



Ministry of Agriculture  
and Forestry of Finland

# The Implementation Plan for the Organic 2.0

Publications of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 2023:3

# The Implementation Plan for the Organic 2.0 Programme

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Helsinki 2023

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Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Tekijänoikeuslaki (404/1961) 9 § Tekijänoikeussuojaa vailla olevat teokset

ISBN pdf: 978-952-366-863-8

ISSN pdf: 1797-397X

Layout: Government Administration Department, Publications

Helsinki 2023 Finland

## The Implementation Plan for the Organic 2.0 Programme

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**Publications of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 2023:3**

<b>Publisher</b>	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry		
<b>Group author</b>	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry		
<b>Language</b>	Finnish	<b>Pages</b>	56

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**Abstract**

The aim of the Implementation Plan for the Organic 2.0 - Finland's National Programme for Organic Production 2030 is that, by 2030, 25% of the total arable area would be under organic production, the collection area of wild organic products would have doubled to 14 million hectares and organic aquaculture would have been started. Another aim is that 18% of the food procured by public food services by 2025 and 25% by 2030 would be organic. The achievement of the targets for organic production also depend on the content of the next Government Programme. The implementation of the Organic 2.0 Programme requires contributions and commitment to develop organic production from the entire chain. The Implementation Plan has been drawn up in cooperation between the stakeholders in the organic production sector and administration in workshops led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Organic production does not depend on chemical fertilisers or pesticides. There is plenty of harvesting potential in organic production, but its efficiency must be further improved to improve the productivity of organic production. The CAP Strategic Plan that entered into force at the beginning of this year will not only ensure security of supply but will also improve the state of the environment by supporting e.g. organic production.

Strengthening organic production requires competence building throughout the chain from farm to fork. The objectives can be reached by investing in research, advice and education and through collaboration between these. There are extensive benefits to be gained from the work to enhance competence in organic production for the entire Finnish food chain.

**Keywords** organic food, organic products, food systems, food

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**ISBN PDF** 978-952-366-863-8 **ISSN PDF** 1797-397X

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**URN address** <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-366-863-8>

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## Luomu 2.0 –ohjelman toimeenpanosuunnitelma

### Maa- ja metsätalousministeriön julkaisuja 2023:3

**Julkaisija** Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö

**Yhteisötekijä** Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö

**Kieli** Suomi

**Sivumäärä**

56

### Tiivistelmä

Luomu 2.0 toimeenpanosuunnitelman tavoitteina on, että vuoteen 2030 mennessä luomutuotantoalaa olisi 25 prosenttia koko peltoalasta, luomukeruuola olisi kaksikertaistunut noin 14 miljoonaan hehtaariin ja luomuvesiviljely saadaan alkuun. Tavoitteena on myös, että julkisten ruokapalveluiden elintarvikehankinnoista luomun osuus olisi 18 prosenttia vuoteen 2025 mennessä ja 25 prosenttia vuonna 2030. Tulevan hallitusohjelman kirjaukset osaltaan vaikuttavat luomutavoitteiden toteutumiseen. Luomuohjelma toteutuu ainoastaan koko ketjun panostuksilla ja sitoutumisella luomutuotannon kehittämiseen. Toimeenpanosuunnitelma on koottu yhteistyössä luomualan sidosryhmien ja hallinnon kesken maa- ja metsätalousministeriön vetämissä työryhmissä.

Luomutuotanto ei ole riippuvaista kemiallisista lannoitteista tai torjunta-aineista. Luomutuotantoa on tehostettava, satopotentiaalia on paljon käytettävissä, ja näin myös luomutuotantoa saadaan tuottavammaksi. Tämän vuoden alusta voimaan tulleen CAP-strategian avulla varmistetaan huoltovarmuutta, mutta myös parannetaan ympäristön tilaa tukemalla mm. luomutuotantoa.

Luomutuotannon vahvistaminen edellyttää osaamisen lisäämistä koko ketjussa pellolta pöytään. Tavoitteisiin päästään tutkimukseen, neuvontaan ja koulutukseen panostamalla ja näiden keskinäisellä yhteistyöllä. Luomuosaamisen kehittäminen hyödyttää laajemmin koko suomalaista ruokaketjua.

**Asiasanat** luomuruoka, luomutuotteet, ruokajärjestelmät, ruoka

**ISBN PDF** 978-952-366-863-8

**ISSN PDF**

1797-397X

**Julkaisun osoite** <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-366-863-8>

## Plan för genomförande av ekoprogrammet Luomu 2.0

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### Jord- och skogsbruksministeriets publikationer 2023:3

**Utgivare** Jord- och skogsbruksministeriet

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**Utarbetad av** Jord- och skogsbruksministeriet

**Språk** Finska

**Sidantal**

56

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### Referat

Planen för genomförande av ekoprogrammet Luomu 2.0 har som mål att 25 procent av åkerarealen ska användas till ekologisk produktion, arealen för plockning av ekologiska naturprodukter ska ha fördubblats till cirka 14 miljoner hektar och produktionen av ekologiska vattenbruksprodukter ska ha inletts senast 2030. Ett mål är också att ekologiska produkter ska utgöra 18 procent av den offentliga måltidsservicens livsmedelsuppköp 2025 och 25 procent 2030. Regeringsprogrammet för följande regering inverkar på huruvida alla mål för den ekologiska produktionen nås. Ekoprogrammet blir genomfört endast om det satsas inom hela kedjan och om man föresätter sig att utveckla den ekologiska produktionen. Genomförandeplanen har sammanställts i samarbete mellan berörda grupper inom ekobranschen och förvaltningen genom arbetsgrupper som letts av jord- och skogsbruksministeriet.

Den ekologiska produktionen är inte beroende av kemiska gödnings- eller bekämpningsmedel. Den ekologiska produktionen bör effektiviseras, eftersom det finns en stor skördepotential och den ekologiska produktionen kan bli produktivare. Med hjälp av den nya strategiska CAP-planen, som trädde i kraft vid ingången av året, säkerställs försörjningsberedskapen samtidigt som också miljöns tillstånd förbättras genom att bland annat den ekologiska produktionen stöds.

