



IFOAM Agribiomediterraneo Newsletter



Dear IFOAM ABM members,
friends and affiliates,

During 2016, the organic agriculture sector continues to provide its unique profile in the frame of sustainable development.

The Mediterranean area is an important region for the biodiversity, the ecosystems, the species and the varieties and is well known as a priority area for social, ethical and sustainable balance.

The opportunity and the challenge to promote different events, initiatives, programs and efforts always constitute a first concern for IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo.

The Mediterranean networking in the organic sector could be the base for the dissemination of knowledge and the holistic development of rural areas.

It is with this in mind that IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo wishes to warmly thank Vignola Municipality and SANA/ BolognaFiere: it is through their support that we are able to create this newsletter, organize the upcoming International Conference at SANA 2016 (see article at page 6) as well as to host in Vignola the next IFOAM ABM Board Meeting on September 9th.

Let's look at the organic way as an alternative to communicate the Mediterranean mentality!

Go organic, go Mediterranean, go smiling!

Charikleia Minotou
President of IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo

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IFOAM'S ORGANIC 3.0 AND THE HUMUS SOCIAL NETWORK

Agriculture is one of the leading factors in global issues of hunger, inequity, energy consumption, pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity and depletion of natural resources. And yet, the positive, multi-faceted environmental, social and economic benefits of a truly sustainable agriculture can contribute solutions to most of our world's major problems. If mainstream agriculture were to adopt more organic practices and principles, the need for Organic 2.0 would cease to exist. Until now, though, organic has not been included - or inclusive - enough to contribute these solutions on a global scale. The Organic 3.0 concept seeks to change this, by positioning organic as a modern, innovative system which puts the results and impacts of farming in the foreground.

The overall goal of Organic 3.0 is to enable a widespread uptake of truly sustainable farming systems and markets based on organic principles and imbued with a culture of innovation, of progressive improvement towards best practice, of transparent integrity, of inclusive collaboration, of holistic systems, and of true value pricing.

In Italy, a newly established Social Network, called Humus, is trying to walk this path to facilitate the transition from Organic 2.0 to Organic 3.0.

Many of Humus Social Network founding organizations are (see full list in the bottom) organic 1.0 pioneers organizations that never forgot their seventies and early eighties ambitious values for changing the world through organic agriculture.

In their Manifesto they state: "agriculture is a core activity, feeding directly over 2 billion people and having the fundamental task to ensure nutritional resources for the whole mankind, while at the same time taking care of most of the Earth's surface. In a country like Italy, these services are intertwined with a complex weave made of history, cultural traditions, landscape, typical foods and gastronomic specialties.. that make its agricultural practices unique and unrepeatable. Only with a sustainable and fair vision we will be able to safeguard these features. [...] This manifesto is promoted by various organizations, in different ways active in organic agriculture in Italy, in order for the principles of organic agriculture to be recognized as a point of reference for the whole agri-food system. The manifesto makes reference to the principles and values of organic agriculture that were established at the IFOAM General Assembly of Adelaide (Australia) in 2005, which are considered an integral part of it".

The Humus Social Network also makes explicit reference to two further tools: the FAO guidelines for the Sustainability

Assessment of Food and Agriculture systems (SAFA Guidelines 3.0, Rome 2013) and the "Charter of Fair Trade Principles", making it thus evident how, in their opinion, the topics of sustainability and fairness are deeply intertwined and should be addressed together.

The Humus founding members are:

- Cooperative "El Tamiso", Padova;
- Cooperative "La terra e il cielo", Piticchio di Arcevia (An);
- "Con.pro.bio Lucano", Metaponto (MT);
- "Rete utile buono e bio", Bari;
- Consortium "Puglia Natura", Andria (BA);
- Associazione Biol Italia, Bari;
- "Rete bio", Castelnovo di Sotto (RE);
- Associazione Agricoltura Biologica Calabria, Sant'Onofrio (VV);
- Advanced Research Center on Consumption and Communication, Bologna University;
- Producer organization "Carpe Naturam scrI", Corigliano Calabro (CS);
- Cooperative group GOEL gioiosa jonica (RC).

The full version of the Organic 3.0 booklet is available for download in [English](#) or in [Italian](#).

A summary is available in [Spanish](#) as well as in [Mandarin Chinese](#) and in [English](#).

To find out more about the Humus Action Network, please get in touch with Maurizio Agostino maurizioagostino67@virgilio.it.

Do you know of similar "3.0 initiatives" in your Country? Share the good stories by writing to secretariat@abm.ifoam.bio.



