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BIOECO ACTUAL®

Independent free newspaper about the organic sector

"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well" Virginia Woolf

BIOFACH & VIVANESS
Organic products still on growth track worldwide

13 - 16 February 2019 | Nuremberg, Germany

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Montse Mulé,
Editor, bio@bioecoactual.com

BIOFACH & VIVANESS

Much more than a business

BIOFACH2019 into organic

VIVANESS2019 into natural beauty

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From the 13th to the 16th of February, at the Exhibition Centre in Nuremberg, professionals from the international organic sector will meet at their biggest annual congress: BIOFACH & VIVANESS, the world's leading trade fair for organic food products and natural & organic personal care, under the direction of Ms. Danila Brunner. "The Organic System: healthy in a holistic approach" is the official motto of the congress.

More than 50,000 visitors and more than 2,900 exhibitors are expected at the 30th edition of **BIOFACH**. Organic producers, processors, distributors, certifiers and journalists from more than 90 countries will take up 9 halls. In addition more than 260 exhibitors of the natural and organic cosmetics and personal care sector from around 35 countries will meet in an extra hall of the parallel fair **VIVANESS**.

BIOFACH is organized around the following three thematic areas:

1. **Innovations & Trends**, where the **Novelty Stand** is. Here the **Best New Product Awards** will be awarded and the **Newcomers** will be presented.

2. **Experience & Discover**, exhibition and experimentation including tastings from the **World of Olive Oil**, the **World of Wine**, and the **World of Vegan**, and their awards; and the **Special Show: Organic right from the start**.

3. **Knowledge & Learning**, which includes the **BIOFACH Congress, Generation Future Network Hub, Fachhandelstreff, Initiatives & NGOs Network Hub**.

The organic food industry continues to grow strongly

In Germany 1.4 million hectares were dedicated to organic agriculture in 2017 (a 10% increase over the previous year); whereas in France 1.78 million hectares were cultivated with organic methods in the same period. Organic turnover in Germany exceeded €10 trillion, whereas in France the organic sector doubled its business volume in five years, which has encouraged many conventional farmers to switch to organic methods. Today, one in eight jobs in France and one in ten in Germany is in the organic

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BIOFACH & VIVANESS

sector. Denmark is the leader in organic consumption with a market share of 13.3%. In Holland, the number of organic farmers grew by 10% and the total organic land area by 7%, according to data provided by ***Bionext***. Belgium increased its consumption by 6% and its organic agricultural areas by 83,000 new hectares. Spain is the European country with the most extensive organic cultivated area, followed by Italy, which exported €2 billion worth of organic goods in 2017. In Austria, where more than 23,000 organic farmers live, sales reached €1.8 billion in 2017. In Switzerland organic sales grew by 8% and its cultivated area by 14.4%, according to ***Bio-Suisse***. Poland is another country showing a steadily growth, both in demand and in offer, and it now has over 800 specialty stores, several new retail chains, 795 organic food producers and 15,740 organic farms. Overall the prospect is good for everyone: the global organic market aims to generate $95 trillion in 2019.

Europe is, after North America, the second world market for organic products. The Asian market follows closely and it is growing fast, according to the figures presented by **IFOAM_Organics International, Switzerland's Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FIBL), and Agrarmarkt Informations_Gesellschaft (AMI),** which is based in Berlin.

India is the country with the highest number of organic producers, followed by Uganda and Mexico. Almost 85% of organic producers live in Asia, Africa and Latin America, according to the report of IFOAM Organics Int. As for the total area dedicated to organic farming, Australia is in the lead, followed by Argentina, China, US and Spain.

More than a business, the heartbeat of the organic sector

"BIOFACH is where the organic sector "comes home" says ***Louise Luttikholy***, IFOAM Executive Director, *"Its professional and, at the same time, relaxed atmosphere highlights what's good about the industry"*.

And the organic sector is in very good health, which is the first of the four pillars, **Health, Fairness, Ecology and Care**, on which IFOAM works to promote and develop organic agriculture throughout the world. *"Organic Agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal, human and planet as one and indivisible. Health is the wholeness and integrity of living systems. It is not simply the absence of illness, but the maintenance of physical, mental, social and ecological well-being. Immunity, resilience and regeneration are key characteristics of health."* explains IFOAM Organics International.

BIOFACH 2019 Congress: The holistic approach to health

The German Federation of Organic Food Producers (BÖLW), as the national sponsor, together with the international sponsor IFOAM-Organics International and the organizers of the fair, have chosen as the topic of this Congress ***"The holistic approach to health"***, which summarizes the relationships between agriculture, food processing, nutrition patterns and health. It also emphasizes the impact of soil, water and air quality on public health and describes how organic farming could contribute to public health. Other aspects of interest are: how we should legislate in order to preserve public resources and reward the work that benefits the health of the environment and consequently of humans, promoting good business practices.

Dr Carola Strassner, Professor of Sustainable Food Systems & Nutrition Ecology, explained in her speech at the BIOFACH Press Conference in Warsaw that *"health is the ability to adapt and to self-manage in the face of social, physical and emotional challenges"* and that the factors that determine health are: our social, economic and physical environment; as well as individual characteristics and behaviours.

Organic agriculture contributes to the recovery capacity of ecosystems, and BIOFACH is the annual gathering of all the agents involved.

BIOFACH is also held in Japan, USA, South America, China, India and Thailand, and year after year brings together more than 3,500 exhibitors and 100,000 professional visitors.■

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IFOAM EU

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The EU organic regulation, an update

Where are we at?

On 14 June 2018 the new Organic Regulation was published in the Official Journal of the European Union. This new regulation will apply from 1 January 2021 and will replace the current Organic Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.

Currently, the secondary legislation is being developed in order to have a full set of rules ready six months before the date of application. The Commission's working plan is to develop the production rules – on plant, livestock, aquaculture, food, and feed – in 2018. By the end of 2019 it would develop the control system, and the international trade.

What is the secondary legislation?

Following the EU Treaty of Lisbon's implementation in 2009, the European Union's legislative process has significantly changed.

The basic text published in June 2018 will be complemented by legal acts, named Delegated Acts and Implementing Acts. These Acts are the detailed requirements of the regulation. There are around 50 delegations of power to the European Commission to further develop the requirements for production, labelling, control and import.

What will change for the European sector?

Despite the fact that these detailed requirements of the regulation are being developed in the next two years, it can be said that the new regulation will not be a big revolution. However, changes will occur, and the European and global organic sector have to prepare for the new legislative framework.

The new regulation will bring about some positive changes, such as a stricter definition of soil-bound crop production – requiring crops to be connected to the soil and banning hydroponics, a ban of genetically engineered nanomaterials, the possibility of using materials more adapted to organic such as heterogenous planting material and the possibility to certify a group of producers in the EU.

However, the European organic sector is not that happy about other changes. For example, the possibility of doing less than one inspection per year (under certain conditions) and the lack of harmonisation for the actions to be taken in case pesticide residues are found in organic products.

What will change for the global sector?

The new regulation will especially impact trade with (equivalent) countries outside the European Union, as it defines two systems to import organic products from outside the EU.

All Third Countries that are currently recognised as equivalent to European organic will have to renegotiate the terms for trade agreements. Under the current system, thirteen Third Countries are recognised: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, India, Israel, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United States of America and New Zealand.

Where there is not a trade agreement between the European Union and the Third Country, the Commission will establish a list of recognised control bodies / authorities that will be authorised to perform controls and certification. The EU regulation will be implemented identically within the EU and outside the EU. Some flexibility will be allowed for the use of plant protection products and / or fertilisers traditionally used in Third Countries.

What does IFOAM EU do?

