As IFOAM Organics Europe, we welcome the initiative to develop a legal framework for soil protection and restoration.

Organic farming, part of the solution

Transitioning to organic agriculture can contribute to restoring and protecting agricultural soils by strengthening soil carbon sinks, increasing biodiversity and avoiding undesired effects by prohibiting the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers. Soils on organic farms tend to have higher soil organic carbon stocks and an improved soil structure, making them more resilient against extreme weather events such as droughts and flooding. **IFOAM Organics Europe therefore asks the Commission to recognise organic farming as a practice for the sustainable use of agricultural soils.**

Soil, ingrained in the EU Farm to Fork Strategy



The European Green Deal and the EU Farm to Fork strategy include several soil related targets, such as the reduction of fertiliser use by at least 20% and the reduction of nutrient losses by at least 50% by 2030. **IFOAM Organics Europe therefore urges the Commission to ensure that the Soil Health Law delivers on the implementation of the Farm to Fork targets.**

Curious to read our full contribution to the public consultation? The reply [is available on the Commission's 'Have your say' website](#).

For more information on soil and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please contact hanna.winkler@organicseurope.bio.

Food Policy

7 policy recommendations on sustainable food public procurement

[The Food Policy Coalition's policy recommendations](#) on food procurement support procurement as a tool that contributes to the systemic transformation of our food system. The seven recommendations by fourteen organisations active in the field of food and agriculture aim to contribute meeting the commitments made with the EU Farm to Fork Strategy, and more global objectives such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

These recommendations support a holistic approach to food public procurement and take into consideration intertwined subjects like organic agriculture, animal welfare, public health, social considerations, and proximity food economy. They are based on the simple and powerful idea that public procurement is a key lever to transform the EU food system.

The seven recommendations say that **minimum mandatory food procurement criteria should:**

1. **Go beyond Green Public Procurement (GPP)** to consider environmental, social and health concerns, such as organic, fairtrade, agroecological practices, animal welfare and waste. This would ensure policy coherence (for example with the Farm to Fork Strategy);
2. Be **ambitious and progressive over time**, to avoid creating market distortions all by achieving a true shift towards new consumption and production models across the EU;
3. Be accompanied by **national and international roundtables of procurement experts** that would support the implementation of public procurement at the national level;
4. Be substantiated by ambitious, regularly-updated, multi-dimensional **national dietary and nutrition guidelines** to help procurers implementing EU public procurement criteria;
5. Go hand-in-hand with **financial and technical support to public buyers**, to allow a more strategic use of procurement, stimulate research, and assess and enable factors for a more systemic change and their impacts;
6. Be paired with **compliance with labour and employment standards**, especially the International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s, to ensure socially responsible procurement, encourage the re-vitalisation of rural areas and include the social economy and social cooperative along the whole supply chain.
7. Contribute to stimulating **greater clarity when it comes to local food public procurement rules**, to avoid infringing the rules of the common market when giving the necessary priority to shorter supply chains.



Organic products, part of sustainable public procurement

These recommendations are clear and achievable. They should also be read in conjunction with the leaflet published by IFOAM Organics Europe in February 2022, [Making organic products in sustainable public procurement happen](#).

This leaflet identifies specific issues to achieve ambitious organic public procurement: build capacity of NGO's and organic sector, set a national/regional target for organic in sustainable public procurement, introduce an organic certification scheme, transform the procurement system step by step, and establish mentoring systems.

Some of these ideas can be directly related to those presented by the Food Policy Coalition. Organic public procurement, and sustainable food procurement in general, needs to be based on ambition, progressiveness, clarity, and reliability, building network and support between authorities and procurers, both in terms of practices and financial means. Those two documents make the case for this.

Sustainable public procurement and organic food are part of the solution to making the forthcoming Sustainable food system framework initiative a truly useful, transformative moment by making the most of the sustainable food public procurement leverage potential.

Background information

IFOAM Organics Europe, other associations and NGOs jointly advocate in the context of the Food Policy Coalition. In December 2021, the Food Policy Coalition's Public Procurement Task Force formulated joint policy recommendations on sustainable food public procurement. This comes after the publication of the briefing paper [Sustainable Public Procurement of Food: A Goal Within Reach](#), highlighting the advantages and leverage effects of sustainable public procurement.

