



**SPECIAL
EDITION**

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"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make" DR JANE GOODALL

BIOFACH & VIVANESS 2022

the organic community is ready

26-29 July 2022 | Nuremberg, Germany



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BIOFACH & VIVANESS

Montse Mulé Cardona,
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BIOFACH & VIVANESS 2022: the organic community is ready

BIOFACH & VIVANESS returns to the Nuremberg Exhibition Centre from 26 to 29 July 2022. With a new Tuesday to Friday schedule, the international organic congress will once again be held on site, where visitors and exhibitors will find all the energy to discover the latest organic sector innovations and trends, while sharing information and knowledge face-to-face. BIOFACH & VIVANESS Director **Danila Brunner** says: "That feeling of being part of a community in our sector is what we've all been longing for, and we'll experience it again at BIOFACH and VIVANESS 2022".

The world's leading fair for organic food and the international trade fair for natural and organic personal care will also benefit from all the experience gained from the digital edition in 2021. "On site, exhibitors, visitors and media representatives can experience the comprehensive range of exhibits, innovations and trends, network face-



©NuernbergMesse / Frank Boxler, Best New Product Awards 2020

to-face, and delve into the congress live and instantaneously. **Online**, the sector can also benefit from the digital representations of exhibitor product ranges, use the communication and appointment-making tools to network over and beyond the physical event, and enjoy parts of the congress in a digital format. This exhibition pairing is an event that thrives on offering a **multi-sensory experience**,

which will again be possible, albeit within the limits due to COVID-19, of course" adds Danila Brunner.

BIOFACH 2022: the evolving trade show concept

This year's edition features a special platform dedicated to farmers – the new **Agriculture forum**. The Best New Product Award will be pre-

sented in seven categories and the **Hot Brands** will provide interested parties with information on the latest trends. Moreover, 32 new companies from the food industry will be presented in the "**Innovation made in Germany**" pavilion. Packaging will already be a major feature of this exhibition, and there will be an overview of zero waste and the "unpacked" concept at the bulk food showcase "**Unverpackt**". Due to their specific relevance and uniqueness, **olive oil**, **vegan** and **wine** will again have their well-deserved spotlighted space at the "worlds of experience" area.

The network hubs **Initiatives & NGOs** and **Generation Future** will continue to provide inspiration for the future. Once again, the **Organic Food Industry Research Award (BioThesis)** will be presented at the Generation Future hub during the trade fair. **Next Generation** provides a networking hub mainly for start-ups



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Both on-site and online, the BIOFACH Congress 2022, which has been developed in partnership with BÖLW and IFOAM, will explore the socio-politically relevant question how to make food production more resilient and climate-friendly whilst applying organic principles. “We need stable and resilient food systems in the face of exceptional climatic events to ensure that everyone has access to an adequate, sustainable and healthy food supply. Our own fragility, and that of the planet and food systems, has become even more evident to us during the global pandemic”, explains Louise Lutikholt. The Executive Director of IFOAM - Organics International adds: “As a system based on the principles of health, ecology, equity and care, the organic system is already working, as demonstrated by millions of farmers and food producers around the world”.

“Science confirms that extreme global events such as the climate crisis or pandemics are connected to the way we treat the natural environment. But scientists also tell us not to lose heart. They say it is in our hands to solve the crisis. To do so, organic farming must become the new normal. There is an urgent need to develop resilient systems from farm to fork. How we produce our food, organise our farms and do business sustainably will be a mammoth task for all governments and for each of us.



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With humus-rich soils, organic farmers sequester excess CO₂ effectively from the atmosphere”, explains Tina Andres, President of BÖLW.

VIVANESS 2022: a reliable source of inspiration and trend-setting

Awareness has grown in all segments of society that a healthy, sustainable and resource-conserving lifestyle is one that brings us consumer satisfaction without compromising our children’s future, and the cosmetics industry is very clearly responding to this concern and is adapting its range of products to consumer demands for natural and sustainable products. Waterless products, vegan cosmetics, refill systems and zero waste are here to stay: they have gone from being a trend to becoming an integral part of supply and demand.

Consumers of natural and organic cosmetics demand “naturalness” – not only natural ingredients, but also

animal welfare, environmental compatibility, waste avoidance, sustainability and fair trade and health, and the transformation of the international cosmetics market is in full swing, generating growth expected to reach 8%. “In general, cosmetics companies are becoming greener, adopting a more holistic and ethical approach and investing in sustainability,” says trend researcher Mirja Eckert of the The New.

Organic – further growth is needed

Organic is part of the solution in addressing some of the major challenges worldwide, such as climate emergency, soil erosion, poverty and hunger. Organic agriculture contributes to at least eleven UN Sustainable Development Goals. Further growth in organic production and consumption is needed all over the world, not only to hit the targets set by the EU, for instance, but to deliver a (sustainable) future. ■

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IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE

2022: 20 years of making Europe more organic and the Year of Organic

20 years of organic's unified voice in European policymaking: This year, the European organic movement will celebrate its 20th anniversary. Anniversaries mark a point in time between the past and the future, an ideal moment to look back on past successes and the challenges lying ahead. Together with our members, supporters, organic stakeholders and network, we want to reflect on our achievements and look ahead to our celebrations. This article invites us to travel through time. It takes us from the beginning of transforming food and farming in Europe to today's challenges and opportunities.

