

# Pesticide presence and contamination: Ensuring a favourable environment for organic operators through EU legislative frameworks

.....  
Marian Blom – IFOAM Organics Europe Vice-president

# Why is this project important?

- Pesticide use and contamination pose significant problems to the organic sector, where the use of synthetic pesticides is prohibited. It is also a challenge for non-organic farmers, processors and traders who want to grow, produce and sell pesticide-free food.
- The current Organic Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 and the new (EU) 2018/848 do not provide (yet) for full harmonization on how to deal with residues of non-allowed substances in organic products. This makes the situation unclear for the organic food and farming sector.
- Currently, Member States and even different control bodies in the same Member State apply different approaches.

# Why is this project important?

- By 31 December 2025, the European Commission shall present a report on the implementation of the Article 29 on the presence of non-authorized products and substances and on the assessment of the national rules. The report might be accompanied by a legislative proposal for further harmonisation in all Member States and Third Countries
- One option is that an automatic decertification threshold will be imposed when pesticide residues are detected, using arguments of protecting organic consumers, preventing frauds and harmonising the implementation of the future legislative proposal.
- However, this clashes with the definition and the principles of organic farming and production. Organic farming is a holistic, process-based approach. Shifting from a process-based approach to one based on the evaluation of the end products is counter-intuitive.

# Project details & deliverables

- The project started in November 2020
- The scientific partner is **FiBL** (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture)
- Total budget: > **200K** EUR

## Reports from FiBL:

1. **Scientific report** on pesticide presence in the environment including surface water, ground water, air, soil, wild plants and post-harvesting activities (published)
2. **Data collection** of pesticide residues present in the food and farming system, including organic (final stage)
3. **Overview** on how control bodies, authorities and business deal with residues in the EU (final stage)
4. **Case-studies** sent to all EU Control Bodies (final stage)
5. **Pilot study** on spray drift on small organic farms in Switzerland (final stage)

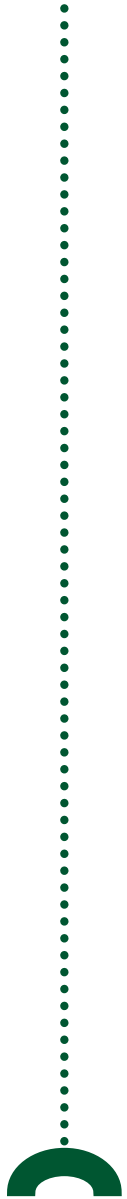
## Workshops:

- 29 June 2022 (online – Task Force)
- 20 October 2022 (online – Task Force)

## Project aim

- *EU policies and regulations that ensure a level playing field and support for farmers, processors, retailers and traders producing food without the use of pesticides.*

To achieve that, the project has four purposes and related activities.



# Purpose and Activity 1

Understanding the level of pesticide presence and contamination affecting food and farming sector, with a focus on organic, and the environment.

## How?

- Report on Pesticide contamination of the environment and its impact on food production. (link to article on next slide)

# Article published in the Journal of Environmental Pollution



Environmental Pollution

Volume 313, 15 November 2022, 120116



Review

Presence of pesticides in the environment, transition into organic food, and implications for quality assurance along the European organic food chain – A review ☆

Mirjam Schleiffer  , Bernhard Speiser 

QR code to the article



Exclusive sponsor

**BIOFACH**

into organic

## Purpose and Activity 2

- Understanding how competent authorities, control bodies & authorities and organic operators are dealing with pesticide presence and contamination.

### How?

- Overview of procedures and approaches implemented by Competent Authorities, Control Bodies & Authorities and operators in the EU
- Showcase illustrating the heterogeneity of approaches in the EU
- 129 surveys collected from companies, control bodies, control authorities currently being analysed → solid position from organic movement



## Purpose and Activity 3

- Reaching a fair and harmonized legislative framework for the organic agri-food sector with harmonized procedures for operators, control bodies & authorities in case of residue findings

### How?

- Preparing evidence and Advocating for harmonisation of the new EU Organic Regulation:
  - Compiling main findings from the above studies and developing recommendations for harmonisation.
  - Develop a position paper on harmonisation together with key stakeholders and experts from the organic sector.
  - Present the proposal on harmonisation to the European Commission and the Member States.

## Purpose and Activity 4

- Better integration of the IFOAM principles of organic farming into horizontal EU legislative frameworks

### HOW?

- Advocating for better inclusion of organic principles in the horizontal legislations concerning the authorisation and use of plant protection products based on:
  - A review of the implementation of the horizontal legislation e.g. National plans under the SUD or labelling requirements

# Thanks to the project sponsors



**EKHAGASTIFTELSEN**



**DIMECOBIO IV 2021-2024**

Progetto per lo sviluppo e la prosecuzione delle attività volte alla definizione delle dimensioni economiche del settore dell'agricoltura biologica ai diversi livelli della filiera

Golden sponsors



Silver sponsors



Bronze sponsors



We thank KRAV for their support to the project



Exclusive sponsor  
**BIOFACH**  
into organic

**Thank you for your attention!**