PHD RESEARCH PROJECT ON SUSTAINABLE ORGANIC PRODUCTION FOR FOOD SECURITY

Since the last months of 2015 the IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo permanent secretariat has been involved in a 3 years PhD research project (Ph.D. Courses-XXXI cycle Agriculture, Food and Environmental Science) at University of Catania, Italy, on “A sustainable organic production model for ‘Food Security’ in Abu Dhabi Emirate and Sicily”, carried out by the Emirati organic pioneer Khalid Butti Al Shamsi (Abu Dhabi Organic Farms).

Summary

The arid areas in the Middle East have been considered, as in the case of United Arab Emirates, among the sensitive regions to be affected by undernourished with the percentage of 85% of the imported food goods to meet the local need. The promotion of ‘national food security’, under extreme local environmental conditions with limited resources, has become one of the most important strategic interests in providing sustainable healthy food per capita in the State. In such a scenario, organic agriculture becomes the tool through which Countries can obtain food sovereignty. This PhD Research Project aims at contributing to the support of national Food security, in a climate change scenario, by developing an integrated organic production system based on biodiversity of food sources, soil fertility and water availability.

The research, that will be carried out both in the UAE and Sicily thanks to the scientific collaboration between the Abu Dhabi Development Foundation and the University of Catania, will allow to develop new models of sustainable cultivations through comparison between food production systems from developing activities in Sicily, as reference model for sustainable agriculture, and the UAE, where new and advanced technologies will be developed and applied.

The research will also contribute to the complex scientific process of applying the concept of sustainability and Food security in the particular situation of UAE and Sicilian region.

Expected results

The multidisciplinary approach research that will be developed during the PhD Course will allow to:

- develop new systems, processes, methods and practices of sustainable cultivation of horticulture and field crops, maximizing, where possible, integrated animal husbandry (poultry, goats, sheep, cows);

- develop and apply new and advanced practices and technologies, through comparison and sharing of information and know-how between food production models from developing activities in Sicily and the UAE;
- contribute to the complex scientific process of accessing and applying the concept of sustainability and food security, in the particular situation of UAE and Sicily. Beside applying the multi-faced sustainability approach of environmental, economic and social health, a specific emphasis will be given to:

1) understanding how sustainable the production of food for the local market is, what is needed and how to promote it, assessing its contribution to stable food supply;

2) understanding how the migrant workers are integrating in the context of the two Regions’ (UAE and Sicily) organic farming sectors, contributing to local economy, social integration and cultural cross-fertilization.

Executing bodies

Executing bodies of the research project will include:

- interdisciplinary group of scientific support including researchers from the Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi (UAE) and University of Catania (Italy) – Department of Agriculture, Food Science and Environment- with expertise in economics, local market development, agronomy, field crops, horticulture, soil science, pest and disease control, rural construction, irrigation and energy related aspects; beyond the participant PhD candidate Khalid Al Shamsi, two more PhD grants will be funded by the Abu Dhabi Development Foundation that can join the research activities starting from September 2016.
- representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with organic agriculture and sustainable development: FAO’s Climate and Environment Division, represented by Nadia El Hage Scialabba and GRAB-IT (Gruppo di Ricerca in Agricoltura Biologica), represented by Prof. Raffaele Zanolli;
- permanent secretariat of AgriBioMediterraneo, regional group of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), represented by Antonio Compagnoni.

DALMATIA - ORGANIC FOOD REGION

EKO FJERA AND THE EMERGING ORGANIC TREND IN CROATIA

Contribution by Jelena Petrov

The emerging trend of growing organic products has resulted in a new fair known as EkoFjera. Farmers are joining associations like Dalmacija Eko, offering a great source of information on green growers and their products.

Unpolluted, ideally structured soil and a growing interest from the younger generation in 'agri-entrepreneurship' during the last few years have contributed to the emergence of new organic growers on the Dalmatian coast. Abandoned regions of small picturesque islands and rural properties grow a variety of organic products based on indigenous Dalmatian varieties. Small family farms run their businesses, providing the market with a wide range of indigenous products faithfully made to the old, traditional recipes like hib - fig cake, varieties of jams etc. Each region, island and village treasures and cherishes old recipes, bringing a rich variety of specific flavours and aromas and thus enhancing each region with its distinctive original products. High quality olive oils, as well as wines represent a rich indigenous assortment of intense aromas specific to the sunny and dry conditions of the Mediterranean region. New vineyard locations like Komarna near Pelješac or Nadin area in the hinterland of Zadar oriented to organic wine growing, have created distinctive wines recognised outside Croatia. The olive, a backbone of Dalmatian agriculture, is also contributing to organic farming through the production of a wide range of award-winning, limited edition, extra virgin olive oils of premium taste and aroma.



