



IFOAM Agribiomediterraneo Newsletter



Dear IFOAM ABM members,
friends and affiliates,

organic agriculture is growing
day by day, not only in terms of
numbers.

The organic footprint daily improves and ameliorates the status of the existing living model. Young farmers, organic stakeholders, scientists and researchers redefine initiatives with an innovative, viable, social and sustainable profile.

Many challenges appear which could be an attractive opportunity for rural development within modern societies.

The protection of the environment, the rational use of natural resources, the environmental friendly attitude of all, the fair priorities, the viability and the need to restart and adopt different behaviors crown organic agriculture as one of the most important tools to achieve such targets.

A sustainable lifestyle is a need based on the holistic approach of living, working, relaxing, collaborating, contributing and farming!

Let's follow the motto: Organic for all, organic for wellbeing, organic for achieving sustainability!

Dr. Charikleia Minotou
President of IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo

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THE 8TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF IFOAM AGRIBIOMEDITERRANEO & LIVE STREAMING WORKSHOP ON ORGANIC 3.0

Contribution by Charikleia Minotou, IFOAM ABM President

The 8th General Assembly (GA) of IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo (IFOAM ABM) will be held on 19 October 2017 in Greece and can be attended through internet or in-person participation.

During the General Assembly, the Regional Board will present and report IFOAM ABM's activities and initiatives, as well as the actions of the Permanent Secretariat, for the period of 2014-2017. Afterwards, election of the following bodies will take place:

1. **8th Regional Board (RB)**, which will be comprised of seven persons, three members of the Executive Board (the president and two vice-presidents) and four coordinators, one for each of the working groups (marketing, training, standards & certification and research & development);
2. IFOAM ABM **Permanent Secretariat (PS)**.

During the GA, motions will be discussed and potentially adopted.

All IFOAM ABM's members with voting rights are entitled to participate or be represented by proxy votes to the GA.

With regards to the elections of the 8th IFOAM ABM Regional Board, we kindly remind all members who are willing to apply or to nominate candidates for the period 2017-2020, to send their written application including:

- For the Regional Board: (1) a brief CV, (2) a proposed action plan and (3) a letter of support from their organization or recommendation from an IFOAM ABM Board Member.
- For the four group coordinators: (1) a brief CV, (2) a proposed action plan and (3) a letter of support from their organization or recommendation from an IFOAM ABM Board Member.
- Regarding the elections of the Permanent Secretariat (PS), all IFOAM ABM's members can nominate their organization or propose the application of a trustful organization or synergy of organizations. The proposals for PS should include stating personnel, premises, equipment and funds allocated to the regular work of IFOAM ABM as well as the availability to cover the expenses of at least one ABM Board meeting/year, as described in the Legal Status of ABM.

Applications shall be sent to ifoam.agribiomediterraneo.2017@gmail.com by **15 September 2017 at the latest**. The email must explicitly indicate for

which category (regional board, coordinating group, permanent secretariat) the candidature is sent and include the email subject "Candidature for IFOAM ABM, 2017".

Motions must be sent to ifoam.agribiomediterraneo.2017@gmail.com by **15 September 2017** as well.

IMPORTANT: According to the IFOAM ABM Statute, the GA is only valid if one third of all members are present. If your participation is not possible, you are kindly suggested to authorize another IFOAM ABM member to vote for you by proxy vote. Votes by written proxy are permitted and are restricted to a total of 5 votes per person. A specific communication by email to the updated list of the IFOAM ABM's members will follow in order to ensure transparency as well as to inform and give access.

Workshop on "Organic 3.0: an innovative and holistic approach offering new challenges and opportunities for the Mediterranean and the World"

A workshop entitled "**Organic 3.0: an innovative and holistic approach offering new challenges and opportunities for the Mediterranean and the World**" will take place on 19 October 2017. It will be held in Greece and will be available worldwide through live streaming. The aim is to present Organic 3.0 and its meaning for the Mediterranean countries and the World.

Organic 3.0 offers a more holistic approach for organic agriculture and its interactions on various levels with the environmental, social and ecological spheres.

Is Organic 3.0 a vision? Is it a strategy? Is it an emerging need? Or is it the upcoming reality?

IFOAM ABM will issue and send a certificate of attendance to all the participants.

Additional details about the registration will be sent to all IFOAM ABM members for their information and for further dissemination.

