



2nd meeting of Thematic Group on Strengthening the position of farmers in the Organic Food Supply Chain

Highlights report

The [2nd thematic group \(TG\) meeting](#) shared Member State policy experiences aimed at growing the organic value chain and identified potential areas of intervention that can support collective actions across the organic value chain and in doing so strengthen the role of organic farmers. [Alistair Prior](#) (CAPI CP) summarised findings from the [1st TG meeting](#) and provided insights from the [2nd meeting of the Forum on Best Practices in the Agri-Food Supply Chain](#).

Member State experiences



[Gerber Van Vliet](#) (Ministry of Agriculture, Viticulture & Rural Development of Luxembourg) shared experiences with upscaling organic

coverage which confirmed ambitious targets as well as challenges and transferable solutions. Success will rely on supply chain effectiveness, the availability of suitable inputs (e.g. seeds), scale of consumer demand, and associated market confidence among farmers. A case study on public procurement provided useful insights into techniques for optimising organic uptake in school canteens, including training in such procurement techniques.



[Åsa Lannhard Öberg](#) (Swedish Board of Agriculture) also shared transferable approaches including the use of a dedicated budget to help finance contributions to the Swedish organic action plan. Åsa underlined the importance of co-ordinated information campaigning through the value chain. TG members acknowledged the opportunities and results from efforts invested in coordinating information campaign messages throughout the whole supply chain.



[Lars Holdensen](#) (Danish Agriculture & Food Council) presented Danish knowhow as a 'world leading organics nation', the result of many years of continuing policy support involving all the significant market actors. Participation of low-cost supermarkets in organic supplies and the roll-out of a labelling scheme for restaurants were presented as other success ingredients for upscaling Danish demand for organics. A 'stairway' model for monitoring consumer commitments indicates that organic loyalty tends to stay stable once gained and often increases. Export opportunities are also proving a strong incentive in Denmark for producers to expand supply.



A common message from these Member State perspectives observed, that while public support (e.g. certification costs) helps, this needs to go hand-in-hand with consumer demand on the market. Demand will continue to be the most significant stimulus vis-à-vis achieving EU targets to increase organic land coverage. Some members suggested that an EU target on consumer retail metrics would complement the target on area under organic production.

Event information

Date: 24 November 2022

Location: Virtual

Organisers: CAP Implementation Contact Point (CAPI CP)

Participants: 37 Members from 14 Member States including farmers, producer organisations, cooperatives, retailers, consumer organisations, banks, researchers, and the European Commission

Outcomes: Exchange of knowledge and experiences to identify ways in which the role of the organic producers in the organic value chain can be strengthened through cooperation.

Web page: [2nd meeting of Thematic Group on Strengthening the position of farmers in the Organic Food Supply Chain](#)



Group Discussion Highlights



Members discussed opportunities for targeted actions that could best support organic supply chain cooperation and considered how such actions could strengthen the role of producers in the supply chain.

Participants appreciated the potential for public procurement systems to prioritise organic uptake by promoting more cooperation between buyers and providers. Labelling and information campaigns were also highlighted as offering significant potential to drive organic uptake. Supply chain inputs as well as upstream production factors were seen as key components to successful upscaling of organics.

Advisory services were recognised as key to building business capacity, boosting skills in areas such as market access, use of data and new technologies. Initiatives to encourage small retailers to cooperate with local producers were also suggested, with funding through CSPs (including LEADER) playing a role.

Reflections & key conclusions from TG members



A panel comprised of **Laura Nolan (Irish Department of Agriculture, Food, and Marine)**, **María Carrascos García (Fundación Entretantos)**, **Felix Schmidling (Franken Gemüse)**, **Jerome Cinel (Interbio-Nouvelle Aquitaine)** offered their conclusions and insights from the discussions.

Panel members concluded that there are benefits deriving from policy-makers and organic food chain actors collaborating and advancing in the same direction.

Actions such as appropriate targets for organics in public procurement could be useful for boosting stable demand. Win-win messaging about organics' local-food characteristics was reiterated as a way of avoiding conflicting consumer information.

Shifting consumer buying patterns to make organics a normal part of the shopping basket should be a goal for all, through promotion raising of the positive attributes of organic production and the associated value chain.

Food forums, city and regional food systems, local policy co-creation, market transparency, and online platforms facilitating trade and capacity were all additional ideas for building the critical mass needed to help positively sway market signals.