

BEST PRACTICES
TO DEVELOP
ORGANICS



SET **COMMON OBJECTIVES**
TARGETS AND ACTIONS TO MEET EU, NATIONAL
OR REGIONAL GOALS



TAILOR POLICIES
TO ORGANIC NEEDS THAT SUPPORT HIGH
QUALITY FOOD, JOBS, THE ENVIRONMENT,
ANIMAL WELFARE AND OUR CLIMATE



CREATE A **PARTNERSHIP**
APPROACH BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS
AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS



USE **PUBLIC POLICY**
SUPPORT TO COMPLEMENT
ORGANIC MARKET GROWTH



FOCUS ON
SUPPLY AND DEMAND
ISSUES OF RELEVANCE TO THE
ORGANIC SECTOR



FOSTER A
POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT
TO ENHANCE THE COMPETITIVENESS AND
SUSTAINABILITY OF ORGANIC PRODUCERS
AND SMEs

SME ORGANICS brings together regional governments, development agencies, organic food and organic farming organisations, enterprise bodies, universities and research institutes from eight regions across Europe over a 4-year period 2016-2020.

As part of a participatory learning process, partners and stakeholders exchange and share experiences of best practices for devising organic action plans. These action plans cover a number of areas such as production and processing, commercialisation and marketing, training and advice, and organic value chain efficiency and governance, that can support the competitiveness and sustainability of organic SMEs in their region.

Project partners:



REGIONE PUGLIA



Special thanks for their contribution to all SME Organics project partners

Publisher: **IFOAM EU** / Editor: **Eva Berckmans** / Language editing: **Chris Sinclair**

Production support: **Triin Viilvere, Eva Berckmans**

Design & layout: **Lii Ranniku**, Ecoprint Ltd – www.ecoprint.ee

Read more about these best practices
& get inspired by others' examples on euorganic2030.bio



A REGIONAL OBSERVATORY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORGANIC SECTOR

Bari, Apulia region, Italy

To simplify the coordination among players in the region's organic sector, a Regional Observatory was set up in 2007. The Biobank Open Project database, which is paperless, allows the online management of notifications related to activities in the organic sector and offers the farmers the opportunity to display and promote their products.

DEVELOPING LOCAL ORGANIC PRODUCTION IN A SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE RESTAURANT AND SHOP

Bari, Apulia region, Italy

The social cooperative 'Rete Utile Buono e Bio' brings together organic producers, so their products can be sold via their online platform, a store and a restaurant in Bari. Thanks to this initiative, customers can buy traceable products that are sold in a socially inclusive setting.

MANUFACTURING HIGH-QUALITY PASTA RESPECTING TRADITION AND IMPROVING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF LOCAL AGRICULTURE

Bari, Apulia region, Italy

Pastificio Attilio Mastromauro Granoro produces a wide range of pasta and related products. It combines a family tradition of pasta making with high-quality products, experience and innovation. This is visible in both its organic range of pasta and its range of pasta produced with 100% local wheat.

BIOREGIONE – BETTER INTEGRATING ORGANIC FOOD IN MASS CATERING

Lombardy region, Italy

The research project 'BioRegione' aims to improve the direct relationship between local production and mass catering. The catering sector has a lot of potential to make the food sector more sustainable and to create a direct relationship with local producers.

SUPPORTING CONVERSION FROM TRADITIONAL TO ORGANIC AGRICULTURE BY RURAL DEVELOPMENT PAYMENTS

Lombardy region, Italy

Rural Development Programme Measure 11.1.01 provides financial support for farmers to convert to organic farming. It aims at increasing the number of organic producers and enlarging the agricultural area cultivated by environmentally sustainable methods and techniques. It does this by providing an annual payment per hectare based on higher costs and lower revenue, differentiating by crops.

SUPPORTING THE MAINTENANCE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTION BY RURAL DEVELOPMENT PAYMENTS

Lombardy region, Italy

To strengthen the organic sector, support to organic producers who are already practising sustainable techniques is provided as an annual payment. This payment rewards farmers who use farming techniques that restore and enhance ecosystems. Payments are calculated per hectare of land area, based on higher costs and lower revenues, and linked to environmental commitments.

THE FIRST ORGANIC LABEL FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN FRANCE

Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, France

The Grenelle Environment Forum sets targets on a national level to develop the organic production and sales. To support, reward and promote local authorities that reach those goals, INTERBIO Nouvelle-Aquitaine created the Territoire Bio Engagé label. The label covers 6% of all cultivated area in organic agriculture and 20% of organic products in public catering.