För att den ekologiska produktionen ska bli starkare krävs det mer kunskap i hela livsmedelskedjan från jord till bord. Målen kan nås genom satsningar på forskning, rådgivning och utbildning och genom samarbete dem emellan. Utveckling av kunskaperna och kompetensen inom ekologisk produktion gynnar hela den finländska livsmedelskedjan.

**Nyckelord** ekologisk mat, ekoprodukter, livsmedelssystem, mat

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**ISBN PDF** 978-952-366-863-8

**ISSN PDF**

1797-397X

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**URN-adress** <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-366-863-8>

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## FOREWORD

The aim of the Implementation Plan for the Organic 2.0 – Finland’s National Programme for Organic Production 2030 is that, by 2030, 25% of the total arable area would be under organic production, the collection area of organic products from the wild would have doubled to 14 million hectares and organic aquaculture would have been started. Another aim is that 18% of the food procured by public food services by 2025 and 25% by 2030 would be organic. The content of the next Government Programme will contribute to the achievement of the goals set for organic production. The implementation of the Organic 2.0 programme requires contributions and commitment to develop organic production from the entire chain. This implementation plan was compiled in cooperation between stakeholders in the organic production sector and administration in working groups led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

In the current situation, which is quite critical for the security of supply of food at the global level, we must identify the opportunities that organic production brings. Organic production is not dependent on chemical fertilisers or pesticides. There is plenty of harvesting potential in organic production, but its efficiency must be further improved to improve the productivity of organic production. The CAP Strategic Plan, adopted at the beginning of this year, will not only ensure the security of supply but will improve the state of the environment by also supporting organic production

Strengthening organic production requires competence building throughout the chain from field to fork. The objectives can be reached by investing in research, advice, and education and training, and through cooperation between these. There are extensive benefits to be gained from the work to enhance competence in organic production for the entire Finnish food chain.

The implementation of the measures will be monitored in accordance with the Organic 2.0 programme every two years together with representatives of the organic production sector.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the preparation of this implementation plan and, in particular, everyone whose commitment and practical measures enable us to achieve the objectives we have set together.

Helsinki 8 February 2023

Jaana Husu-Kallio, Permanent Secretary

# 1 Objective 1: Growth in consumer demand for organic products

– the market share of organic products to 5% by 2030. The consumer demand, exports and production of organic food should increase in a balanced manner



## Milestones:

- In 2025: 40% of Finns will assuredly recognise the EU organic logo as an organic label and 35% of Finns are active users of organic products
- In 2030: the market share of organic products will be 5% and 40% of Finnish people will be active users of organic products

## Measures

### 1.1 Communication and campaigns increase awareness of organic production

Competence and knowledge related to organic production should be increased among consumers, food and catering services, and the authorities. The authorities must become more involved in communicating about organic production. The communication is based on research knowledge.

Information on organic production and organic labels will be disseminated in regional and national projects and EU-funded projects that aim to promote the consumption of organic products. Examples from other countries will be used to inform the marketing and branding of organic products. Market surveys must be developed per each product group. The Finnish Grocery Trade Association is currently publishing quarterly data at the COICOP 5 level, which does not include organic products as a specific category. The Finnish Organic Food Association carries out market intelligence, but the aim is to integrate the monitoring of the sales of organic products into the monitoring conducted by Statistics Finland. Finland annually participates in the EU Organic Day held on the September equinox on 23 September and the EU Organic Awards.

#### Indicators

- Monitoring the development of consumer groups, awareness of the organic label and the growth of awareness on organic production using the Organic Products Consumer Barometer
- Number of visitors to the Luomu.fi website
- Number of EU projects that aim to promote the consumption of organic products
- Comparison with the development of organic production in other countries / available statistics

#### Potential funding sources

- EU funds for the promotion of agricultural products
- Role of national and regional projects in disseminating and compiling information
- Finnish Organic Food Association's EU projects, the Hyvä merkki ("Good label") and Nudging Organic projects provide funding to communication related to organic production at least until the end of 2024
- Business funding

## 1.2 Clarifying the sustainability benefits of using organic products – Making objective and reliable information on organic production available in a sufficiently clear format

Synthesis reports produced based on existing research knowledge and the launch of new research projects to meet identified information needs are key measures to promote this goal. In 2022–2023, one synthesis report per year can be produced with the current funding of the Finnish Organic Research Institute. The funding of the Finnish Organic Research Institute is bound to the Government Programme, and its continuation as of 2024 is not yet known. Securing the funding at least at the current level will enable continuing the operations and achieving the targets.

The Finnish Organic Research Institute produces and publishes science communication on its website and social media channels and engages in media cooperation to promote the visibility of organic research. The target group for the Institute's communication is consumers, farmers, companies, the media, authorities and research and education sector actors. Information on organic research and organic production is also communicated to the general public in the form of seminars, lectures and newspaper articles.

In 2023, the Finnish Organic Research Institute will produce an Organic MOOC course open to everyone (2 credits), as part of the teaching offered by the University of Helsinki. The aim of the course is to present organic production across the food system so that everyone interested in organic production can get a basic idea of organic production as a part of our food system.

### Indicators

- Number of publications
- The accessibility of science communication is monitored based on visitor information
- Number of participants in the Organic MOOC course

### Potential funding sources

- Funding from the Finnish Organic Research Institute will be used to produce the Organic MOOC course and carry out scientific communication
- Research funding

### 1.3 Developing organic products in tourism services

Organic agri-tourism will strengthen the organic production sector, increase the market for organic food and create new business opportunities for rural areas. It brings organic producers and consumers closer together.

The EU Commission's action plan for organic production in the EU encourages Member States to support the development and implementation of biodistricts that combine organic production and tourism. The aim is to utilise the economic and socio-cultural potential of the regions through the resources of local private and public actors. In some EU countries, these activities are highly evolved.

In Finland, the Finnish Eco-Agrotourism Association – ECEAT Finland is a trailblazer in organic agri-tourism, with roots in the international ECEAT International network (European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism). The association currently has approximately 35 organic agri-tourism destinations in Finland, but the number is increasing and interest is brewing for organic agri-tourism around the country.

According to the ECEAT sustainability criteria, each of the association's member companies providing catering services must have introduced at least six organic products in daily use. Many companies also actively inform tourists about organic products e.g. through their catering services and guided tours.