How it began: Planting the seeds for transforming Europe's food and farming

After its official foundation in 2002, IFOAM Organics Europe ('IFOAM EU Group' back then) opened its coordination and liaison office



©NuernbergMesse / Hans-Martin Issler. Nuremberg - Seed festival

in Brussels, where most legislation on organic production was decided, in October 2003. The office laid the groundwork for IFOAM Organics Europe to develop into a professional advocacy organisation, representing organic stakeholders from all over Europe and working on policy issues, such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and Research & Innovation.

Among our initial successes was the publication of the first EU Organic Action plan, following extensive advocacy efforts in 2004. Other major political achievements were preventing the adoption of an EU ecolabel for food products and developing rules for organic wine processing. We also organised the first editions of our European Organic Congress in 2007 and Organic Processing Conference in 2010, success-

fully establishing these key events in Europe.

Growing our crops: The first ten years of advocating for organic in Europe

Over time, we successfully strengthened our relationships with our members, NGOs, civil society, and trade bodies, and further reinforced our relations with the European institutions. This cooperation and networking led to a range of political achievements. Between 2012 and 2013, as IFOAM Organics Europe, we managed to maintain some progressive elements of the Commission's CAP proposal for more sustainable farming practices and prevented GMO contamination of the European organic and non-GM sector. In addition, the European Technology Platform for organic food and farming, TP Organics, was officially recognised as one of 40 European Technology Platforms (ETPs) by the European



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IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE

Commission in 2013, after its establishment in 2007.

These achievements are mirrored in our development from a voluntary network to an organisation with a professional structure. By 2011, we grew from one full-time staff member in 2003 to a full-time staff of twelve, and had established 15 different working groups, task forces and interest groups, among others the Interest Group on Organic Farming. Within 10 years, IFOAM Organics Europe became the leading organisation and voice for organic food and farming in Europe. The European institutions and other European organisations recognise us as the go-to organisation for all matters on organic.

Caring for our common future: A shared vision of transforming food & farming

In 2013, we started a participatory vision process to make sure the entire sector and movement feel well-represented and have a clear goal. Based on broad member consultations, we set out what we want to achieve by 2030 and developed a strategy.



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By 2030, the organic movement wants a fair, environmentally conscious, healthy, and caring food and farming system across Europe covering three pillars: Organic on every table; Improve – Inspire – Deliver; and Fair play – Fair pay.

As the European organic movement, we lead change, believe in holistic approaches, and thrive on interactions with other like-minded initiatives, including fair trade, agroecology, and urban agriculture. Across Europe, many initiatives are already transforming food and farming and making our Vision 2030 a reality.

Harvest time: Taking stock of organic's recent successes

We actively promoted organic farming as part of the solution to the climate and biodiversity crises. Together with IFOAM – Organics International, we participated in several editions of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC's COP), putting organic on the international political agenda, and promoting agroecology and organic as solutions to the crises. On top of that, we successfully coordinated the four-year SOLMACC project, demonstrating that farming

can be climate-friendly by applying a combination of optimised organic farming practices.

We also worked hard on ensuring the EU Organic Regulation better meets the realities organic producers face and consumers' demands. To allow organic producers to get ready for the foreseen changes in the new EU Organic Regulation, we worked hard to have its application postponed by one year, so 1 January 2022 instead of 1 January 2021. Our guide on the new EU Organic Regulation further supports organic operators in reading and interpreting the new rules.

Among our most recent successes is the recognition of organic as a political tool and part of the solution to the current societal challenges – foremost the climate and biodiversity crises. The EU identified organic as the sector that positively contributes to achieving the European Green Deal's targets. These targets triggered additional support for organic maintenance and conversion in Europe, in line with our Vision 2030.

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IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE

The European Green Deal wants to make Europe climate-neutral by 2050 and “addresses the challenges of sustainable food systems in a comprehensive way, recognising the inextricable links between healthy people, healthy societies and a healthy planet”. To help achieve this, both the European Commission’s Farm to Fork Strategy and the EU Biodiversity strategies set ambitious but achievable targets of 25% organic land in Europe by 2030, as well as a 50% reduction in pesticides use and a 50% reduction in the sales of antimicrobials in livestock and aquaculture. A valuable tool to reach the 25% goal and further develop the organic sector is the new EU Organic Action Plan.

Growing our good practices: Creating a better future in challenging times

Putting organic farming at the heart of a transition towards sustainable food systems is a smart choice. Organic is legally defined at EU level, delivers important environmental benefits, is a successful economic model for farmers, and is based on

minimising external inputs and fairer and more stable prices. Moreover, organic farming is both a dynamic and innovative movement working on a transition of European agriculture to agroecology, as well as a market that grows every year.

Following the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Commission started working on a legislative framework for sustainable food systems promoting policy coherence at EU and national levels. IFOAM Organics Europe will continue working to ensure it recognises organic. It is crucial that this framework is a true lever for transforming food and farming and leaves no room for greenwashing and watering down the organic principles of Care, Health, Ecology, and Fairness.

Furthermore, the organic movement has been and continues to be very active in protecting the organic food and farming sector from GMOs



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and in keeping Europe GMO-free. We will be heavily involved in the policy debate on New Genomic Techniques, representing the European organic movement’s voice.

2022, the year of organic! Celebrating birthdays of the global, European and Asian organic movement

With IFOAM – Organics International’s 50th, our 20th and IFOAM Asia’s 10th anniversaries, we will celebrate 2022 as the year of organic.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we will celebrate our successes of the past 20 years and look ahead together with the IFOAM network members from all over Europe, staff, decision-makers, and representatives of other agri-food and environmental organisations in a range of celebratory activities.