IFOAM Organics Europe is part of the [EU Food Policy Coalition](#). This coalition was created informally in 2019 and works towards policy integration and alignment at the EU-level to facilitate the transition to sustainable food systems. It brings together civil society and organizations working towards refining and advocating for a [shared vision](#) of sustainable food systems at the EU level. Partners include NGOs from a broad spectrum working on food systems, grassroots social movements, farmers organizations, organizations of fishers, trade unions, think tanks, scientific and research groups.

Visit www.foodpolicycoalition.eu to learn more and follow the coalition's activities on [Twitter](#) using @EU_FPC.

Buy Better Food campaign wants to put sustainable food on all public plates

The time has come to make public food procurement a mainstream issue at European level. To this end, we participate in an advocacy campaign on public food procurement [Buy Better Food](#) in Europe launched on 14 March. Together with other civil society organisations in the European landscape, we want to ensure mandatory criteria for public food procurement are included in the **Sustainable food system framework initiative**. The European Commission will publish this initiative by the end of 2023.



The EU Organic Action Plan says to expect minimum mandatory criteria for organic products in the Sustainable food system initiative. But as the food sector is at the crossroads of other issues, such as health and social aspects, minimum mandatory criteria should go beyond organic and adopt a holistic view, focusing on larger aspects of our food.

Buy Better Food – Sustainable food on the public plate, the campaign we co-lead, aims to show the pivotal role public food procurement (PFP) plays in achieving food systems transformation in Europe and beyond. By amplifying good practices and challenges in PFP, this campaign will show how PFP can be a main contributor to sustainable, healthy and fair food systems as advocated by the EU Farm to Fork Strategy and UN Sustainable Development Goals. Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Sarah Wiener is the torchbearer of this campaign within the European Parliament.

Find out more about the campaign on its [dedicated page](#) and on Twitter and LinkedIn using [@buy_betterfood](#). You can also contact antoine.pauti@organicseurope.bio with any question you may have.

THE BENEFITS OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS IN SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Including organic, plant-rich and healthier meals into public procurement offers many benefits when it comes to consumption, production and social system.

- HAPPIER STAFF**
 - 54% increase in job satisfaction²
 - Fewer sick days³
- HEALTHIER DIETS³**
 - Less and better meat
 - Fewer processed foods
 - More plant-rich meals
- FEWER CO₂ EMISSIONS¹**
 - Up to 88% less waste in production
 - Up to 50% less food waste on plate
- MEAT³**
 - Production and consumption of less and better meat
- LESS COSTS ON PUBLIC HEALTH³**
 - Denmark can save €300 health costs per person/year
 - Investing €1 in public kitchens saves €35/year

LET'S GET TO 25% EUROPEAN ORGANIC LAND BY 2030, TOGETHER!
VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE

IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE
Phone: +32 2 416 52 32
info@organicseurope.bio
www.organicseurope.bio
@OrganicsEurope

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Applications for European Organic Awards now open (until 8 June)

In concomitance with the first-year anniversary of the European Organic Action Plan, the submission period of the European Organic Awards officially opened 25 March 2022.

Aimed at rewarding excellence along the EU organic value chain, IFOAM Organics Europe and other partners involved in the project, namely the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and COPA-COGECA, formally opened the applications at a high-level event in Brussels on 25 March.

Read more about this event on the [European Commission](#), [European Economic and Social Committee](#),



and [Committee of the Regions](#) websites.

Comprised of 7 categories and 8 prizes, the awards will reward the best organic farmer (female & male), best organic region, best organic city, best organic bio-district, best organic SME, best organic food retailer and best organic restaurant. There will be an award ceremony to announce the winners on the annual [European Organic Day](#) on 23 September 2022.

How can I apply?

If you have developed and implemented, or you are still implementing, an excellent, innovative, sustainable, and replicable project for organic production in the EU, you can apply now for the EU Organic Awards! Applicants will be asked closed guiding questions, some of them developed in relation to the [four organic principles](#) and the sustainability pillars. These questions will help the applicants to better structure their answers and the jury to obtain more data about the applicants.

Check out the [European Commission's website](#) for the application forms and for more information on the different categories, **application procedure, and eligibility criteria.**

Why apply?

In line with the EU Organic Action Plan, the aim of the awards is to raise public awareness of organic agriculture in the EU as well as giving you the possibility to have your project rewarded! If you win, you will receive a non-monetary recognition award as well as public visibility for your project.

What are you waiting for? Apply now, you have time until 8 June 2022 to submit your application!