Visit Finland's Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) programme develops sustainable tourism practices. As a result of the STF programme, ECEAT Finland has also gained more members, and promoting sustainable tourism has gained ground in many tourism companies in both rural and urban regions. ECEAT Finland and its sustainability certificates are actively involved in STF as a partner.

Visit Finland also has a DataHub database where Finnish companies providing travel services can store information about their company and the products and services they offer. The interface enables different actors to search for and publish business and product information concerning the tourism sector on their own channels. The Visit Finland tools can also bring good added value to organic agri-tourism.

The criteria set for hotels to obtain the Nordic eco-label, i.e. the Nordic Swan label, require to use more organic products than before. According to the criteria updated in 2021, at least 5% of the products used in a restaurant must be organic in 2022, and in 2024 this share will be 7%. In addition, the Green Key tourism eco-label requires that the destination uses organic and local food.

Although organic tourism and the use of organic food, organic products collected from the wild and other organic products have already been part of Finnish tourism services for some time, there is still a lack of widespread awareness on the topic. While culinary tourism is growing, it does not raise awareness of organic products adequately. Cooperation between organic and tourism sector operators must be increased, and the visibility of organic production must be enhanced. Organic agri-tourism must be included in regional development as this would create opportunities for earning money, especially in rural areas.

### **Indicators**

- Number of organic tourism farms
- Use of organic products in tourism services
- Increased cooperation between organic and tourism sector operators

### **Potential funding sources**

- Business Finland, Visit Finland, regional projects

## 2 Objective 2. Increasing the use of organic products in professional kitchens

### Milestones for 2025:

- Target share for organic product use 18% of actual food procurements (kg) in public catering services
- 60% of the milk and 25% of the fruit and vegetables covered by the school scheme aid will be organic

The achievement of the target is monitored by means of a survey (all public catering services), the Steps to Organic system in catering services using it, and separately in state-owned in-house companies.

Opportunities for monitoring the sales of organic products by wholesalers will be investigated as part of the monitoring carried out by Statistics Finland.

Other possibilities for monitoring include: Developing the monitoring of the share of organic products of the food purchases by professional kitchens e.g. through EkoCentria's electronic system for monitoring the share of the use of organic products (KÄTSY).

### Measures

#### 2.1 Making the added value and ecological benefits of organic production visible – Highlighting benefits related to animal welfare and reducing impacts on the environment and climate

Finland will produce synthesis reports and scientific communication tailored to the needs of professional kitchens and public catering service providers (e.g. municipalities and wellbeing services counties) that clearly highlight the strengths and added value of organic production. Science-based communication helps the customer, such as the municipality, to commit to increasing its use of organic products. The materials must also be available in Swedish.



### Indicators

- Number of publications aimed at professional kitchens and those procuring public catering services
- The accessibility of science communication is monitored based on visitor information
- A survey on the impacts of communication for customers and professional kitchens in the Steps to Organic programme
- Number of strategies and procurement policies of municipalities and wellbeing services counties that encourage the use of organic products

### Potential funding sources

- The work will already start in the Luomutetaan ruokapalvelut (“Making catering services go organic”) project, in which Natural Resources Institute Finland is involved.
- Project funding from the Development Fund for Agriculture and Forestry Makera, food chain development funding

## 2.2 Increasing dialogue across the entire chain to develop domestic organic primary production and products matching the needs of professional kitchens and catering services

More organic products must be introduced to the market in packaging suitable for large kitchens. Organic recipes and organic products developed for professional kitchens are also needed. There is a need for raising awareness of public sector procurement cycles and contracts among wholesalers and food manufacturers. Market dialogue on food procurement must also be stepped up. Actors in the value chain of the hotel and catering industries must be brought together.

Manufacturers and wholesalers will be encouraged to better promote and communicate about organic products and incorporate organic products from SMEs in the wholesale offering in order to improve their availability. Value chain working groups will also produce information to support wholesalers.

### Indicators

- Number and consumption of organic products aimed at professional kitchens
- The extent of the organic product range of wholesalers and suppliers

### Potential funding sources

- Food chain development funding
- Local food, organic and natural products coordination project
- CAP Strategic Plan/ cooperation measure
- The work will begin in the Luomutetaan ruokapalvelut ("Making catering services go organic") project
- Business funding
- Steps to Organic programme

## 2.3 Increasing the share of organic production in the school scheme by simplifying the system, expanding the product range (in cooperation with catering services) and reviewing the amount of the support – evaluation of the strategy for the implementation of the school scheme/ auxiliary measures

To develop the aid scheme, opportunities available for the catering services producing school meals to apply for the aid will be examined.

The strategy for the implementation of the school scheme is prepared for six-year periods. The 2023–2028 strategy includes objectives for use of organic products and examination of the product range with stakeholders. The range of products eligible to the scheme must be tailored to the needs of food services and be based on seasonal availability. In addition, the criteria for granting aid for products must be changed so that the correct amount of aid can be granted for each product. For example, berries have been currently bundled into a single group and the aid is determined based on the price of the cheapest product of the group, which does not encourage choosing berries with higher prices.

### Indicators

- Share of organic production in the school scheme (milk and fruit served at schools)
- Successfully influencing the new school scheme (definition of the applicant, objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy, etc.)

### Potential funding sources

- EU school scheme aid

## 2.4 Examining the impact and development needs of the Steps to Organic programme and assessing the need to develop the programme into a certified system of organic products in professional kitchens as a part of this process

The Steps to Organic programme supports professional kitchens in promoting the use of organic products, including by providing information on available organic products and their suppliers and by enabling the verification of the use of organic products, e.g. through OIVA inspections.

The Steps to Organic programme helps professional kitchens communicate about the use of organic products reliably and makes the use of organic products visible to consumers in food services with the “Luomua” star label for organic products.

### Indicators

- Report completed

### Potential funding sources

- Food chain development funding
- Savo Consortium for Education/Steps to Organic programme

## 2.5 Integrating organic production into food, municipal, wellbeing services county and procurement strategies

Communication and advocacy will target the decision-makers in municipalities and wellbeing services counties and catering service customers to make sure that attention is paid to organic production in food, municipal, wellbeing services county and procurement strategies. There is a need for regional and municipal strategic objectives for the use of organic products and increasing the use of local organic products in professional kitchens to meet the objectives of the national procurement strategy.