IFOAM Asia will host its 10th anniversary celebrations from 14-16 October 2022, including the 5th Organic Asia Congress and a side event to commemorate World Food Day. The celebrations will be a moment to look back at the origins of IFOAM Asia, assess the movement’s achievements and plan the next steps to further develop the Asian organic sector. It will ultimately be a celebration of the Asian organic movement, Asian people, and Asian culture. ■

For more information on how you can join us in celebrating organics in 2022.

Stay tuned and visit:
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Tradin Organic is the global front runner in organic food ingredients, with over 700 employees and 13 offices worldwide. They offer a full-service portfolio, including unique sourcing, sustainability initiatives, own sourcing projects, distribution and processing capabilities.

Tradin sources premium, organic certified raw materials and ingredients for the international food industry, carrying more than 150 products from over 60 origins. Some of their product groups entail, cocoa products, oils & fats, nuts and grains, dried fruits, IQF fruits, vegetables and more.

As an international player with a local presence in their markets, they can guide their clients through their journey of certification and offer tailor-made solutions to suit individual requirements.

Tradin Organic employs an extensive international team of locally sta-



Courtesy of Tradin Organic

tioned field scouts who work directly with farmers and processors to guarantee organic and ethical integrity, full transparency, and a secure supply of a wide range of organic ingredients. It's a simple one-stop shop for many customers.

With their highly skilled teams and range of certifications, Tradin Organic is continuously working to monitor the organic integrity of its entire product range throughout the whole supply chain process. Ad-

Tradin Organic is the global front runner in organic food ingredients

ditionally, they strive to ensure the highest food safety standards for all customers. In this way, quality is guaranteed from origin to processing and end consumer.

Sourcing high-quality, organic certified raw materials is a demanding but rewarding job. Tradin Organic approaches smallholder companies in countries of origin and establishes future-proof partnerships and products, allowing the supplier to elevate their existing products, receive 100% organic certification, and improve their livelihoods.

This extensive network of carefully screened, long-term independent suppliers also ensures the steady supply of only the best quality products. Tradin oversee all aspects of transportation and storage, from goods in control to preserving organic integrity.

Biofach, the world's leading Trade Fair for Organic Food, is coming back for its 2022 edition, and Tradin Organic is thrilled to be back again and reconnect with customers and partners. Interested in exchanging ideas with them? Meet Tradin Organic at Biofach 22 in their Stand 5-310. ■

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DIGITAL AUDITS

Are digital audits the future of organic certification?

For 30 years, organic regulators have been establishing organic control and inspection systems both at national and international levels. The result is a holistic but complex system of local, national, and international public standards. Hundreds of certification bodies worldwide have to ensure that any operator who grows, processes, or sells organic products with an organic claim or label complies with the corresponding rules and regulations. And all certification bodies must be accredited by an accreditation body against ISO 17065 that establishes their compliance with policies and procedures of transparent and unbiased decision making.

Additional to accreditation, registration with competent state authorities is foreseen that authorises them to inspect and certify against organic regulations. On top of the public system, private standards, controls, certification, and approval add another complex system.

Covid has accelerated digital controls

The Corona-crisis has greatly accelerated digitalisation within the audit and certification sector. Hampering national and international travel, the pandemic forced many inspectors to stay at home. Certification bodies who already had the technology and workflows in place to conduct remote audits

now had a big advantage, whilst others had to adapt overnight to this new world. Especially for organic processors and traders, who usually register all flows of goods within their enterprise resource planning systems, remote audits and inspections can be easily implemented. Structured work packages can be handled step by step without on-site time pressure, saving money, time, travel stress, and emissions.

Ensuring integrity through satellite data

Even farm audits can partially be conducted remotely. To ensure the integrity of such procedures, satellite-based technologies are becoming more and more important. "Together with Organic Services, we are currently developing an Organic Plausibility Checker. The system will

To check organic plausibility, an app will combine satellite data with organic supply chain data and enable farmers to contribute to credible self-audits. "The app can, for example, guide the farmer to a certain place on the farm, tell him to point the smartphone in a certain direction, and to take a photo. This photo will then be registered with its coordinates and a time stamp and be automatically uploaded to a secure platform that can be accessed by the certification body's inspectors", explains Mr. Alam.

The inspector can focus on checking the farm's documents, such as procurement protocols and accounting reports, from anywhere in the world. By comparing the uploaded photos with the farmer's documented information on field sizes, crop, and yield, it is possible to conclude whether the provided information is accurate or not. These practices should not replace farm visits altogether – but they can be a great help in verifying information even at short notice. ■

Farm audits can partially be conducted remotely

greatly facilitate the work of inspectors and certifiers by reducing or replacing certain on-site activities, ease the documentation burden of farmers, and improve fraud prevention through accurate data", says Reaid Alam. He is the founder and CEO of Green Earth Observations, a company specialising in monitoring and verifying agricultural farmland through space technology.

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INTERVIEW



Christophe Barnouin is the CEO of Ecotone, one of Europe's largest organic and plant-based food companies. For 30 years Ecotone (formerly Wessanen) has committed to change the industrial food system with alternative food. With biodiversity as its core value, Ecotone is the first international food company to fully become B Corp certified.

Christophe Barnouin: "We can literally put Biodiversity on the Menu every day"

What does Ecotone mean?