For more insights about Organic 3.0 please visit <https://www.ifoam.bio/en/organic-policy-guarantee/organic-30-next-phase-organic-development>

IFOAM'S ORGANIC WORLD CONGRESS 2017 COMING UP SOON

Every three years, the organic sector comes together at the Organic World Congress (OWC), the world's largest and most significant organic gathering, to discuss and deliberate issues of the day.

The OWC is a unique opportunity to share experiences, innovations and knowledge about organics and also to take part in the General Assembly, visit side-events as well as an organic exhibition, while giving the organizing country global visibility. This year India, home to over 600,000 organic farmers, will host the 19th OWC in New Delhi, India.

The 19th OWC in India

India won the bid to host the 19th Organic World Congress of IFOAM - Organics International at a very critical time in its agricultural history. The organic food movement has grown four times in the last three years. The OWC will no doubt play a critical and unprecedented role in supporting the Indian organic farming movement and tilting India's agriculture policy firmly and irrevocably in the direction of organic.

At the same time, it will enable solidarity among organic farmers and organic farming associations across continents, supporting the efforts of the Intercontinental Network of

Organic Farming Organisations (INOFO). For these reasons, the theme of the 19th OWC is 'An Organic World through an Organic India.'

Conference Tracks

The Organic World Congress 2017 will have four parallel conference tracks:

1. Main Track - Organized by IFOAM – Organics International
2. Farmers' Track - Organized by OFAI
3. Scientific Track - Organized by ISOFAR, TIPI and NCOF
4. Marketing Track - Organized by APEDA

Each track has its own objectives and criteria, and you can find more information on each individual track on the official OWC website: <https://owc.ifoam.bio/2017>

Why Join the Organic World Congress?

The Organic World Congress attracts international attention and offers a global platform for exchange. It benefits a number of different organic stakeholders, including the local and global organic movements, farmers, governments, international development agencies, policy-makers, researchers and scientists, and trade.

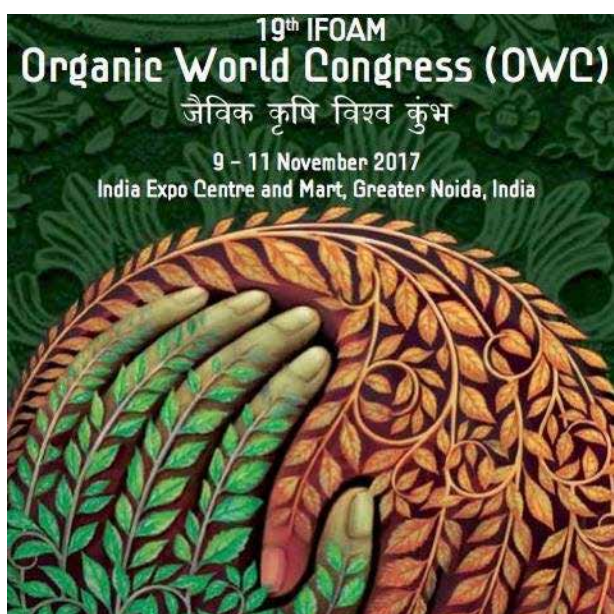
Benefits for India's Organic Movement

- Biggest sharing of organic farming practices in the world.
- Access to the world of organic farming beyond India's borders.
- Opportunity to showcase the best Indian organic farming practices to the world organic farming community.

Benefits for the World Community of Organic Farmers

- A world class event, expected to rally a record number of organic farmers
- Special emphasis on the participation of organic farmers from Asia, Africa, and South America.
- Free stall space to all organic farming associations.
- In-depth exposure to organic farming in India.

Benefits for Governments, International Development Agencies, and Policy-Makers



- Ready access to global thinking, research and practice on organic farming policies.
- Ready access to work being done by governments worldwide to convert agriculture to organic methods.
- Identification of areas where governments can start funding changes to strengthen organic agriculture.
- Vision planning for converting entire country's agriculture to organic.
- Up-to-date data through IFOAM - Organics International on organic farming worldwide, including latest growth data.

Benefits for Researchers and Scientists

- Researchers will have opportunities to share their work on organic agriculture and access instant peer review of papers.
- Discussions will provide new thrust areas.
- Scientists will attempt to relate organic farming to sustainability and climate change issues. TIPI and ISOFAR will oversee scientific discussions.
- Exposure to seed conservation work carried out within official and non-official seed agencies and networks, especially in the area of open pollinated seeds.