IFOAM EU is actively following these processes and has already started providing a broad range of input to all the EU institutions with the help of the expertise, knowledge and the experience of its membership. IFOAM EU is now working hard to contribute on the production of the secondary legislation in order to make the new set of rules easily implementable from the sector.■

The new regulation will especially impact trade with countries outside the EU

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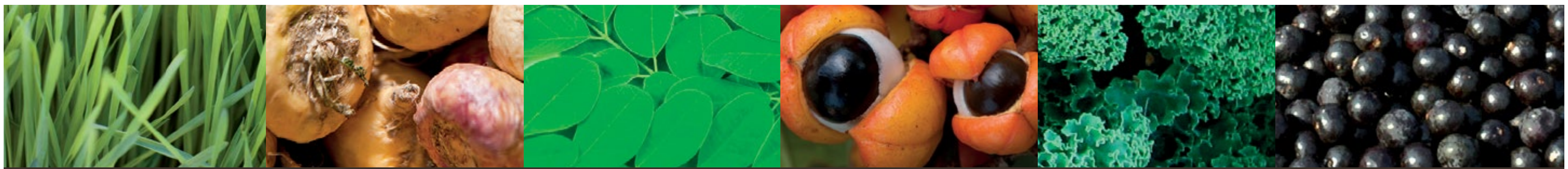

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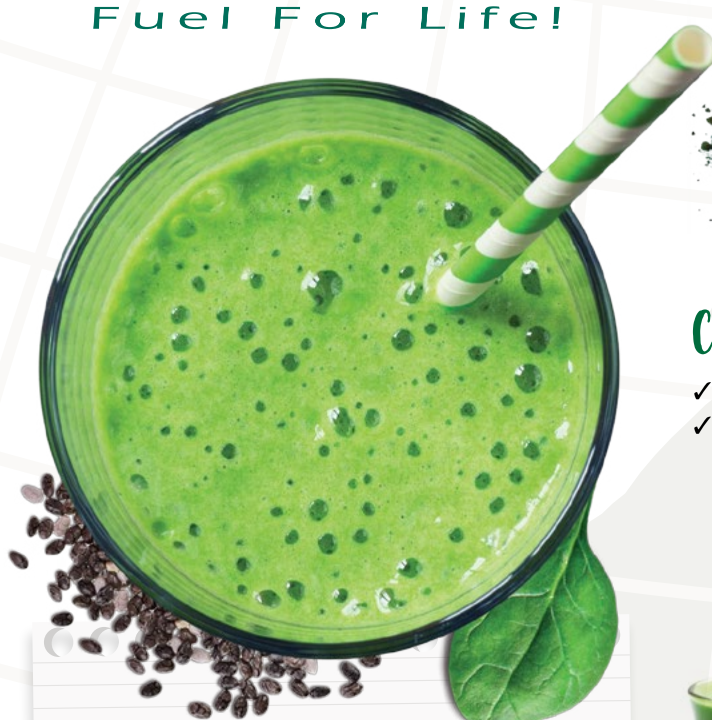

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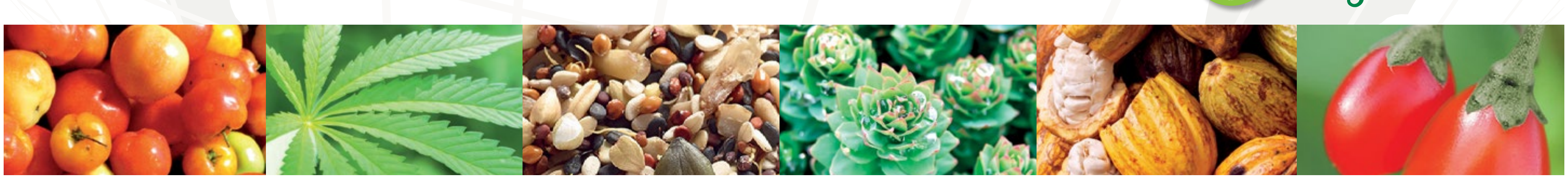

IFOAM ORGANICS INTERNATIONAL

Louise Luttikholt,
Executive Director | IFOAM - Organics International www.ifoam.bio

Health and organic -look at the whole picture!

'Is organic really healthy?' I regularly get asked this question by people who are sceptical or unsure of the benefits of organic. Sometimes this is followed by an extreme example – such as the fact that eating excessive amounts of organic potato chips is not healthy at all.

When looking at it purely from a narrow health perspective, it is hard to judge whether organic is really healthy or even healthier than conventional food. However, there is much more to say about health in relation to organic.

Health is one of the four Principles of Organic Agriculture that we have defined at IFOAM – Organics International, along with Ecology, Fairness and Care. The principle of Health states that: 'Organic Agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal and planet as one and indivisible.'

This principle points out that the health of individuals and communities cannot be separated from the health of ecosystems – healthy soils produce healthy crops that foster the health of animals and people. The role of Organic Agriculture, whether in farming, processing, distribution, or consumption, is to sustain and enhance the health of ecosystems and organisms from the smallest in the soil to human beings.

Thinking about 'positive health'

In Organic Agriculture we are used to looking at agro-eco systems with a holistic perspective. Farmers design their production systems in ways that emulate and enforce natural systems. For instance, pests could be considered as an expression of imbalance in production. Therefore, pest control measures are taken to restore the balance.

When it comes to human health though, we often think solely in the context of an 'absence of illnesses. However, the relatively new concept of 'positive health' relates to the organic 'systems thinking' and describes health as a dynamic phenomenon with several dimensions.

'Positive health' goes beyond purely physical functions and daily functioning to also include aspects like participation, quality of life, mental well-being and meaning.

Organic agriculture has a lot to offer in the context of positive health. First of all, organic food contains less pesticide residues. This has been scientifically researched and shown many times.

Furthermore, consumers with an organic lifestyle take seasonality and proximity into consideration. Not only does this contribute to a healthy environment, it also encourages greater creativity and diversity in cooking, which again contributes directly to one's health. Many organic consumers are also conscious about meat consumption and animal welfare.

The ability to 'make a change' and a sense of meaning

Thinking about the other aspects of positive health, like participation, quality of life and meaning, organic has a lot to offer. For instance, in community supported agriculture or participatory guarantee systems, groups of consumers and producers come together to decide what they want their local food system to look like. This means that people are empowered to make the choices that can positively contribute to their – and their society's – health.

Crucially, consumers, in their role as citizens, can also contribute to a greener agricultural political direction through the very act of their purchases. Every cent that we spend shapes the world around us. This means that

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people can make a positive contribution - even if they are buying organic potato chips!

We can also increase our sense of meaning when we relate the effects and impacts of organic agriculture to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is not difficult to see how organic contributes to reducing poverty, as farmers have to buy fewer inputs and can earn higher prices for their products. Organic also contributes to clean water, to preservation of life on land and can be part of climate action. These are all public goods that are at the centre of the health of our shared planet!

A credible and realistic approach to organic and health

Promoting health as an element of organic also implies that we should be honest and clear in our communication about what organic can do and cannot do. This means no false promises.

Sometimes consumers get the idea that organic is a 'green wonderland', which sets them up for frustration as they expect organic to heal all injustices in the world. Likewise, when people are ill we should not claim that if you just eat organic you will be all right.

At IFOAM - Organics International, we promote a realistic perspective on the positive relationship between organic and health by showing the deeper connections between our production systems and the maintenance of our overall physical, mental, social and ecological well-being.

We are what we eat. And we also are how we eat. The transformation to a different food culture, an increased appreciation of food and of those who worked to get that food onto our table, and a sense of modesty regarding what we really need to be happy will help create a context in which we can live healthily.


