Natural&Organic Products
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INDEPENDENT FREE NEWSPAPER ABOUT THE ORGANIC SECTOR

"Could you look an animal in the eyes and say to it, 'My appetite is more important than your suffering?" MOBY

Organic in the UK

Consistent Growth

Natural & Organic Products Europe 2019

7-8 April | ExCel, London

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NATURAL & ORGANIC PRODUCTS EUROPE

Montse Mulé,
Editor, redaccion@bioecoactual.com

7-8 April 2019 ExCeL | London

Natural&Organic Products Europe 2019

The Future of Health at Europe's favourite natural business event

Natural & Organic Products Europe opens its doors on 7 and 8 April 2019 at the **London ExCel**. Professional visitors (more than 10,000 from 91 countries attended last year) will have the opportunity to see a new record number of certified organic products expected this year (55% of total) in addition to a large number of natural products. There will be more than 700 companies exhibiting food, beverages and superfoods, as well as health, beauty, personal care and eco living products, all of them divided into four categories: **natural food show; natural beauty & spa; natural living and natural health**.

Leaders of innovation, influencers and decision makers related to this industry will be at the fair, where more than 70 talks on health, nutrition and natural beauty will be held in three different scenarios: **Natural Food Talks, Natural Products Talks and Natural Beauty Talks**.

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"Natural & Organic Products Europe is the place to be for retailers looking to tap into the growth opportunity organic offers. It's a dynamic and exciting event where you can source the breadth of the certified organic offer, see the latest innovations in line with consumer trends from new brands and established ranges, network with like-minded companies working together to grow organic and learn more about what's driving momentum for organic," says Aileen Nicol, campaign director at the Organic Trade Board.

Plant-based products

The growth in the demand for vegan products, expected to increase by 327% in 2019, is spectacular. Vegan novelties from brands from all over the world will be presented at the fair.

"With The Economist calling 2019 the 'Year of The Vegan', it's clear veganism is a trend that continues to sustain significant growth, not only in the UK, but around the world. The market for vegan food, health products and a full vegan lifestyle is constantly growing. Get involved by visiting us in Vegan World!" says Abigail Stevens, Trademark Marketing Manager at the Vegan Society.

Bettina Campolucci, plant-based chef and blogger at Bettina's Kitchen says:

"I am excited about the future. There has never been so much choice of good, natural and organic products on the market as there is now."

Zero waste

Organic products require organic packaging, but an increasing number of people, especially young families, are becoming more aware of the consequences of excessive packaging.

Joe Jackson, director of Apothecary 27 and winner of the Best Independent Retailer at the Natural & Organic Awards Europe 2018, says: "Not only are people becoming more conscious about the food they're eating, but they're also questioning what their food is being packaged in, and whether it's necessary."

Hemp and turmeric: fast growth and multiple benefits

Hemp is in trend for its multiple benefits for health, beauty and well-being, also in the fashion, paper and packaging sectors.

Jim Manson, editor-in-chief of NaturalProductsGlobal.com comments on this: "*CBD* oil is quickly becoming a very valuable product category for the health food trade -but also migrating rapidly into mass retail channels. Consumer interest in turmeric / curcumin is still strong, together with the

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Bio Eco Actual
P.O.Box 74, c.p. 08211 Castellar del Vallès
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+34 664 320 251
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www.bioecoactual.com
bio@bioecoactual.com

DIRECTOR
Enric Urrutia

EDITOR
Montse Mulé

CO-EDITOR
Oriol Urrutia

TRANSLATOR & SUPERVISOR
Miriam Martínez Biarge

CONCEPT & DESIGN
QUAE Soluciones Creativas a Medida
info@quae.es - www.quae.es

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Bilbao Editorial Producciones S.L.U.
control@bepsa.es - www.bepsa.es

DIGITAL EDITION
Oriol Urrutia

COLLABORATORS
Finn Cottle, Eduardo Cuoco, Sergi Corbalán, Johanna Eckhardt, Vicky Holman (Diversified Communications UK), Julia Lernoud, Nicola Love, Louise Luttikholt, Jim Manson, Montse Mulé, Dominika Piasecka, Miguel de Porras, Enric Urrutia, Oriol Urrutia, Helga Willer

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NATURAL & ORGANIC PRODUCTS EUROPE

wider category of adaptogens. Products focused on brain health, mood and gut health also look set for growth."

Vegan and plastic-free cosmetics

Vegan and plastic-free cosmetic products are on the rise. With a 38% increase in sales of vegan beauty products, this trend will continue to grow as the vegan lifestyle expands and more conscious consumers demand plant-based, cruelty-free products.

New Products Showcase and 30 under 30 initiative

The whole show will feature over 400 natural and organic foods and drinks exhibitors in total, and 60% of them are expected to include vegan products.

"Newness is crucial to our business, and nowhere in the UK is there more innovation that is relevant to my business than this show," says Al Overton, head of buying at Planet Organic.

The growth in the demand for vegan products, expected to increase by 327% in 2019, is spectacular

©Aidan Synnott

Designed to recognize and celebrate the natural and organic industry's up-and-coming talent, 30 under 30 initiative returns this year with the intention to throw a spotlight on the next generation of professionals driving the sector forward.

Matchmaking Lounge

New to this edition is the Matchmaking Lounge, where buyers and producers will be able to meet and agree on purchases and sales. "Natural & Organic Products Europe has always been a go-to for the best in innovation, products and ingredients we've never seen before. You'll see by the sheer number of my team walking around the show that we rely on this chance to meet new brands and get a real understanding for the biggest new trends in the industry", says **Nick Janda**, head of trade at **Holland & Barrett's** head of trade.

Natural & Organic Awards

During the event the winners of the prestigious Natural & Organic Awards Europe, Natural Beauty Retail Awards, and Best Independent Retailer of the Year award will be announced.

More than 70 talks will be held in three different scenarios: Natural Food Talks, Natural Products Talks and Natural Beauty Talks

Methodical and committed organization: Diversified Communications UK.

Natural & Organic Products Europe is run by Diversified Communications UK, a subsidiary of Diversified Communications, a family business based in the USA that was established in 1949 with the aim of connecting and strengthening different business communities, including natural and organic food, drinks and health companies.

Diversified Communications UK organises other fairs in Europe: Nordic Organic and Eco Living Scandinavia in Mälmo, Sweden; and, starting this year, Organic Food Iberia and Eco Living Iberia, in Madrid, Spain.■

FOOD

ORGANIC IN THE UK

Roger Kerr, Chief Executive Officer. OF&G (Organic Farmers and Growers)
www.ofgorganic.org | roger@ofgorganic.org

UK organic sector remains solid with millennials predicted to drive market growth

©OF&G. OF&G National Organic Combinable Crops 2018

Over the last eight years, the UK's organic market has seen consistent and stable growth, with an annual increase in sales of around 5% year-on-year.

Increasingly conscious consumers, who value health, ethics and who care for the environmental impact of the food they eat, are supporting this market growth, with millennials becoming a key driver.

Young shoppers, aged between 18 and 34, typically look for a wide range of high-quality, high-welfare and 'healthy' products that are sustainably sourced. These values align strongly with organic, and crucially, are recognised for doing so, providing a solid future market.

Existing purchasers of organic produce provide excellent opportunities for both the organic sector and retailers as a whole. In the domestic market, medium-spend consumers of organic spend approximately £4,500 a year on groceries compared to around £4,100 for the average food shopper.

In particular, the heavy organic shopper will spend £1,800 more per year on groceries compared with non-organic buyers, demonstrating the increased value of listing organic lines across all categories.

With the core offering of organic food production resonating with shoppers, we must ensure organic food offers are available both physically and mentally by ensuring they are visible and promoted effectively, wherever possible.

Opportunities to accelerate growth in UK organic

While British consumers are increasingly moving towards organic food, the sector is less than 2% of the total UK food market. This is far behind some of our European counterparts, with Denmark taking a 13.3% share of the organic food market and France, Germany and the Netherlands being, or being close to, 5% share.

Ultimately, the scale of growth in the UK will come down to improved availability of organic produce. Areas including public procurement, retailer support and government policy are better aligned to organic in countries with higher market share, and this is something which we need to continue to work towards in the UK.

Export opportunities offer another area for consideration which is currently being spearheaded by the organic dairy sector. Organic dairy accounts for 20% of the global organic food and drink market and is anticipated to grow by more than 50% by 2023, to £21.3bn. Global brands introducing organic product lines largely accounts for the shift in organic being a niche enterprise to becoming a mainstream contender.

Alongside other organic control bodies, OF&G (Organic Farmers and Growers) continue to lobby Defra and the EU Commission (via IFOAM EU) on issues arising from Brexit and trade, particularly in relation to organic exports to the EU. We are assured by the government that the organic sector is seen as a 'bellwether' for UK food and farming.

Economic sustainability of UK organic farming systems

Gross margins in organic production are improving. For example, when taking both yield and price into consideration, it is now possible to achieve 90% of conventional outputs in organic cereals with significantly lower variable costs and working capital.

Agro-ecological, regenerative farming systems are gaining wider global support. For example, a report by iPES Food suggests a common food policy for Europe could address issues such as biodiversity loss and ensuring farming remains viable for the next generation. Also, the French based research group, IDDRI, call for greater support for sustainable food production in a recent report, which cites organic as an appropriate and sustainable model.