Benefits for Organic Trade

- The trade fair is being organised to enable large, worldwide participation of all sectors of the organic trade (including government departments) in the pavilions. A huge number of traders and agencies from India will be participating.
- One track in the Congress is being dedicated to marketing issues.
- B2B meetings will be facilitated.

To find out more about the 19th Organic World Congress, visit <https://owc.ifoam.bio/2017>



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19TH ORGANIC WORLD CONGRESS

जैविक कृषि विश्व कुंभ

9 - 11 November 2017 | New Delhi, India

Registration open!

for more information please visit: owc.ifoam.bio

EXPO'S ORGANIC ACTION NETWORK STARTS ANEW AS ORGANIC ACTION NETWORK ITALIA

Contribution by Ilaria Barbonetti, Organic Action Network Italia

The “Organic Can Feed The Planet” Action Network was started in May 2015 with the aim of bringing organic and its topics into the framework of the Universal Exposition in Milan.

Promoted by the main Italian organic organizations (AIAB, ANABIO-CIA, the Association for Biodynamic Agriculture, Città del Bio, the Federation for organic and biodynamic produce and FederBio) and supported by Bologna Fiere and ITA – the Italian Trade Agency, during the 6 months of EXPO the “Organic Can Feed the Planet” Action Network has been representing the organic world in a united way and has made clear that a different kind of agriculture is not only desirable, but also possible!

The Action Network was sponsored by IFOAM – Organics International, IFOAM EU, IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo, GRAB-It and ISOFAR as well as supported by Navdanya International, whose President Vandana Shiva participated to the opening event of the Action Network on May 16, 2015 in EXPO.

The legacy of the Organic Action Network in EXPO was the Charter **“Organic Can Feed the Planet – Towards sustainable consumption and production”**, a manifesto written by the scientific commission of the working group which stresses out the benefits of a wider adoption of this production method.

The Organic Charter, supported by various prominent personalities such as the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Olivier de Schutter, the winner of the World Food Prize Hans R. Herren and the scientist and activist Vandana Shiva, has been handed over to the Italian Vice Minister for Agriculture Andrea Olivero on September 29th, 2015, during the “zero edition” of the **Festa del Bio** (the “Organic Festival”), a celebration day for the whole sector.

Little more than a year from the end of EXPO, thanks to the joint efforts of FederBio and ICE (the Italian Trade Agency), the project starts anew with the name “Organic Action Network Italia” (OANI) and aims at becoming the point of reference for the Italian organic sector: a coordination group between the Italian and the international realities, with the purpose of promoting the excellence of the national organic food production across borders as well as contribute to and have a say in the political decisions taken in Bruxelles.

The Steering Committee of the OANI is, as of now, composed by representatives of the following organizations (in alphabetical order): ANABIO – CIA, Assobio, Associazione Biodinamica, Bioland Südtirol, BolognaFiere, Federbio, FieraMilano, Grab-IT, IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo, IFOAM EU Council, IFOAM Organics International, ISOFAR, Tavolo associazioni Bio e Ambientaliste.

The activities of the Organic Action Network are managed by its coordinator Matteo Bartolini (Deputy President of FederBio, former President of the European Council of Young Farmers and of the European Commission Advisory Group on the CAP reform) and by Ilaria Barbonetti, acting as organizational secretariat.

The work of the OANI can be followed by subscribing to the [newsletter](#) as well as by visiting the website www.organicactionnetwork.bio or the social pages ([Facebook](#); [Twitter](#)) and the [youtube channel](#) of the project.



SANA KEEPS ON GROWING

From Friday 8th to Monday 11th September 2017 SANA, the Italian fair that is a reference point for the world of natural and organic produce is set to return. This coming edition will include many new developments, from a larger layout to a number of new initiatives, while events that have become mainstays of the SANA fair, such as SANA Novità, SANA Academy, SANA Shop and the VeganFest, have all been confirmed.

The 2016 edition of SANA saw visitor numbers reach 47,221, with 833 companies in 50,000m2 of exhibition space, over 60 events and workshops (involving 4,800 participants) and 2,300 meetings with buyers from 27 different countries. These figures demonstrate the impressive growth of the sector that is showing no sign of slowing down. SANA has continued to grow too; for years now the fair has been the reference exhibition platform for operators and enthusiasts of natural and organic products in all of their many forms.