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We hope that you enjoy your organic meal!. ■

Louise Luttikholt,
Executive Director, IFOAM – Organics International

Louise Luttikholt became Executive Director of IFOAM-Organics International in July 2018. Born in the Netherlands and raised on a family dairy farm, she has extensive experience in organic agriculture, fair trade and development cooperation at strategic, management and regulatory levels. Prior to joining IFOAM – Organics International she worked as Director of Helvetas Germany, was Chair of the Textile Advisory Group of Fairtrade International, as well as Director of Strategy and Policy at Fairtrade International.

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ORGANIC MARKET

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The global outlook for organic food and farming

To judge by some usually reliable metrics, organic markets around the world are currently in robust good health. Organic sales are growing strongly worldwide, market penetration is rising, M&A activity and investment remains high, retailer engagement is deepening and consumer awareness is increasing. Set against a backdrop of a global epidemic of lifestyle diseases, and an urgent need for practical climate change mitigation, organic's longer term outlook look promising too.

But don't take anything for granted. The global organic food and farming Industry faces some formidable challenges – from undersupply issues to a growing international fraud problem; on-going regulatory hurdles to charges of elitism. And as organic moves into the next phase of its development – organic version 3.0 as it's being labelled – there are calls from some quarters for a realignment of organic values, and to move away from the current market dominated model. And with that, comes the question 'what kind of organic industry do we want in future?'. It's a question we'll come back to.

Headline data

First, let's look at the headline data. A good place to start is the release at Biofach of the annual World of Organic Agriculture report by FiBL and IFOAM. The 2018 edition told us that global organic industry was worth almost US$ 90 billion, confirming the positive trend of recent years. The US organic market was the world's biggest market, at €38.9 billion, followed by Germany (€9.5 billion), France (€6.7 billion), and China (€5.9 billion). The report showed that most of the major markets continued to show double-digit growth rates, and that the French organic market grew by 22% – the European market overall was worth around €30 billion.

More detail to this big picture came throughout the year as individual

Marco Verch©Creative Commons

markets reported their most recent national data. Staying with Europe, the Nordic countries have been the standout performers. Sweden grew its organic market by 9.3% in 2017, and in doing so nudged itself very close to the "magic" 10% share of total food and drink sales. Denmark, already a member of the 10% club saw organic penetration hit 13.3%, which Organic Denmark called a "remarkable tipping point". Double digit (12.5%) growth in Spain propelled it into the global top ten organic markets, thanks to growing interest among millennials and increasing retail availability. In Germany, an extraordinary 25% of all new food and drink launches in 2017 carried an organic claim, an almost fourfold increase on 2008 figures.

The US organic market meanwhile grew at six times the pace of conventional, according to the Organic Trade Association. North American neighbour Canada, having experienced a period of "tremendous growth", has seen organic's share of overall food and drink reach 2.6% (up from 1.7% in 2012). And in Australia, where personal health has become the biggest motivation to choose organic, the market was set to be worth AU$ 2 billion (US$ 1.5 billion) by the end of 2018.

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ORGANIC MARKET

India – organic nation?

Subhrajyotio7©Creative Commons. Cherry Resort inside Temi Tea Garden, Namchi, Sikkim

Looking to Asia, while China commands fourth place in world organic market rankings, the country that has recently been accomplishing the most is India. Whilst its domestic and exports markets are comparatively small, India has very serious ambitions for organic. Its 15-year organic-only experiment in the small state of Sikkim is paying multiple benefits, according to the Indian government. The health of local people, especially farm workers, has improved, farmers' income is rising, and there's been a boom in eco-tourism, thanks to the region's flourishing biodiversity.

Sikkim, which forms part of India's 'organic hub' in the fertile north-east of the country has shown the potential for organic expansion – and offered an alternative vision to a GM future. Across the country organic output is growing and a domestic consumer market is quickly being established. Recognising the opportunities for exports, the Indian government has launched "game-changing" new organic regulations and a new logo scheme. The government has also stepped in to create an initiative that links up organic growers in India with leading online retailers, like Amazon and BigBasket. India's organic producers are also attracting inward investment – for example, the IFC's US$25 million backing of leading exporter Suminter India Organics.

Big ticket deals

2018 might not quite have seen the tectonic shifts of 2017 (most notably Amazon's US$14 billion take-over of Whole Foods Market), but there were still plenty of big ticket deals involving organic brands and retailers. The major food and beauty multinationals continue to want their piece of organic action. So, hard on the heels of deals in 2017 involving Pukka Herbs, Mãe Terra, Pacific Foods and Uncle Matts, have come Coca Cola's acquisition of Australia's MOJO, L'Oréal's buy-out of German organic cosmetics pioneer Logocos Naturkosmetik and Nestlé Brazil's own-brand organic oats launch (with the a promise that it will "democratize the supply chain"). But specialists are also eyeing up takeover targets – for example, Midsona's €48.5 million move on German organic pioneer Davert.

Retail investment in organic also continued apace in 2018. In Europe, the major discounters were all upping their organic game. Lidl Denmark announced its aim for a 50% rise in organic sales. In Germany, Aldi launched 60 new organic lines at the beginning of the year to meet "booming" demand. Netto said that its recipe for success with organic (which in its Danish supermarkets accounts for 10% of total food and drink sales) was to "go massive" with the category. Specialist organic retailers were also on the march. In the UK, Planet Organic, bought in September 2018 by Inverlieth LLP, announced plans to double its store count over the next five years. French retailer Bio c'

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ORGANIC MARKET

Bon (with 110 stores across Europe), opened its first store in Japan. In the US, specialist online retailers – such as Brandless and Thrive Market – are succeeding in opening up organic to low and middle-income consumers.

Regulatory tensions

Regulatory and political pressures have been a feature of the organic scene on both sides of the Atlantic. Early proposals for the revision of the EU Organic Regulation threatened what IFOAM EU called a “lose-lose situation”, instead of being the enabler for organic to be the ‘flagship model for sustainable farming growth”. By the time the European Council endorsed the final wording of the new Regulation, the text was described by IFOAM EU president, Christopher Stopes, as “fragile” and still containing “important weaknesses”. During the revision process Sweden’s lead organic body KRAV announced that it was considering withdrawing entirely from the EU Organic Regulation, while the Danish organic industry discussed launching a new organic+ label, in response to concerns that existing EU organic standards were stifling innovation and growth.

In the US, tensions between the organic industry and lawmakers have been even more pronounced. The Organic Trade Association went as far as to accuse the Trump Administration of “launching an assault” on organic for planning to kill a rule that would advance animal welfare standards under the National Organic Program.

Back to the future?

At a recent IFOAM EU conference, a discussion was held on the question ‘Has regulation become a threat to the idea?’ While recognising the importance of regulation – providing a formal basis for trade, protection of consumers and bona fide producers – a warning was given that regulation can fossilise current practice, and that if it is too prescriptive can become a straight-jacket. In the debate, the UK-based professor Nik Lampkin asked if organic was any longer “an open-source, citizen-owned concept?”

This theme was taken up at last year’s Biofach by Dutch organic commentator Ronald Van Marlen, who argued that market-led organics were “driving unrealistic and undesirable targets for growth”. He sees the accelerated market consolidation of the last few years as a “silent takeover” by the multinationals. “A movement about principles and values is being sold by a market for value creation,” he told delegates. Van Marlen wants the organic movement to “regalvanize its role as force for positive change” and give the stage to the “new disruptors”.

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Elsewhere, there has been a sharp rise in interest in PGS organics (Participatory Guarantee Schemes), which are reminiscent of the local, trust-based networks of the early days of the organic movement. Initiatives such as the Real Organic Project in the US, formed by farmers who want to distance themselves from what they see as “the failures” of the National Organic Program, and the launch of Rodale’s Regenerative Organic Agriculture, reflect concerns over ‘industrialised organics’ and fears that human-scale organic production is under threat.