Ecotone is the European leader for organic and plant-based food, as well as the first and largest international food business to be fully B Corp certified. We are a mission-led company that champions biodiversity through food. From a biodiversity perspective, an ecotone is where two biological communities or eco-systems meet and integrate to form the richest most biodiverse places on earth. This is why we named our company after this meaningful word.

What's your mission?

We are committed to charting an alternative path to the dominant, industrial food model that is damaging the planet. More than a slogan, "Food for Biodiversity" is a catchy way to describe our job: creating food that can help biodiversity thrive, not just survive.

What does 'make food for biodiversity' mean in practice?

It means that we are driving the change in food production in order to preserve and grow biodiversity, as well as offering consumers a wide variety of ingredients.

Hence these strong commitments that drive us: we ban all chemical substances that destroy life in the fields, we promote meat and dairy alternatives to avoid deforestation, we develop advanced agricultural practices beyond organic standards, we fight against food standardisation and support revitalising ecosystems degraded by humans.

You were the first international food business in Europe to be B Corp certified. What does it mean?

In a world with so many challenges, we are convinced that companies

should play a role by having a positive impact. But this impact must be measurable in an objective and trustable way. B Corp is one of the most demanding certifications that evaluates brands' social and environmental impact.

Becoming the first international food business in Europe to be B Corp certified stresses that our commitments are not only vocal but deeply rooted in our products, initiatives, and actions. And shared by all our brands and employees.

You have strong company commitments & challenges set for 2030.

When I'm looking at the work done by Ecotone teams, I'm confident we'll achieve our goals. By 2030 Ecotone commits to:

- further grow the share of its turnover of organic products to 90% and of vegetarian products to 95%.



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INTERVIEW

- defy food standardisation and guarantee that two thirds of our products will not be based on the nine over-consumed global commodities (wheat, rice, corn, soybeans, palm oil) that more than 65% of global diets are based on.
- triple the volume of strategic raw materials grown using agricultural practices exceeding organic specifications in order to increase biodiversity (agri-ecological practices, under cover, long crop rotation).

Is the future of food organic + plant-based?

We don't see the trend for plant-based products and organic as a business opportunity: It's in our DNA. It's also a necessity when our planet's biodiversity is collapsing. It's one of the biggest crises our, and future generations, are facing. And current

industrial agriculture (the use of pesticides) and food systems (intensive breeding) are largely to blame. So, when you mix organic and plant-based products you solve these two problems and foster biodiversity.

What about current plant-based market growth? Is this growth sustainable?

We eat too much meat, that's a fact. And we are depleting biodiversity to feed all these livestock. The growing awareness of this issue is beneficial because it allows us to change our eating habits and thus stimulates creativity and innovation in the food industry. However, we must not fall into the trap of ultra-processed, chemical transformation of plants.

It is therefore necessary to eat healthy, natural, and vegetables. And at Ecotone this is what we propose! We promote and enhance biodiversity by choosing an alternative path: we offer organic and vegetarian products developed with agroecological practices that sometimes even go beyond organic certification. That kind

of growth is sustainable.

How much of a threat is vegan-washing?

I regard the increasing consumer interest in vegan food as positive and critically important. The consumer will figure out over time whether brands and companies are seriously committed to driving positive change or whether it's veganwashing.

There also is a role for NGOs and policymakers in guiding consumers to make the right choices. But ultimately, it's down to every one of us – We have the power to change our diets to become healthier and more sustainable and have a big impact on the planet overall. We can literally put Biodiversity on the Menu every day.

What can you tell us about your top EU brands' latest product innovations?

In our fight for ingredient diversity, we've launched with Bonnetterre



an oat drink based on agroecological, local, and organic practices that foster biodiversity on a larger scale. It took us several months to adapt the supply chain to match these processes that integrate CSR initiatives at all stages.

Our natural, fair and delicious Clipper brand has launched a plastic-free teabag.

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PREVENTING FRAUD

Ina Hiester, Freelance journalist for the organic sector
mail@organic-matters.de | www.organic-matters.de

Explaining organic fraud: a criminalistic approach

Selling conventional products as high-quality organic ones has become a sadly common income source for fraudsters worldwide. How come? To understand this, it's worth having a look at the three preconditions, the "ingredients" of fraud: incentive, opportunity, and attitude. They were first unveiled by Donald R. Cressey who then arranged them in the so-called "fraud triangle". Because even though, from case to case, these ingredients may be present to a different extent, they create the basis for every single fraud to occur – be it organic or not.

Incentives motivate people to do something, and one of the biggest incentives out there is: money. Latest figures from Germany show that consumer prices for organic food are between 30 and 175% higher than those for their conventional equivalents. "In organics, production costs tend to be higher whilst yields are lower. On top of that, there are extra costs for audits, controls, and certification to prove organic integrity", explains

Gerald A. Herrmann, director of Organic Services. An incentive is nothing without **opportunity**, meaning the existence of favourable circumstances for fraud to occur. "In Europe, organic legislation dates back to the early 90s. I was a farm consultant at that time, and organic audits and certification schemes were still in their infancy", remembers Gerald. Although both preventive and detective measures have since been further developed, he is convinced that more can be done. Despite manifold rules and regulations and an organic accreditation and certification sector that is worth millions, opportunities and loopholes for organic fraud persist. At the same time, technologies to conceal fraud have become more advanced. The **attitude** behind fraud generally comprises two aspects. Firstly, the conclusion that the gain (incentive) outweighs the possibility to be detected



123rfLimited@manczurov

(opportunity), and secondly, a moral justification. "Everyone is doing it!" or "I have to make a living somehow" are claims we often hear from perpetrators in this context.