A group of farmers decided to establish the Association of Organic Farmers of Dalmatia – EKO Dalmacija. Focusing on joint marketing, they have highlighted the importance of organic food to consumers and have created a platform for knowledge exchange. Since all four Dalmatian counties are strategically oriented towards the development of the food production sector based on sustainable practices, organic farming and indigenous species; this initiative enjoys great support from the public sector of Dalmatian counties. The

synergy brought about by the cooperation of growers, public sector, distributors of the organic food, caterers and hoteliers has resulted in the biggest fair of organic products in the Republic of Croatia: EkoFjera 2016. This will become an annual Split event in June. EkoFjera 2016 featured over 50 certified growers with more than 300 products – from fresh vegetables and fruits, a large number of indigenous extra virgin olive oils like oblica and levantinka, carob products, premium wine varieties -tribidrag and plavac mali, traditional fig cakes, goat cheeses, sage & heather honey to traditional herbs. Apart from the organic products fair, EkoFjera 2016 also included a rich educational programme, and featured Darko Rundek, an icon of the Croatian music industry, in concert.



A great number of producers also offer their products on-farm, opening up the possibility of visiting the organic farms. The city will feature a regular green market at a central city location. Organic production has a significant role to play in the preservation of agro-biodiversity, soil fertility, employment of youth and the production of nutritious high quality food in the region. There is a growing demand for organic food in both the local and foreign market.

For more information and contacts please refer to Association Dalmacija Eko at www.dalmacijaeko.com.



IFOAM ABM INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT SANA 2016

“ORGANIC 3.0 IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: TRUE COST ACCOUNTING AND FAIR PRICING FOR ORGANIC AGRICULTURE”

The cooperation between IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo and SANA thrives and a new international conference is being organized for the 2016 edition of the Italian organic fair.

The topic of this year's IFOAM ABM International conference is “**Organic 3.0 in the Mediterranean: True Cost Accounting and Fair Pricing for Organic Agriculture**”.

The conference, which will take place on Saturday September 10th, 2016, from 10am until 1pm, at SANA international organic exhibition Bologna, Notturmo conference room.

During the introduction, there will be a welcome speech by Charikleia Minotou (IFOAM ABM President), Erio Ricchi (Vignola Municipality assessor for agriculture and environment), Paolo Carnemolla (FederBio President/Organic Action Network Italia) and Antonio Bruzzone, General Director from BolognaFiere.

The conference will then begin with an overview, updates and highlights of organic agriculture in the Mediterranean: the IFOAM ABM regional board members will bring their own Country-specific contribution, the Humus Italian Organic Producers Social Network will talk present their initiative and Laurent Vonwiller (Biosuisse) will talk about the Leading Organic Alliance (LOA) Social Standard Working Group.

The morning will then continue with a session on True Cost Accounting and Fair Pricing. Nadia El Hage Scialabba (FAO Organic and sustainability programme), Ricardo Guimares (Fairtrade International, responsible of pricing) and David Gould (IFOAM Organic International - secretariat of the Sustainability in Organic Agriculture Action Network SOAAN) will all bring their valuable competences and help us unravel this topic.

Of course, there will also be time for questions&answers and for debate. Antonio Compagnoni (IFOAM ABM Permanent Secretariat/Organic Action Network Italia) will be moderating the event.

For more information and to register to the conference, please write to secretariat@ifoam.abm.bio.



salone internazionale del biologico e del naturale

SANA 2016 CONTINUES TO GROW (30% more exhibition space). NATURALLY.

A new year of prosperous cooperation between BolognaFiere and IFOAM ABM.

The organic world is assuming an increasingly important role in the “Green economy” as a laboratory of regulatory, organizational, business and market innovative experiences and as a sector of the real economy in strong development. The new EU policy regarding major issues, such as combating climate change and protecting biodiversity, found the organic sector as a partner that represents alternative models of development and good practices.

IFOAM AMB, since 1990, year of its foundation, has always stood out for its efforts to promote, develop and disseminate information and knowledge related to organic farming and food production in the Mediterranean. Also, the organization has always sought to create solid connections between organic agriculture and sustainable development.