One new feature worth noting this year is the new larger and more functional layout. In addition to Pavilions 25 and 26, which are reserved for the sector of Organic Food, a further two pavilions (21 and 22) will house the section Natural and Organic Body Care, a part of the event that is growing notably in terms of the number of companies present. Pavilion 16, with its own entrance (North entrance), will be dedicated to Green Lifestyle, with proposals for every aspect of a natural and organic life, from the home to clothing, gardening to pet care, free time to travel. The Green Lifestyle section will be upgraded and reorganized in order to correspond to consumers' growing interest in green and organic issues and how these can be integrated into every sphere of daily life.

The 5 pavilions, located on the ground floor, will be connected by walkways and made easily accessible from the Bologna exhibition Centre's North and West entrances.

In addition to the significant new developments many leading businesses from the sector that attended in 2016 have confirmed that they will be present once again in 2017. Already a large number of companies with a history of attending the event have confirmed their participation this year alongside those participating at SANA for the very first time.

Two appointments not to be missed, both taking place in Pavilion 16, are SANA Shop, where visitors will be able to test and purchase the products on display, and VeganFest, the most important vegan initiative on a national level, organized in collaboration with VEGANOK.

SANA Novità, the showcase inside the Service Centre, will be a key attraction for visitors who will be able to discover new products and the latest evolutions of existing products presented by companies at the fair. Once again visitors will be able to vote for their favourite products.

SANA City also returns with the numerous initiatives involving the city of Bologna and the direct participation of restaurants, bars and local businesses.



SANA 2017 – the new layout

A calendar rich in B2B appointments, numerous workshops and seminars, including those of the SANA Academy, and opportunities to meet with international calibre buyers, producers and professionals from the sector; this all contributes to making SANA the ideal terrain on which to cultivate opportunities for development and networking that can emerge from the scenario of organic and natural products, a sector which is experiencing continuous expansion.



Website

www.sana.it

Social Channels

Facebook.com/sanabologna

Twitter.com/sanafiera

Youtube.com/BolognaFiere

Instagram/Sana_fiera

BE PART OF SANA WITH BIOL

Don't miss the chance to participate at the Italian leading international trade show for organic and natural products! SANA is both a marketplace and a networking venue and it provides a unique opportunity to present new products and learn about the latest market trends.

BIOLITALIA – the association for the Improvement of Organic Products – has the objective of improving the quality of organic products in terms of organoleptic, environmental and social aspects. Founded in 2010, BIOLITALIA supports organic producers in research, development, training, technical assistance and promotion. Producers of BIOLITALIA are committed to participating in the events of the BIOL network (BIOL, BIOLMIEL, BIOLWINE, BIOLFISH) in which products from various sectors are evaluated and given specific recognition by an international panel of experts, through analysis and tasting sessions.

BIOLITALIA will take part at SANA in Bologna with a collective area of almost 400 sqm, which includes a stand for co-exhibitors, show kitchen and events area.

If you are interested in joining us and showcase your products or your organization in this dedicated area, please contact us by writing to info@biolitalia.it!





IFOAM AGRIBIOMEDITERRANEO & THE ORGANIC ACTION NETWORK ITALIA PRESENT:

**ORGANIC 3.0:
STATE OF THE ART AND BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDIES
FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN**

September 11th 2017, 10 am - 1:30 pm
Notturmo Room

@ SANA 29th international exhibition of organic and natural products
Bologna (Italy)

Further details will be communicated soon.



THE ROLE OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE AS A LEADING HOLISTIC SYSTEM IN A WORLD OF GREEN-MOVEMENTS & ECO-AGRICULTURE PRACTICES

Contribution by Shirley Gazit, Ph.D. - The Israel Bio-Organic Agriculture Association (IBOAA)

Organic agriculture (OA) emerged in the 1920s as an alternative to the increasing intensification of the conventional agriculture, by the use of inorganic fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.

Organic farming operates without synthetic pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers and relies on organic inputs a source for fertilizers usually with a more diverse crop rotation. This approach is the basic for the crop- soil management that was developed alone side with the emergence of the OA, back in the 1920s. Pioneer research on soil organic matter and the importance of it as a foundation to soil microbial community showed the benefits of this underground ecosystem to crop growth and yields. In the 1920s, Rudolf Steiner outlined in Germany the principles of Biodynamic Agriculture (BA) - an early version of OA. The Biodynamic system has a strong metaphysical component in its practices, and is considered "organic- metaphysical".