Our members find more information in recordings of the 'Let's discuss organic' session informing about the EU Organic Awards and EU Organic Day, now available [on our member extranet!](#)

Visit the [European Commission's EU Organic Awards website](#) for all information. There you also find contact details for questions about each category.



IFOAM
ORGANICS EUROPE

Rue du Commerce 124 – 1000 Brussels – Belgium – Phone: +32 2 280 12 23 – Email: info@organicseurope.bio

1.2 Knowledge for organic

New! Playlists in multiple languages on Organic Farm Knowledge's YouTube

The [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#) attaches great importance to making its content accessible in several languages and is working on this a lot. Recently, the platform's [YouTube Channel](#) has been launched and is constantly being improved.

Now it offers [playlists in several European languages](#). Content is now sorted both by theme and by language to help users find the content they are looking for in their native tongue. Videos are available in 20 different languages already, and the chances are very high that there is also video content in your native speech!

Furthermore, practice abstracts on the platform will be converted to HTML versions so that they can be automatically translated into different European languages in the future.

We invite you to browse the [Organic Farm Knowledge YouTube channel](#) for content in your own language. To stay up to date and to be informed about new tools on the platform you can subscribe to the [Organic Farm Knowledge newsletter](#) and follow the Organic Farm knowledge platform on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for news and events.

Learn more about Organic Farm Knowledge at www.organic-farmknowledge.org.

A video introducing the Organic Farm Knowledge platform was created to learn more about the platform and better understand its offerings and wide range of tools for organic farming. The video is already available in [English](#), [Italian](#), [German](#), [Estonian](#), [Greek](#) and [Dutch](#). More languages will follow!

Organic Farm Knowledge was originally set up by [ICROFS](#) (International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems) in the framework of the [OK-Net Arable](#) project. It is currently being developed further by the project [OK-Net EcoFeed](#). Both projects are coordinated by [IFOAM Organics Europe](#) and are funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. The third core partner of the Organic Farm Knowledge platform is [FiBL](#) (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture).

For more info please contact organic-farmknowledge@fibl.org.



Organic Farm Knowledge is a product of OK-Net Arable and OK-Net EcoFeed. These projects have received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreements No. 652654 and No. 773911 respectively. The information contained within this platform only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



New project wants to make school meals part of transition to sustainable diet

The EU-funded “SchoolFood4Change” (SF4C) project aims to shift school meals and schools into a new paradigm of systemic change towards sustainable diets. By focusing on children, our future, and strong trust in youth action competence, SF4C strives for a long-lasting impact on the food system that will benefit people and the planet.

Schools can play a pivotal role in a food transition

Schools and education are important means to foster the transition towards sustainable and healthy diets. However, increasing the availability of healthy food is not enough. Systemic solutions to challenges around food and school food need to be accompanied by a food culture environment supporting all actors along the food system chain – including pupils, families, farmers, procurers, public authorities, and policymakers.

SF4C wants to impact 3,000 schools, 600,000 young people & 2 million citizens

SF4C follows a holistic multi-level approach and brings together expertise of established European organisations and networks, sustainable food procurement, nutrition specialists, scientists, and chefs. Started in January 2022, the SF4C consortium counts 43 partners and has the ambitious target of reaching at least two million EU citizens, impacting over 3,000 schools and 600,000 young people across 12 European countries.

Over the course of the next four years, project activities will involve developing innovative and sustainable food procurement, promoting Planetary Health Diets and cooking, and introducing the “Whole School Food Approach”. The project’s results and outcomes will contribute to the implementation of the Farm to Fork Strategy.

SF4C will launch its website in June 2022. In the meantime, those interested can contact amalia.ochoa@iclei.org, Project Coordinator at Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) for further information or questions.

ClieNFarms project has started

Making farms climate-neutral is the aim of the ClieNFarms projects that started last January. The project will set up 20 cases studies where systemic solutions will be tested and evaluated using up-to-date modelling approaches and multicriteria assessment tools.

These case studies will cover the diversity of production systems (crops, beef, dairy, special crop productions, etc) and all geographical areas of Europe as well as New Zealand. The solutions will be co-designed with farmers and local actors (R&D, finance, supply chain, etc) in a living-lab like structure.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we will facilitate exchange between project partners and policymakers and ensure project findings feed into EU policies, like the Farm to Fork Strategy and climate policies.

INRAE coordinates the ClieNFarms project which will run until end of 2025.