So, to conclude: With its compelling ‘healthy body, healthy planet’ proposition, organic is well placed to continue on its global growth trajectory. But that question – what kind of organic industry do we want in future? – is very definitely a live one, as is how do we make organic relevant for the next generation. One thing is clear, the ‘new disruptors’ want to shape their own vision for organic, and are already changing the discussion. ■

THE WORLD OF SEEDS

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Organic seeds: towards a transparent European market


©Matthias Klaiss

The use of organic seeds and propagating material is one of the fundamental principles of organic agriculture. This is reflected in current European regulations which stipulate that the use of organically produced plant reproductive material is mandatory if a crop is to be sold as organic produce.

Derogations

However, in Europe, demand for organic produce has historically outstripped organic seed supplies. In response, the current European regulations allow for exceptions, or 'derogations', from the organic seed requirement if certain conditions are met. In order to ensure the integrity of such a system, the regulations mandate the use of a computerised database in each national territory, which must keep a regularly-updated list of all organic seeds which are available at any given time.

An authorisation to use non-organic untreated seeds or seed potatoes may only be granted: (i) where no organic variety of the species the user wishes to obtain is registered in the database, and no alternative varieties of the same species would be appropriate for the user's production, (ii) where no supplier in that area is able to deliver seeds before seeding time, or (iii) where the use is justified for research or conservation purposes, in agreement with competent Member State authorities.

Consequently, the effective and accurate implementation and use of these databases is of paramount importance to the organic seed supply chain, and in ensuring the integrity of the organic sector.

New Organic Regulation

In June 2018 the European Commission published the new organic regulation 2018/848, to take effect from 1 January 2021. The new regulation aims to phase out the existing system of derogations for untreated conventional seed and planting material, and continues to mandate the use of a database containing information about organic and in-conversion plant reproductive material. The new regulation extends this requirement to organic animals, which are to be categorised by sex, species or breeds, age and any other relevant information. For aquaculture juveniles this should include their health status and the production capacity for each aquaculture species.

The regulation further stipulates that Member States must make this information public, free of charge, together with the names and contact details of suppliers. Operators of these databases are obliged to ensure that the information is updated regularly.

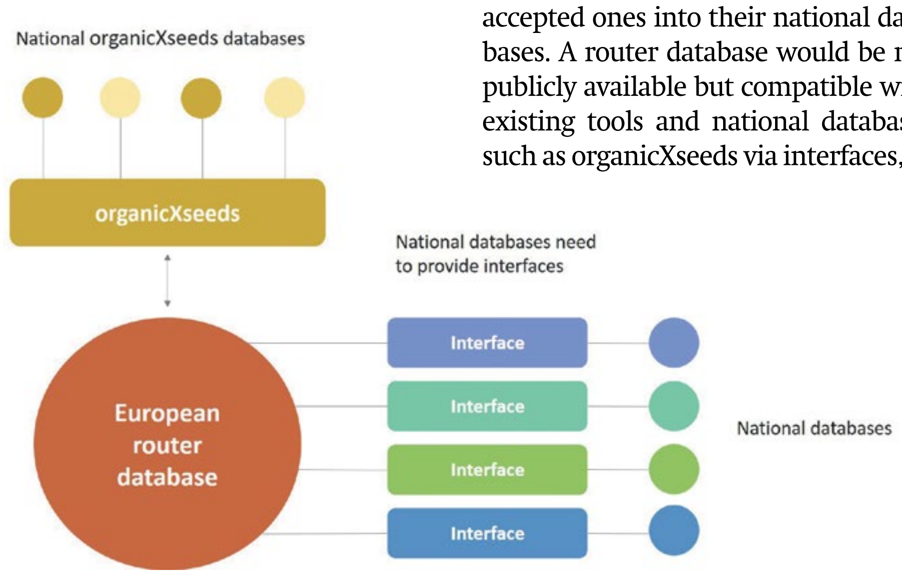
Organic Seed Databases

Member States have to ensure that measures are taken in order to comply with the European regulations with respect to organic seed. The Commission publishes links to Member States' databases on its website, which shows that member states at present have adopted a range of tools from simple spreadsheets to fully computerised tools. The most popular computerised tool is **organicXseeds**, a tool that integrates all the requirements of the European organic regulations into a single platform. It is presently running in seven countries and was developed by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL). Such a system can be used by all relevant stakeholders across the organic sector, including seed suppliers who use it to publish their available organic seed, farmers searching for organic seeds, inspection bodies who will receive and determine derogation requests, and competent authorities who need to monitor and report to the European Commission.

A European market for organic seeds?

The new regulation acknowledges the importance of developing the organic seed market, and stipulates that the current derogation regime will expire by 2036. As such, Member States will need to harmonise implementation across the European Union.

One way this could be achieved would be through a harmonised computerised database. Another would be through the development of a **European router database**. A router database would essentially mean that Member States would be free to manage their own national databases and systems while having an interface with the router database. Suppliers would be able to access a unified European online platform where they can manage their seeds and decide to which European countries they are able to deliver. The national authorities can accept or decline these offers and integrate the accepted ones into their national databases. A router database would be not publicly available but compatible with existing tools and national databases such as organicXseeds via interfaces, as demonstrated in the figure below.



A European router database is already under development in the LIVESEED project; a European Horizon 2020 project coordinated by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU (IFOAM-EU) and with partners including the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL). By linking national databases, LIVESEED additionally aims to establish a level playing field in the organic seed market, and improve transparency and performance.

While organic seed databases can deliver transparency on what is produced and available, farmers and seed suppliers need to have a role and actively participate in this process. Increased investment in seed databases is necessary to improve the situation of the organic seed sector. Establishing or utilising existing national expert groups could help to stimulate dialogue between stakeholders, in order to increase organic seed production and support the implementation of the new regulation. ■

For more information:
DG-AGRI Organic: https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/
Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL): https://www.fibl.org
LIVESEED: https://www.liveseed.eu
organicXseeds: https://www.organicxseeds.com
Contact person: Xenia Gatzert, FiBL, xenia.gatzert@fibl.org

(1) Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007; Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008; Commission Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008.
(2) Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008, s 30.
(3) Ibid., Art 45 (5).
(4) Regulation (EU) 2018/848, s 66.
(5) Ibid., Art 26 (2).
(6) Ibid., Art 53 (1).
(7) Döring, T., et al. (2012). The organic seed regulations framework in Europe—current status and recommendations for future development. Organic Agriculture, 2(3-4), pp.173-183.

THE WORLD OF VEGAN

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The vegan organic market: Healthy food that's inclusive of everyone

The vegan and organic sector have both been experiencing enormous growth in the recent years. The global market for vegetarian and vegan products was worth $51 billion in 2016, according to the market research company Euromonitor, while the organic market was worth around $77.4 billion in 2017.

There have been more vegan organic products hitting the market as the global population is becoming increasingly health-conscious and starting to care about the content of their foods. In the age of constant health scares, media reports and food additives, every step we can take to protect ourselves from harmful substances is an important one.

Vegan products are by no means free from those ingredients – there are healthy plant-based foods as well as unhealthy ones. But on average, a vegan diet is healthier than a non-vegan one as consuming more fruit and vegetables has amazing health benefits.

> Research shows vegans have lower blood pressure, lower rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and also some types of cancer

Eating a balanced vegan diet helps people to limit saturated fat and get plenty of fibre, vitamins and minerals. Research shows vegans have lower blood pressure, lower rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and also some types of cancer. The British Dietetic Association has said that a vegan diet is suitable at any age or life stage, including infancy, childhood and pregnancy.

Vegan products are very inclusive, constituting a safe dietary option for vegetarians, the lactose intolerant, those with allergies, people with various religious beliefs, the health-conscious, those who care about the environment and those who simply enjoy vegan food from time to time.

A strong vegan offering can promote not only inclusivity, but also sustainability and good nutrition. You can cut down your food-related carbon footprint by up to 50% by simply eating a vegan diet. With every 100 calories we feed to animals we get only 12 calories back in the form of their meat or milk, making animal farming inherently wasteful.