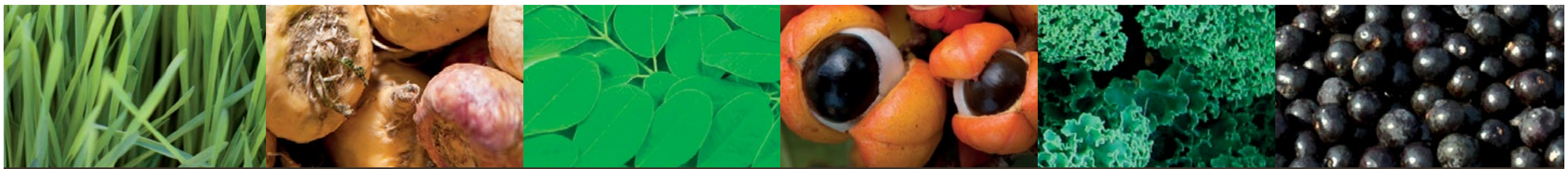
Organic farming systems are also likely to be supported by a shift in the UK's agricultural policy, with the new Agriculture Bill promising 'public money for public goods'. With organic farmers already succeeding in improving air, water and soil quality, and protecting wildlife and biological diversity, overall this appears to be a positive step forward that will benefit British organic producers and their customers.

The organic shopper will spend £1,800 more per year on groceries compared with non-organic buyers

Positive outlook

Choosing to buy and eat organic produce is about supporting a regenerative food system, delivered by one of the most highly regulated food sectors in the world.

At OF&G we are positive about the direction of organic in the UK, with many of our licensees seeing double digit growth over the last decade – significantly greater than overall figures suggest. As a business ourselves, we have also experienced 40% growth in licensee numbers over the last five years and now certify over 50% of UK organic land, signifying a shared sense of optimism in UK organic.■



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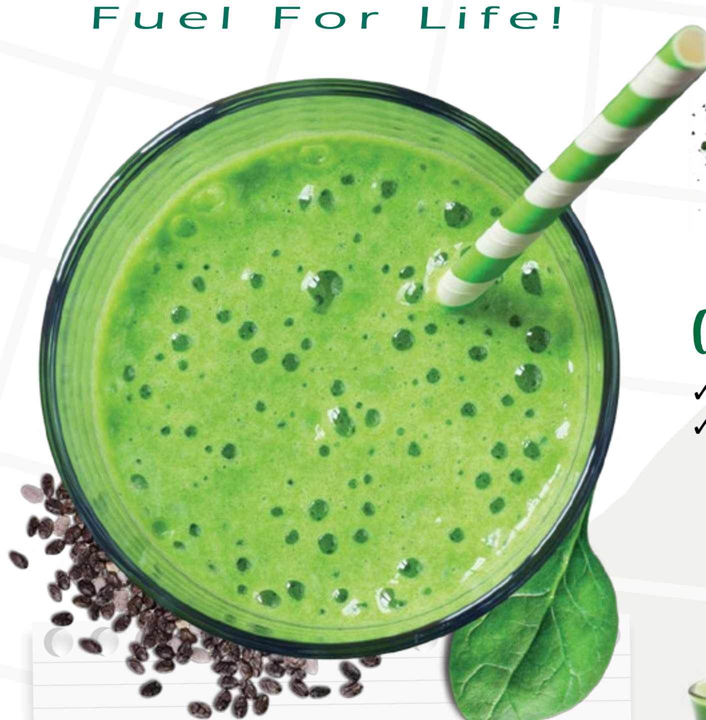

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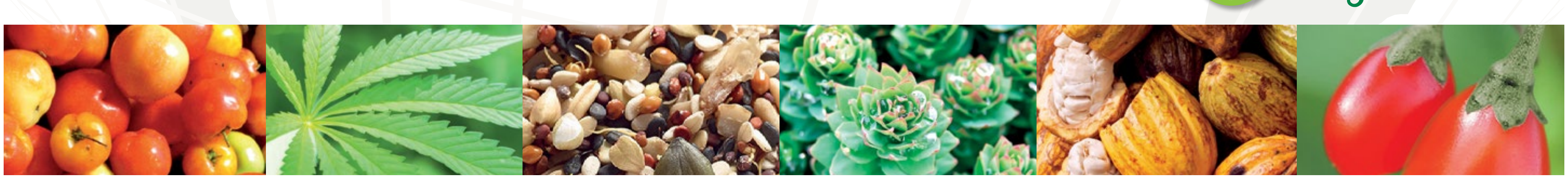

ORGANIC IN THE UK

Finn Cottle, *Trade Consultant Soil Association Certification*
fcottle@soilassociation.org, www.soilassociation.org

UK: 2019 promises to be another good year for organic

©Soil Association. Organic Market Report 2019 | Soil Association Market Reports

It's been another welcome year of steady growth in the organic market. With the political uncertainty dominating the past few months, it's something I'm proud of that organic has been an area of such consistency in recent years.

The UK organic market continues to experience steady, healthy development, and has just entered its 8th consecutive year of growth. In 2018, sales increased by 5.3%. That means almost £45 million a week is spent on organic in the UK.

By 2020, we expect the organic market to be worth £2.5 billion, a big increase in value from less that £1.7 billion in 2010.

2018 was a year of food trends, and organic was not unmoved by the rising tide of free-from, vegan, and healthy options hitting the shelves. As healthy diets continue to grow in popularity, organic continues to be buoyed, with many shoppers seeing the organic certification symbol on pack as a signpost to a healthy choice

Meat-free options too are growing quickly, especially veganism, which has seen a stratospheric rise in the last few years. Specialist diet choices, like gluten or dairy free, are also increasing in popularity, with many organic options coming to market. Combined with a growing consumer desire to clearly know the provenance of where their food is coming from, organic – as a legally certified and fully traceable product – offers a double assurance to shoppers.

2018 also saw shoppers becoming more conscious of what and where they are buying. 'Conscious consumers' – those who consider the social, environmental, ecological and political impact of their buying habits – are growing in numbers, particularly among millennials. In fact, Nielsen's Global Corporate Sustainability Report found that 73% of millennials are willing to pay more for a product if it comes from a sustainable brand.

These factors have all combined to boost organic sales. Shoppers choose organic because they know it guarantees higher animal welfare standards, contains fewer pesticides with no added artificial additives or chemicals and is better for the planet. In short, and as we've been saying all year, organic is food as it should be.

When we drill down into the figures in this year's report, there is impressive growth in almost all areas. UK organic sales into food service including cafes and restaurants grew at 7.8% this year, helped in no small part by both Food For Life award holders and our scheme for smaller restaurants and coffee shops, Organic Served Here. Diners are increasingly looking for sustainable choices on menus and with one in four meals now eaten outside the home, this is a promising channel for organic food and drink.

The fastest growing category for organic in 2018 was home delivery through online and box schemes, at 14.2%. This channel accounts for 14% of all organic sales and by 2023 is on target to make up a quarter of all sales of organic in the UK. This growth follows a change in shopping habits for UK consumers, particularly millennials, who hone their shopping skills online, checking product

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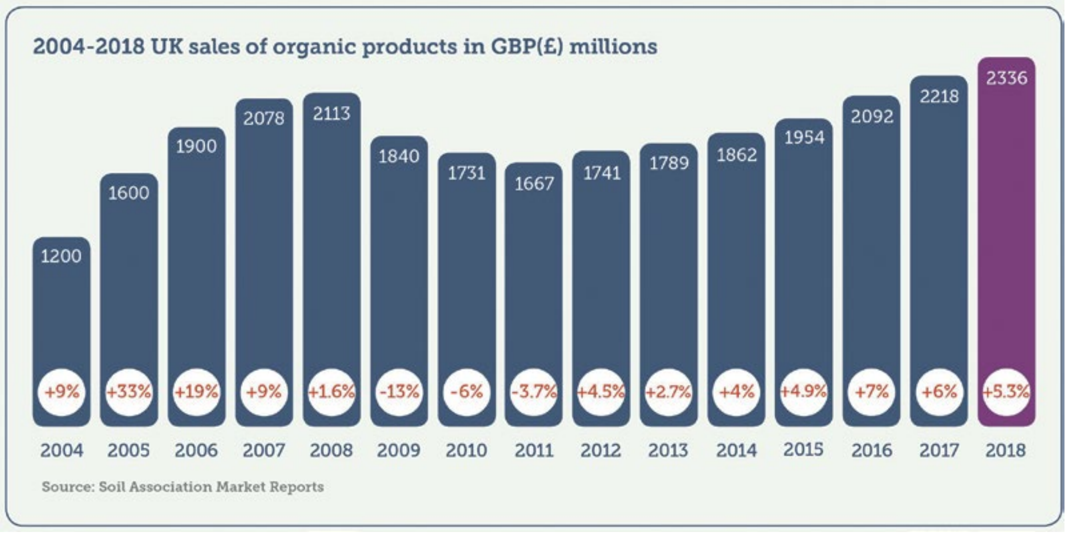
ORGANIC IN THE UK

reviews before purchasing. Online supermarket Ocado continues to dominate, with over 3,000 organic products on offer, but many new and smaller box schemes are also finding success.

As shopping habits change and more people shop more locally and frequently, the independent retail sector – organic's pioneering channel – has seen a 6.2% year-on-year sales growth, and Soil Association Certification licensees expect further rises this year. There are between 800 and 1,000 independent shops selling organic products, with shoppers preferring them for specialist knowledge and exclusive new products not available in the supermarkets.

Independents are better set up to follow consumer trends quickly, such as plastic-free shopping. Many shops are focusing on minimising their waste as much as possible with much more loose fresh produce and refillable options for staples.

More broadly, the UK organic market continues to be dominated by three main supermarkets, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose, who kept their overall share of the market at around two thirds of the total, although this share fell from 67% to 65.8%. This could be explained by discounters, especially Aldi and Lidl, eating into the market (discounters are not included in supermarket sales figures in the report). More than 1.5 million new households shopped in Aldi or Lidl in the last year, and as they increase their stock of organic products, we can expect them to continue to drive sales in the sector.