ClieNFarms has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036822. 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.

Policy instruments & voluntary initiatives for reducing contentious inputs in organic farming

The [RELACS project](#) released a new scientific paper by [Varga et al., 2022](#), analysing existing policy instruments and voluntary initiatives in the EU for reducing contentious inputs in organic farming. The paper considers copper, mineral oils, external nutrient inputs, anthelmintics, antibiotics and vitamins.

The study finds that due to the current dependence of organic farming on the inputs considered, any sudden phase-out or ban on their usage would do more harm than good to organic. The paper calls for gradual data-driven reduction measures.

For this, reliable and accessible databases on the use of inputs are necessary. In addition, significant investments for targeted research into alternatives, knowledge sharing and awareness raising are also needed. Both organic and non-organic farmers will benefit from this.

[Learn more about these findings and other scientific publications on RELACS's website.](#)

Visit the [RELACS website](#) to learn more and follow the latest project's developments on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) using @RELACSeu and #RELACSeu.

RELACS seeks to promote the development and adoption of environmentally safe and economically viable tools and technologies to reduce the use of external inputs in organic farming systems. IFOAM Organics Europe is responsible for the communication and dissemination of project results as well as the coordination of the science-practice-policy dialogue.



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RELACS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 773431. 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.



Register to RELACS trial results webinar: Reducing Anthelmintic control

Are you interested in reducing anthelmintic use in your flock? Would you like to learn about natural alternatives to them? The RELACS project - Replacement of Contentious Inputs in Organic Farming Systems - has explored how heather and fungi could support these goals! As the project comes to an end, we invite you to join this webinar on April 8 2022. Led by expert Spiridoula Athanasiadou of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) we will discuss:

- Benefits and challenges of alternative approaches
- Grazing sheep on heather: what did we learn?
- Adding naturally occurring fungi (*Duddingtonia flagrans*) to feed: lessons learnt
- Trial results: impact on animal health and welfare
- Next steps

[Register now](#) & learn more about benefits & challenges of alternative approaches!

For more information contact Ana at aallamand@soilassociation.org.



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2 IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE DEVELOPMENT

The Year of Organics toolkit – Celebrate with us

[This year, the European organic movement will celebrate its 20th anniversary](#). Together with [IFOAM – Organics International](#)'s 50th and [IFOAM Asia](#)'s 10th anniversary, 2022 will also mark the Year of Organics.

The year of organics comes at the perfect time to raise awareness and recognize organic food and farming as part of the solution to climate and biodiversity crises. Now more than ever we need to underline the positive effects of organic and celebrate it worldwide, together!

To help you amplify our messages and celebrate our birthdays, IFOAM – Organics International published [the Year of Organics toolkit](#). In the toolkit, you will find visuals and messages you can freely use to help us spread the word about the Year of Organics and the benefits of organic!

How does it work?

Simply visit the [Year of Organics toolkit](#), click on the card of your choice, find the content relevant to you in its attachments, and save the free videos and visuals directly onto your device. From soil, climate crisis, to biodiversity and inputs, you will find key messages, posters, and useful logos to share on social media, in your presentations, as part of your communication campaigns, on your website, or on any other channel!

Help us spread the word by using the official Year of Organics toolkit. Make sure to post on social media using [#YearOfOrganics](#) and tag [@OrganicsEurope](#) and [@IFOAMOrganic](#)!

To stay up to date with further information regarding the Year of Organics, keep an eye on our [website](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).

Celebrating women transforming our food system!

One day isn't enough to do justice to the incredible work carried out by women in agriculture around the world. This International Women's Day and beyond, let's celebrate the women leading the transformation of our food systems!

Women farmers produce half of the world's food

Despite this, female nutrition indicators across all age groups are worse than those of their male counterparts. Women farmers play a key role in ensuring food security, particularly in rural societies, but lack of training, insufficient access to resources, and exclusion from decision-making processes often result in their yields being up to 30% lower than men farmers'.

Closing the gender gap could **raise total agricultural output in developing countries by up to 4%**. The right resources could help rural women maximise economic opportunities, increase productivity, and improve food security, education and healthcare around the world, since women tend to reinvest in their households.



Organic can be part of the solution!

- Ensures that women, who play a key role in caring for the diet of their communities, can have access to healthier, diversified and nutritious food.
- Uses sustainable agricultural practices that avoid the use of chemical inputs like pesticides, which harm women farmers' health.
- Promotes knowledge-intensive practices through technical information and training, which empowers women to act autonomously and independently.