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Nowadays, many products are imported from other countries, which may not have food health and safety laws as strong as we do in Europe. Despite them being deemed safe for the European market, many people are sceptical about the claims and origins on the packet. Organic products need to market themselves effectively and be transparent about ingredients and production methods if they want to succeed in this competitive market.

The Vegan Society has been running its Vegan Trademark scheme since 1990, registering products with the internationally recognised sunflower logo. The Trademark is the authentic vegan standard, appearing on some 24,000 products spanning across 800 companies in 53 countries around the world.

Around 75% of these are companies based outside of the UK, with Germany having the most trademark holders, followed by Italy and then Spain. There are many vegan organic products registered, with the market booming in the recent years.

Vegan Trademark holders can boast that their products are inclusive of all dietary requirements as well as being kind to the environment and healthy for people. In a world full of chemicals and unhealthy substances, vegan organic food is truly the future – and this is indeed predicted by a 2018 Food & Beverage Trend Report that states "plant-based foods will become the new organic".

For more information, business can visit and apply for the Vegan Trademark at https://www.vegansociety.com/your-business/vegan-society-trademark.■

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NEW PROFESSIONAL EVENT
organic food IBERIA
IFEMA | Madrid
6-7 June 2019
GET READY FOR THE NEW ORGANIC SHOW IN SPAIN
Organic Food Iberia is the first fully professional and international trade only show for the Iberian Peninsula. It is 100% endorsed by the Spanish Government and the main organic associations of Spain and Portugal.
This is your opportunity to meet organic and ethical producers from all regions of Spain and Portugal under one roof. It's the definitive business event of the year for networking and to explore the amazing produce that this region has to offer.
Be part of Organic Food Iberia!
"It's time for Spain to have a dedicated meeting point between production, industry and marketing that reflects the growing increase in organic consumption, which will be facilitated by Organic Food Iberia in Madrid 2019."
ÁLVARO BARRERA, PRESIDENT, ORGANIC VALUE ASSOCIATION, CAAE (ECOVALIA)
For more information visit www.organicfoodiberia.com
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ORGANIC IN THE UK

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UK organic market: consisting growth

Organic market performance

Despite an uncertain economic climate in the UK, organic products have been leading the way in innovation and growth. The sector has enjoyed 7 years of steady increases in sales and is now well exceeding pre-recession levels to be at the highest market size ever, approximately £2.3 billion.

Although the estimated growth for the previous 12 months at 6% is lower than many other European countries, organic is outperforming the general trend on food and drink sales in the UK estimated at approx. 3% for the same period and buyers are more interested in the potential sales.

The market structure is still dominated by the large supermarket groups who account for approx. 67% of overall sales, however this situation is gradually changing as more shoppers choose to do a 'top-up' shop in smaller specialist outlets rather than doing a 'big weekly' shop in a large supermarket: independent shops have approx. 17% of the market. As UK shoppers are confused by the diversity of labels and claims which they face both in store and on pack, they often prefer to shop in an environment where they can ask for help and assistance in understanding the provenance and quality of the food – this is available in the independent stores.

Online shopping continues to give a significant boost to organic sales, as the choice and breadth of organic options is widened dramatically: for example Ocado, the key online food retailer has more than 3,500 organic products in the range and together with box schemes for fruit, vegetables and meat, which are very popular in the UK, account for approx. 13% of the overall market. Loyal organic shoppers know that they can enjoy the broadest range of choice through online shopping.

Innovation in healthy choices

Soil Association has licenced more than 3,000 new products in the last year, many of which are not only organic but also have additional health claims of free-from, vegan or dairy-free. Healthiness is becoming an increasingly important motivator and innovative brands that are bringing healthy solutions are growing market share.

123rf Limited©Jeremy Richards. Borough Market, Southwark, London

Market data would suggest that the packaged grocery category is the key driver for organic sales, having added almost £90m sales to the sector in the last 5 years. The most successful products have been in the Tea, Home baking and Biscuits and cereals categories; and many of the favourite UK household brands, such as Pukka, Kallo, and Doves Farm, are enjoying

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further success through exporting to Europe and beyond.

Chilled foods and fruit, veg and salads have also been playing a major role in fuelling growth for organic. UK consumers are more aware of organic being a signpost to healthy options and as they adopt more vegetarian based diets, the popularity of meat and dairy substitutes is rising. Not only is the current growth of organic fruit outpacing the market, with bananas alone achieving more than £50 million sales, the future opportunity for prepacked snacking options is exciting both in this area and in dried fruit and nuts, energy bars and healthy drinks.

Many larger FMCG brands, such as Kellogg's cereals, Coca-Cola's Honest drinks range and Babybel cheese are enjoying the rising demand for organic in the UK and delivering solutions that satisfy the needs of the ethical consumer who also wants to eat healthily.

A changing consume

The UK organic market has traditionally appealed to an older consumer, and although the 55+ age group still accounts for almost 50% of all sales, the exciting growth is coming from a younger 28-44 year old and, in some cases, from those with a young family who want to give their children the best start in life. Baby food is still a key market for organic: more than 60% of all products sold has organic certification.

Growth is not just coming from loyal consumers buying more, but there is also a depth of growth coming from new customers who are buying into the innovative products. Good provenance and sourcing are fundamental for the UK organic consumer: knowing where the product comes from and that there has been care and attention in the production process right from the high level of animal welfare, to using less pesticides through to environmentally friendly packaging. For brands to succeed in the UK, they must have consumer trust: Soil Association certification has a top class reputation, and gives a high level of integrity which appeals to the discerning customer in the UK.

123rf Limited©coward_lion. Pret A Manger founded in 1983 - international sandwich shop chain based in the UK

Organic – Food as it should be

Organic food and drinks account for just 1.5% of total sales in the UK despite the growing number of consumers interested in health and wellbeing: the headroom for sales is very attractive. Growth in beauty and wellness is soaring at more than 25% in the last year and textiles at a similar level, showing just what can be achieved in the developing segments. More innovation is needed across the whole market, to build consumer loyalty and extend organic spend from the most highly shopped categories into those which are still developing.

After all, UK consumers know that *organic is food as it should be* – a simple statement which is being reinforced strongly by Soil Association in all its marketing and communications.■

ORGANIC IN SPAIN

Pedro López Salcedo,
PROVOTEC. Advanced consulting for the agri-food sector | www.provotec.es

"Where is the bio market going in such a hurry?"

Reflections on the evolution of the sector from the Spanish market perspective

The continuous growth of the organic market has become a commonplace. Instead of giving figures, which were again positive in 2017 and have been on the run virtually since the beginning of the century, we believe it is of more interest to reflect on its causes, in order to understand what is happening and how this growth has been forcing the evolution of the organic production system for the last few years.

Spain, a traditionally high exporting and low consumer country – and at the same time one of the most affected by the European demographic problem - has experienced an evolution of its internal market similar to that of the rest of the EU, but at such a speed that 2016 propelled the Spanish market into the top ten countries in terms of global consumption.

	Population (1)		Market(2)		
	EU (mil .people)	Spain (mil .people)	EU (mil €)	Spain (mil €)	World (mil €)
2012	504,06	46,82	20.900	998	64.000
2016	510,28	46,44	30.700	1.686	89.700
Variation	1,23%	-0,81%	46,89%	68,94%	40,16%

What is happening in the Spanish market?

After several years observing how the Spanish organic sector has been evolving, we recently predicted that the market would take off when organic consumption reached a critical number, which we estimated to be around 2% of total food consumption. In 2016 and 2017 the figure has already been reached, and this is the current scenario:

- Increased consumption, driven by two interrelated factors: 1) increased offer of organic products at the point of sale thanks to more efficient supply chains; and 2) increased demand, due to the rising concerns about health, nutrition and the environment. Organic products are more and more seen as the answer to these concerns.
- A rise in the number of organic manufacturers, which increases the variety of processed products.
- A rise in the number of conventional large companies that are manufacturing organic products. These companies have better access to retailers thanks to their well- established distribution chains.