Recipe and antidote

Once we have all three main ingredients together, the question remains how organic fraud is ultimately committed. Besides falsifying certification documents, Gerald provides another example: "Imagine there is a farm-

er who has 3.000 hectares of organic soy production. He has three organic certificates: one for the United States, one for the EU, and one for China. All certificates have been issued by accredited certification bodies – but luckily, these don't know of each other. So, the farmer can sell three times of what he has actually grown – all with a valid certificate!". Understanding the ingredients for fraud in the organic sector is crucial to fight it. Incentives will persist as long as conventional producers don't have to pay the "true costs" for their economic activities (e.g., the costs for the loss of biodiversity through intense use of pesticides) and as long as the costs for audits and certifications continue to increase rather than decrease. The responsibility for reducing opportunity clearly lies with our organic regulators, who above all, must encourage digitalisation and facilitate access to supply chain data within the organic sector. The most difficult part, however, will remain to change the attitude behind organic fraud. ■



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ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

Lisa Haller, Miguel de Porras & Judit Feher,
Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, FiBL | www.fibl.org

ALL-Ready-Boosting agroecology transition in the European Union

The scientific community agrees that the current agricultural systems are facing multiple environmental challenges. A transformative process is crucial on different levels (scientific, economic, social, political), while supporting innovative systems that protect and enhance natural resources to ensure food security. Agroecology is an approach that has the capability to strengthen the resilience of farming systems, also referred to by the European Green Deal, Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies as one of the sustainable practices to be promoted and scaled-up. Nevertheless, organic farming has always been at the forefront of this transformative process and should be considered as the vanguard of agroecology transition.

Still, the question is, how can this transformation be further main-

streamed in a way to ensure the achievement of the sustainability goals set by the EU. That is where Living Labs can play an important role, since they are initiatives with experimentations performed in a real-life context, taking science into the fields. Farmers and other value chain actors, including consumers, are not only users any more, they are involved in the whole process, from proposing ideas, designing experimental solutions, as well as improving and promoting them further.

Acknowledging the added value of the Living Lab approach, the European Commission has proposed a partnership, "Accelerating farming systems transition: agroecology living labs and research infrastructures" to provide funding and support for a network of Living Labs and Research Infrastructures that will accelerate the transition towards agroecology throughout Europe, with the help of long-term, site-specific, multi-stakeholder and real-life experimentations. To support this ambitious partnership, the EU is currently funding several projects, one of them being ALL-Ready, "The European Agroecology Living Lab and Research Infrastructure Network: Preparation phase".

To achieve this objective, ALL-Ready is preparing the framework for a future European Network of Living



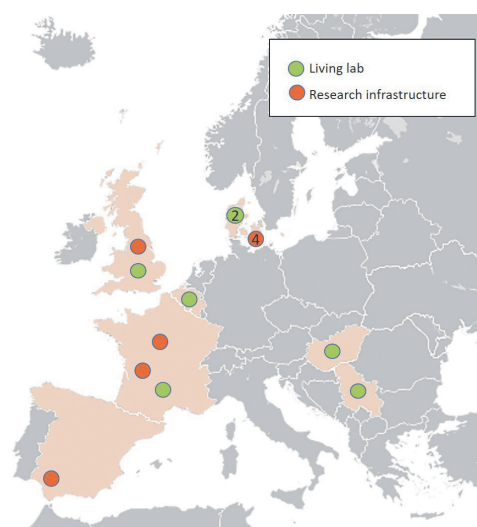
Courtesy of FiBL

Labs and Research Infrastructures. The project is bringing together all stakeholders (farmers, consumers, researchers, policy makers) across Europe, to collect the knowledge and tools that are necessary for implementing a partnership, which has the capacity to support and trigger agroecology transition.

During the preparation phase, ALL-Ready is working with a pilot network of Living Labs and Research Infrastructures, launched in December 2021, which is serving as a test-bed to experiment and give feedback on the tools and recommendations (funding, governance, capacity building, etc.) developed in the frame of the project. Organic farming initiatives are key partners of this pilot network and the ALL-Ready consortium, providing an

essential contribution through vast experience of the practical application of agroecology principles.

The ALL-Ready consortium also applies the concept of agroecology beyond food systems to society as a whole. In such a systems approach, everyone in the farming system (farmers, farm advisors, suppliers) or related to its context (policy makers, agricultural knowledge and innovation system and value chain actors, etc.) should be engaged, if we want to achieve a substantial transformation that can restore our broken food system. To make this transition happen, scientists, farmers, business actors, policy-makers and consumers need to work together in a co-creative process, towards which the organic sector has already paved the way. ■