©Soil Association. 2004-2018 UK sales of organic products in GBP(£) millions | Soil Association Market Reports

2019 promises to be another good year for organic, if not without its challenges. Despite the uncertainty, however, consumer confidence has not dipped significantly, and sustainable shopping habits are more deeply ingrained than in previous years. As such, expect organic and the assurances it offers to remain resilient in the year ahead.

Changing consumer diets and habits will continue to shape the direction that organic sales take. Shoppers are likely to continue to eat less meat and more plant-based alternatives, while looking for other ways to reduce their impact on the planet. As it was in 2018, packaging – particularly single-use plastic – will be a major focus for all retailers and producers this year, and organic is leading from the front in developing new solutions to this problem.

As ever, we all have a role in encouraging more shoppers to choose organic. As conscious consumerism grows, clearly signalling the benefits that organic offers will be more important than ever, so we'll be working hard to help consumer understanding, using our new and clear communications about organic.■

Soil Association Certification's Organic Market Report is available to download for £100 (+VAT) here:

https://www.soilassociation.org/certification/market-research-and-data/download-the-organic-market-report/

FOOD

ORGANIC IN THE UK

Jim Manson, Editor-in-Chief, Natural Products Global
www.naturalproductsglobal.com | jmanson@divcom.co.uk

Brexit has created unwelcome uncertainty for the UK organic industry, but the sector is determined to stay on its current growth trajectory

It's still very possible that when this year's Natural & Organic Products Europe event opens its doors on 7 April Britain will have already left the European Union under the deal negotiated by Theresa May. Other scenarios include a short delay in the withdrawal process, or a vote by MPs to put the final decision on the prime minister's deal back to the British people.

> There is some evidence that organic dairy sales are being dented by a growing preference for dairy and meat alternatives among younger consumers

Right now, however, the biggest concern for the UK organic sector is the prospect of a no-deal Brexit. This, as the industry has been warning for many months, could lead to UK organic producers being locked out of the crucial EU market for up to a year.

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Politically-driven crisis

In late February, the chief executive of the UK's lead organic body the Soil Association, Helen Browning, wrote an open-letter to Britain's secretary of state for food and farming, Michael Gove, warning that a no-deal Brexit could seriously damage short to medium term prospects for the UK organic industry. Browning has previously called the prospect of a no-deal Brexit a "complete catastrophe", comparing its effects on organic farming business to the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreak.

So, at the time of writing, a top priority for the UK organic industry is persuading the Government to give assurances that organic businesses will be protected against losses from a "politically driven crisis".

Part of the UK organic industry's frustration with the continuing uncertainty over Brexit is that it threatens the return to solid, sustainable growth that has been assiduously built up over recent years.

The recently published 2019 Organic Market Report showed that the UK organic market grew 5.3% in 2018, comfortably outpacing the conventional food market and marking eight years of consecutive growth.

£2.5 billion market

The Soil Association expects that if recent "steady growth" continues through 2019 the market should be worth £2.5 billion by 2020.

Key growth categories include beers, wines and spirits and chilled foods. Fresh produce and canned goods also saw solid growth. And organic beauty and wellbeing experienced another year of double-digit growth (up 14%).

When it comes to retail channels home delivery (both online and box schemes) is a stand-out performer, with sales up 14.2% on 2017 and commanding a 14% share of all organic sales.

Supermarket underperformance in organic continued into 2018, with growth of just 3.3%, meaning that the major retailers' share of the organic market fell again, to 65.8% (from 67% in 2017).

Indies stay strong

Independent retailers however maintained strong sales of organic – up 6.2% in 2017 – helped by the depth of range and the growing choice of organic offered by wholesalers. The report says independents are continuing to benefit from consumers' changing shopping habits and the now established trend of shopping locally and more often.

Among consumer trends, the 2019 report identifies 'health' as a "key motivator for the majority of shoppers". Provenance is also an increasing factor when people are

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making food choices, with more shoppers concerned about authenticity and integrity.

Other food trends affecting organic include the rapid growth of the vegan and plant-based food categories (the UK last year overtook Germany to become the world's leader in vegan NPD).

In some instances these trends present a challenge for organic. For example, there is some evidence that organic dairy sales are being dented by a growing preference for dairy and meat alternatives among younger consumers. But in other cases – for example vegan+organic or free-from+organic combinations – there is a perceived "double assurance" factor, that boosts organic sales.

Stimulating future growth

A key priority for the UK industry is stimulating future growth. Consumer facing promotions and education initiatives are being coordinated together to maximise impact. The longest established of these is the Soil Association operated Organic September promotion. 2018 was biggest yet, setting out to "de-mystify organic and show consumers how easy organic food is to introduce to their daily lives". As well as engaging the major retailers, the Soil Association also makes available free visual merchandizing and 'digital toolkits' to help retailers drive additional organic sales throughout the month. The EU-funded (for now) Feed Your Happy campaign is the latest iteration of multi-multi-million Euro consumer campaign run by the Organic Trade Board. The campaign's sub-brand Wake Up To Organic is a national one-day event where independent organic retailers – with the support of food and drink brands – offer over 14,000 free organic mini-breakfasts to people on their way to work.

Creating more shelf-space for organic is also vital for stimulating growth. The trend in the independent channel is already travelling in the right direction. Elsewhere, we see the big discounters – Aldi and Lidl – pushing for a greater share of the organic market, and significantly increasing organic listings. And there was very encouraging news from London-based chain Planet Organic last year, when the retailer's new owner LLP said it planned to double the current store count over five years.

Crucially, the UK organic industry is also continuing to invest in high levels of NPD – a reliable indicator of overall business optimism. UK organic brands – big and small – are highly adept at getting high-quality, on-trend products to market extremely quickly. Hundreds of those brands – spanning food, beauty, health and eco living will be out in force in London this week for Natural & Organic Products Europe, determined that they won't be deflected from their own growth plans.■

UK organic brands -big and small- are highly adept at getting high-quality, on-trend products to market extremely quickly

Creating more shelf-space for organic is vital for stimulating growth

TRADE SHOW

VEGAN IN THE UK

Dominika Piasecka, *Media and PR Officer, Vegan Society*
dominika.piasecka@vegansociety.com, www.vegansociety.com

Veganism is taking over the UK market

The Vegan Society
One world. Many lives. Our choice.

Smoked salmon, sausage rolls and four-cheese pizza don't sound like something a vegan would enjoy… But in 2019 we have seen animal-free alternatives to these very foods being launched by UK retailers, chains and restaurants.

This year alone tens of new plant-based products have been launched and supermarkets have taken notice too, with Waitrose and Marks & Spencer both releasing plant-based ready meal ranges. The latter brought out as many as 60 delicious products and promised its offering will only grow. What's driving this vegan obsession?

While the population of vegans has quadrupled in the last four years, it is still at just over 1% of the UK population. This huge demand for mainstream plant-based options is mainly driven by the 1 in 3 Brits who, studies show, are now consciously reducing the amount of meat, dairy and eggs in their diet.

Veganism offers a tremendous opportunity for the retail industry precisely because it's a new and exciting concept that's slowly but surely making its way into the mainstream. It is an exciting yet underexplored market with a huge growth potential that's already happening.

Offering vegan options makes clear commercial sense – it opens the potential market up not just to vegans but also vegetarians, the lactose intolerant, followers of certain religions, environmentalists, the health-conscious and those who simply enjoy vegan food.

It constitutes a safe dietary option for nearly everyone and promotes sustainability, as Oxford University scientists found that avoiding meat and dairy is the single most effective action an individual can take to help the planet.

The EU vegan market has grown by 451% in the last four years

Existing menu items in restaurants can be 'veganised', for example by replacing cheese in a vegetarian sandwich with a vegan version, using lentils or soya mince instead of meat in a lasagne, or using vegan mayo in wrap fillings. Sometimes all it takes is removing a pesky small amount of dairy or egg.

2018 was the year when veganism truly went mainstream and as many as one in six products launched in the UK last year carried a vegan claim. The European market is stepping up its vegan game too, with a 451% growth of meat substitutes in the four years to February 2018.

Retailers and outlets must cater for consumers who are making these vegan choices or they risk missing out. Shoppers are increasingly more savvy and curious about where the product and its ingredients come from. They study the label carefully to see whether the item meets their dietary and ethical criteria.

However, with the lack of a legal definition for veganism it's easy to get confused and companies have been known to mislabel products or make false or inaccurate claims about product suitability for vegans.

One such area is the beauty industry where the difference between 'vegan' and 'cruelty free' is not emphasised enough. While the former signifies a product contains no animal ingredients and wasn't tested on them, the latter only refers to animal testing.

The Vegan Society's Vegan Trademark scheme has been running since 1990 to make it easier for people to assess at a glance whether a product is vegan. Items registered with the Vegan Trademark have been verified as vegan and the buyer can be confident that the product is suitable for their lifestyle choice.

Some 30,000 products spanning across 1,000 companies are currently registered with our Vegan Trademark. In 2018, a total of 9,590 products were registered - a whopping 65% increase on the year before.

©Aidan Synnot. Vegan World | Natural & Organic Products Europe 2018

©Aidan Synnot. Vegan World | Natural & Organic Products Europe 2018

Around 75% of the Vegan Trademark business comes from companies based outside of the UK, with Germany having the most Trademark holders, followed by Italy and then Spain. The Vegan Trademark covers 53 countries around the world.