Following Rudolf Steiner work, other publications in the 1940s (Howard 1940; Balfour 1943; Rodale 1945; Tate 1994) and the outstanding work of Charles Darwin on earthworms was foundational for OA farmers to understand organic matter dynamics in soils (Darwin 1945) (from the foreword by Howard). Also in the 1940s, Lord Northbourne in his book "Look to the Land" (Scofield 1986) used the term "Organic Farming" as a holistic concept, designing and managing the farm as an organic- whole system: integrating soil, crops, animals and society. This holistic approach is still the core of OA today (Lampkin & Padel 1994).

Meanwhile in Conventional Agriculture (CA), after World War I the infrastructure for the manufacture of explosives (Haber-Bosch: fixation of N) shifted to manufacturing synthetic (N). Synthetic (N) fixation enabled a 20-fold reduction in the volume and weight of fertilizer relative to manures, drastically reducing fertilizer transport and application costs per unit of N. Following that, organic C was decoupled from N and, along with the soil microbe community dependent on its energy! By doing so, Conventional Agriculture actually left out of the science of crop- soil fertility management for the next 50 years. The theory of Von Liebig about the chemical basis for plant nutrition: N, P and K as the top elements necessary for plant growth, was used nearly exclusively as the theoretical basis of soil fertility well into the 1990s and some may say until nowadays.

OA methods are more environmentally sound than intensive CA, which is dependent on the routine use of herbicides, pesticides and inorganic nutrient applications in the production of crops and animals. Recent research suggests that organic agriculture results in less leaching of nutrients and higher carbon storage (Drinkwater et al. 1995), less erosion and lower levels of pesticides in water systems (Kreuger, Peterson & Lundgren 1999; Mäder et al. 2002). Organic farming is reported to increase diversity in the agricultural landscape: carabid beetles (Kromp 1989; Pfinner & Niggli 1996), vascular plants (Hyvönen & Salonen 2002) and birds (Freemark & Kirk 2001). In a meta-analysis done in 2005 (Bengtsson, Ahnstrom & Weibull 2005), Organic agricultural found to usually increase species richness compared with conventional methods. In addition, Soil organisms were generally more abundant in organic agriculture systems, with significant positive effect on earthworms, microarthropods and fungi.

As for the claim about Organic agriculture not able to meet the global food supply needs, many research papers

published in recent years indicates the opposite. **Model estimates indicate that Organic Agriculture methods could produce enough food on a global per capita basis to sustain the current human population, and potentially an even larger population, without increasing the agricultural land base (Badgley et al. 2007).** A review and meta-analysis of yield data comparing organic and conventional agriculture showed that currently organic yields of individual crops are on average 80% of conventional yields at the field and crop level (De Ponti, Rijk & Ittersum 2012). The actual debate is the claim on one side that green-revolution methods such as: high-yielding plant and animal varieties, mechanized tillage, synthetic fertilizers and pesticides and even transgenic crops, are all essential in order to produce adequate food for the growing human population. Another side of the debate claims that green-revolution methods have incurred substantial direct and indirect costs and may represent a Faustian bargain. In addition, over the last 40 years with the doubling of the human population in the past, more than enough food has been produced to meet the caloric requirements for all of the world's people, **if food were distributed more equitably.** In my last article, I wrote about "Go Organic"- New frontiers in marketing organic produce: "Consumers see environmental consciousness as an important corporate priority along with good value, trustworthy, fairness and care. Many consumers prefer to spend more on green products, for the benefits they provide". Simply put, the handwriting is on the wall.

In Recent years, we are facing an era of "green consciousness" at the local and global community level. Green movements had spurred over the last decades: Eco- Agriculture, Agroecology, Sustainable Agriculture, Pharmaculture and Green Agriculture... are examples of movements traveling along side OA in a mutual journey. .

Although OA has been a strong foundation for those movements and some are reinventing the wheel, the big question is:

Why won't we all just "Go Organic"?

I believe there is a "Silent Battle" between green- movements on "Who will take the lead"...

OA has the strongest foundation, combined with the practice in field and crop level and a strong commitment to the community. **OA is an holistic system that relates to specified detailed set of rolls and standardizes practices all over the world, regulated by local authorities.** In the past 30 years, OA certifications ensured consumers of farmer's high quality performance and integrity. I believe that OA offers today the best practical option in an Eco- Agriculture practices. I say "Go Organic" on every chance I get: speaking to farmers, students of agricultural sciences, consumers and whom it may concern.

