Organic agriculture: Overview on European Situation

Europe

Map 3: Organic agricultural land in Europe: Agricultural area and shares of the total agricultural land 2008

Source: FiBL Survey

A Growing Reality

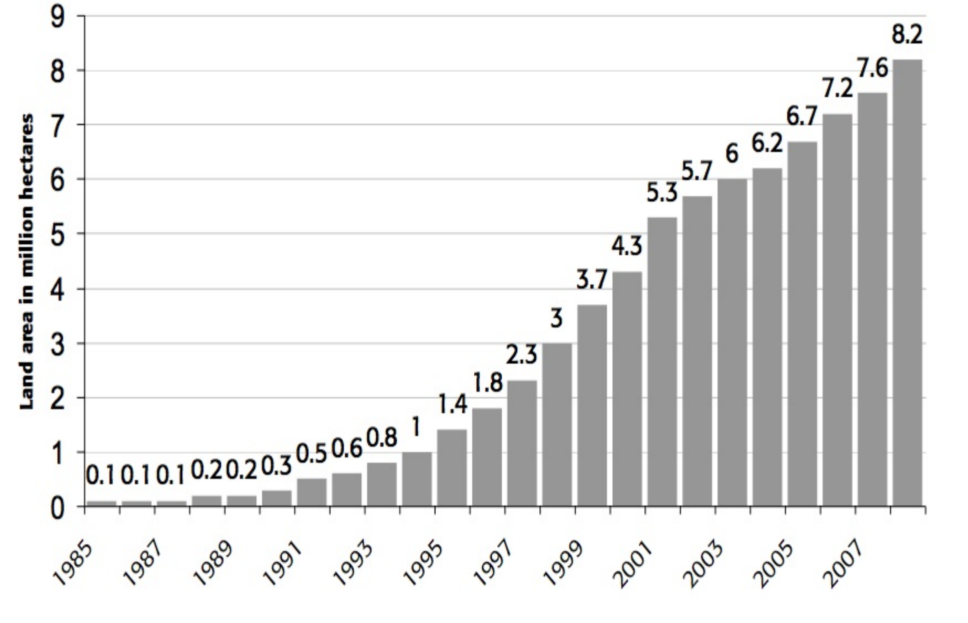
In most countries the organic area is on the increase and the market continues to grow.

This positive development is also due to several policy **support measures;**

- funding under rural development programmes,
- legal protection,
- action plans as well as support for research and advice.

The organic sector, represented by the EU Group of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (**IFOAM EU Group**), plays an important role in the development of organic food and farming in Europe.

Statistic



- Since the beginning of the 1990s, organic farming has **rapidly developed** in almost all European countries
- In European Union more than **7.5 million hectares** are managed organically by almost **200.000 producers** (end of 2008)
- This constitutes **4.3 %** of the agricultural area

Differences within Europe

- More than 10% of agricultural land is organic:

Liechtenstein (29.8%)

Austria (15.9%)

Switzerland (11.1%)

Sweden (10.8%)

- Largest organic **agricultural area**:

Spain (1.1 million ha) from 2007

Italy (1 million ha)

- Highest number of **producers:**

Italy: more than 44.000 producers

European Market for Organic Food

- **Turnover** (general retails sales, specialized shops, farmer to consumer direct sales):

about 18.000 million euros (2008)

- **Largest markets**:

Germany (5.850 million euros)

France (2.591 euros)

UK (2.494 million euros)

Italy (1.970 million euros)

EU Regulation on organic farming

- 1991, first legal protection: (EEC) N 2092/91
- **2007: new regulation (EC) N 834/2007** on organic production and labelling.
  - Complete set of objectives
  - Principle and basic rules for organic production
  - New permanent import regime
  - More consistent control regime
  - Mandatory use of EU logo

Action plans for organic food and farming

- **Organic Action Plans** provide a framework for integrating policies and measures in order to encourage organic sector development.
- Action Plans serve as a **strategic instrument for governments** to achieve policy goals, particularly when multiple policy areas (such as agriculture, environment, trade) and different levels of policy formulation are to be integrated (Schmid et al. 2007).
- According to a survey by the IFOAM EU Group and FiBL, at least **15 countries in Europe** have or had an action plan (Gonzalvez 2009), many of them with quantitative targets. Austria, for instance, aims to have 20 percent organic land by 2010.

Research

- Today, organic farming research is substantially funded under national research programmes, national organic action plans and European projects.
- Even though no figures for all European countries are available, it is known that the funds of the eleven countries that are part of the ERA-Net project CORE Organic amount to more than 60 million Euros annually (Lange et al. 2007).

With the launch of the 7th research framework program in 2008, four projects focusing on organic farming started:

- **CERTCOST**: Economic analysis of certification systems for organic food and farming;
- **LowInputBreeds**: Development of integrated livestock breeding and management strategies to improve animal health, product quality and performance in European or- ganic and "low input" milk, meat and egg production;
- **Organic Sensory Information System (OSIS):** Documentation of sensory properties through testing and consumer research for the organic industry (Ecropolis);
- **Indicators for biodiversity** in organic and low-input farming systems (BioBio).

Situation in Italy - operators

- **About 50.000 operators**
  - About 43.000 producers
  - About 4.700 processors
  - About 2.000 farmers-processors
  - About 150 farmers-processors-importer
  - About 50 importers

Italian Organic Market

- **1,6 billion euros** on global sales
- **1,4% share** of the organic market over total food market

Business distribution

commercial activity	Number of operators		var%
	2006	2008	
Buying groups	288	479	66.00%
Direct sale	1324	1943	47.00%
Agriturisms	839	1178	40.00%
E-commerce	79	110	39.00%
Catering	658	791	20.00%
Restaurants	177	199	12.00%
Markets	193	208	8.00%
Shops	1094	1114	2.00%
TOTAL	**4652**	**6022**	**29.00%**