The Vegan Trademark team will be running The Vegan Society stall at the NOPE show 2019. Companies interested in registering their products can speak to the team there or email trademark@vegansociety.com for a quote. ■

30,000 products from more than 1,000 companies are currently registered with The Vegan Society Trademark


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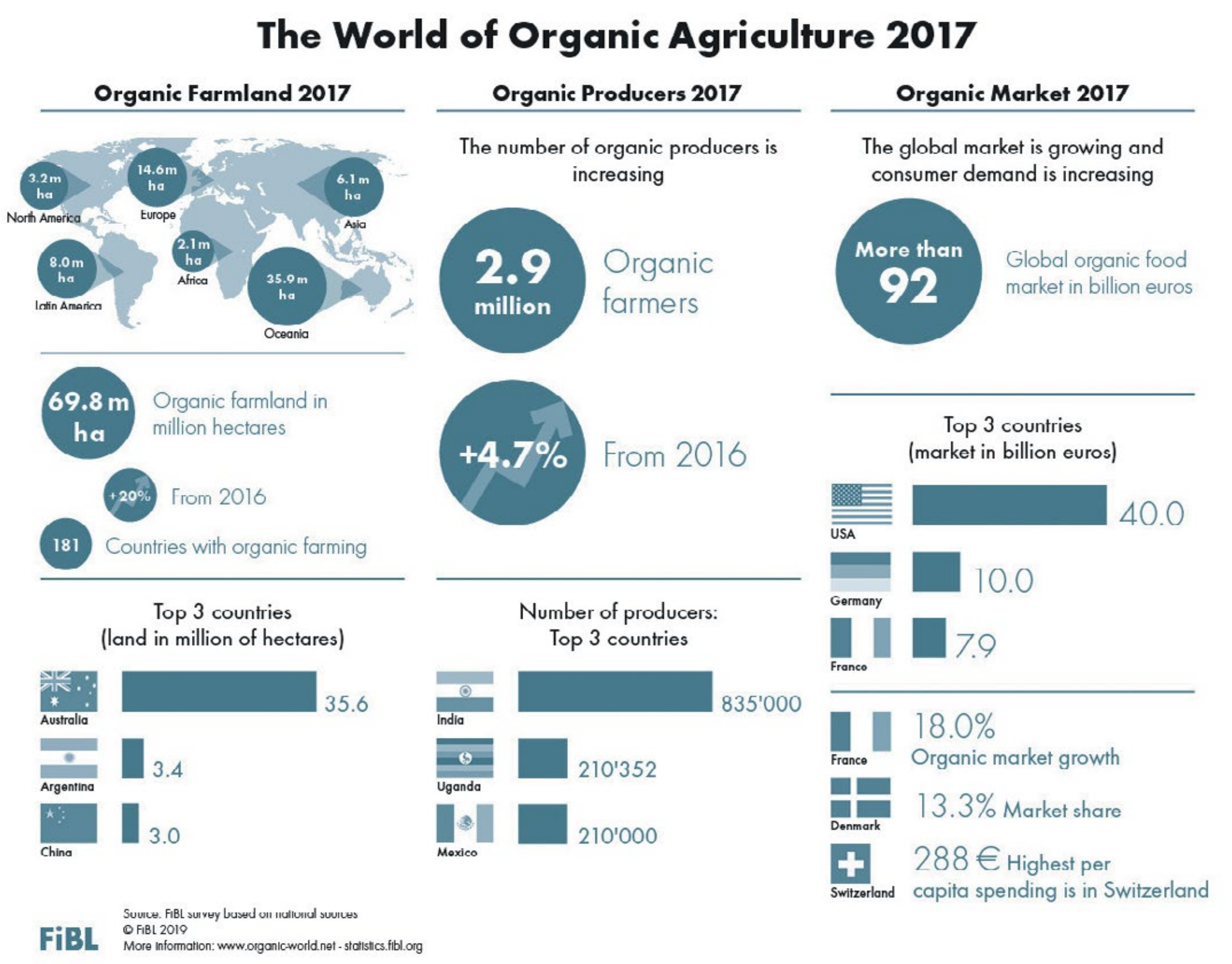
Global organic area reaches another all-time high – Nearly 70 million hectares of farmland are organic - 14 facts on organic agriculture worldwide

The year 2017 was another record year for global organic agriculture. According to the latest survey on organic agriculture worldwide carried out by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), the organic farmland, the number of organic producers and organic retail sales continued to grow, as shown by the data from 181 countries (Figure 1). Organic areas increased to 70 million hectares and thus reached another all-time high. They grew by 20% or almost 12 million hectares! In the following article, the key data from the latest statistical yearbook, "The World of Organic Agriculture", edition 2019, are presented.



©FiBL. Figure 1: Infographic "The World of Organic Agriculture". Source: FiBL Survey 2019

1. Almost 70 million hectares of organic farmland – another all-time high

In 2017, 69.8 million hectares of organic agricultural land, including in-conversion areas, were recorded. The regions with the largest areas of organic agricultural land are Oceania (35.9 million hectares, which is half the world's organic agricultural land) and Europe (14.6 million hectares, 21%). Latin America has 8 million hectares (11%) followed by Asia (6.1 million hectares, 9%), North America (3.2 million hectares, 5%), and Africa (2.1 million hectares, 3%) (Figure 2).

2. Australia has the largest organic farmland area

The countries with the most organic agricultural land are Australia (35.6 million hectares), which, with a growth of 8.5 million hectares, recorded the highest farmland growth ever, Argentina (3.4 million hectares), and China (3 million hectares) (Figure 2).

3. Globally, 1.4% of the farmland is organic – Liechtenstein has the highest organic share with 37.9%

Currently, 1.4% of the world's agricultural land is organic. The highest organic shares of the total agricultural land, by region, are in Oceania (8.5%) and Europe (2.9%; European Union 7.2%). However, some countries reach far higher shares: Liechtenstein (37.9 %) and Samoa (37.6%) have the highest organic shares. In fourteen countries, 10% or more of the agricultural land is organic (Figure 2).

4. Record growth in organic farmland - Increase of 11.7 million hectares or 20%

Organic farmland showed the highest increase ever recorded: it increased by 11.7 million hectares or 20% in 2017. The strong increase is mainly because 8.5 million additional hectares were reported from Australia. However, many other countries reported an important increase and thus contributed to the global growth, such as China (32% increase; over 0.7 million additional hectares), Argentina (12% increase; more than 0.4 million additional hectares), and the Russian Federation and India, both with an additional 0.3 million hectares (Figure 2).

THE WORLD OF ORGANIC

5. Organic farmland grew in all regions

There was an increase in organic agricultural land in all regions. In Europe, the area grew by almost 1 million hectares (7.6% increase). In Asia, the area grew by almost 30% or an additional 1.2 million hectares; in Africa, the area grew by 14% or over 0.2 million hectares; in Latin America the area grew by 7% or 0.5 million hectares; and in North America by more than 3% or almost 0.1 million additional hectares.

6. Non-agricultural organic areas reached more than 42 million hectares

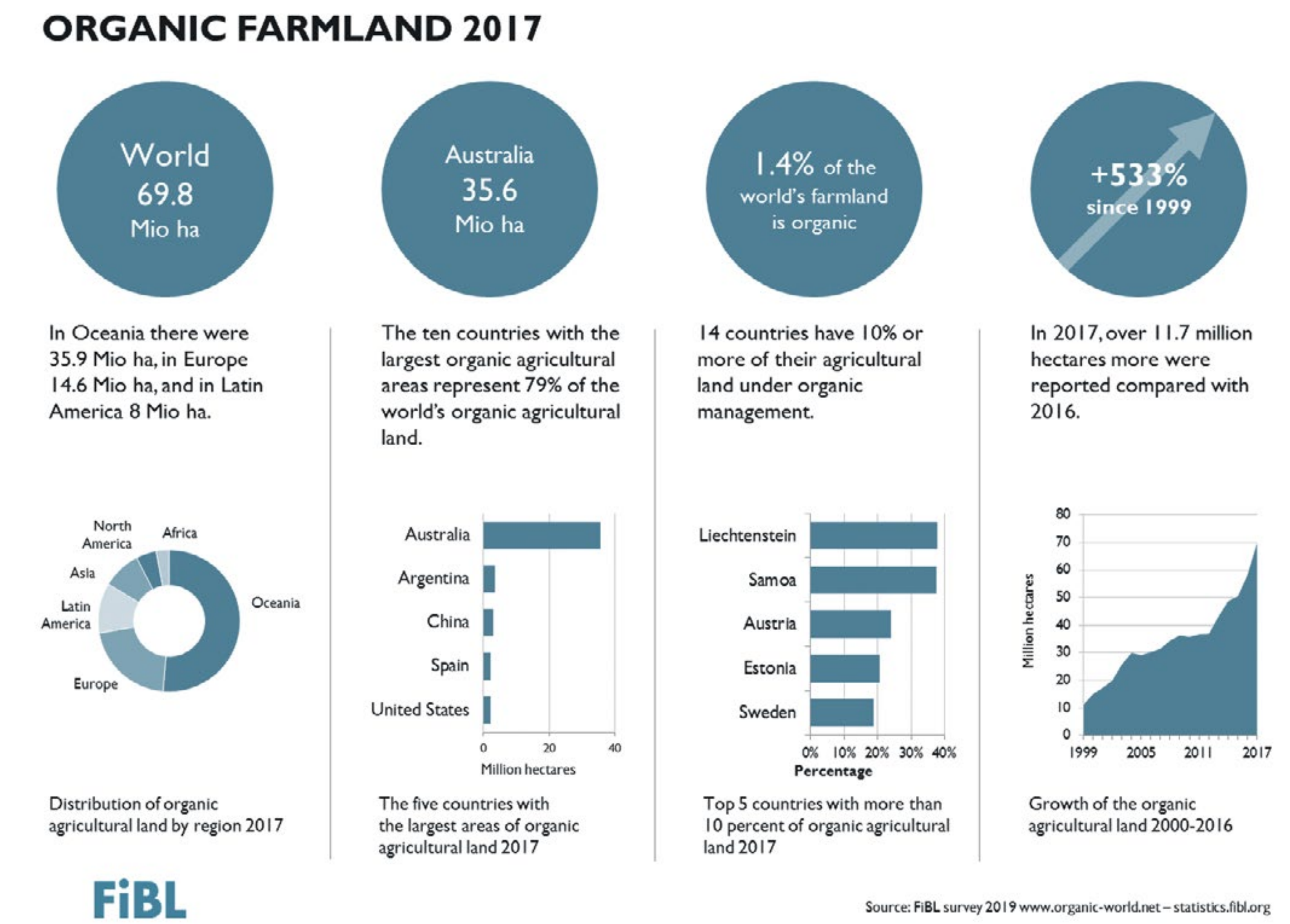
Apart from the organic agricultural land, there is organic land dedicated to other activities, most of which are areas for wild collection and beekeeping. Other areas include aquaculture, forests, and grazing areas on non-agricultural land. These areas of non-agricultural land constitute more than 42.4 million hectares.