Still I accept researches and leading figures in Eco-/Agri- fields to take a thorough Look on the OA practices in order to advance in our mutual journey.

The handwriting is truly on the wall: **"Go Organic"!**

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Specializes in vegetable crops,
The Israel Bio-Organic Agriculture Association (IBOAA)

I MEDITERRANEAN WORKSHOP OF ORGANIC GARDENING, VALENCIA, 28-29 NOVEMBER 2016

Contribution by Karen Hoberg

Gardens, parks and green spaces in most of the cities are using pesticides and synthetic chemical fertilizers as nitrates that negatively impact the groundwater or herbicides as glyphosates that are harmful to human health and the environment. Also these spaces have a high consumption of water what is particularly serious when plants are used that need it in abundance in areas with water scarcity. Also in these spaces, the management of the organic waste of pruning and weeds are problematic, instead of being an opportunity of recycling.

Therefore, we have to think about changing the current concept of parks and urban gardens for another that contemplates the places of interaction of people, plants and animals, which are part of a green infrastructure. Its design and management must be done by sustainable and agroecological practices. This was the key messages from the 20 experts and researchers as well as more than 200 participants of the workshop organised by the Spanish Society for Agriculture (Sociedad Española de Agricultura Ecológica - SEAE) in collaboration with IFOAM Agribiomediterraneo.

The objective of this workshop was to learn about organic gardens and parks' experiences and techniques, to exchange forms for their design and management, and to propose recommendations to develop good practices and standards for organic gardening in the municipalities. There are already private voluntary standards for organic gardening developed by certification bodies, which apply to the management of green spaces, gardens and parks, public or private. This certification can be applied to any type of outdoor space, in which the natural elements are predominant and that fulfils a recreational or recreational purpose.

IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo participated in this event with the panel session "Situation and prospective in Mediterranean countries". Dražen Lušić from Croatia, vice-president of ABM, presented the situation of bee disappearing due to the uncontrolled use of pesticides in urban areas and Christos Karapanos offered examples of organic gardening initiatives in Greece as new challenges with new products and services.



Dražen Lušić, Victor Gonzalvez, Cristos Karapanos, Karen Hoberg, M. Dolores Raigon (president SEAE)

THE IV COURSE OF SICILIA INTEGRA, PATERNÒ (CATANIA) APRIL 3RD - MAY 5TH 2017

Contribution by Dr. Salvatore Timpanaro, Phd in Materials Science, University of Catania

The IV Sicilia Integra course on “Design for Sustainability and Organic Agro-Food Systems” that was held in Paternò (Catania, Italy) from 3rd of April to 5th of May 2017 was attended by 19 students, 10 migrants selected together with the Associazione I Girasoli and 9 unemployed sicilians with agricultural skills and experiences, and has been realized at ‘Masseria’ (Farm) San Marco. The Masseria has 16 hectares of citrus fruit, vegetables, olives and figs in organic farming, a platform for product transformation and logistics of 2,000 m2 and a 3 floor building. The theoretical lessons have been held at the building while the practical activities have been realized directly at Masseria.

The course has been constituted by a 5 week learning journey developed and conducted by Gaia Education in partnership with the University of Catania, the Association managing migrants welcome center I Girasoli, the Municipality of Paternò and the Association managing activities at former Station San Marco and has provided knowledge and practical skills on regenerative and organic farming techniques in the context of the three dimensions of sustainability– environment, society and economy, with culture as an underlying dimension. The 19 students, that received an attendance certificate, have new skills and competences useful to find job opportunities in the organic agriculture field (that every year in Sicily has a turnover increase of 20 %).

More info about the project can be found here:

<https://www.gaiameducation.org/index.php/en/project-based-learning/sicilia-integra/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/968968159807185/>



THE EUROPEAN ORGANIC FARMING CONTROL & CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

Contribution by Lizzie Melby Jespersen and Antonio Compagnoni.

The following contribution is made by Lizzie Melby Jespersen and Antonio Compagnoni resulting from their work within the EU research project “OrAqua”. The overall vision of “OrAqua” has been to facilitate economic growth of the organic aquaculture sector in Europe, supported by science-based regulations and in line with organic principles and consumer confidence.