Many multinationals that have recently stepped into the organic sector worldwide (Coca-Cola, Amazon + Whole Foods, Unilever, Nestle, Carrefour, Aldi, etc.) are following this same strategy in Spain. In addition, many Spanish medium-sized organic businesses are being merged or absorbed. This is impacting all levels of organic production: manufacturing, processing, distribution and sales.

In this fast spiral of events, the production and commercialization chain of organic products tends to converge with the conventional one, especially in the areas of marketing, sales and consumption.

What can be expected in the short and medium term?

The manufacturing and processing sectors will be restructured

For a while it is predictable that the concentration of supply continues: in the organic sector this will be done through production and marketing cooperatives, while in the conventional sector it will take place through corporate absorption. As a result, a progressive decrease in the number of producers is expected, which will be especially intense among small and medium independent producers.

The sales channels will be modernised

The conventional sale channel of organic products, which is more efficient in terms of supply capacity, purchase volume and commercial management, will continue to grow at the expense of the specialised channel. The rate of loss of specialised channels will depend on their ability to evolve, restructure and improve their sales model.

Consumers will evolve

The consolidation of current trends and the availability of an increased range of choices will empower consumers, who will demand more accessibility, differentiation, trust and consistency to producers, processors and sellers.■

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Marian Blom,
Project manager knowledge & innovation | Bionext www.bionext.nl

ORGANIC IN THE NETHERLANDS

Organic food and farming in the Netherlands

Netherlands literally means 'lower countries', referring to its low and flat land. With 17 million people living in an area of 42,000 square kilometres, it is a very densely populated country. Nevertheless, it is a large exporter of food and agricultural products. Two million hectares of the land area are used for agriculture, and in 2017 almost 70,000 of those hectares were farmed organically by 1,800 organic farmers. This accounts for 3.5% of the total land area, which is lower than the 6.7% EU member states average.

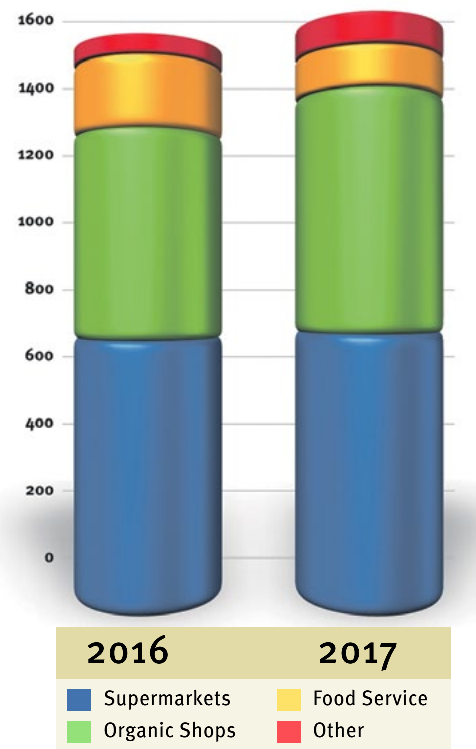
In 2017, sales of organic food in the Netherlands were around €1.5 billion, and they were sold mostly in supermarkets, organic supermarkets and shops, and food service (catering industry).

Organic food sales tripled between 2006 and 2016. In 2017 the growth slowed down but still reached 5%. Despite this continuous growth, the market share of organic products is around 3% of total food consumption, which is lower than in a country like Germany (5.1%).

Trends in marketing channels

In the past year fast growth could be observed in the food service channel (14%); however organic is still limited to 1% of the total volume of meals prepared by this sector. Supermarkets also showed a significant growth in organic sales. The supermarket chain Albert Heijn experienced the most intense growth. With a market share of one third of supermarket sales and an estimated 40% of the market share in organic food, it is also the business with the biggest share of organic food sales. An average Albert Heijn store will stock approximately 400 organic products.

After many years of steady growth, sales in organic retailers decreased for the first time in 2017. Organic supermarkets and shops sell almost 100% organic products. The main organic supermarket chains are Ekoplaza (73 shops), Natuurwinkel (26 shops), Estafette (21 shops), and their suppliers. An average Ekoplaza shop stocks 5.000 organic products.



Import, processing and export

Bionext's best estimation is that 60% of the products sold in the Netherlands come from Dutch organic growers, 30% from European growers, and 10% from other countries. The Netherlands is a European main port for food products and that includes organic food products. Many Dutch companies are active in processing and sales for the European market (2,700 companies are registered with Skal for these activities). They export around €1.3 billion worth of organic products to the European market.

Organic and other sustainability labels

Organic is still the biggest sustainability quality mark. Nevertheless 'single-issue' quality marks are also getting more popular with consumers, like the Dutch 'Beter Leven' mark for animal welfare or the mark for environmentally friendly agricultural practices like 'Milieukeur'. With more than 100 quality marks, it is almost impossible to understand and remember what they stand for.■

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ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT

Markus Arbenz | markus.arbenz@bluewin.ch

Organics and Agroecology 4 Development

Organic 3.0 positioned organics as contribution to solutions for societal problems. Health is one of them. Organics serves development and needs development.

Marta Montmany©

Working organically is no longer just doing good in a niche for the benefit of those participating in the value chain. With nearly 100 billon US$ consumer purchases it is by far the biggest sustainability label scheme.

Fair Trade (US$ 8 billion), Rainforest/Utz or the Global Coffee Platform are dynamic and surpass the organic trade volume in certain products and markets (e.g. coffee). However, they don't have the same power to contribute to societal challenges such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, inequality of societies or - as discussed at this BIOFACH - deterioration of health through inadequate nutrition and food systems.

Those promoting agroecology but not organic, such as FAO or some groups that have a critical attitude to trade or go further in their expectations of minimal requirements (standards), can't show an equal level of implementation either. Nevertheless, agroecology and organic have to be seen as one and indivisible and as complementary for reaching societal relevance. Movements for permaculture, natural farming, regenerative agriculture or for food sovereignty support the organic paradigm and underline diversity in the movement.

Policy for organic development

The World Future Council together with FAO and IFOAM Organics International (BIOFACH 1-451), supported by the organic companies Do It (5-112) and Sekem, highlighted how policy can support the impact building of transferring the agroecology ideas into reality. They awarded cases from India (100% organic Sikkim), Denmark (organic action plan), Ecuador (participatory urban agriculture) or Philippines (from arms to farms). Those illustrate impressively that organic is not just labeling for price premiums, but that policy for societal development and benefit can use organic as a tool. Impressive is also the initiative of TEEB AG - receiving the vision award - that studies and promotes "true cost accounting" as policy instrument. IFOAM Organics International has even a policy toolkit with umpteen other cases that highlight, how various governments on regional, national, provincial or municipality levels use organic for instance for food security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, education, jobs creation or prevention of health problems (nutrition sensitive agriculture).

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ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT

Not only local governments but also international co-operation organizations are discovering the use of organic uptake to achieve societal objectives. The Swiss government is investing in *ecological organic agriculture* in Africa and in *nutrition sensitive agriculture* in the mountainous areas of Asia/Africa/Latin America; and is starting trade promotions in the Balkans and the Maghreb areas with the purpose of creating jobs and accelerating trade. The French, Dutch and Austrian governments are investing in the development of the organic sector in West Africa and in the Caucasus. The German government, so far integrating organic in their green innovation centers in Africa, is supporting four organic knowledge hubs in North (Sekem, Egypt), East (Biovision Africa Trust, Kenya/Uganda), West (FENABE, Senegal) and South (Kasisi, Zambia) Africa. The approach is always the same: identify innovations, promote, build capacity on individual, institutional and societal levels and see trade developing. BIOFACH, with its shows in Asia, Latin America and – who knows – in the coming years also in Africa, is an important catalyst to make organic trade and impact visible. This support – worth dozens of millions of Euros – is happening because the organic movement has managed to convince by its effectiveness (impact building e.g. by the Swedish projects after the year 2000) and by its strategy and visions (Organic 3.0). The challenge is now to keep its promises and to demonstrate the results to future evaluators of those that invest.