7. Growth in all major land use types

Over two-thirds of the organic agricultural land was grassland/grazing areas (almost 48.2 million hectares), which increased more than any other land use type in 2017 (27%, mainly due to the large increase of grazing areas in Australia).

With a total of over 12 million hectares, arable land constituted 17% of the organic agricultural land. An increase of almost 11.3% since 2016 was reported. Most of this category of land was used for cereals including rice (4.5 million hectares), followed by green fodder from arable land (2.8 million hectares), oilseeds (1.2 million hectares), dry pulses and vegetables.

Permanent crops account for 7% of the organic agricultural land, amounting to nearly 4.9 million hectares. Compared to the previous survey, an increase of more than 300,000 hectares, or 6.7%, was reported. The most important crops were coffee, with nearly 0.9 million hectares and olives (almost 0.9 million hectares), each constituting almost 20% of the organic permanent cropland, followed by nuts (0.6 million hectares), grapes (0.4 million hectares), and tropical and subtropical fruits (almost 0.4 million hectares).



©FiBL. Figure 2: Infographic "Organic Agricultural Land". Source: FiBL Survey 2019

8. Organic producers on the rise – 2.9 million producers in 2017

There were at least 2.9 million organic producers in 2017. Forty percent of the world's organic producers are in Asia, followed by Africa (28%) and Latin America (16 %). The countries with the most producers are India (835,000), Uganda (210,352), and Mexico (210,000). There has been an increase in the number of producers of over 100,000, or nearly 5%, compared to 2016. Please note that some countries report only the numbers of companies, projects, or grower groups, which may each comprise a number of individual producers. The number of producers should, therefore, be treated with caution, and it may be assumed that the total number of organic producers is higher than that reported here (Figure 3).

9. Global market has reached over €92 billion

Organic food and drink sales reached €92 billion in 2017. With €43 billion, North America is the region with the largest market followed by Europe (€37.3 billion) (Figure 4).

10. United States is the largest single market

In 2017, the countries with the largest organic markets were the United States (€40 billion), Germany (€10 billion), and France (€7.9 billion). The largest single market was the United States (47% of the global market), followed by the European Union (€34.3 billion, 37% of the global market), and China (€7.6 billion, 8%). (Figure 4)

11. European consumers are spending more on organic food – Switzerland has the highest per capita consumption (almost €300)

While the organic per capita consumption globally was only €11, it was €119 in North America and €47 in Europe (European Union: €67). In Europe, per capita consumer spending on organic food has doubled in the last decade. The highest per-capita consumption in 2017, with almost €300, was found in Switzerland and Denmark (€288 and €278 per capita respectively) (Figure 4).

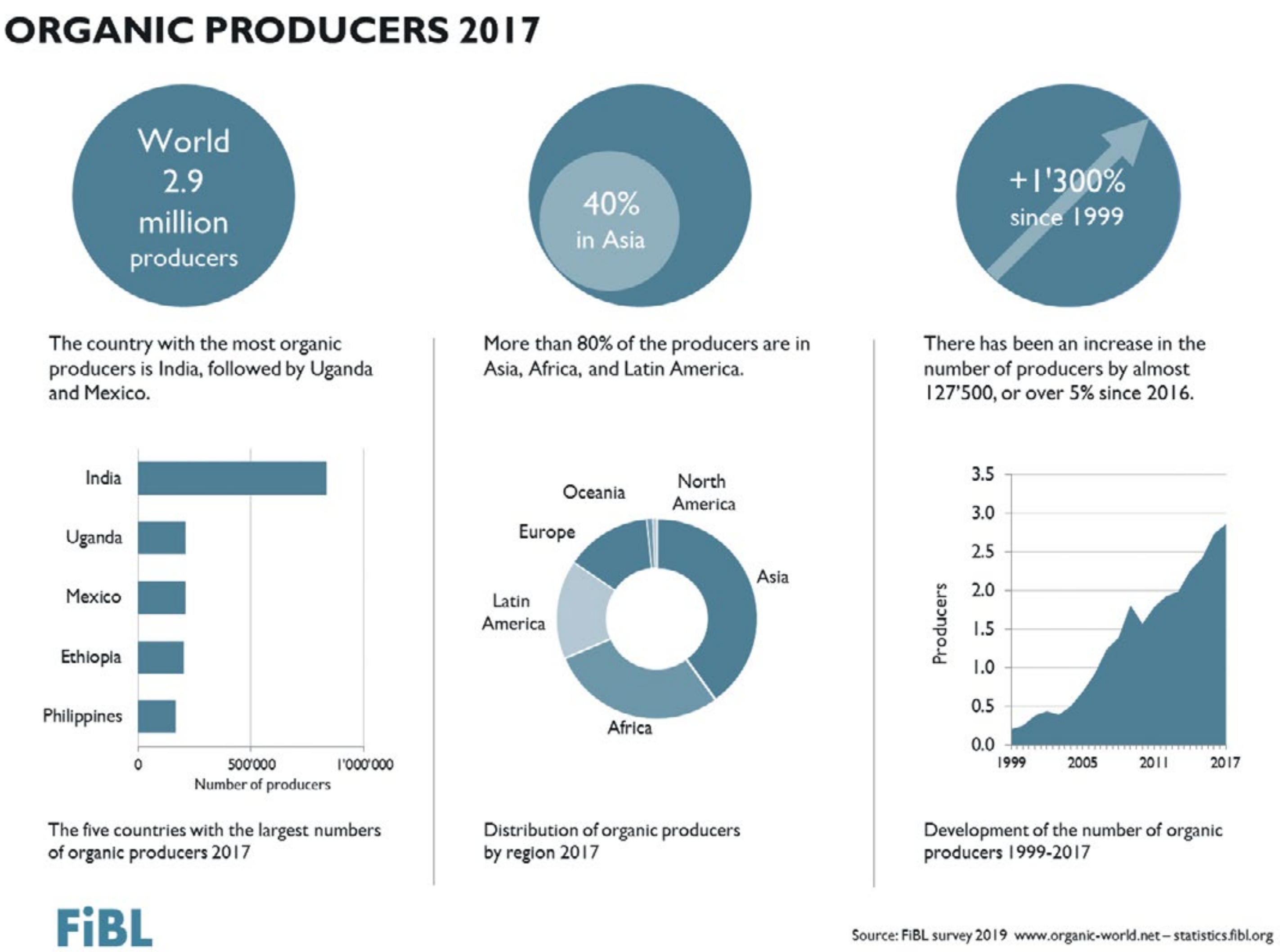
12. Organic market shares about to reach or surpass the 10% mark in some countries– Denmark has the lead

Globally, European countries account for the highest shares of organic food sales as a percentage of their respective food markets. The highest organic market shares were reached in Denmark (13.3%), the first country with an organic market share of over 10%, Sweden (9.1%), and Switzerland (9%).