Food procurement in many municipalities is carried out through broader framework agreements that have been jointly tendered out. Communication will be used to raise awareness of organic production and the sustainability impacts of organic production as well as the importance of promoting the use of organic products among companies and procurement rings responsible for the joint procurement of food. Materials for communicating about organic production will be provided.

Information provision and advocacy will be used to encourage the wellbeing services counties to take organic production into account in their strategies as a part of responsible food procurement.

The development of mandatory minimum standards for sustainable public food procurement and the inclusion of organic products in these will be monitored at the EU level. Any new requirements concerning the use of organic products will be put to practice.

### Indicators

- Number of regional and municipal strategies encouraging the use of organic products in professional kitchens
- Number of rows indicating organic product use in public food procurement documents (Hilma)

### Potential funding sources

- Hansel as a provider of information
- Food chain development funding
- Finnish Organic Food Association
- Vaikuta hankinnoilla ("Make an impact through procurement") network
- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

### 3 Objective 3. Increasing the selection and upgrading the processing of organic food products



#### Measures

##### 3.1 Increasing research into organic food processing

Applications for research and development funding must succeed in obtaining funding 'earmarked' for the processing of organic foods and consumer research. The Finnish Organic Research Institute annually monitors the project portfolio and the volume in euros of research into organic production carried out by the University of Helsinki and Natural Resources Institute Finland.

Professional actors are also needed. It is important to educate experts in organic food processing in researcher education, which is why the needs of organic food processing must be taken into account in university education as well.

Expertise is needed especially in the further processing of organic foods whose consumption is increasing, such as vegetarian and convenience foods. Education and research must cover the entire food sector in a versatile manner, including the nutritional quality and safety of raw materials and end products and the impacts of processing methods.

Information on the correct use of authorised additives and processing aids is needed in the preparation of organic foods. There is also a need for developing gentle processing methods that help avoid over-manipulation and preserve the good properties of organic raw materials. As organic farming supports the Sustainable Development Goals, the reduction of food waste must also be promoted throughout the chain, including by making better use of side streams.

Consumers want to ensure the authenticity of organic products, which is why authentication, traceability and transparency throughout the supply chain are important areas of development. The development of digitalisation serves the entire chain, entrepreneurs, trade and consumers.

### Indicators

- Monitoring the amount of funding for organic food research

### Potential funding sources

- Research and development funding

## 3.2 Developing cooperation between food companies, procurement organisations and professional kitchens

Product development will be promoted to increase the availability of food suitable for professional kitchens and to develop value-added products both for the domestic market and for export. The requirements set for professional kitchens differ from those concerning consumer products. Products that are suitable for the processes of catering services are created through joint development and testing. Market dialogue and innovative procurement that includes developing products suitable for professional kitchens will be encouraged together with companies.

### Indicators

- Selection of organic foods in wholesalers and catering services

### Potential funding sources

- CAP Strategic Plan/ training and communication projects, cooperation projects, advisory services, rural network activities, business funding

### **3.3 The food industry and trade will see the organic production sector as an opportunity and a sector of the future. Contract production will be increased to ensure the supply of raw material**

The consumption of organic products will grow as new organic products enter the market. The trade sector has been a partner for large and small food industry companies in developing organic own label products. This has resulted in organic products that are attractive and affordable to consumers. The production of own label products means stability for business, especially in times of economic uncertainty. The marketing and logistics of retailers help small players create their brand and place it on the market.

There is still a need for increasing the range of domestic food products, such as bakery and processed meat products. Especially small food processing companies with limited human resources must be supported in the conversion to organic production, and existing organic processing companies must be supported with advice and information to make sure they can comply with new production conditions. The food industry must be provided with information on consumers of organic products, international and domestic organic product markets, as well as exports and research related to the development of organic products for consumers and professional kitchens. Information on market requirements is gathered from retail, wholesalers, food services and organisations in the organic production sector. Small businesses can have fantastic products but lack marketing resources. In some cases, they could sell and market their products to a wider market through a larger company. One way of verifying the quantity and quality of raw materials is to increase contract production. Contract production would also promote branding. The role of the food industry should be seen as a part of the development of the chain in different strategies, such as county strategies.

The goal of the 'organic product of the year' competition organised by the Finnish Organic Food Association during the theme day for organic products is to encourage the food industry to develop innovative organic products and to boost the marketing of organic products by highlighting interesting case examples from Finland and the rest of the world. The 'organic product of the year' competition of the Finnish Organic Farmers Association highlights the best Finnish organic products in both consumer and professional kitchen categories.

The needs of the food industry related to the fortification of organic foods must be examined and a situation picture constructed of the preconditions for the fortification of organic foods, including with vitamin D.

**Indicators**

- A chain barometer used to explore ideas related to organic production across the entire chain – including an increase in the range of organic products in food industry (consumer survey)
- Volume of contract production
- Number of producer organisations focusing on organic production
- Number of participants in the competitions and the organic foods theme day
- Needs related to fortification have been investigated

**Potential funding sources**

- Food chain development funding, business funding, CAP Strategic Plan/ project funding, appropriations for advisory services

### **3.4 Increasing food industry workers' competence in organic production**

To guarantee sufficient competence in organic production in both small and large food companies, organic products must be included in the scope of training and advice. Currently, the advisory services are limited to the expert services of the Finnish Organic Farmers Association and, to some extent, the advisory services provided by the Women's Rural Advisory Organisation. The production instructions of the Finnish Food Authority are readily available, but especially small companies lack the resources necessary for staff training. An extensive study to be carried out of education and training in organic production will provide information on available education and training, and this information can be utilised by education and training providers in the future.

The Finnish Organic Food Association has a special Organic Food Group, which consists of Finnish organic food manufacturers. The group meets regularly to discuss the challenges and opportunities of organic food processing, and it is also an important channel for disseminating expertise.

**Indicators**

- Report completed

**Potential funding sources**

- Funding for food chain development
- CAP Strategic Plan/business funding
- Funding for the development of teaching and education



## 4 Objective 4. Finland to become a significant exporter of organic products

In the Organic 2.0 programme the target value of Finland's organic product exports in 2030 was set at EUR 100 million. When the implementation plan was drawn up, this was considered a modest target and partly contradictory with the title: "Finland to become a significant exporter of organic products." Therefore, the target for organic product exports has been moved up to EUR 100 million in 2025 and, after that, a new target for 2030 can be set for the exports.