In the last years, IFOAM ABM and BolognaFiere SpA have developed a collaboration to achieve some strategic objectives, such as establishing the SANA exhibition as the specialized trade fair for organic in Italy and the Mediterranean area and promoting organic farming through joint activities and events (e.g. last year’s International Conference for the 25 years of IFOAM ABM, “Agroecology for organic agriculture in the mediterranean” and this year’s conference “Organic 3.0 in the Mediterranean: True Cost Accounting and Fair Pricing for Organic Agriculture”).

Also, as part of the agreement between the two parties, IFOAM ABM members and producers are entitled a promotion price to actively participate in SANA Exhibition in a dedicated IFOAM ABM space, with a stand and the opportunity to expose on booths. To receive more information and a commercial offer, please contact: Monica Maselli Monica.Maselli@bolognafiere.it.

SANA, the International Exhibition of Organic and Natural Products, due to take place at BolognaFiere from Friday 9th to Monday 12th September, is now preparing for its 28th edition with record numbers of exhibitors and visitors, including both professionals and those interested in the sector.

The international showcase for Italian organics – which this year will be filling a space of over 50 thousand m², an increase of 30% on 2015 – will be occupying pavilions 25,26,29,30 and 36 of the exhibition centre.

The new exhibition area will provide space for the three key sectors of the event: Organic Food, for the vast sphere of food products, Natural and organic personal care, which includes the section for health and wellbeing and Green Lifestyle, the sector dedicated to those interested in an ecological, healthy and responsible lifestyle.

Exhibiting in Organic Food will be producers and distributors of organic food products, companies and services that produce equipment, packaging and technology for organic agriculture and apiculture, but also institutions and certification bodies. Among the goods on show in the Personal Care section will be natural treatments, medicinal plants and their derivatives, dietary products, supplements and special foods made from natural sources, products, services, accessories and equipment for personal care. In the area Green Lifestyle visitors will be able to discover a wide range of reduced environmental impact products for home care and decoration in addition to clothing, leisure and ‘green living’ products.

Numerous confirmations from important players in the sector and the significant growth in the number of new participants build upon the positive experience of the 2015 edition, which recorded over 45,000 visitors, with a 40% increase in the number of foreign buyers from 21 countries and a 25% increase in the number of exhibitors.

A number of high profile appointments for Italian and international operators and buyers from the sector will accompany the main exhibition both inside and outside the exhibition centre. In addition to the appointments there will be workshops and conferences: in September last year 4000 B2B meetings took place as well as 65 seminars and meetings, involving a total of 6000 participants. There will also be potential opportunities for development and networking at SANA NOVITÀ, dedicated showcase for products with innovative features as recognised by the exhibitors of SANA CITY, the external venue for cultural gastronomic, entertainment and commercial events organized for the visiting public and for the city.

At the SANA SHOP visitors will be able to try and purchase food and cosmetic products, supplements, beauty treatments and natural items for the home and leisure activities. The fair is also set to see the return of VeganFest, which this year will be celebrating a special edition: during SANA, recording will take place for the episodes of the new TV format “VeganFest Live”, with exhibitions, animation, video projections, meetings, conferences and demonstrations of vegan cooking. Further innovation can be found at the Area Gelato VeganOK, with demonstrations from master ice-cream makers and pastry chefs, free tastings, demonstrations and training events.

REPORT FROM THE 10TH EUROPEAN ORGANIC CONGRESS “TRANSFORMING FOOD & FARMING THROUGH ORGANICS”

Contribution by Ilaria Barbonetti and Antonio Compagnoni

The 10th European Organic Congress “Transforming Food & Farming Through Organics”, organized by IFOAM EU, took place on April 4th-6th, 2016 in the Netherlands.

On the first day the event was hosted by the Amsterdam Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) and was dedicated to the IFOAM EU General Assembly, during which a new board was elected:

- Christopher Stopes, EcoS Consultancy, UK (President)
- Sabine Eigenschink, Austria Bio Garantie, Austria (Vice-president for regulations)
- Jan Plagge, Bioland, Germany (Vice-president for policies)
- Bavo van den Idsert, Bionext, The Netherlands (Treasurer)
- Évelyne Alcázar Marín, Ecovalia, Spain
- Sylvie Dulong, Fédération Nationale d’Agriculture Biologique, France
- Thomas Fertl, BioAustria, Austria
- Jiri Lehejcek, Czech Technology Platform for Organic Agriculture, Czech Republic
- Sybille Kyed, Organic Denmark, Denmark

A strong board, that will make the voice of the organic movement heard in Bruxelles, but where the Mediterranean Countries, which are the ones where the most of the production takes place, are under-represented.