REGIONAL BRANDING OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, France

To promote local production or supply, supporting regional operators, and proposing a clear identification of local organic products, the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region and the Region Midi-Pyrénées launched the brand 'Bio Sud-Ouest France' in 2013. Today, 556 products of 35 companies are certified, ranging from raw products to processed foods.

A REGIONAL CLUSTER FOR PUBLIC CATERING

Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, France

To introduce high-quality organic food products, such as labelled organic and/or local foods, in public catering, a regional cluster was created in 2012. The cluster is a tool for developing and organising the production and supply of local and quality food for catering services in Nouvelle-Aquitaine. The cluster's missions are to support public catering restaurants, to structure the local and organic value chains to develop a suitable supply and to promote organic and local products. It does this by bringing together several regional organisations.

INNOVATIVE VEGETABLE PRODUCTION AT ORGANIC DEMONSTRATION FARM MROWISKO

Lodzkie region, Poland

The organic farm 'Mrowisko' specialises in organic vegetable production as well as produces compost and plant extracts. There are no animals on the farm, so fertilising is achieved through crop rotation, composting, organic fertilisers allowed by the Fertiliser Institute in Puławy and manure purchased at organic farms. Appropriate composition of neighbouring plants protects the crops from pests and diseases.

INCREASING THE QUALITY AND LONGEVITY OF ORGANIC JUICES BY USING INNOVATIVE METHODS

Lodzkie region, Poland

The family business 'Wiatrowy Sad' is a company producing juice from their own farm. Thanks to funding from the Rural Development Programme it was able to invest in farm modernisation and press machinery. The end-product of the new pressing method is a high-quality bag-in-box packaged juice that stays fresh for up to 14 days after opening without fermenting.

ORGANIC FRUIT-GROWING USING PROBIOTECHNOLOGY

Lodzkie region, Poland

For more than 10 years, the owners of the organic fruit-growing farm EkoMarchaty have not used chemical fertilisers. Instead, they use a solution called 'ProBiotechnology'. By using a non-genetically modified mixture of natural ingredients, the owners enhance the farm's efficiency as well as revitalise and protect the environment.

USING INVESTMENTS TO IMPROVE THE VIABILITY OF FARMS AND TO PROMOTE INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES

Navarra region, Spain

Spanish farms face many issues related to droughts. Rural development funds are often given to farmers to invest in their farms. However, these funds usually focus on irrigation, moving the problem from one region to another. Funds from the Rural Development Programme are used to give grants to farmers to improve the long-term viability of their farms by other means than irrigation, and to promote innovative agricultural technologies.

PROMOTING FAIR TRADE AND DIRECT RELATIONS BETWEEN CONSUMERS AND PRODUCERS OF ORGANIC FOOD

Pamplona and surroundings, Navarra region, Spain

Landare is a consumers' association providing organic, local and healthy food at affordable prices. By establishing direct contact between local producers and processors, it established a fair trade for the actors involved. After 25 years, almost 3,000 families are involved in the association.

IMPROVING THE TRANSFER OF RESEARCH & INNOVATION RESULTS TO FARMERS THROUGH TRAINING AND ADVISORY SERVICES

Navarre region, Spain

The Institute for Agri-food Technology and Infrastructure of Navarre (INTIA) provides advisory services to the agricultural sector. Its main goal is to improve the transfer of research and innovation results to farmers, to find solutions to farmers' problems and needs, and to improve farms' profitability and sustainability. INTIA's extensive network of 150 technicians distributed over 13 offices and experimentation network make sure this happens.

ALLOWING LOCAL PRODUCERS TO SELL THEIR OWN BRANDS IN SUPERMARKETS

North-West region, Romania

Thanks to joining forces under a regional agri-food cluster organisation, local producers have taken ownership of the value chain. The management of the AgroTransilvania cluster negotiated the prices with major suppliers, on behalf of its members. These efforts paid off: their products can be found in the 'Transilvania at Home' aisles of the two biggest shopping centres in the city.

TÂRGUL AGRO, AN ONLINE PLATFORM MATCHMAKING RURAL SUPPLY AND URBAN DEMAND FOR AGRI-FOOD PRODUCTS

North-West region, Romania

The Agro Fair online platform brings together the entire supply chain for conventional and organic agriculture. Supply and demand meet online to trade virtually. By bringing together agricultural producers, processors, farmers, traders, warehouses, public and private organisations and consumers in a ITC-based platform the parties can make an offer or request. Thanks to this virtual agri-food trade, organic producers can better market their products and easily reach the consumer, especially in urban areas.