Women in organics: what's your message for the world?

For International Women's Day, IFOAM Organics International asked some of the incredible leaders, farmers, and sustainability advocates in the organic community to share a message that matters to them. Hear from them on their [dedicated blog](#)!

This article first appeared on IFOAM - Organics International's blog "[Organic without boundaries](#)". We thank them for writing and sharing it with us!

Do you have an initiative that is transforming food & farming? Share it with us, get visibility & inspire others!

To make the EU Green Deal a reality, we need to change the way we eat and farm. The organic movement has always been a pioneer and innovator. Several organic and other projects are already revolutionizing food and farming across Europe, moving us closer to our [shared Vision 2030](#).

We can make organic and truly sustainable farming more widely available and recognized if we work together. If you have a project that can inspire other food and farming actors as well as policymakers, share it with us by submitting it to EUorganic2030.bio.

If your initiative is deemed to meet the goals of our vision, we will promote it on our social media – showcasing strategic actions to show that fair, environmentally conscious, healthy, and caring food and farming systems are possible! Need inspiration? Have an initiative? Visit euorganic2030.bio



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They make it happen! A Belgian farming collective for biodiversity and preservation

Organic farming and production work with nature to achieve the best possible results for people, animals, and the planet. To inspire further change in our food and farming systems, our vision collects strategies that develop organic further and inspire others.

A perfect inspirational example is given by Froidefontaine, a Belgian farm that brings together



producers, processors, and other passionate project leaders to build a unique place for food, craft, and education. It is a place where individuals can express their talents through several developmental settings, from access to land, infrastructure, finance, administrative support as well as marketing.

The farm is home to a number of sustainable producers and products, including cider, potatoes, vegetables, chickens, honey, and natural colours extracted from flowers. The farm provides visitors with a variety of high-quality organic products, educational activities, and boarding facilities. Froidefontaine practices regenerative and agroecological farming, protects natural areas, and preserves biodiversity.

Check out their [website](#) & get inspired! You can also apply and be part of their farm with your own project.

Read more about this and other initiatives on euorganic2030.bio, and share it on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#). Find out what other initiatives are transforming food and farming in Europe on social media using #EUorganic2030.



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**HAVE AN INITIATIVE THAT TRANSFORMS FOOD AND FARMING? VISIT
EUORGANIC2030.BIO TO SEE INSPIRING EXAMPLES AND SUBMIT YOUR OWN!**



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Volunteering at IFOAM Organics Europe: Team work and discovering Belgium

Hello, my name is Rico and in September I started working at IFOAM Organics Europe as one of the ESC volunteers. For 11 months, I'm supporting the Projects & Fundraising team.

After almost seven months in Brussels, it feels like I have been living here forever. I am well attuned to my work and currently trying to acquire German sponsors. I am also working on a report for the EU Commission's LIFE-grant, which provides financial support to IFOAM Organics Europe and hence, requests an annual accountability report. The report is almost finished and must be handed in very soon. It is a lot of work and will consist of around 100 pages. So, it was very helpful that all colleagues have contributed to it! Next to that, I also started to work on a personal project during the ESC year. As I have a lot of fun presenting and designing, I will redesign many materials that we use in our team to send out to potential sponsors.

In my free time, me and the other volunteers try to see as much of Belgium as possible. The other day we went to the EU Parliament and got a guided tour. It was super interesting and impressive to see the plenary hall in real life. However, we still haven't gone to Belgium's coastal towns, and still haven't seen much of the Walloon part of the country. Unfortunately, the weather was not so pleasing in the past months either. The typical Belgian rain, cold and wind was not really inviting to go outside. But when the sun peeked through the clouds no one could hold us back. Last weekend we made it to the famous Waterloo and even went to Liège. There you can find one of Belgium's longest staircases and of course the famous Liège waffles. But there are still many more places to visit in Belgium and now that the spring is just around the corner, I am sure we will become more active again.



**EUROPEAN
SOLIDARITY
CORPS**

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.