Background

The first European regulation on organic farming The first European regulation on organic farming (Reg. n° 2092/91) was adopted in 1991. It provided a legal definition of organic farming, production rules for organic plant production and defined control and labelling requirements in order to protect consumers and organic farmers against misleading organic claims. In 1999 this regulation was amended by Regulation (EEC) No 1804/1999 setting up rules for livestock production and prohibition of GMO. In June 2004 the Commission launched the European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming [COM(2004)415 final], with which the Commission intended to assess the situation and lay down the basis for policy development, thereby providing an overall strategic vision for the contribution of organic farming to the Common Agricultural Policy. One of the recommendations in the action plan was to improve and reinforce the community’s organic farming standards, among other things by completing the standards for areas not yet covered, such as aquaculture. This led to the revision of the organic regulation and adoption of a new Council Regulation (EC) n° 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing regulation (EEC) n° 2092/91. In 2008 the Council regulation was supplemented by the Commission Regulations (EC) n° 889/2008 and n° 1235/2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council

Regulation (EC) n° 834/2007. Finally, in 2009 the organic aquaculture rules were introduced by the adoption of the Commission Regulation (EC) n° 710/2009 laying down detailed rules on organic aquaculture animal and seaweed production. The new organic aquaculture regulation came into force on January 2010.

With the Commission Decision of 3 June 2009 (2009/427/EC) the European Commission established an independent Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production (EGTOP) to assist the Commission by providing technical advice as regards evaluation of products, substances and techniques which can be used in organic production, improving existing rules or developing new production rules and enhancing exchange of experience and good practices in the field of organic production. The group delivers independent expert advice, based on mandates from the Commission which, in turn, are based on requests forwarded to the Commission by the Member States. Until now EGTOP has drafted reports based on three mandates on organic aquaculture http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/eu-policy/expert-advice/documents/final-reports_en. These have been dealing with the use of non-organic juveniles, permitted feed and feed additives (Aquaculture report A in 2013); stocking density, recirculation aquaculture systems, reproduction of shrimps, use of hormones, rules for production of juveniles and their feed, evaluation of substances for cleaning and disinfection (Aquaculture report B in 2014); dietary requirements of early life stages of shrimps and rules for production of zooplankton (Aquaculture report C in 2016).



The EU Member States are not allowed to apply stricter national regulation (specifically for the organic sector) than the rules set out in the EU organic regulation, but they are allowed to develop and apply national regulation in fields not (yet) covered by the EU organic regulation, e.g. processing, catering, climate change mitigation or social aspects, as long as such requirements do not violate general EU regulation within these areas. Private national or international organic standards can be applied in the EU Member States besides the EU organic regulation. The private standards are usually owned by organic producer organizations, (e.g. Bioland or Naturland in Germany, KRAV in Sweden, Soil Association in the UK or Demeter worldwide). As a minimum, the private organic standards shall fulfil the EU organic regulation but, contrary to the national regulations, the private standards may apply extra, as well as stricter rules than the EU organic regulation, also within fields that the EU organic regulation already covers. This means that organic aquaculture farmers may need to be certified not only according to the EU organic regulation but also to one or more private organic standards, depending on the market requirements.

Some private standards/logo owners (e.g. Naturland and Soil Association) maintain the final certification decision, and hereby the use of their logo, although they generally outsource the inspection to several accredited control bodies. The inspectors of the control bodies are trained by the private standards/logo owner concerning the extra requirements of the private standards to be controlled. Other private standards/logos owners (e.g. Krav and BioSuisse) delegate both inspection and certification to the accredited control bodies, maintaining just a sort of guidance over interpretation of the standards implementation.

For some years, most of the private organic standards owners and some private organic certifiers in Europe have been collaborating within the framework of LOA (Leading Organic Alliance), in partnership with IFOAM Organics International Best Practice Community, on establishing equivalence processes and developing common standards, especially in non-regulated areas, such as social responsibility, packaging etc. Current members of this initiative are: BioAustria (AU), BioForum (BE), Bioland (DE), BioSuisse (CH), Debio (NO), Ecovalia (ES), Eko (NL), Icea (IT), Krav (SE), Naturland (DE) and Soil Association (UK). As regards the aquaculture standards most of the European private standards and logo owners are now converging their standards towards the EU organic regulation (apart from Naturland).

It is worth to mention that the current status of the EU Organic Regulation is an ongoing process of review, which was started by the Commission in late 2011 with a proposal for a new organic regulation that, following the recently implemented Lisbon Treaty rules, needs to be agreed by the so-called Trilogue (Parliament, Council and Commission).

[This is just a preview. If you wish to read the full paper, you can [download it here.](#)]

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