TRAINING FOR LOCAL FARMERS ON CONVERSION TOWARDS ORGANIC

North-West region, Romania

The 'Organic Informal Business School' is a private initiative that operates for free in rural areas and small towns in the North-West Region of Romania. Its goal is to increase the competences of local farmers by giving training sessions which are made available also on YouTube.

REKO RINGS – A LOCAL FOOD MODEL FOR SELLING AND DISTRIBUTING LOCAL FOOD

South Ostrobothnia region, Finland (and beyond)

REKO rings are a model for selling and buying local food directly from producers to consumers. Products are sold based on pre-orders made through closed Facebook rings. Different producers bring their products to the same place at the same time, providing a pick-up point for consumers.

ENSURING PROTEIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY AMONG FARMERS BY ESTABLISHING AN ORGANIC FARMER NETWORK

South Ostrobothnia region, Finland

The organic farmer network aims to ensure animal husbandry farms' self-sufficiency regarding protein feed. It does this by establishing a network that connects animal husbandry farms and crop producers. Close cooperation between farms ensures feed self-sufficiency and enhances profitability of crop producers.

'STEPS TO ORGANIC' – A VOLUNTARY PROGRAMME FOR INCREASING THE USE OF ORGANICS IN RESTAURANTS

South Ostrobothnia region, Finland

'Steps to organic' is a voluntary programme for all private and public kitchens. Its purpose is to help increase the use of organic products as part of sustainable development. It achieves this by collecting data about the use of organic products, and by offering information on food procurement and knowledge about how to apply sustainable development in kitchen functions. Consumers can also find restaurants that offer organic food on the programme's website.

A MARKETING PLATFORM FOR ORGANIC AND FAIR PRODUCTS FROM CENTRAL SWITZERLAND

Zentralschweiz region, Switzerland

RegioFair Bio Zentralschweiz is a marketing platform that developed a business model for SMEs in the agricultural sector manufacturing organic products. The organisation sells a broad range of high-quality regional, seasonal and organic products from about 100 organic farmers of the Zentralschweiz region. It does this via an independent trading platform that sells exclusively to qualified retailers and does not compete with on-farm shops.

CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING ORGANIC WHOLESALE FOR SWISS ORGANIC SHOPS, RETAIL AND CHEFS

Seon & Neuchâtel, Zentralschweiz region, Switzerland

Biopartner is the leading organic wholesaler in Switzerland. They supply a broad range of organic products to specialised organic shops, retail and chefs as well as the food processing industry. Biopartner focuses on progressive and customer-oriented logistical processes and defines new measures to improve its sustainability year on year.

STIMULATING COLLABORATION BETWEEN ORGANIC ACTORS ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN

Zofingen, Zentralschweiz region, Switzerland

Bio Marché is an annual organic fair where around 200 small-scale producers, wholesalers, processors and traders from Switzerland and abroad gather. The fair gives the different actors the chance to present themselves and their products, to strengthen existing networks and to increase collaboration between the different actors across branches and the value chain.



10 recommendations to
MAKE AN ORGANIC ACTION PLAN
successful

1. Undertake a thorough status quo analysis of the organic sector, involving key stakeholder groups, to identify relevant development needs and priorities
2. Stimulate participatory stakeholder involvement throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation phases, recognising that stakeholders can lead actions as well as benefit from them
3. Link the plan to the country or region's overall strategies for stimulating wider economic and rural development and achieving environmental and other societal benefits
4. Define strategic objectives that are clear, measurable and prioritised to be achieved within a relevant timescale
5. Select actions that are well aligned with the plan's objectives and clearly address the needs of the organic sector in the country or region
6. Ensure a balance between 'supply-push' and 'demand-pull' actions which recognise SME needs for high quality produce and public goods from organic land management
7. Enable knowledge and information exchange to support a growing organic sector, particularly if there are many new entrants
8. Improve organic consumers' and citizens' access to and awareness and understanding of organic food and farming
9. Allocate sufficient financial and human resources to implement the plan, including specific funding from both private and public sources, that build on existing programmes
10. Integrate regular monitoring and evaluation from the outset

SME ORGANICS

Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



www.interregeurope.eu/smeorganics



https://www.linkedin.com/company/sme_organics



www.facebook.com/SMEorganics



<https://twitter.com/SMEorganics>