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Press Release

Organic action plan - Turning ambition into action, Copa and Cogeca makes its proposals

Last March, Copa and Cogeca [welcomed](#) the general principles proposed by the European Commission in its action plan for organic farming. In order to reach the target of 25% of land cultivated according to organic farming principles, a clear direction and concrete options for farmers will have to be discussed more precisely. Copa and Cogeca released a position paper today on the three axes of the strategy, giving its thoughts on the way forward.

Organic farming has been constantly growing for the last decade (62% in ten years), from 8.5 million hectares in 2010 to 13.8 million hectares in 2019. Meanwhile EU consumers have been increasingly interested in this method of production. Still, the current EU farmland devoted to organic farming is at 8.5%, far from the ambitious target of 25% presented in the Farm to Fork Strategy. Even if the target to be reached in nine years is very ambitious, there are ways to improve the share of organic farming in a system that must remain market driven as is the case in the Commission's proposal.

The Action Plan rightly focuses its attention on how to stimulate demand and ensure consumer trust. For Copa and Cogeca the promotion of organic farming and its EU logo will be an important part of the strategy and we believe that the organic sector should be supported by the Promotion Policy, to a certain extent even above its market share. However, if we truly want to ensure a healthy growth of the sector, we will need to ensure that the development of the European market is not heavily affected by increasing competition from non-EU products while the CAP should focus its support on the transition process.

On the livestock side, a major obstacle in the transition remains the lack of organic feed sourced in Europe. In 2019, oilcake imports increased by 13% (386 tonnes) while soya bean imports increased by 25% in the same year (357 tonnes of the total oilcakes). 80% of all organic oilcakes imported into the EU comes from China. There is a clear and strong need to increase the production of European organic protein feed if we want to support the conventional livestock sector's conversion to organic. Organic protein feed is not only a question of quantity but also of quality. Boosting the production of high-quality organic protein feed to reduce European dependence on non-European imports of organic proteins will offer interesting opportunities.

European organic farmers and agri-cooperative need to have the proper toolbox to protect crops and harvests from environmental changes. To reach the 25% of organic farming, research and innovation will have to be increased and serious discussions will have to take place on both seeds and plant protection.

Copa and Cogeca also focus on the challenge of the development of organic aquaculture. The massive imports of fish from non-EU countries, the complicated management practices and lack of proper inputs, will ask of legislators to provide clear support to European organic aquaculture farmers.

Copa - Cogeca | European Farmers European Agri-Cooperatives

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Download the Copa and Cogeca Position paper on the organic action plan [HERE](#).

Translations will be available in DE, ES, FR, IT, PL and RO on the Copa-Cogeca website soon.

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