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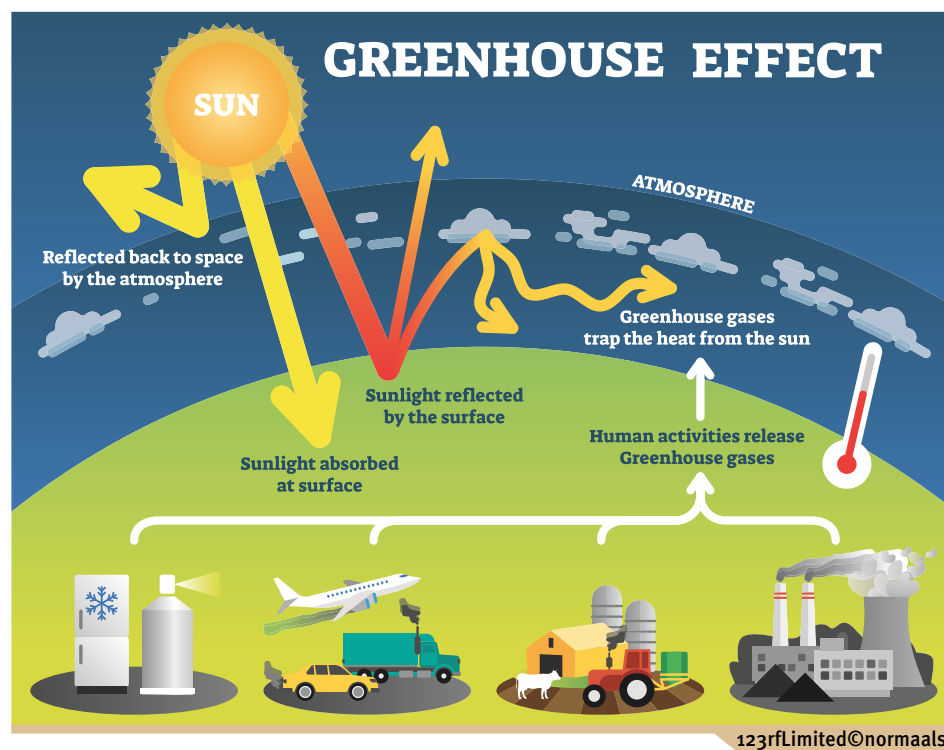
CLIMATE

www.opta-eu.org

OPTA launches Manifesto for Organic Climate Action

Year by year the effects of climate change become more and more manifest to all of us. In scientific studies, our time is called 'the sixth mass extinction event'; the first of such events caused by humankind itself, strongly related to our unsustainable way of living, which began with the industrial revolution. And still, awareness and the will to change are very low. So, how do we find a way out? And what can organic food and agriculture contribute?

Recently, the Organic Processing and Trade Association Europe (OPTA) launched a Manifesto for Organic Climate Action. A step that was driven forward by some individual members, like Ronald van Marlen (NaNa Bio). When the new working group on "climate" was launched by members in spring 2021, it was voted a top priority. A Climate Working Group was formed and within half a year the Manifesto and a number of actions were agreed on in the OPTA GA of November 2021. The first step



in the Manifesto is to affirm scientific findings as the basis for all actions: Yes, we are heading for a huge rise in global temperatures – of between 1,5 and 6 degrees in just decades.

OPTA members decided to focus on what we as the organic sector can contribute, with the attitude that organic helps, but will not be enough at the end. First of all, according to a recent article in Nature Food, the total share of the agricultural and food chain in GHG emissions is calculated as 34%, one third of all emissions. In several sectors, like energy, the transition has started. But food and agriculture are lagging far behind. It is the ambition of the organic sector to speed up transition to agroecological and regenerative organic agriculture that cuts GHG emissions and contributes to climate protection goals by the multifunctional environmental performance concept of the organic food and farming system approach. And yes, production, distribution and consumption of food from organic agriculture is a feasible action that we all can take, from farmer to consumer, to lower the pressure on climate change and secure a healthy food supply. A comparison study by Peiper et al showed that the external climate costs of organic production, compared to conventional, can be up to 50% less. And, importantly, as scientific papers show, organic consumers have a more healthy and sustainable consumption style.

Organic provides more resilience based on biodiversity, a sound balance between animal and plant production, a natural circularity that works with the environment and is legally certified and controlled according to the EU regulation that prohibits cherry-picking greenwashing. Additionally, organic cuts chemi-

OPTA Europe Workshops

• **Thursday 28-07 10:15-11:15h:** Implementation residue handling of the new regulation. **Moderator:** Aurora Abad (OPTA Europe). **Speakers:** Juan Carlos Pérez (EOCC), Jochen Neuendorff (Anti Fraud Initiative-AFI), Alex Beck (AÖL)

• **Thursday 28-07 13:15 -14:15h:** Organic company strategies for Climate action. **Moderator:** Aurora Abad (OPTA Europe). **Speakers:** Ronald van Marlen (Nana Bio), Megan Debates (US Organic Trade Association), Tobias Bandel (Soil&More Impacts)

Place: Room St. Petersburg, BIOFACH, Neurenberg Messe

cal drivers of climate change, improves biodiversity and soil fertility with positive impacts on CO₂ uptake from the air, and leads to a more balanced diet between plant and animal production.

But more will be needed, like dietary transformation, reduction of energy and water use, transition to more regional and local food distribution, transition to green energy use and reduction of damaging packaging. The three central underlying concepts of sustainability are "sufficiency", "circularity" and "efficiency". A real challenge for all of industry and societies. Therefore, OPTA will create a platform on its website to show the best practice of its members, illustrating initiatives to improve and reduce their climate footprint. Furthermore, OPTA will start a library of scientific publications with the clear aim to raise awareness about the impact of agriculture, food and consumption patterns on our climate and on the wider environment. And, of course, we need the whole organic sector and its representatives to take up this vital task together. Therefore, we welcome the BIOFACH theme of 2022 and will contribute with two workshops. ■

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Markus Arbenz,
Carbon Standards International of the Easy-Cert Group

CLIMATE

Organics and climate change

COP 26 in Glasgow clearly showed that the world is not on track to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. Nevertheless, natural disasters, people's awareness and civil society pressure make climate change inarguably one of the top global issues. Pressure will increase. Many countries are planning now for a future exit of the fossil-fuel based economy and for climate neutral societies by 2050.