Marta Montmany©

Trade makes impact alive and visible

Every local organic and agroecological initiative creates impact. Remote farmers in the global North and South e.g. generate biodiversity by creating living spaces in and above the soil. Ecological intensification leads to healthy food in sufficient quantities. Ecosystem services contribute to beautiful, divers landscapes and increase the quality of life and in some cases make it even attractive for visitors (tourists). Farming organically is not only an ecological, but a social measure to accelerate local economies with tangible benefits for people. This can be observed in the vicinity of big cities and in remote areas. Avoiding concentration of people in cities worldwide and in few wealthy countries mitigates excessive migration streams that poison the political climate and create conflicts with the risk of escalation.

Organic 3.0 postulates a move from highlighting impressive initiatives to scaling the impact with broad uptake of the alternative agriculture paradigm. Organic certification and trade with certified products is just one aspect and expression of organic farming, however it gives a face (because it is measurable) to the opportunities and dynamics of the organic market. Trade and trade shows like BIOFACH are an excellent demonstration of that. However, the movement needs to be vigilant that the values are kept and that it is not the trade system with its ugly face and traps that destroys the benefit.

Change in attitudes

By going out of the niche, organics is receiving the opportunity to become system relevant, that the awarded "Sikkims", the "Denmarks" and the "Philippines" become numerous and a reality everywhere, and that true cost accounting is business as usual. Such change does however not come over night, nor by copying from one place to another. Development is context specific and so is the application of the development tool that we call organic agriculture. Real change happens with change of attitudes and consciousness building; and only if we understand *Organics (as a tool) for (societal) Development and Organics (that is) for (own further) Development*.■

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ORGANIC COSMETICS

Mark Smith, *Director General at NATRUE* | *www.natrue.org*

2019: What's next for Organic?

With continued interest and growth in the natural and organic cosmetics sector, it is important to recognise that a strict definition of natural and organic cosmetics and ingredients, as well as claims regulation, go hand-in-hand in order to ensure consumers the quality finished products they expect.

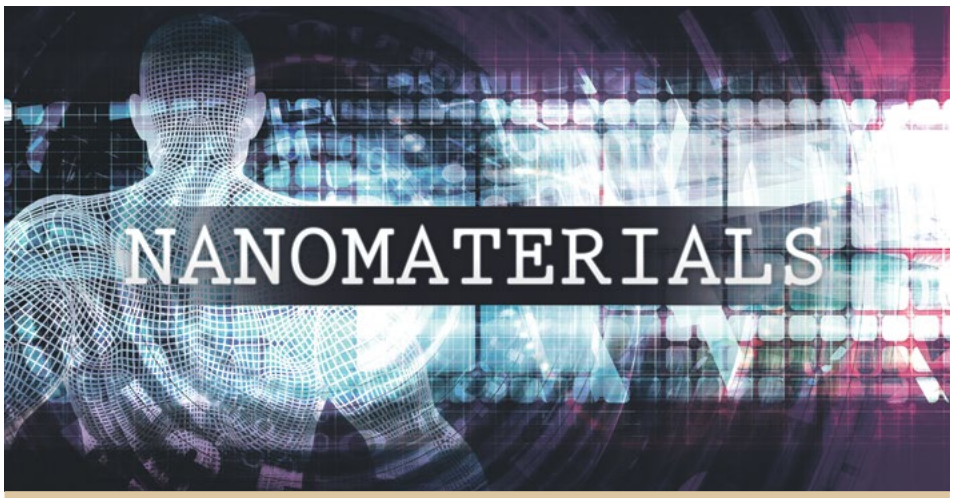
NATRUE was formed with a mission to protect and promote natural and organic cosmetics, and one of our pillars is advocacy: to speak up for the sector on emerging or evolving legislation that may impact the sector.

To this end, NATRUE is the representative of the natural and organic cosmetics sector at the Commission's working group on cosmetic products, where we see a number of developing areas that will likely have an impact on the sector in 2019.

- **Claims**: from 1st July 2019 the updated technical document from the EU Commission will be applicable. The text supports best practice application by in-market control authorities of the existing EU regulation for cosmetic product claims. The document is not legally binding but Member States consider it a useful tool to evaluate the six common criteria in the context of two new annexes: 'free from' and 'hypoallergenic' claims.

- **Endocrine-disrupting chemical substances** (EDCs): these represents any substance or mixture, natural or not, that alters function(s) of the endocrine system and consequently causes adverse health effects. Existing legislation requires the EU Commission to make available criteria for identifying ED substances in cosmetics. In mid-2018 EU Commission published a Roadmap for a harmonised framework across all industry sectors including cosmetics. Ultimately, how the results of the Roadmap will be implemented into actions for all cosmetics will depend on the proposed criteria.

- **Nanomaterials** represent a current 'hot' topic for cosmetic stakeholders; especially in countries like



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France. Following the publication of the Catalogue of nanomaterials in 2017, in 2018 the EU Commission developed a Roadmap for a revision of the horizontal nano definition whose outcome will be relevant for an anticipated review of the Cosmetic Regulation. The topic remains under discussion between Member States, the Commission and industry stakeholders. It remains necessary to ensure appropriate scientific-based regulation and practice implementation by the control authorities on this consumer-sensitive issue.

- **(the) ISO 16128** guidelines for natural and organic cosmetics have been released in full since September 2017 and have raised much controversy. Due to the inherent flexibility of the guideline, including classification of ingredients from GMO plants as natural, a direct reference of the ISO 16128 guidelines as they stand in legalisation or as a harmonised

ORGANIC COSMETICS

standard for criteria in the EU would impact the sector and undermine both transparency, authenticity and consumer expectations. Currently the provisions of the EU Cosmetic Regulation do not provide an official definition for 'natural' or 'organic' claims, and in 2019 a crucial issue will be whether the guidelines are being implemented in favour of consumer expectations or not. NATRUE continues to monitor and represent the sector for new technical reports being developed within the ISO Working Group, as well as advocate for better regulation at EU-level.

- **Animal Testing** is banned under the Cosmetic Regulation in Europe. In May 2018 the European Parliament voted on a resolution calling for a worldwide ban on animal testing in cosmetics by 2023. In the third-quarter of 2018, the EU Commission provided its response to the Parliament. NATRUE has a continued policy towards an animal-testing ban as a criteria requirement for use of its Label for non-EU countries.

- **Packaging** was one of the hottest topics in 2018 with the first ever EU-wide Plastics Strategy published that aims at reducing the consumption of disposable plastics and make all plastic packaging on the EU market recyclable from 2030. The European Parliament have also been active in propositions to incentivise the Commission's strategy, where MEPs want to ban micro-plastics in cosmetics as well as expressing a need for quality standards for recycled plastics.

- **Microplastics**: in January 2019, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) is requested to submit a risk and socio-economic assessment proposal for possible restrictions on 'intentionally-added' microplastic particles in products, including cosmetics, to the EU Commission. NATRUE bans microplastics and was invited by ECHA to contribute as part of a workshop on behalf of the natural cosmetics sector. Based upon the outcome of the risk assessment a future stakeholder consultation would be planned towards the end of the first quarter of 2019 for 6 months. Following this a 2-month consultation would be expected to take place for a regulatory proposal by October/November 2019.