Upgrading the processing of organic products for exports has been set as the second target. The intermediate target for upgrading the processing of organic products for exports is 35% in 2025 (+ 10 percentage points) for products exported under a specific brand, and 50% in 2030. This target is even more significant than increasing the value of exports, as upgrading the processing increases the value of exports faster and more efficiently than increasing the volume of organic product exports. The Finnish Organic Food Association studied the value and added value of organic product exports in 2018 and 2020 with an interview study funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. There are currently no plans to continue the study.

In addition, the profitability and competitiveness of primary production should be improved so that Finnish organic raw materials will be available to the processing industry as the international sales of Finnish organic products develop. For this reason, the aim should also be to promote organic farmers' opportunities to sell organic raw materials directly to the international market. This is a temporary objective that will remain in force until the processing industry is able to provide a significant level of use for organic raw materials. It is difficult to set an indicator for this objective, but the related progress and needs should be monitored through e.g. interviews with experts.

## Measures

### 4.1 Encouraging companies to increase the exports of organic products

Special projects and joint events are needed to promote the export of organic products, enabling companies to obtain information on the export market and potential relevant to organic exports, help related to product development and marketing, and official information on the special features of organic product exports. The export market access of existing organic products can also be promoted through joint buyer events, participation at fairs and other measures that support exports. The projects must be implemented in cooperation with export organisations, organic food organisations, research institutes, educational institutions, operators providing product development services and the Finnish Food Authority. After the implementation of the Food from Finland programme has ended, further measures to promote food exports must be ensured, and they must include organic products.

Funding is also available for market surveys and market openings for organic products. In particular, the funding opportunities of larger group projects should be utilised better than at present, as they also give the projects the necessary visibility and critical mass. Individual companies have quite limited resources for investing in the market and their impact remains quite insignificant, even with public funding (funding usually operates at a 50%/50% ratio).

To develop organic products suitable for export, there is a need for funding aimed at companies and groups of companies to cover the costs of research and product development. It is important that Finnish companies invest in product development related to organic production and knowledge of the target market.

#### Indicators

- Cooperation projects completed
- Promotion of organic food exports continues

#### Potential funding sources

- Business Finland funding
- CAP Strategic Plan/business funding and projects involving a group of companies
- EU promotion campaigns
- Business funding

## 4.2 Project to promote organic food exports

The project aims to organise the promotion of organic food exports on a long-term basis. It is important to combine existing export tools and agree on the use of resources and the roles of different parties in promoting organic food exports. There is a need to investigate the most suitable and efficient project types and appropriate national funding. In addition, organic food exports must be included in future EU funding applications.

Another objective of the project is to increase organic food exports. This requires regular information provision to companies on the potential of exports and the development of international organic markets and on the available export promotion measures. Farmers must be provided with information on the direct sales of organic raw materials to the export market (temporarily to improve the profitability and competitiveness of primary production, promoting this cannot be a long-term objective). Suitable groups of companies must be assembled for different measures. It is necessary to organise export promotion events and measures specifically aimed at organic companies and products.

The narrative of organic production in Finland must be created as a part of Finland's country brand. The special features of organic production in Finland, such as the collection area of organic products from the wild, will be utilised in communicating about organic production. One of the main goals of the project is to compile the strengths and main arguments of organic production in Finland in one place and work on marketing material based on this information in different languages to serve as a tool for companies and to be used at events that promote exports.

### Indicators

- Number of participating companies, number of events, growth in exports
- Increase in business cooperation
- Export volume in 2025 and 2030
- Monitoring the value of organic exports every 2 years
- Monitoring the added value of organic exports every 2 years

### Potential funding sources

- Project funding

### **4.3 Maintaining information on organic production standards from different countries and supplementing information services with respect to the requirements for private organic labels in main target countries for exports**

The need, opportunities and costs of other organic certificates promoting exporting (e.g. Krav, Bio Suisse) will be examined and, in collaboration with organisations, companies and the authorities, the opportunities to offer additional certification as an official service will be explored as this is often a prerequisite for market access.

#### **Indicators**

- Volume and share of additional certified exports

#### **Potential funding sources**

- Project funding, business funding, as part of official duties

## 5 Objective 5. Increasing organic production



### Measures

#### 5.1 Encouraging the production of raw materials that meet domestic and export demand

Finland will encourage the production of raw materials to achieve the objectives of increasing consumption, serving the food industry and promoting exports. The production of products will be increased in line with consumption trends (e.g. berries, legumes, outdoor vegetables and meat products). The dissemination of consumer information will be promoted throughout the production chain, including primary producers to ensure that primary production will be better able to meet the demand.

Statistics will be developed to enable the real-time monitoring of organic producer prices and make the information openly available. Producer price monitoring should also be carried out concerning direct sales, trade between farms and EU internal market prices.

The Finnish Organic Food Association coordinates and maintains working groups on the value chains for organic meat, organic vegetables and organic milk that monitor the development of the organic production sector and the situation in the organic market by product group and look for solutions to bottlenecks in the chain, such as production and processing problems. In addition, the development of the organic cereal market is monitored by a working group on organic cereals led by the Finnish Cereal Committee.

The need for changes in support for organic production in the next EU funding period must be considered well in advance, including the costs of different types of production and the need for support.

### Indicators

- Development of the production of products that match domestic and export consumption trends
- Statistics on organic markets are up-to-date and as openly available as possible
- Preparation of the next CAP period has taken the needs of the organic production sector into consideration

### Potential funding sources

- Cap Strategic Plan/ payment for organic production
- As part of official duties

## 5.2 Increasing crop yields per hectare and crop security by developing cultivation methods and expertise

In organic production, the average yield is a misleading indicator, as there is massive variation between the crop yields of different farms. The yield gap between the best farms and farms with an average yield is much larger than in conventional farming. The crop yield depends on the farms' motivation to produce crops, farm size, production sector, geographical location, and many other factors.

Increasing the crop yields per hectare is essential for the development of organic production, but it must be done sustainably, taking environmental efficiency into account. The farm-specific profitability of the production must also be taken into account. The breeding and testing of crop varieties also play an important role in the development of cultivation.