And the organic movement?

We know that our food system is simultaneously a cause and victim of climate change. We also know that farming systems and agriculture policy do matter. Hence, it is not a surprise that the organic movement pays a lot of attention to climate change. However, a review of the discussion shows that, as usual, the organic movement highlight the benefits of organic systems (e.g. reduction of N2O emissions or soil carbon storage) while adversaries criticise low organic yields and increased need for land. This is the standard way of comparing organic and conventional farming, as advocates and critics attempt to influence consumers and policy makers.

Will that work to cool the planet?

Reaching climate neutrality will be a challenge, whatever farming systems are used. However, organic is



Flickr / Francis Mckee. Cop 26 Glasgow October 2021

well positioned to be the frontrunner in developing the future of agriculture and food systems. Why, and how?

- The Organic 3.0 feature “a culture of innovation” provides the basis to develop the transition to climate neutral food production. Farm assessment tools and improvement programs are more and more developed. Organic institutions are well advised to encourage their farmers to be the first ones to work towards positive climate balances on their operations. That will require even more to work with nature-based farming systems and through ecological intensification.
- Consumers trust organic more and more and they link organic with health and environment-friendly production. The next step, to make organic climate positive, is a logical one. Organic marketers should

use that opportunity by optimizing their supply chains and by communicating their climate change improvements. Consumers will care more and more and consider climate criteria in their purchase decisions.

- Reductions of greenhouse gas emissions and offsetting the balance is still the predominant strategy in the private sector. Pressure on the private sector to improve the climate balance is increasing, and so is demand for offsetting. The prices for certificates is increasing rapidly, creating an opportunity for those that can offer C-reduction.
- Reducing will not be enough. Removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere becomes an essential aspect of efforts to limit climate change. Removal can be done geologically, technically and through

plants and vegetation. The latter – by far the most important strategy – is particularly relevant for farmers who have land, and the skills, to maximize photosynthesis.

- On top of fixation of CO2 from the atmosphere in plants, there is a need to conserve the fixed carbon for a long time in a sink. Carbon can be stored in a growing biomass of vegetation (e.g. in growing agroforestry systems), by increasing organic matter in the soil (increasing humus content) or in technical applications (e.g. wood constructions).
- Biochar – produced through pyrolysis of organic matter – is a method to store carbon for a long duration. Biochar has also many technical and agriculture applications including soil fertility improvements. Biochar is an underused opportunity.

Even though COP 26 in Glasgow was labelled a failure, societies, economies and governments must move forward, and they do. Organic agriculture has the potential to showcase climate neutral production and even offer climate services to the economy and society. Organic institutions (e.g. research or farmer associations) and start-ups from the organic movement, such as *Carbon Standards International* with its *European Biochar Certificate* can build the institutional framework, provide the essential services to farmers and leverage impact. ■



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ORGANIC COSMETICS

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2022: Natural and Organic Trends and Outlook

Beauty trends, cosmetics, and ingredients are constantly evolving. Despite a steady increase in consumer interest in the megatrends “natural” and “sustainable”, the impact of the pandemic over the past two years has only accelerated consumer demand. Yet, in 2022, the reactivity of companies to newly emerging trends will be equalled by the need to collaborate as the regulatory landscape changes.

Sustainable Innovation

Outside the health-focused themes raised due to the pandemic, where we saw a surge in demand for natural personal hygiene products such as soaps and hydroalcoholic gels, there remains an underlying need for decisive action when it comes to the escalating climate emergency and its long-term impact, which has only crystallized in consumers' consciousness through their increased demand for ethical and environmentally friendly products. In 2022, a further wave of sustainability-focused innovation across



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the supplier chain is expected to take root. This can mean everything from more waterless products, to greener methods for raw material extraction and production, to eco-designed products, to reducing waste via upcycling, to greater use of ingredients with positive social and reduced environmental impact, to reduction or removal of packaging and investment in reuse and refill schemes.

Consumer Focus

Consumers have reacted accordingly, and we've witnessed a boom for such products as solid and powder cosmetics – especially deodorants and soaps – with some stores' sales reported to have reached a growth of 422%. The established consumer trends to choose natural and avoid plastic where possible have been met with a new

emphasis on multifunctional products – like a combined shampoo and soap. In addition, as the understanding of pre-, pro- and post-biotic ingredients increases, we can expect the steady rise in ingredients and products claiming to benefit the skin's microbiome (the various microorganisms that live on our skin) to continue.

Outside the scope of cosmetic ingredients and packaging, we've seen a rise in the inclusivity influencing the industry and its outlook. Consequently, manufacturers are taking notice and adjusting their product ranges accordingly; for instance, by creating gender-neutral products for various skin types and ages.

Expanding digitalisation

Given nearly all consumers were affected by lockdowns, 2020-2021 saw a notable acceleration in the growth of sales from e-commerce; both due to necessity and convenience. 2022 will only continue this trend, and besides



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purchases, ever more digitalisation will impact complementary habits as consumers also look to obtain product information, use more apps or seek tips from influencers either before, after, or during the point of sale.

Regulation Revision

Following publication of the Green Deal and the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability (CSS), in late 2021 the EU Commission launched a targeted revision of the EU Cosmetics Regulation (CPR). The CSS's objectives are to better protect citizens and the environment against hazardous chemicals and encourage innovation for the development of safe and sustainable alternatives. The CPR revision focused upon five key aspects: (1) an extension of a generic approach to risk management and only allowing substances when essential to society; (2) account for combination effects from simultaneous exposure to chemicals from various sources; (3) a revision of the nanomaterial definition; (4) changes to how information is provided (including digital labelling); (5) reattribution

of scientific and technical work from SCCS to EU agency (e.g., ECHA).