We wish to stress out that it is only through a wider participation of the national movements to international issues that a Country can achieve bigger recognition and representation in the relevant bodies of the sector.

On Tuesday, April 5th, the actual congress began with an opening from IFOAM President Christopher Stopes and from the Netherlands Minister of Agriculture, Martijn van Dam, who recognizes organic as one of the (pioneer) alternatives for the achievement of sustainability in the agri-food sector. The biggest challenge, in his view, is that of satisfying the ever growing demand for organic products without giving up on quality and abandoning the principles this kind of agriculture is based on.

The issue of importing organic products from far away Countries brings along many questions regarding how flexible we are willing to be with regulations and controls that are not completely in line with the European ones.

The first panel of the day was then dedicated to a fundamental topic: how to transform the agri-food system, how to shift the CAP and other agri-food policies towards agroecology. The session was attended by Liz Bowles (Soil Association), Angelika Hilbeck (ETH Zurich), Andre Leu (IFOAM OI) and Karst Jacob Kooistra (Tradin’ Organic). The main concepts that came out of this discussion were the need to engage consumers in a more effective way, to exchange information among producers (best practices, success stories), to have a research where researchers and producers work together, as well as to change attitude towards technology: the economic system needs to be transformed in parallel with the agrifood system. Organic cannot and should not conform to the industrial system and use the same parameters of industrial agriculture: productivity should be backed up by elements such as environmental services, product quality and, as a result, the protection of human health.

The second part of the morning was dedicated to 3 parallel workshops:

- Innovative organic production beyond the EU rules (Guest: Tobias Bandel, Soil & More International BV);
- Organic consumption for a sustainable food chain (Guest: Maurizio Mariani, Consortium Risteco);
- Approaches to mainstreaming organic food and farming (Guest: Johan Cejje, KRAV).

In the afternoon a second panel took place, on the topic: “What does Organic 3.0 & the IFOAM EU Vision 2030 mean for Europe? Making the CAP and other agri-food policies compatible with the organic vision for 2030”. Among the invited speakers: Sergi Corbalan (Fair Trade Advocacy Office); Patrick Holden (Sustainable Food Trust); Arnd Spahn, (European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions - EFFAT); Andre Leu (IFOAM OI) and Aurélie Trouvé (AgroParisTech).

During the lively discussion some crucial topics were tackled, such as the threshold for pesticide residues and the automatic de-certification of producers, the production in extra-European Countries and the kind of investment companies do there, etc..

The day ended with a very inspiring speech by Susan George, President of the Board of the Transnational Institute, who informed the audience on the worrying hidden aspects of TTIP, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, that threatens the European food sovereignty and democracy.

On April 6th, the last day of the conference, the works were opened by a plenary session on the topic: “Challenges and

opportunities developing organic farming under a new organic regulation – Supporting organic farming development using CAP and other agri-food policies”. Among the invited speakers: Martin Häusling (European Parliament); Diego Canga Fano (European Commission); Pekka Pesonen (COPA-COGECA); Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands Minister for Economic affairs) and Thomas Fertl (IFOAM EU). Diego Canga Fano declared that, as soon as there will be a final agreement on the regulation, the commission will have some years to implement the 36 delegated and implementing acts. The agreement will be published and then there will be an 8-weeks period to present comments, in full transparency, with the involvement of IFOAM.

He also hopes that an international dialogue on the organic regulation worldwide can be rebuilt, in order to look for innovative and effective tools to guarantee the respect of the principles and the integrity of organic without unnecessary commercial barriers being imposed, since these discriminate organic products in the whole world. Europe not only imports organic produce, it also exports it. There is therefore a need for a public-private initiative, comprising of the Countries representatives from the United Nations agencies and from the organic movement, something similar to the International Task Force for Harmonisation and Equivalence that was once led by IFOAM. There are efforts going on for a multilateral agreement on organic, dialogues are being conducted with the US, Canada and Japan, but we need to involve a greater number of Countries. Organic can be one of the solutions for the current crisis of European agriculture.