Finland will invest in long-term field testing in the organic production sector and learn from the practices of the best organic farms. In the cultivation of arable crops, the management of perennial weeds (such as quitch grass, thistle and sonchus) must be developed with the help of new, more lightweight tilling methods and crop rotations.

The new opportunities provided by smart digital monitoring methods and remote identification systems will be utilised in the development of plant protection in organic production. Changing cultivation conditions affect the occurrence of pests and diseases. There is a need for developing biological plant protection methods and studying their effectiveness. There is also a need to raise awareness of how biodiversity in the agricultural environment can be used to support plant protection in various organic farming systems. Research related to measures promoting biodiversity and the exploitation of natural pests in plant protection will be continued.

Research and development funding must be allocated to the development of recycled fertilisers suitable for organic production, their testing and the development of organic farming methods. Balanced plant nutrition, ensuring the timely availability of nitrogen nutrients and taking care of the growing conditions of fields are key factors in producing a crop. Crop yield levels can also be increased by developing mixed farming techniques, plant protection methods and crop rotations.

### Indicators

- Amount of research and development funding for the development of recycled fertilisers and organic farming methods
- Increase in crop yields per hectare based on statistics of Natural Resources Institute Finland
- Development of the number of organic projects bringing together researchers, advisers and farmers
- Number of Living Lab networks in the organic production sector

### Potential funding sources

- Project funding
- National and international research and development funding

## 5.3 Strengthening organic livestock production



Livestock farming is an integral part of organic production. Finland is regionally differentiated in terms of livestock production and crop cultivation, which weakens nutrient cycles and hinders feed trade between farms. Another challenge is the significant increase in production costs in organic livestock farming and the requirements set by new legislation concerning organic farming. It must be possible to increase the protein self-sufficiency of feed production for non-ruminants.

The profitability of livestock production must be improved to meet the demand and the use of organic products by consumers and public catering services must be increased despite a decline in purchasing power. There are many bottlenecks that must be resolved to increase production, particularly in pork and broiler production. Likewise, the organic breeding of calves from dairy and suckler cow farms should be developed.

One important means to promote self-sufficiency in feeds and local production is by encouraging and funding projects that aim to increase cooperation between farms throughout Finland. There is a need for measures that promote cooperation between livestock farms and farms exclusively used for plant cultivation as well as between farms representing the same production sector.



Organic production leads the way in providing production conditions that enable the natural behaviour of animal species that affects animal welfare and the most suitable feeding method for a given species. The mandatory grazing requirement for organic livestock prevents biodiversity loss and increases biodiversity, but there is a need for more research data and practical examples. Experiences of the available solutions should be shared and dialogue increased with the entire Finnish livestock sector. There continues to be a need to develop even better construction and management method solutions that can be carried out cost-effectively on several farms with the aim to improve the production conditions. Finding the best solutions requires more cooperation between Nordic advisory services and organic production organisations.

Projects related to production conditions and feeding that enable the natural behaviour of animal species must include special features concerning veterinary care and medication in accordance with valid regulations on organic livestock farming. To date, there has been little cooperation between veterinarians and advisory services in organic production. In the sector, there is a lack of basic knowledge and there are even negative preconceptions on both sides. The greatest challenges in the coordination of veterinary medicine and preventive health care and the conditions set for organic farming are associated with organic milk production, organic pig farming and organic egg production.

Exemptions related to the use of conventional animals in organic production will expire in certain respects on 31 December 2036. The availability of organically grown animals must be improved and cooperation between actors in the production chain must be developed so that the quantitative and qualitative needs of organic livestock farmers related to animal material can be met with organic livestock. Animal material suitable for organic production must be bred taking into account the feed and medication requirements related to organic production, including high genetic diversity, ability to adapt to local conditions, and the animals' longevity, vitality and resistance to diseases and health problems. Research and development projects must focus on studying the selection criteria for animal material suitable for organic production, providing practical field operators with information, and developing trade in breeding animals to ensure the availability of the best possible animal material.

Measures taken to promote the welfare of organically grown animals must be more boldly highlighted when communicating about organic production and products to consumers. There is need for public discussion on the preconditions for the welfare of organically grown animals and possible contradictions in the values of organic production.

In organic beekeeping, the appropriateness of national aid paid to beekeepers per hive will be investigated. Starting in 2023, the aid scheme for beekeepers will be examined as a part of coordinating the needs and conditions of the apiculture sector. The costs of

organic beekeeping are higher than in conventional honey production for reasons such as the requirements set for organic production concerning production supplies and the organic sugar used to feed the bees during winter. Organic farming accounted for 8.8% of bee colonies in 2020.

Opportunities for using funds from NEUV02020 or similar resources for advisory services for beekeeping are examined, as the service is only available to those with a farm code.

### Indicators

- Separate 2030 production targets have been set for different types of production
- New aid conditions for beekeeping will be in force in 2023
- No decrease but, instead, growth in the volume of products entering the organic products market from any livestock production sector from the 2021/2021 volumes

### Potential funding sources

- Research and development funding
- As part of official duties
- Project funding

## 5.4 Development of cultivation practices and increasing farmers' competence and collaboration through research, education and advice

Developing organic farming methods requires a lot of local and experience-based knowledge of the suitability of different methods for different soil types, production systems and environmental conditions. Increasing cooperation between research, advisory services and farmers through development projects is highly important so that new information can be put into practice and research can be targeted to topics that are relevant for farmers and serve practical operations. Various kinds of farmers' gatherings and the production and dissemination of guides and instructions for farmers support the work to increase competence. The Living Lab and Lighthouse Farm concepts also support cooperation and competence building.

Research knowledge must be shared through many channels. The annual Luomupäivät (“Organic Days”) event focusing on the most topical issues of organic farming is an important meeting place for researchers, advisers and farmers. The Finnish Organic Farmers Association and the Finnish Organic Research Institute have carried the main responsibility for organising the event for several years. Research knowledge is also disseminated through webinars and online platforms open to all.