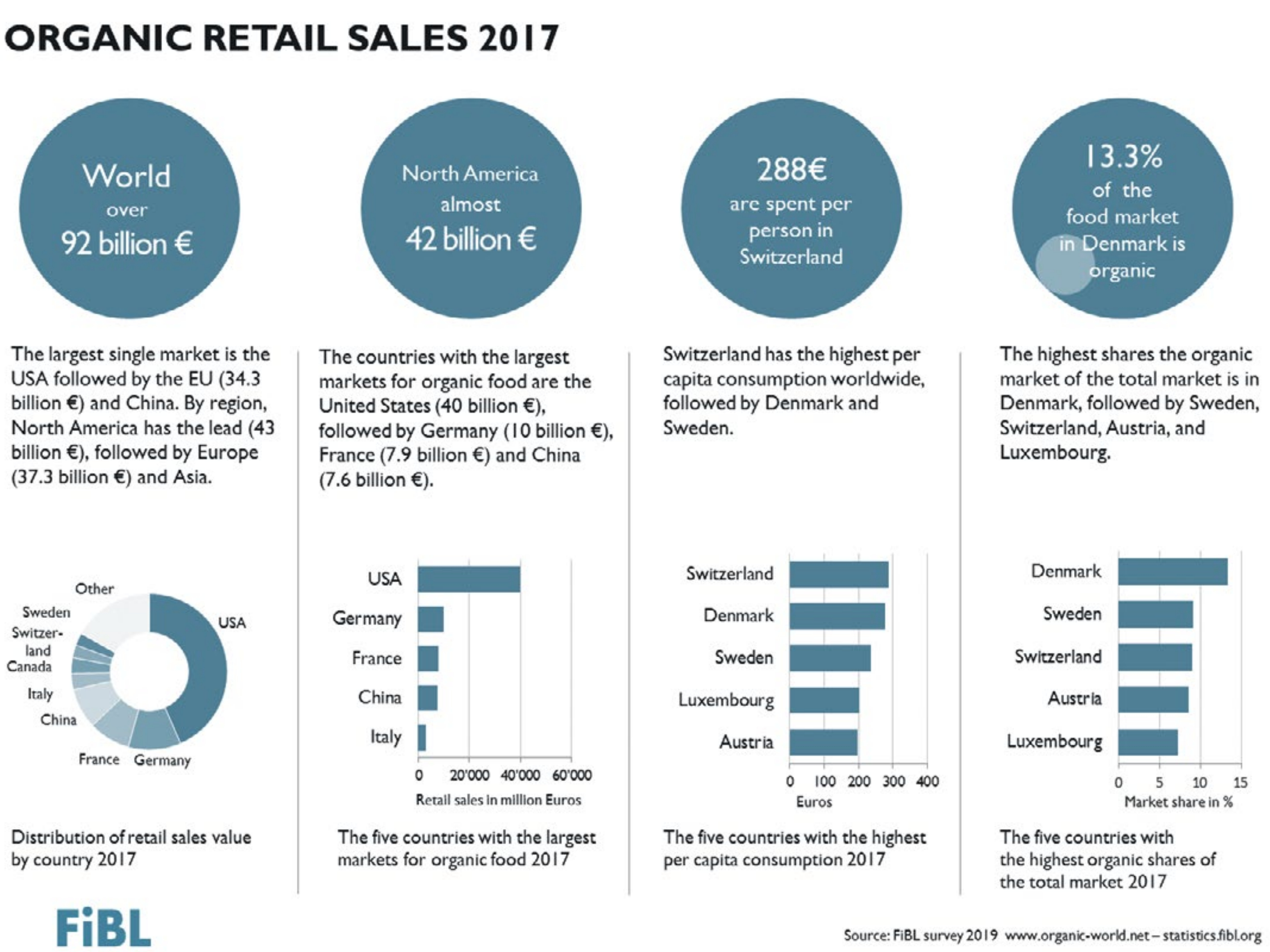
Individual products and product groups hold even higher shares. Organic eggs, for instance, constituted almost or more than 30% of the value of all eggs sold in some countries (Figure 4).

13. Double-digit growth rates of retail sales in 2017 in many countries

While the world's largest organic market, the United States, achieved a growth rate of 6%, the European market recorded a growth rate of almost 11%, which is the second



©FiBL. Figure 3: Infographic "Organic Producers". Source: FiBL Survey 2019



©FiBL. Figure 4: Infographic "Organic Retail Sales". Source: FiBL Survey 2019 time retail sales had a double-digit growth rate since the financial crisis. Among the global five top markets, the highest growth was observed in France (18%).

14. Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) – organic continues to lead

Looking at Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS), a recent survey of 14 standards (including organic, 2016 data) shows that, in 2016, growth continued and that at least 15 million hectares are covered by selected crops and standards. All of the standards covered experienced growth in their areas since 2011. The most successful commodity is coffee: at least 25.8% of the global coffee area is certified at least under one of the standards covered. Organic continues to be the standard with the largest certified area.

Conclusion

On a global level, all key indicators for organic agriculture showed growth, making 2017 another very successful year for the organic sector. The organic area and market continue to grow at a fast pace worldwide.

As organic areas and therefore organic production are growing faster than ever, the potential to meet better the demand of the market is there, and supply imbalances will be potentially reduced. In some countries, the organic market shares have reached 10%; and for some individual products these shares can be even higher.

In order to be better able to monitor and analyse the development of the sector more accurate data are needed.■

About FiBL

The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL is one of the world's leading institutes in the field of organic agriculture. FiBL's strengths lie in its interdisciplinary research, innovations developed jointly with farmers and the food industry, and rapid knowledge transfer. FiBL employs some 300 staff at its various locations.

About the FiBL Survey on organic agriculture worldwide

The survey on organic farming worldwide is carried out by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL in Switzerland, together with partners. The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, the International Trade Centre, Coop Switzerland. NürnbergMesse, the organisers of the Biofach Organic Trade Fair, and IFOAM- Organics International. The next global organic survey will start in mid-2019; data will be published in February 2020 and presented at the Biofach Organic Trade Fair in Nuremberg, Germany. The data can be downloaded at statistics.fibl.org; the yearbook "The World of Organic Agriculture" is available at www.organic-world.net

ORGANIC IN SPAIN

Javier Rees, *Director Rees Exports Consulting,*
www.rees-exportsconsulting.com | jrees@rees-exportsconsulting.com

Spanish market in continuous growth

As a marketing and sales agency specialised in developing sales into Spain's Food & Drink industry, I have had the privilege to work across a number of different categories in the past fifteen years, but none has provided me with so much interest and insight than the organic food and drink market. During this time, especially in the past seven years, the pace at which the market has developed across all European countries is nothing short of spectacular, and Spain is a great example of this.

For years, Spain has led the European Union in terms of the area dedicated to organic farming with 2,082,173 hectares, most of which is exported to third countries, especially in northern Europe where there is a higher demand compared to Spain. This however is changing, as local consumption levels have grown significantly, placing Spain as the 5th organic food and drink market in market value within Europe. What is remarkable however is the speed at which this has happened, shaping the industry as a whole.

Spain provides many opportunities to exporters who are looking to enter the market

Spanish grocery retail chains are dedicating more and more floor space to organic food and drink, forcing specialist stores, specialist chains and specialist distributors to reduce their margins to compete. In recent months, a number of long-standing specialist chains and distributors have been forced to close after decades of activity, which adds to the sense that the market has changed for good - and will inevitably continue to do so, leading to further market concentration.

Despite this rapid concentration, the specialist channel remains key for both Spanish and international manufacturers looking to enter the organic food and drink market and it will by no means disappear given that many Spanish consumers remain loyal to specialist stores. For exporters, it is an excellent starting point that involves less risk as there are very little listing fees involved. It also provides a more cautious approach that allows to "test" the market before committing to fully branded Spanish packaging.

In terms of accessing the channel, working with a distributor is a must given its fragmented structure. There are numerous distributors that can be approached, some stronger than others depending on the region involved, with a small number offering the potential to supply the whole market, including the Canary and Balearic Islands. Once a distributor has successfully been appointed, it is key to work closely with their sales team, and to provide them with trade marketing and promotional tools to help secure sales. In-store sampling and consumer shows such as Biocultura should also be explored to help build brand awareness and consumer trial.

©Vida Sana. Organic Showcooking at BioCultura Sevilla, organic consumer show with over 15,000 attendees

Regarding the grocery retail market, I would also recommend working with a distribution partner who can provide quick access to listing opportunities and can commit to the day to day obligations and fees involved in working with supermarket chains. A small number of specialist distributors also supply the grocery retail channel so perhaps these would be the ideal partners to approach first.

Specialist channel is an excellent starting point for exporters...

Overall, Spain provides many opportunities to exporters who are looking to enter the market, whether it is the specialist channel, grocery or both. The market is in continuous growth with buyers looking for NPD to add value to a category which is no longer considered niche. It is a category that has become well established and is by no means considered a trend. ■

CONSULTING


Eduardo Cuoco, *IFOAM EU Director*
www.ifoam-eu.org | info@ifoam-eu.org

Sergi Corbalán, *Executive Director of the Fair Trade Advocacy Office*

ORGANIC MOVEMENT

Civil society call on the next Members of the European Parliament to make Europe fair by 2024

©Diliff. The Hemicycle of the European Parliament in Strasbourg during a plenary session

At the end of May 2019, citizens from every European member state will make their voices heard by voting for a new European Parliament. These elections will select 705 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) for a five-year term. (Do note that this is the number of seats that will be available in a scenario where Britain leaves the EU).

The European Parliament elections are a decisive moment in which citizens and civil society can make their voices heard by voting and putting forward important issues such as sustainable consumption and production.

Ahead of the elections, five civil society organisations have joined forces calling for a fair and sustainable European consumption and production agenda with their '*The Fair Times*' campaign.

Together the Fair Trade Advocacy Office ('FTAO', which leads the global Fair Trade movement's advocacy at EU level), IFOAM EU (the European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming), CIDSE (an umbrella organization for Catholic development agencies from Europe and North America), RIPESS (a global network of continental networks committed to the promotion of Social Solidarity Economy) and ECOLISE (a European network for community-led initiatives on sustainability and climate change) are representing their respective movements and networks through a campaign that is a little different from the usual.

The coalition has drafted an issue of '*The Fair Times*'; a newspaper that will be published in 2024, at the end of the next term of the European Parliament. The newspaper is full of examples of what could be achieved if transformative policies are implemented and it hopes to inspire candidates to commit to taking action if they are elected. The newspaper reports on a range of topics; from organic farming to ethical financing, community led initiatives to sustainable public procurement. It talks of tackling imbalances of power in supply chains, promoting social solidarity business and the need for urgent action against resource depletion, the decline in biodiversity and more. Members of the networks will be able to use this newspaper, and other tools that will be developed to approach candidates and discuss their visions of how to put sustainability and fairness at the heart of European policies.

Sergi Corbalán, Executive Director of the Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO) put it this way; "We wanted to coordinate a campaign that brought a community of likeminded organisations together to call with a unified voice for a transformative EU agenda which serves both people and planet."