After this panel, four parallel sessions were held:

- Implementing the new organic regulation in practice (Diego Canga Fano, European Commission; Kees van Zelderen, Biohuis; Alex Beck, AÖL; David Crucefix, Soil Association)
- Towards a CAP for innovative agro-ecological

approaches and sustainable development (Vicky Swales, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; Pierre Bascou, European Commission; Matthias Stolze, FiBL; Jan Plagge, Bioland)

- Agroecological research and innovation for food and nutrition security (Alexandra Tuijelaars, European Commission; Martin van Ittersum, Wageningen University; Sébastien Treyer, Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations - IDDRI; Nikolai Pushkarev, European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)
- Safeguarding breeding and farmers rights against patents on life (Ben Tax, Rijk Zwaan; Maaik Raaijmakers, Bionext; Joris Baecke, Dutch Federation of Agriculture and Horticulture (LTO).

Alex Beck, talking about certification controls, has stressed how the annual control was once perceived as something to be proud of, to show the evolution of the operators throughout the years. The risk based approach now presents a challenge for all of them, since they can be considered guilty even when not responsible: it is therefore of fundamental importance that the first approach, composed of inspection and audit, is maintained and that the risk based approach is applied only when and where appropriate.

The congress ended with food for thoughts by Geoff Tansey, from the Food Ethics Council, on the the need for a paradigm shift for the common future: the transition from a world based on productivity, to one based on self-sufficiency. Law is a “fiction”, but once it exists one must live by it. Working on true cost accounting includes organic among the movements that challenge the basis of the most classic economy, anchored in the exclusion of externalities. Organic has all it takes to contribute to the achievement of the goals of sustainable development. We need more interaction, more sharing of success stories: we can invent money, but we can't invent food.



ORGANIC AGRICULTURE & SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

EXPERIENCES IN MEDITERRANEAN PRODUCTION

Contribution by Laurent Vonwiller

Organic agriculture: Strong trend / new challenges

Looking back at more than 25 years of development, organic agriculture is now strictly codified: Complicated Regulations are defining exactly requirements to label a product "organic". However, organic agriculture is also facing new challenges and must consider additional sustainability requirements, which were not integrated into regulations: Social Responsibility is such a challenge: Manpower (agriculture workers) are an important resource and should be treated accordingly. Labour laws and international regulation based on ILO conventions should be respected and give protection and rights to the workers. In general, consumers are expecting that organic products will be produced under fair Labour conditions in the frame of an agriculture preserving natural and human resources.

Tackling Challenges

The Leading Organic Alliance

A few years ago, European organic associations formed the LOA (Leading Organic Alliance) with the goal to identify and tackle challenges, to defend and develop the image of organic agriculture – even beyond the existing regulations - creating values for the farmers and trust for consumers. LOA sees Social Accountability as such a challenge: Throughout the world, agriculture workers tend to be paid badly, often below the official minimal salaries: More and more, migrants are replacing indigenous workforce, as workers tend to leave agriculture, being attracted by better paid jobs with less working hours. Workers in agriculture are very often temporary employed, Many factors make that their position is weaker as the one of factory workers.

LOA assessed that precarious working conditions in agriculture are contradicting the spirit of organic agriculture. This is why a LOA working group, is developing ways to foster Social Accountability in Organic Agriculture. Discussions to integrate these LOA efforts into the IFOAM framework are on going.

Responses from Retail - Audits

As a reaction to reports on bad practices in the management of Human Resources, control systems based on social audits are increasingly used in order to assess the social performance of producers. However, audits were too often presented as a kind of magic wand, an absolute mean of control. Now, however, we know that the efficiency of audits is limited: It is not sufficient for supermarkets to show that many suppliers have been audited! There is a growing understanding that programs based on means such as Awareness Raising or Capacity Building should be organized: Exchanges between retailers,

industries, traders, producers, producer organizations and stakeholders (such as NGOs or Trade Unions) are increasing under the form of workshops, Round Tables etc.

The most important result of such activities is the motivation of organic producers, integrating Social Accountability into the philosophy of organic production: Motivated and committed producers are the best guarantee for Social Accountability.

Various levels of social auditing

Looking at existing "Social Standards" with the view of developing tools which can be used in organic agriculture to foster Social Responsibility, the LOA working group differentiated between various types of control systems: Some can be qualified as "high level systems" but are rather complicated and expensive (and not always accurate for agriculture). On the other hand, easier modules at lower level do exist (such as GlobalG.A.P.'s GRASP). There is a huge gap between high and low level systems: This is why the LOA Working Group is working on a module able to fill the GAP between high and low level systems, but at any rate with a level sufficient to make sure that Social Responsibility as practiced by organic farmers or processing plant managers is checked and assessed in a credible way, unveiling shortcomings and fostering Corrective Actions. To reach this goal, a good training of auditors on the principle of Social Accountability and on proper auditing techniques, should be provided.