### Indicators

- Number of regional development projects

### Potential funding sources

- CAP Strategic Plan/training and communication projects, advisory services, cooperation projects
- participation fees for events, financing of advisory services

## 5.5 Encouraging to increase the production of specialised products through advice and research

The structures of organic research related to the study of horticultural plants will be developed and piloting will be carried out to diversify the production. In addition to competence in the production of horticultural plants, more diverse production will also be supported by developing the cultivation of protein and oilseed crops and dye plants, which so far have been more rare.

Finland will invest in training experts in special crops, less common arable crops, outdoor vegetables, garden berries and fruit production, and enable making use of international expertise in the production. The small number of experts causes a real bottleneck to developing the sector in Finland. Investments must be made in researcher education and further education opportunities. Funding is needed to enable hiring at least a few postgraduate students each year. Another bottleneck is the insufficient number of researchers in the sector.

Factors limiting the yield level of outdoor vegetable production are usually related to weed management and control of plant diseases and pests. The variation in weather factors brings more challenges. The availability of organic propagating material in the future is open to question and there are also risks related to plant protection associated with the use of imported seedlings. The availability of high-quality organic propagation

material may pose a major challenge in vegetable production. There is a need for testing the resistance of varieties against diseases. The development of the diverse cultivation of organic vegetables (new, less cultivated plants) requires testing.

The requirement of root-soil contact in the EU Regulation on organic production causes a bottleneck to the development of greenhouse production. This applies, in particular, to the year-round greenhouse cultivation of organic tomatoes and cucumbers, which has previously been carried out as sack farming in limited growing media. The development of new production technology requires knowledge of the type of production that would meet the requirements of the current Regulation on organic production.

In plant protection, it is important to continue research (proactive methods) related to measures promoting biodiversity and the utilisation of natural pests in plant protection. At the same time, the measures to promote biodiversity support the wider objective of maintaining biodiversity in the agricultural environment and increasing ecosystem services.

### Indicators

- Organic vegetable experimentations are under way
- Finland has experts in the cultivation of organic special crops
- Launching Nordic cooperation on cultivation in soil floor greenhouses
- Development of research and development funding in the sector and the number of new practical cultivation solutions

### Potential funding sources

- Research and development funding

## 5.6 Doubling the production of organic seed and seedlings. Establishing trials for organic varieties



In the future, plant propagating material used in organic farming must be organic, as no exceptions for the use of conventional propagating material will be granted as from 31 December 2036. The Finnish Food Authority manages a database for monitoring the availability of organic propagating material and the seeds of different plant species and varieties sold in Finland.

More organic seed production is needed. The production of organic seeds is technically challenging, and production involves many challenges related to plant protection. There is need to invest in the training of seed farmers and research investments must also be targeted at improving the profitability of production.

The characteristics of varieties play a major role in determining the yield level of organic production. There is already a lot of variety selection and even plant breeding for organic conditions in Europe, but all varieties produced may not be suited to Finland's cool climate and long days.

So far, no comprehensive, uniform and systematic experimentation of organic plant varieties has been carried out in all parts of Finland, unlike has been the case for conventional cultivation. The work should be planned in cooperation with Boreal Plant Breeding and farmers producing materials with high diversity. The Natural Resources Institute Finland has organic arable areas that can be used in Jokioinen, Ruukki and Mikkeli (farm research cooperation on experimental plots).

### Indicators

- Statistical data on organic seed production and seedlings
- Volume of annual experiments with plant varieties in organic arable lands
- Extent of the testing activities for varieties suitable for organic production
- Area used to cultivate organic varieties and material
- Supply of organic varieties and materials with high diversity
- Decline in the exceptions granted for conventional seeds (number and use in kg)

### Potential funding sources

- Research and development funding
- Project funding

## 5.7 Developing cooperation among farms

Producers will be encouraged to increase mutual cooperation. One way to do this to use the measure for promoting collaboration under the CAP Strategic Plan to establish producer organisations. According to the action plan for organic production in the EU, organic farmers can benefit from EU funding provided under the EU's common agricultural policy and from the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products and the aid and funds available from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFAF) by setting up or joining a producer organisation. Producer organisations improve the organisation of the different operators in the organic production supply chain. Action plans covering the production of organic fruit and vegetables receive more co-financing.

Regionally diverse production will be enabled. Securing regionally diverse production enables farmers and other actors in the sector to benefit from local cooperation, such as the relocation of livestock manure or agri-ecological symbiosis.

### Indicators

- Number of organic producer organisations
- Increase in the share of collaborating organic farmers
- Number of Living Lab networks

### Potential funding sources

- CAP Strategic Plan/advisory services, cooperation projects (incl. farmer group projects)

## 6 Objective 6. Growth of the collection area of organic products from the wild

Objectives set for the collection of organic products from the wild in the early 2030s:

- The potential of the collection of organic products has been maximised in terms of the production area, production, recovery, processing, products, consumption and exports, and intangible values.
- The collection of organic products is a part of profitable forestry: Finland has a digital forest data system that is sustainable, fair and cost-effective for all operators in the chain where all relevant information needed for certification and the efficient operation of raw material chains as a part of profitable forestry has been integrated.
- Organic products collected from the wild are a part of Finland's national brand and the narrative of organic production in Finland.

### Milestones:

- 2023: Examining whether there are organic certification practices that make it easier for forest owners to include their forests in the system for the collection of organic products within the framework of the current legislation. Launching pilot projects to test group certification for products other than those collected under the right of public access and to collect data based on the experiments.
- 2027: Developing incentives to encourage forest owners to include their areas in the system for the collection of organic products
- 2030: Doubling the current collection area of organic products of 6.9 million hectares

## Measures

### 6.1 Increasing the collection area of organic products and improving the efficiency of the use of the area

Forest owners are informed about the collection of organic products from the wild, its significance and the related opportunities, both about products collected with the forest owner's permission, for which the forest owner can earn additional income, and about products collected under the right of public access that have a wider societal significance. In addition to market development and economic potential, information will be provided about intangible values and the sustainability and responsibility perspectives.

In addition to increasing the number of areas included in the system for the collection of organic products, well-functioning and cost-effective means to utilise them will be created to ensure that the raw materials collected from the areas end up in the market as organic products and the production of raw materials is diverse and cost-effective. Cost-effective processes for the collection of organic products will be studied and developed, both separately and as a part of regular logging activities.