Saying goodbye to our colleagues



Yulia Barabanova

IFOAM Organics Europe is saying goodbye to Yulia Barabanova who has left the organisation at the end of March. Yulia joined us in 2014. During all the 8 years in the organisations, Yulia has had a key role. She successfully guided IFOAM Organics Europe through two vision and strategy processes during which she intensively collaborated with the board, council, and staff. In addition, Yulia was part of the TP Organics secretariat, where among many other things she coordinated the writing of the 3rd Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda. Yulia has made a huge contribution to the recognition that TP Organics receives from policy makers nowadays. Yulia has decided to explore new career options, but we are sure she will bring the organic spirit to

her new workplace. All colleagues, and the whole organisation, are very thankful for all the work she did for IFOAM Organics Europe and TP Organics. We all wish her success and happiness in the next steps of her career.





Axel Gery

After 5 months spent in our FLOEE unit as a volunteer Axel Géry left us to undertake personal projects. His permanent good mood, his help in the management of the daily operational tasks and the organisation of some internal events (Christmas lunch Monthly meeting) show us his flexibility and his polyvalence. We wish him all the best for his next project.

3 EVENTS

Preview of events

Webinar “Healthy policies for healthy soil: the Green Deal playing field”

Participate in this webinar on 10 March, at 10.30-13.00 (CET), organised by Legambiente (IT) and Zelena Istra (HR) within the Soil4Life project, in partnership with the European Circular Bioeconomy Policy Initiative.

Why participate?

Soil is both a playground for ecological transition and a natural, basic resource essential for its implementation. The new [Soil Strategy](#) presented by the European Commission does not only update the measures and targets of actions already taken but requires a change of vision: Europe must protect its soils and must determine the conditions for keeping soils healthy. This is not the case today: at least two thirds of Europe’s soil is not in a healthy condition.

What to expect?

Among keynote speakers from the European Parliament and the European Commission will be Nathalie Sauze-Vandevyver, Director of the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI). She will introduce the EU Mission "Soil Deal for Europe".

In the panel discussion, Bram Moeskops, Research & Innovation Manager at IFOAM Organics Europe, will present soil protection in the agroecological transition. He will focus on the role of organic farming (the only agroecological approach regulated at EU level) in soil preservation and soil health. He will also outline policy recommendations and show how organic farming and agroecology contribute to improving soil health, fertility and biodiversity, while simultaneously delivering climate change mitigation and other ecosystem services.

Visit the [soil4life website](#) for the full programme and registration.

Members can now get inspired for EU Organic Day & learn about EU Organic Awards

On 10 March, we held a webinar to inform the movement about the EU Organic Awards and inspire our members to start organising national activities celebrating EU Organic Day at national level.

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member? Find the recordings of this member-only webinar [on our member extranet](#) (extranet > [hot topics](#) > [EU Organic Day 2022](#)).

Are you organising events yourself? Please communicate them to communication@organicseurope.bio. We will make sure to feature them and share them within our network.

If you are interested in another inspirational session about the EU Organic Day, please reach out to us too!

Maybe you are also interested in our upcoming "Let's Discuss Organic!" webinars:

- Thursday, 7 April from 14:00-15:30 CET: *Organic Textiles*.
Hosted by Antoine Pauti, Policy Assistant on Agriculture, Environment and Food at IFOAM Organics Europe.
- Tuesday, 10 May from 14:00-15:30 CET: *Revision of the Directive on the Sustainable Use of pesticides (SUD)*.
Hosted by Mathilde Calmels, Policy Coordinator on Pesticides, Fertilisers and Natural Inputs at IFOAM Organics Europe.

[You can register to 'Let's discuss organic' on our member extranet.](#)

Are you interested in these sessions but not an IFOAM Organics Europe member? Contact membership@organicseurope.bio for information about what you can gain from being a member.

Learn about organic textiles & the EU Regulation on the pesticides in our member-only webinars

We continue our "Let's Discuss Organic!" series of member-only webinars. Join experts from our team and network and discuss hot topics in the organic movement.

- Thursday, 7 April from 14:00-15:30 CET: *Organic Textiles*.
Hosted by Antoine Pauti, Policy Assistant on Agriculture, Environment and Food at IFOAM Organics Europe.
- Tuesday, 10 May from 14:00-15:30 CET: *Revision of the Directive on the Sustainable Use of pesticides (SUD)*.
Hosted by Mathilde Calmels, Policy Coordinator on Pesticides, Fertilisers and Natural Inputs at IFOAM Organics Europe.