Beyond auditing

Beyond the definition of a efficient audit systems and the training of auditors, the goal is to create a dialogue with producers thanks to a system of awareness raising / capacity building, to prepare farmers and farmer associations to develop good practices. In addition, LOA wants to develop contacts to relevant stakeholders at international and local level.

A real chance

LOA has a chance to build a solid and credible system (which could become effective as per 2017, first in Mediterranean countries like Spain and Italy - First test audits took place successfully in 2016). This will contribute to strengthen the image of organic agriculture as proposed by the labels of organic organisations such as the LOA members. But the hope is really that the LOA project will create far more than a tool to improve the image: It may allow producers to interiorise fully, maintain and develop further values of Fairness and Sustainability which are indestructibly connected with organic agriculture.

BRIEF REPORT

THE LOA TEST AUDIT ON SOCIAL STANDARDS IN SPAIN

Contribution by Évelyne Alcázar Marín

During the last 2 and a half years, inside the Leading Organic Alliance (LOA) there has been a working group on social standards, involving several organizations (BIOSUISSE, ICEA, KRAV, NATURLAND and ECOVALIA).

The social requirements are becoming a new exigency in the market. This is due to the great impact they have in the media, but it's also a way to differentiate those who only comply with the EU regulation requirements from those who do more.

Organic companies are starting to see how this kind of certification helps them communicate their premium behaviours, e.g. when they put in place good social practices and work to overcome weaknesses in their management system.

The aim of LOA Social Standard working group is to share knowledge about social aspects and find a way to get a social certification standard shared by all above-mentioned organizations.

In January, as part of this process, a social audit test was carried out in Almería, Spain, and was then repeated in April in Calabria, Italy (see next article).

The purpose of these social audit tests is to find the best way to put in practice checks on social audits.

As far as the inspectors' qualification is concerned, the main focuses were put on the importance of training on legal work requirements and on their ability to carry out interviews.

It is fundamental to have a good knowledge of the overall social situation in the place the inspection is being conducted; for instance, the presence of migrants and mafia were issues that were taken into account.

Furthermore, to carry out a good inspection, time management is very important. With regard to this, the preparation phase showed the need for a good tool to facilitate work. The test audit in Spain brought the opportunity to better define what this tool should be.

Another aspect that needs to be taken into account is the most efficient steps sequence during a social audit. For instance, a good starting point is to revise the documents related to staff policy, salaries and contracts before doing the interview itself, since this helps checking the worker's knowledge about his/her own rights.

During a good audit process it is crucial to get all needed information in the minimum amount of time possible.

All efforts made by the LOA Social Standards working group have contributed to emphasizing how important the social aspects for its members are and how this kind of questions are filling a gap in the current regulation, a gap that consumers and society expect to be tackled.



BRIEF REPORT

THE LOA TEST AUDIT ON SOCIAL STANDARDS IN CALABRIA, ITALY

Contribution by Mariano Serratore

Organic agriculture is a production method which demands maximum respect for the environment, health and human dignity at the same time. The interlacement of eco-compatible techniques, respect of field workers' rights and justice among the different actors of the organic food chain have been the focus of a meeting that took place on April 4th-7th, 2016 at the Educational Center ABC of Sant'Onofrio (VV), Calabria Region, and that was organized by ICEA in cooperation with the Association for Organic Agriculture in Calabria.

The meeting is one of the activities of a network, the Leading Organic Alliance (LOA), that has been established among the main European organizations dealing with organic agriculture, owners of certification standards which bring an extra value to the public European organic regulations currently in force. The involved organisations are, among others, Biosuisse (Switzerland), Naturland (Germany), KRAV (Sweden), Ecovalia (Spain) and ICEA (the Institute for Ethical and Environmental Certification), which is the only Italian partner so far.

Goal of the alliance is to find common and shared working tools, guidelines for the operators and rules for the agrobiological production, that can give tangibility and substance to the principles and values of organic agriculture, not least those related to social responsibility and solidarity.

These are very important topics for a Region like Calabria, after the tragical events of Rosarno that have publicly shed lights on the slavery drama in different contexts of agricultural production.

The LOA working group on social responsibility that met in Calabria has examined two case studies, both from producer organizations from Calabria, as a reference model for combining organic agriculture systems and techniques and the encouragement of behaviors based on social responsibility towards employees and the surrounding territory.