Eduardo Cuoco, Director of IFOAM EU, says "The European Parliament elections are an important moment to raise awareness to incoming Members of the European Parliament about the urgency of promoting sustainable agroecological and organic production and consumption practices". He added that "the European organic movement particularly advocates for a reformed Common Agricultural Policy that rewards and incentivizes the environmental and socio-economic outcomes delivered by farmers". In this context, he also stressed the need for a true cost accounting framework that helps reward practices that deliver public benefits together with the previously mentioned reformed Common Agricultural Policy.

Corbalán added: "Through promoting good practices that are ongoing in communities across Europe and calling for EU policies that help to upscale such initiatives, alongside calling for an enabling policy environment, we hope to motivate candidates to understand the impact of our current trends and how if elected, they could make a huge difference."

If you're passionate about transforming the production and consumption agenda and want to contact candidates of the European Parliament elections and share your views as part of the '*The Fair Times*' campaign, contact advocacy@fairtrade-advocacy.org. A campaign package involving information about how to approach candidates, campaign materials and access to a dedicated website will be shared with you. ■

FOOD

IFOAM ORGANICS INTERNATIONAL

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

The 2020 Organic World Congress
From its Roots, Organic Agriculture Inspires Life

Every three years, IFOAM – Organics International joins with organic sector partners to hold the Organic World Congress (OWC), the world's largest organic gathering. The next OWC will be held September 23-25, 2020 in Rennes, France. Several pre-conferences and the IFOAM – Organics International General Assembly will take place before and after the Congress. A milestone 20th anniversary event, the 2020 OWC is inspired by the motto "From its Roots, Organic Agriculture Inspires Life", and its vision will draw from the French organic movement's ethical, historical, and scientific beginnings. OWC 2020 planning and implementation activities will be coordinated through the Consortium OWC Rennes 2020 and IFOAM – Organics International with the generous support of several institutional partners.

The Congress – what is it?

The OWC is a global forum of exchange for organic and like-minded stakeholders – from scientists, farmers, and policy makers to journalists, practitioners, and other agricultural players. It aims to connect these more than 2,500 stakeholders from 50 countries in a week-long congress to foster dialogue. At the 2020 Organic World Congress, participants will be able to share, pool, and expand their knowledge on the institutional, economical, and social frameworks and practices that allow for the development of the organic movement. Moreover, OWC 2020 will provide organic farmers with an exciting opportunity to meet other stakeholders active in organic agriculture as well as organizations in their national, European, or global networks. Together these actors will be able to promote local production and share their know-how and scientific knowledge, paying particular attention to sustainable development and the harmonious enrichment of cultures.

The Organic World Congress is seen as a leading event for the global organic sector and offers momentum and inspiration to all who take part.

Key Priorities and Messages

- Innovation can be used to

ORGANIC IFOAM FAMILY of STANDARDS

That's Organic - Worldwide.

GLOBAL

IFOAM Standard

International Standard for Forest Garden Products (FGP)

Biocyclic-Vegan Standard

AFRICA

Tunisia Organic Regulation

East African Organic Products Standard

The SAOSO Standard, South Africa

Zimbabwe Standard for Organic Farming, Zimbabwe

ASIA

Asian Regional Organic Standard

Saudi Arabia Organic Regulation

China Organic Regulation

India Organic Regulation

Israel Organic Regulation

Japan Organic Regulation

Korea Organic Regulation

Diaoyutai Private Organic Standard, China

OFDC Organic Certification Standard, China

Sunshine Earth Organic Standard, China

HKORC Organic Standard, Hong Kong

Biocert International Standards, India

Social Certification Services Organic Standard, India

Japan Organic & Natural Foods Association Organic Standard, Japan

MASIPAG Organic Standards, The Philippines

DCOK, LLC International Standards, South Korea

iCOOP-IFOAM standard, South Korea

ACT Basic Standard, Thailand

Vietnam PGS Standards, Vietnam

OCEANIA

National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce, Australia

New Zealand Organic Export Regulation

Pacific Organic Standard, Pacific Community

Australian Certified Organic Standard, Australia

NASAA Organic Standard, Australia

AsureQuality Organic Standard, New Zealand

EUROPE

EU Organic Regulation

Switzerland Organic Regulation

Turkey Organic Regulation

Bio Suisse Standards, Switzerland

Nature & Progrès Standards, France

The EcoWellness Standard, Germany

Krav Standards, Sweden

THE AMERICAS

Argentina Organic Regulation

Canada Organic Regulation

Costa Rica Organic Regulation

Ecuador Organic Regulation

USA Organic Regulation

Argencert Organic Standard, Argentina

OIA Organic Standards, Argentina

IBD Organic Guidelines, Brazil

CCOF International Standard, USA

THE FAMILY OF STANDARDS

contains all standards officially endorsed as organic by the Organic Movement, based on their equivalence with the Common Objectives and Requirements of Organic Standards. Both private standards and government regulations are admissible.

www.ifoam.bio/ogs

Note: Applicant standards are marked in grey. Family Standards Frame: January 11, 2019. Click on each standard to see more details. Best viewed with Adobe Reader stimulate farmer conversion to organic – increase nutritional revenues from fields while maintaining ecosystem vigour;

- Organic systems are tied to the living soil and should be enhanced to preserve and develop biodiversity as well as plant and animal integrity;
- The organic agriculture movement inspires healthy food systems and a culture of sustainability;
- Organic agriculture is forward-looking and achieves innovation through the melding of tradition and science;
- Organic agriculture serves as an inspiration for the transformational changes needed within the agricultural sector;
- Organic agriculture works and positions itself as an agent of change. It is time to scale up and harness the benefits reaped from regenerative (sustainable) ways of farming;
- The OWC2020 is solution-oriented and will seek to offer alternatives to global challenge and maximize positive impacts on people and the planet. Its tonality is pragmatic, friendly, positive, and collaborative;
- Organic agriculture is a tool for responsible development.

Congress Program

The 2020 Organic World Congress will include plenary sessions and six congress fora. Congress fora topics will be:

1. Leadership Forum: discuss and mould the future of the organic movement.
2. Farmers' and Advisors' Forum: share knowledge and initiatives.
3. Science Forum: present research on the organic sector.
4. Supply and Value Chain Forum: address profession-related concerns.
5. Cultural and Education Forum: discuss the philosophical foundation and knowledge management of the organic movement.
6. Stakeholders' Forum: promote a multi-actor approach for organic food systems.

Participation in one or more of the above-mentioned fora is possible and encouraged, however advanced application is required. Interested attendees will need to submit an outline of their contribution to congress organizers for approval. Contributions may be submitted online via https://owc.ifoam.bio/2020. The application period for these submissions will run from April 15 to September 30, 2019. IFOAM – Organics International will publish OWC 2020 announcements and additional pre-congress information this spring. To view and receive OWC 2020 announcements, please visit https://owc.ifoam.bio/2020 and subscribe to our updates.

Where is it – the Couvent des Jacobins

The 2020 OWC will be held at the Couvent des Jacobins, a large conference centre at the heart of Rennes. Uniquely fusing past and present, the Couvent des Jacobin is situated inside a remodelled 14th century historic structure and can be reached on foot or via public transport from all city hotels and the main train station.

Boasting 4,000 square meters of exhibition space and full catering services featuring seated dining space for 1,500 guests, the Couvent des Jacobins is the perfect venue to host the 2020 Organic World Congress.

OWC Side Events – how do I participate?

OWC 2020 will offer its participants the chance to organize and/or join in one or more side events, including half-, full-, and multi-day pre-congress events, pre- and post-congress excursions, city events, and tours. Organizations or other parties interested in hosting or holding side events may be eligible to apply as side event organizers. If selected and approved as a side event organizer, companies will be allowed to brand their event as official side-, pre-, or post-congress events.

For Congress-related Questions – please email!

For congress-related inquiries and to request additional OWC 2020 information, please contact the Organic World Congress 2020 Consortium–France via email at owc2020@itab.asso.fr.

Save the Date:

September 21-27, 2020

Website:

https://owc.ifoam.bio/2020/.■

DISTRIBUTION

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE


Miguel de Porras,
Co-Director, FiBL Europe


Nicola Love,
Research assistant FiBL Europe

The Contribution of Organic Agriculture to the SDGs: Scientific evidence from comparative research

Comparative research shows that organic agriculture has great potential to improve economic, environmental and social conditions in rural areas in low income countries. The time has come for international stakeholders and donors to take a stance on unlocking this potential and to support organic agriculture and other agro-ecological approaches worldwide as a means of achieving the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At a recent workshop held by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) the benefits of organic agriculture in the light of the SDGs were explored.


©FiBL

On 26 February 2019 over 150 people came together in Brussels for the FiBL-led workshop "The Contribution of Organic Agriculture to the SDGs: Scientific evidence from comparative research". The aim of the event was to stimulate debate on the role of organic agriculture and other agro-ecological approaches in the European and international development policy frameworks in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

FiBL researchers presented the results of their research on the performance of organic agriculture in tropical and sub-tropical climate zones in terms of productivity, economic viability, environmental soundness and social inclusiveness to an audience that included high-level participants from the European Commission, Members of the European Parliament, diplomats, academics, practitioners as well as civil society organisations.

Scientific evidence from research

FiBL research results show that organic farming and other agro-ecological methods can be economically more beneficial for smallholder families in low-income countries than conventional methods, despite lower yields in some cases, as they require less capital and income can be higher in terms of labour input. Hence, organic farming can represent an economic advantage for small-holders in addition to the well-known environmental benefits that this agricultural system brings. The yield potential in these regions is far from exhausted, as there is still too little knowledge on how to implement the concepts of organic farming and other agro-ecological approaches in a meaningful way.