[Register to 'Let's discuss organic' on our member extranet.](#)

Interested in the session but unable to attend? Do not worry, recordings will be available for our members on the extranet afterwards. The recordings of the first three 'Let's discuss organic' sessions are already available for [on the member extranet!](#)



Are you interested in these sessions but not an IFOAM Organics Europe member? Contact membership@organicseurope.bio for information about what you can gain from being a member.

IFOAM Organics Europe 20 Years celebration event – registration open for members

This year, the European organic movement will celebrate its 20th anniversary. Together with IFOAM – Organics International's 50th and IFOAM Asia's 10th anniversary, 2022 will also mark the Year of Organics.

For this occasion, we would like to give our organic community the opportunity to celebrate together in person. We are pleased to invite all IFOAM Organics Europe Members to our 20 years anniversary event that will take place in-person on **11 May, starting at 16:00 in Brussels, BE.**

The event will embrace a high-level panel talk, during which we will welcome the First Vice President of the European Commission - Frans Timmermans together with other high-profile speakers. The high-level discussion will be followed by a celebratory reception.

Should you wish to attend the celebratory event, please find more information on IFOAM Organics Europe's 20 years anniversary event registration & programme on our [Members' Extranet events calendar](#) or reach out to us via events@organicseurope.bio.

Early bird registration for the European Organic Congress 2022 now open

[Register now for our European Organic Congress 2022](#) - 'A more organic future: On the road to achieving the EU Green Deal' and benefit from the early bird ticket fee! [IFOAM Organics Europe](#) and [INTERBIO Nouvelle-Aquitaine](#) are delighted to welcome in person this year's Congress participants on 16-17 June, in the 'world's wine capital', Bordeaux, France.

The Congress offers a wide variety of sessions to discuss the organic sector's hot topics:

- Plenary session on the CAP's contribution to the Organic Action Plan;
- Workshop on the pilot network of climate positive organic holdings;
- Review of the first 6 months of EU Organic Regulation 2018/848;
- Parallel sessions on the organic market & supply chain and organics sector & digitalization;
- Networking dinner, and so much more...

Visit the [website of the European Organic Congress 2022](#) for the complete programme and find your favourite sessions. Stay tuned for updates on the final programme by following @OrganicsEurope on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).





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Save the date: The first Organics Europe's Youth Event 2022 31 Aug-1 Sept 2022

Organic and You(th) – Together for sustainable food systems

We are excited to announce that we have been working on a brand-new event: [Organics Europe's Youth Event](#). Together with our partners FiBL Switzerland and Bio Suisse, we created an exciting programme for the first edition. FiBL will host the youth event in its recently opened new office in Frick, Switzerland, from 31 August to 1 September 2022.

The youth event aims to create a platform for young agents active in the organic sector. We will welcome young farmers, entrepreneurs, processors, retailers, scientists, students, and other (young) interested actors to network, discuss and learn about the potential of organic production and their role in a sustainable food system.

Under this year's motto: "Organic and You(th) – Together for sustainable food systems" the event will host a wide range of sessions, including panel discussions, talks, and workshops to inspire young actors in the organic movement. Sessions will cover in depth how to transform our food system from the perspective of, amongst others, socioeconomic change, climate change and EU policies.

Participants are invited to bring up questions and challenges and to discuss these in sessions with a diverse, European sounding board of other participants. It will moreover open the stage to showcase many inspirational examples of young entrepreneurs who will present their organic initiatives and how they are already contributing to an organic and sustainable future. An optional excursion on 2 September will provide a unique practical insight into innovative, organic production systems.

To stay up to date with the opening of the registration and further information regarding the event, keep an eye on our website, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.



Review of events

Watch "Let's Discuss Organic!" recordings on EU organic day, sustainability labelling & agroecology living labs

The recordings of the first three 'Let's discuss organic' sessions are now available for our members [on our member extranet!](#)

On 3 February, expert Anne-Claire Asselin, President of X-Food, Expert Environment and Biodiversity at Sayari, and Sabine Bonnot, President of ITAB, presented recent developments of the PlanetScore and answered audience questions.

On 10 March, IFOAM Organic Europe's Director, Eduardo Cuoco, and Communications Manager, Eva Berckmans, hosted a session on the EU Organic Awards and EU Organic Day. IFOAM Organics Europe's members from Bioforum Vlaanderen, the Soil association, the Czech Technology Platform for Organic Agriculture and our colleagues of IFOAM Organics – International presented their inspirational activities to organise on EU Organic Day and to promote and celebrate organic.