- **Fragrance allergens:** an outstanding area of action for the EU Commission following the 2012 Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) Opinion is to propose risk management measures regarding further fragrance allergens labelling on cosmetic products packaging, thereby exceeding the current 26 fragrance allergens to be listed by law.

123rf Limited©Kateryna Garyuk

As a non-profit international natural and organic cosmetics association, NATRUE is committed to its mission. Our unique position of being directly involved in relevant regulatory developments is crucial to support the sector by speaking up and being heard at European and international regulatory decision-making levels.

Furthermore, in 2019 we will see how the NATRUE label continues to grow, having exceeded 6000 products covering more than the 250 brands it has in 2018 worldwide, and how it continues to set a high-quality standard that gives people worldwide the opportunity to enjoy natural cosmetics that really deserve their name.■

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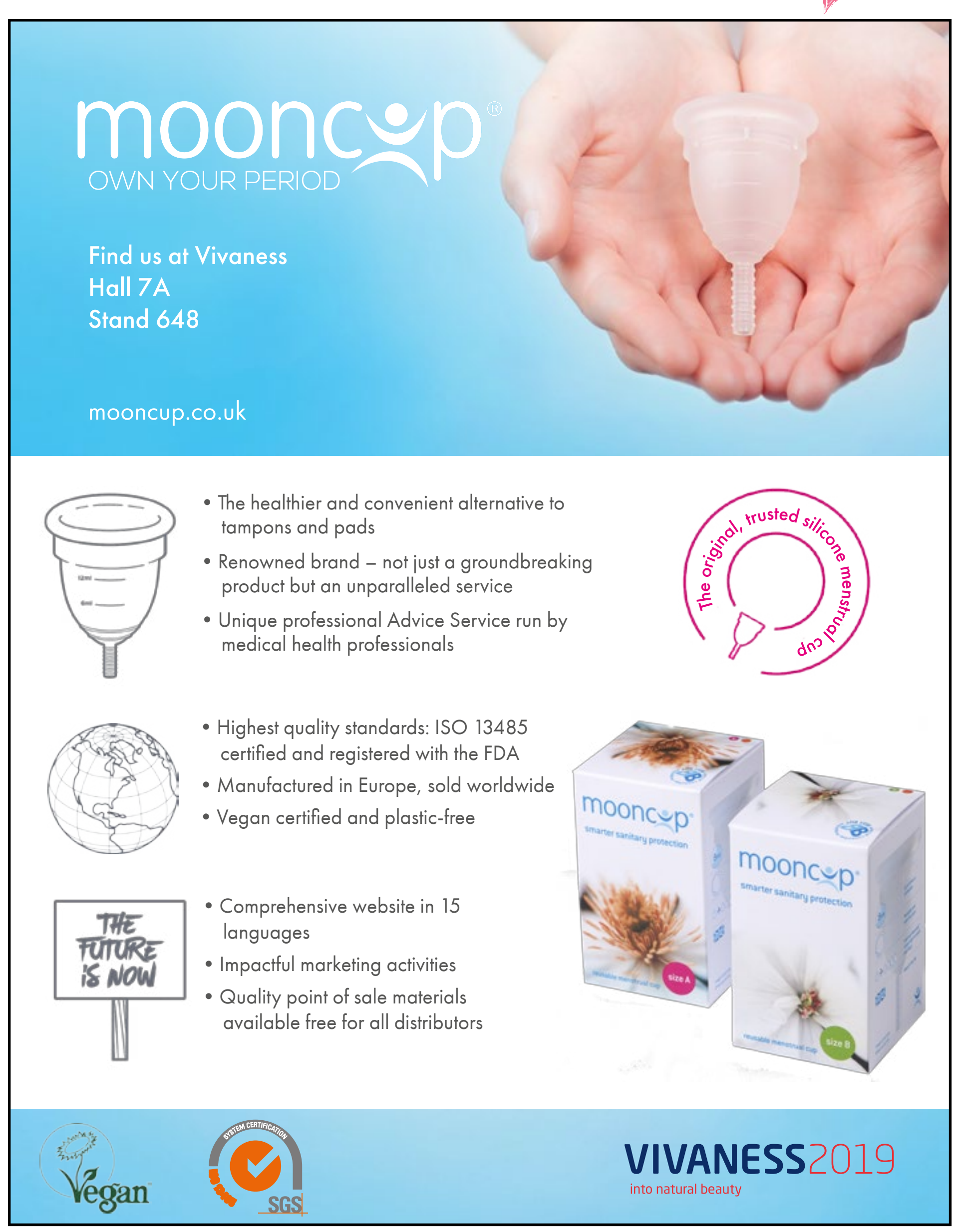
INTIMATE HYGIENE



INTERVIEW

Oriol Urrutia, Co-Editor, | comunicacion@bioecoactual.com

Gertraud Grabmann, BioAustria President

"Today's organic farmers were conventional yesterday"

What is the current situation of organic agriculture and livestock in Austria? How does it change from one region to another?

Share differs from county to county. With approximately 50% of the agricultural land being organically cultivated, the county of Salzburg has the highest share. While in the past organic grew faster in grassland regions, in recent years the main growth has taken place in arable regions. Burgenland for example shows an increase in organically cultivated land of 10 percent within the last 4 years.

More than 1 of each 5 farms in Austria are Organic

Austria is leading the awareness of animal dignity with extra regulations added to those of the EU. What role does agroecology play in the organic movement?

This question is difficult to answer. Since the term agroecology is not clearly defined, nearly everybody seems to read it differently. Anyhow, agroecology is in many ways linked with organic. I observe that organic practices more and more serve as a blueprint for agroecological approaches in non-organic farming. We very much welcome the integration of ecological practices in mainstream farming. This is why we are asking for a Common Agricultural Policy that pays for the public goods that sustainable agriculture is delivering to the society. On the other hand agroecological research is contributing to the further development of organic farming.

What is your opinion about the support that the organic sector is getting from European institutions?

European Institutions and policies have significantly supported organic in the past, but they need to do more in the future. Agriculture needs to deliver solutions to many societal issues, and organic is a key instrument to achieve this objective. Therefore the support of organic is a clear political assignment.

Austria is pioneer and leader in organic production and consumption; what would you recommend to a country that wants to follow your path?

There are many reasons that explain the achievements in organic production in Austria. For example consumer awareness was and still is comparatively high. Furthermore a legal framework for organic production was established very soon - years before the EU organic regulation was adopted in 1991. And beyond that, supermarket chains stepped into marketing organic products some 25 years ago; they established their own organic trademarks and quickly expanded the assortment. Another reason is that organic farmers started getting together and fighting for their interests very soon. One cannot compare this particular situation with those of other countries. Anyway - what I propose is: build coalitions based on the values of organic farming, and include conventional farmers in them. Never forget: Today's organic farmers were conventional yesterday.

Organic is present more and more every day in mass-consumption supermarkets around Europe. What future do you expect for the specialized organic retailers & sector?

Austria is a good example of a country with high availability of organic products in supermarkets. This is a challenge for specialized shops and they have to find their own strategies to provide added value to consumers. In the end organic needs to be available via all distribution channels in order to be accessible for all consumers.■

Austria's organic market

Austria´s organic market has been growing continuously over the last years. It amounted to €1.8 billion in 2017 and increased by 12% compared to 2016. In terms of numbers, supermarkets are the most important distribution channel with a share of 75% of the total organic market. Around nine percent of the food and drinks sold in supermarkets are organic – especially eggs, milk, vegetables, fruits and bread.

Organic Agriculture in Austria

23,065 farms – 20.7% of all Austrian farms - are farming according to the EU-Regulation on organic production. They are cultivating 24% of the Austrian farmland, which makes Austria one of the EU member states with the highest share of organic farmland.

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