A Commission proposal is expected in Q4 of 2022; yet, adoption of legislation is not expected before 2023-2024.

Ingredient risk

In mid-2021 two initiatives aimed at revising REACH and CLP emerged with legislative proposals expected from Q2 2022 onwards.

Earlier in 2021, ECHA and the EU Commission presented drafts focusing on a generic approach to risk assessment, potentially opening the door to blanket restrictions or bans on substances or mixtures containing a constituent that is classified as a hazardous material. Since significant changes to REACH and CLP are unavoidable for downstream users, and because natural complex mixtures (NCSs), like essential oils, are fundamental to the identity of the sector, it remains essential for natural cosmetic formulators to access a wide palette of NCSs. However, the risk of inappro-

priate regulation could, in effect, endanger both natural cosmetic authenticity and the diversity consumers have come to expect.

Following the 2021 EFSA Opinion, which concluded that E171 (titanium dioxide) was no longer considered safe as a food additive, in 2022 titanium dioxide, which is safe for cosmetics use by law, is expected to receive a further independent risk assessment by the SCCS.

Claims substantiation

The EU Commission is expected to release a package of horizontal proposals reworking policy as part of the Green Deal and EU consumer law revision. These 2022 proposals centre on three areas: sustainable products, environmental claims substantiation, and expanding consumer empowerment in the face of greenwashing. In tandem with these we can expect an update to the Unfair Com-



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mercial Practices Directive guidance document on environmental claims.

NATRUE's commitment

To ensure appropriate and proportionate regulation for the natural sector, into 2022 and beyond, NATRUE will continue its mission and work closely with the sector to provide input to the revisions of REACH, CLP, and CPR, contribute to the protection of safe, natural ingredients, and advocate for better regulation for claims to combat greenwashing. ■

ORGANIC COSMETICS

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INTERVIEW



Stefan Hipp is managing partner of the organic baby food producer **HIPP**, that has production sites in five European countries and sells its organic products all across the European Union. Having studied agronomy, Stefan Hipp is an active organic farmer, and follows in the footsteps of his grandfather, Georg Hipp, who founded the company in 1932, and his father Claus Hipp. In order to strengthen the voice of organic trading and processing companies in the EU, Stefan Hipp has served as President of the Organic Processing and Trade Association (OPTA EU) since 2020.

In your opinion, what are the main challenges for the European organic sector?

There are certainly more than one, but to reach 25% organic in 2030 is the main challenge. Everybody understands the positive contribution of organic food and agriculture to common needs, like climate, soil fertility, biodiversity and health. But it is less well understood that organic has much lower negative externalities than conventional, but has to compete with its low prices.

Stefan Hipp: “To reach 25% organic in 2030 is the main challenge”

How can the organic processing and trading industry play a leading role in the transformation of food and farming?

We should show the inclusiveness of organic production, how it takes care of sustainability, health and fairness and brings more and more benefits. Because consumers understand that we can't proceed as we have done for the past 70 years. We have to act now to stabilize climate change for the next generations. As organic processing, trade and retail we can connect production and market demand and inspire the conventional sector to change their model.

Which EU policy tools would be most useful in order to boost organic market growth?

When the European Parliament adopted its report on the F2F strategy, it took note of the Commission's proposal for a directive on VAT rates that envisages the use of indirect taxation to encourage the consumption of sustainable and healthy food products. The Parliament further recommended to the Member States that they make use of existing tools in this regard, such as reduced VAT rates and green public procurement. This would be a short cut to stimulate inclusive organic production. Furthermore, investment in consum-

er awareness by mass media of organic as the standard in public canteens would boost organic as well. The combination of these three instruments would accelerate organic directly.

In which areas is OPTA currently focusing its work on?

On the practical level, we put a lot of effort in making the implementation of the new regulation as smooth as possible for organic processing, trade and retail. Some important topics in that perspective are the new import procedure, the risk-based approach with regard to residue findings, and some aspects of packaging in relation to retail certification. Furthermore, important parallel regulation has our attention, like nutrition and sustainability labelling. Finally, we have developed our Manifesto for Organic Climate Action, to stimulate and share the best practices of our members and share data on climate change.

It's time for Member States to act on the EU Farm to Fork strategy?

Yes, national governments adopted the F2F strategy and the action to develop their national action plans. That is important, because the success of organic is strongly dependent on the national response. With our growing network we are able to exchange best practices that member

companies and national associations can use for their political dialogue.

True cost accounting: how can we achieve it?

The models we have to differentiate costs for ecological and social externalities in agriculture and food production are getting more and more sophisticated. We are ready to show price-differences on the shelves. What we need now are innovative governments that are willing to take up the instrument for a set of selected impacts, like climate, biodiversity, soil and health and combine this with a zero tax for organic. In the meantime, organic entrepreneurs will continue to show the added value of true cost accounting and pricing.

Is OPTA open to new members? How can they join the association?

Of course, we are open for organic trading and processing companies that want to raise the sector's voice in Brussels and that want to benefit from the broad knowledge of the association and its members. In spring 2022, we will transfer our association to Brussels to be even closer to European institutions. Companies that are interested in our network or that need support in implementing the new organic regulation are more than welcome to send an email to info@opta-eu.org. ■



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