On 14 March, TP Organics hosted a webinar about the European R&I partnership on agroecology living labs and research infrastructures. Several experts on the subject shared the stage and gave our members answers to the question what the agroecology living labs are about and how they can get involved.

Thank you to all those who attended and for contributing to the discussion!

Do not miss out on the upcoming "Let's Discuss Organic!" webinars:

- Thursday, 7 April from 14:00-15:30 CET: *Organic Textiles*.
Hosted by Antoine Pauti, Policy Assistant on Agriculture, Environment and Food at IFOAM Organics Europe.
- Tuesday, 10 May from 14:00-15:30 CET: *Revision of the Directive on the Sustainable Use of pesticides (SUD)*.
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[Our members can register to 'Let's discuss organic' on our member extranet.](#)

Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member who is interested in the sessions but cannot attend them? Do not worry, recordings will be available on the extranet afterwards.

Are you interested in these sessions but not an IFOAM Organics Europe member? Contact membership@organicseurope.bio for information about what you can gain from being a member.



EU FarmBook: Open-source knowledge platform for farmers **23 February 2022, online**

On 23 February, we held a member-only webinar in which 28 participants from the organic sector learned about the progress of the work in the two sister projects EURAKNOS and EUREKA. Participants were introduced to an online, open-source, EU-level knowledge reservoir [EU FarmBook](#). This platform makes practice-oriented knowledge from EU research and innovation projects more easily accessible, searchable, multilingual, interactive, and attractive to the European farming and forestry community.

The webinar included “hands-on” testing of and feedback to the platform by participants. They appreciated having all project results in one place, as well as the search function and layout. 9 out of the 28 participants are part of multi-actor projects. All participants were invited to join the multi-actor community and be part of the journey, which will continue in the recently approved 7-year follow-up project .

With Horizon Europe, there will be many more multi-actor projects. The new project will build upon EURAKNOS & EUREKA to support knowledge exchange between all EU and national Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) actors by further developing, expanding, exploiting, and maintaining an easily accessible and user-friendly EU-wide digital platform for practitioners in agriculture, forestry and other rural sectors.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we will bring in our network into this project, too, and help make the material on the platform ready for organic practitioners. For example, developing and promoting education and training material for organic farmers and translating knowledge into user-friendly formats.

The recording of the webinar is available via [our member extranet](#), under [Research & Innovation](#). Thank you to all those who attended and for contributing to the discussion!

If you are reading this article, the odds are high that you are interested in attending the online closing conference of EUREKA on 29 March. For more information and registration consult the [EUREKA website](#).

The feasibility of an EU-wide digital knowledge reservoir was first explored by the EURAKNOS project, based on the outputs of Horizon 2020 Thematic Networks. This assessment was extended to a ‘proof of concept’ by the subsequent EUREKA project, working with other multi-actor Horizon 2020 projects. As a partner in both projects, IFOAM Organics Europe made sure that the new platform suits the needs of the organic actors.



4 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE

IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE MAIN SPONSOR 2021

The contributions of sponsors allow IFOAM Organics Europe to focus on its most important work – representing organic stakeholders. This funding is a means to co-finance IFOAM Organics Europe events, projects and publications and is a highly valued contribution to our work.

IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE KEY SUPPORTER 2021



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5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2022

The Year of Organics

Global

#YearOfOrganics

25 March 2022

[EU Organic Awards](#)

Launch of the application period

7 April 2022

[Let's Discuss Organic! Organic textiles](#)

Exclusive online webinar for members.

10 May 2022

[Let's Discuss Organic! Revision of the Directive on the Sustainable Use of pesticides \(SUD\)](#)

Exclusive online webinar for members

8 June 2022

[EU Organic Awards](#)

Deadline for the submission for applications

16-17 June 2022

[European Organic Congress](#)

Bordeaux, France

#EOC2022

26-29 July 2022

[BIOFACH 2022](#)

Nuremberg, Germany

#biofach #vivaness

31 August-2 September 2022

[IFOAM Organics Europe Youth Event](#)

Frick, Switzerland

#OEYE2022

23 September 2022

[EU Organic Day](#)

European Union

#OrganicEU #EUorganicDay

29-30 November 2022 (TBC)

[Organic Innovation Days](#)

Brussels

#OID2022



2022

[10-year anniversary of IFOAM Asia](#)

[20-year anniversary of IFOAM Organics Europe](#)

[50-year anniversary of IFOAM Organics International](#)



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