Beate Huber, Head of International Cooperation at FiBL Switzerland, said "organic agriculture has great potential to contribute to sustainable development. Investment in research and capacity building will help to take advantage of its benefits and to tackle existing challenges in technologies and market access and to better understand the drivers of change."

The validity of the research was discussed in a very influential scientific panel made up of Urs Niggli, president of FiBL, Verena Seufert from the Institute for Environmental Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and Stephane Bellon from the French National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRA). This panel, facilitated by Frank Eyhorn from IFOAM – Organics International/Helvetas, discussed the main challenges of research in organic agriculture.

FAIRS

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

Political action needs to be taken

During the afternoon a policy panel discussed the policy implications of the scientific evidence presented. The panel included representatives from the European Commission, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, IFOAM - Organics International and Maria Heubuch, Member of the European Parliament, The Greens/EFA, the European Parliamentary Alliance on the Fight Against Hunger.

During this session FiBL researcher Adrian Mueller presented his very influential article “Strategies for feeding the world more sustainably with organic agriculture”, recently published in Nature Communications. The article introduced an interesting reflection on the multiple scenarios that our global food system will face in 2050 according to current estimations. The researcher introduced, from a scientific point of view, the discussion on sustainable food systems, making very relevant remarks, such as: “Sustainable production cannot be discussed without addressing consumption and processing”.

©FiBL. SDG’s in which organic agriculture contributes directly

The institutions represented in the policy panel gave their views on the evidence presented during the discussion taking an important stance on the importance that organic agriculture can have in achieving the SDGs.

Willem Olthof from the European Commission Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, stated: “There is quite an evidence base, but at the same time this evidence base is geared towards the north and insufficiently towards the south … and what is important is an understanding of the drivers of change. This is something that we can debate further; those drivers tell us more about where we can intervene and where we can intervene efficiently.” “I am particularly intrigued by the potential influence of organic agriculture and innovations in organic agriculture on conventional agriculture and would welcome more research on that”.

Maria Heubuch concluded: “now that we’ve seen the evidence, political action needs to be taken. In the next programming period of the European Union’s development cooperation, considerably more money has to be spent on organic and agro-ecological farming. Without the appropriate amount of funding, we will fail to transform agriculture and deliver on the Agenda 2030.”

Overall, the event was an outstanding opportunity to demonstrate the contribution of organic agriculture to the European and international policy debate on sustainable development, to showcase FiBL’s ongoing work, and to highlight the importance of continued and increased investment in research.■

DISTRIBUTION

THE WORLD OF SEEDS

Johanna Eckhardt, Junior Coordinator, No Patents on Seeds
johanna.eckhardt@no-patents-on-seeds.org

Prohibition of patents on plants and animals from conventional breeding put into question again

At a hearing on a patent on pepper in December 2018, Syngenta argued that the amendment of the Implementing Regulations adopted by the 38 Contracting States of the European Patent Office (EPO) in 2017 were in contradiction to the European Patent Convention (EPC) and that patents cannot be dismissed due to this rule. By agreeing with the argumentation of the industry, the EPO put yet again into question the prohibition of patents on conventionally bred plants and animals.

In 2017, after protests from the public and criticism from EU institutions, the EPO adopted new rules for the interpretation of the EPC. For the first time, the EPO acknowledged that both the processes of breeding and the resulting plants and animals are excluded from patentability if the processes are considered to be “essentially biological”. However, the board of appeal decided in December 2018 that patents on plants and animals must not be dismissed due to this rule. Thus, the EPO has submitted to the demands of the industry by making the rule basically invalid. This has led to the kind of legal chaos that can and will be abused by big companies such as Bayer, Syngenta and BASF to further monopolise our daily food resources. Within the last few years, the EPO has granted around 200 patents on food plants such as tomatoes, broccoli, peppers and lettuce derived from conventional breeding and not genetically engineered. With the current practice the EPO is evading European law and should put an immediate stop on patents on plants and animals derived from conventional breeding.

Patent cases

The coalition NO PATENTS ON SEEDS! is demanding that patents on conventional breeding are prohibited without any exemptions. A step in the right direction was made in January 2019, when Syngenta withdrew a patent on tomato plants (EP1515600) following public protest. Together with over 20 organisations and 65,000 people from 59 countries, NO PATENTS ON SEEDS! filed an opposition against the tomato patent in 2016. The patent itself was controversial since the patented trait of increased Flavonol derived from conventional breeding with species from Peru and Chile.

An opposition hearing of another patent by Syngenta on insect-resistant pepper and chili plants (EP2140023) scheduled for March 2019 has been cancelled by the EPO.

In March 2019 NO PATENTS ON SEEDS! filed an opposition against a patent on lettuce (EP 2 966 992 B1) by Rijk Zwaan. The Dutch company claims lettuce from conventional breeding can be cultivated under higher temperature. The trait, which is also known from wild lettuce species, is supposed to be helpful for adaption to ongoing climate change.

©Sebastian Widmann. Joint opposition to Syngenta tomato | No Patents on Seeds

Unified Patent Court (UPC) and Brexit

Apart from a pending decision of the German Constitutional Court concerning the legitimacy of the UPC, it is yet to be seen how Brexit will affect the development of the UPC. Though Great Britain is currently a member of the European Patent Convention and has ratified future developments, there is no current agreement in case of Brexit. If Brexit continues as planned, the UK will have backed a court system that might or might not have any jurisdiction over the country. Thus, the patent convention is now part of the Brexit negotiations with the EU. At this time it is not clear whether the UK will stick to the agreement after it leaves the EU.

Further info and the report 2018: http://no-patents-on-seeds.org/en

Updates:

- Twitter.com/NoPatentsOnSeed

- Facebook.com/nopatentsonseeds.■

NO PATENTS ON SEEDS! is demanding that patents on conventional breeding are prohibited without any exemptions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RAW SUPERFOOD
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AWAKENING
RASPEBERRY RIPPLE
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Certified Organic
Gluten Free
ISWARI
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2020
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2 90ml Add hot/cold water or milk alternative
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INTERVIEW

Oriol Urrutia,
Co-Editor comunicacion@bioecoactual.com

diversified
COMMUNICATIONS UK

Carsten Holm

"We are all really passionate about our mission to promote organic"

Carsten Holm (Copenhagen 1962), is the Managing Director of Diversified Business Communications UK, one of the most important event organizer companies in the UK, with a national and international vocation for organic and natural related events. Diversified events always stand out thanks to their professionalism and dynamism, as we have experienced at Natural & Organic Products Europe, NOPE (London), Nordic Organic Food Fair & Eco Living Scandinavia (Malmö); and will shortly see in the new Organic Food Iberia & Eco Living Iberia fairs (Madrid). These fairs are the perfect places for the organic sector to meet and do great business.

You organize events for the natural and organic industry in very different places of the EU. What are the most particular aspects of the UK organic industry?

When Natural & Organic Products Europe was launched over 20 years ago, organic was still considered a niche product and had a slight hippy reputation, which seems very odd looking back. But since then, the market has matured and become more professional, appealing to a much broader audience. However, the UK government hasn't been as proactive as many other governments in supporting organic, so overall, the support from the large retail chains, and the proportion of food and drink that's organic, has lacked behind many other countries. But I sense this is changing and there is still plenty of opportunity for growth and for new companies to enter the market.

Another difference is that we still haven't managed to persuade enough of our farmers to convert to organic, so whilst UK manufacturers are very good at creating excellent finished products, which appeal to an international audience, most of the raw materials are still imported. So that's something we would like to see change. I also think this is one of the reasons why Natural & Organic Products Europe has such a strong reputation internationally, as buyers know it's a great place to see the latest trends and to find innovative, quality products, which are attractive to consumer markets across the world.

How do you and your team achieve the dynamism that always characterizes NOPE?

We are all really passionate about our mission to promote organic. We also work hard to create a welcoming, friendly environment, so our visitors and exhibitors enjoy the experience of attending the show. Finally, we always try to have fun and enjoy what we do, and we like to develop a meaningful personal relationship with our customers. I think that really comes through in all the events we organise.

What makes NOPE different from other organic EU trade shows?

I like to think it's the atmosphere and the personal touch, which is so important to us. I also think the size is ideal – it is not too big and it is not too small – and you are always guaranteed to see some incredibly innovative products.

Vegan products are growing incredibly in the UK. We should not miss NOPE vegan area, should we?

We believe that the principles that motivate people to become vegan are very similar to why people buy organic. Both are about people who care about the environment and about animal welfare, so it is natural that vegan, much of which is also organic, should form part of the show. Natural & Organic Products Europe is now the largest event in the UK for vegan products and a must see for anyone wishing to be involved with this growing category.

Why are you organizing Organic Food Iberia (Madrid, 6-7 June)?

We were approached by our Spanish sales agent, Susana Andres, who had spoken to several Spanish companies that felt Spain needed its own dedicated trade show for organic. We already knew that Spain was the largest producer of organic in Europe and that the consumption of organic was growing. So we went to see all the key players in Spain, and the response was incredibly positive. Our friends in Portugal turned out to be equally supportive, so after a few months, Organic Food Iberia was officially launched at an Advisory Panel, held during last year's Natural & Organic Products Europe.

The support since then has been incredible; we have received official support from the Spanish and the Portuguese governments, as well as all the major regions, many of whom will be exhibiting with large pavilions. The interest from buyers has also been high, so we can look forward to a very successful launch in June, with nearly 500 exhibitors expected at the first edition. It's going to be amazing.■

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