These organizations are the OP Cape Naturam (Corigliano Calabro – CS), second level cooperative specialized in the production of organic fruit and vegetable (with organization and volumes reaching the main European commercial platforms) and the Cooperative Goel Bio (Gioiosa Ionica – RC), specialized in the production of citrus and extra virgin olive oil, and comprising of agrobiological companies trying to defend themselves from criminal oppression.

Below, a list of all those who took part in this meeting:

Mariano Serratore – ICEA (Italia)
Laurent Vonwiller – Coop (Switzerland)
Juan Carlos Perez - Ecovalia International (Spain)
Jörg Schumacher – Bio Suisse (Switzerland)
Manfred Fürst –Naturland (Germany)
Eva-Lena Radberg –KRAV (Sweden)



REPORT FROM THE 8TH EKOLOJİ İZMİR FAIR, TURKEY

Contribution by Charikleia Minotou

EKOLOJİ İZMİR is the only fair that represents Turkey's both national and international field of certified organic products. During the exhibition the industry's stakeholders were invited to participate to Izmir Fair which is the most modern fairground of Turkey. The 8th EKOLOJİ İZMİR FAIR was held at 26th – 29th April 2017 in fuarizmir. At the Fair only certified organic products have been presented and many companies from different sectors provided the organic sector and its development. The range of the products at the exhibition included the following categories: organic clothes, baby products, cosmetics, food, cleaning products, services.

The 8th EKOLOJİ İZMİR "Organic Products Fair focused on the production, entrepreneurship, processing and services, in order to create and provide the dynamic profile of the organic sector and to attract the interest of the professionals but also of the consumers. In the frame of the exhibition parallel activities took place. The aim, as described by the Mayor of Izmir Mr Kocaoglu, was to meet the expectations of the sector, bringing new markets to the country, achieving the point deserved by the organic product economy and increasing the organic consciousness.



The organized Ecology Symposium from FIBL and ETO, on the topic "Managing Organic Agriculture in the Mediterranean: Key success factors for Market development", held different stakeholders, the leading organizations of the sector and gave the opportunity to presented prototypes examples. At the opening session Mr Zafer Goynugur the President of ETO, Mrs Elisabeth Ruegg the coordinator German-Turkish Bilateral Cooperation-Organic Agriculture and Dr. Ali Kemal Ozturk from the Ministry of Food Agriculture Livestock from Ankara mentioned the importance of the organic sector at Turkey, the potential organic development and the importance of the existing and ongoing strong collaborations and

challenges. All the sessions of the Symposium covered important fields as farming strategies, marketing solutions and best practices.

As Mrs Ruegg mentioned, through best-practice results & experiences in the organic sector from Turkey, "by offering tailor-made trainings for defined target groups is an excellent approach to stimulate quality improvement along the supply chain. At the same career meetings organized and a specific job platform established by ETO (CVyolla) which promotes job opportunities in the organic sector or among students and young graduates"

IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo participated with a presentation on the topic of "Organic Agriculture in the Mediterranean" with its President, Dr. Charikleia Minotou in an effort to promote the importance of the organic sector in the Mediterranean, its connection with the sustainable development and the trends, opportunities and challenges which appear from its implementation. At the same time the presentation focused in the perspective to enforce collaborations, dissemination of knowledge, the research, and fair and sustainable priorities in the organic world.



Moreover, in the frame of the fair interactive panels took places on "how to start organic farming" and on "control and certification in organic farming" and a workshop on "Organic Cotton, Preferred Materials and Textile Sustainability: How can Turkish businesses play a leading role?"

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IFOAM EU 4TH ORGANIC PROCESSING CONFERENCE “INNOVATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM”

The 4th Organic Processing Conference will take place on 24-25 November 2016 in Seville, Spain. The European event is dedicated to organic food processing innovation and developments.

Registration is now open to join organic business leaders in Seville. Over two days you will be informed and inspired by experts sharing experience and best practice in organic production developments, market trends and EU policies for green production.

The previous edition, held in 2014 in Paris, France, brought together 150 leaders with CEOs and senior management of organic companies representing more than half of the participants; high-level policy makers and certification representatives were also in large attendance.

[Register now](#) to join the event and benefit from an early bird discount of up to 20% of the normal fee. Early bird registration closes on 16 September. Stay up-to-date on social media with #4OPC

For more information please visit the [website](#) and download the [conference programme](#).

Interested in gaining visibility at this event? To find out about the sponsorship's opportunities and for further questions, please contact Laura Ullmann, the IFOAM EU communications manager at laura.ullmann@ifoam-eu.org or +32 (0)2 808 7991.

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