In addition to increasing their total area, the potential of the areas to serve as collection areas of organic products will be improved by enhancing their connectivity and accessibility. The total area alone does not indicate the suitability of the area for the collection of e.g. berries.

The collection areas of organic products are considered as a special environment completely different from arable farming. The possibility of reducing costs for annual payments will be investigated to either abolish or minimise costs during years when there is no production or measures.

Centres will be designated for the collection of natural products, with the collection of organic products from the wild as part of their activities. Wholesale sector will be created for the collection of organic products to promote the market access of the growing production and facilitate cooperation between the collectors, processors and manufacturers of organic products. The anticipation of the supply and demand of raw materials and intermediate goods produced from these will be increased to achieve more consistent and stable operations.

The preparation of forest plans with an emphasis on natural products will be promoted. The plans will be used to encourage forest owners to increase the overall yield of their forests also through the added value brought by the collection of organic products.



### Indicators

- The collection area of organic products, areas certified using the investigator model and the basic model, and potential of the area (connectivity)
- Growth in the market for organic products collected from the wild
- Increase in the value of the collection of organic products for forest owners

### Potential funding sources

- Project funding

## 6.2 Developing a comprehensive digital forest information system for the collection of organic products

In 2030, Finland must have introduced a digital forest data system that is sustainable, fair and cost-effective for all operators in the chain where all relevant information from different systems needed for certification and the efficient operation of raw material chains has been integrated.

The system will be developed as a whole so that, in the future, it can be used to compile not only information related to organic collection areas and control but also the availability of raw materials, crop potential and season and the progress of the collection of organic products, and to make all of this available in real-time in a mobile application. The comprehensive system also provides forest owners with information on the raw material potential and enables anticipation related to, for instance, the recovery of resin, pine bark and birch bark in good time before felling. The system must be developed gradually, with the foundation for the system in place and its maintenance planned in 2027.

A study must be carried out already before this, i.e. in 2023, of the possibilities and the most cost-effective means of collecting the forest information required for organic certification based on the forest information standard from the systems of different forest owners. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry must convene a meeting of key actors from the forest and natural products sector to discuss the possibilities and requirements of the collection of as up-to-date data as possible from different systems.

A study will be conducted of how the potential for the collection of organic products from the wild can benefit different operators, including the forest sector, when communicating about sustainable and responsible activities. A study will also be conducted of the impacts of the diverse use of forests on the regional economy and the significance of the collection of organic products in this context.

### Indicators

- The system is in use

### Potential funding sources

- Funding from parties involved in the collection of organic products
- Project funding

## 6.3 Developing inputs suitable for organic production and increasing their use

The use of organic alternatives to stump treatment substances will be encouraged and new alternative products developed. Organic forest fertilisers will be developed. At the same time, the development of environmentally friendly, locally produced alternatives also contribute to preparedness for future changes.

### Indicators

- Number of new organic inputs

### Potential funding sources

- Business funding
- Research and development funding

## 6.4 Using communication and marketing to raise awareness of the collection of organic products and related opportunities and strengths throughout the production chain

Training and information on guidelines for the collection of organic products from the wild will be provided. Joint events will be organised to increase dialogue and cooperation between those involved in the collection of organic products and processing of natural products, landowners, research institutes and authorities. A strategy for communicating about the collection of organic products will be drawn up and updated on a regular basis.

More effective communication about the organic production sector will be targeted at young people. Organic production, and especially natural raw materials, is a growing part

of the sustainable food system of the future. Young people's awareness of and inclusion in the future organic sector will be increased by means of communication in cooperation with actors in the sector.

The supply and availability of organic products collected from the wild in Finland and in international trade will also be promoted through work on the value chain. The Finnish Organic Food Association aims to establish its own working group on the value chain under the theme of the collection of organic products in 2023.

#### Indicators

- Communication strategy completed

#### Potential funding sources

- Project funding

## 6.5 Developing statistics on the collection of organic products

Background information on the operators involved in the collection of organic products from the wild will be compiled in 2023 (including primary producers, processors, the total surface areas of the areas used for the organic collection activities, raw materials, products) and annual monitoring will be carried out based on this data in the future. An operating model will be developed to enable obtaining the data quickly for monitoring purposes and further measures. Data production on the number of collection areas of organic products will be developed to make it more up-to-date and to also include locally obtained data related to the investigator model.

The quantities, export volumes and value of the organic products collected from the wild and products processed further will be investigated.

#### Indicators

- Number of statistics

#### Potential funding sources

- As part of official duties, Natural Resources Institute Finland's performance targets/official duties, Arctic Flavours Association

## 7 Objective 7: Initiating organic aquaculture

Sustainable aquaculture production has significant growth potential in Finland. The global production of aquaculture is growing strongly and already exceeds beef production. Farmed fish is responsible, healthy and climate-friendly food. The overall impact of fish farming on the water system is minor, causing only 1–2% of Finland's nutrient loading in the Baltic Sea.

The Government adopted a resolution on the aquaculture strategy for mainland Finland in February 2022.

The vision of the aquaculture strategy is that aquaculture production will increase to 25,000 tonnes in 2030 in such a way that this growth will not jeopardise the achievement of the objectives set for water and marine resources management. In order to implement the strategy, 27 concrete measures have been defined, including an analysis of the development of organic production.

An aquaculture development group appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry will serve as a forum/working group for the work that aims at initiating organic production. The development group has had preliminary discussions on organic production and concluded that the work could start with a survey on the opportunities of organic production and possible obstacles caused by legislation. In the future, the development group will discuss the matter in more detail together with experts in organic production.

So far, the survey has found many challenges for initiating organic aquaculture. It will take many years to create the parent stock of fish and start the organic production of fish fry. The import of organic fry from the country with organic fish farming closest to Finland, Denmark, presents a disease risk. Feed production must be differentiated and the plant-based raw material must be organic. Organic production needs to have a lower fish density compared to conventional production. All-female shoals or triploid non-spawners may not be used in organic production. Recirculating aquaculture systems are not allowed in organic production.

There are many questions related to organic fish production. The legislation causes significant restrictions or obstacles to organic production, its productivity and, therefore, its profitability as well. It must be possible to cover the extent and decrease in productivity with the price premium for organic fish, but it is uncertain whether this is possible. Experience and knowledge will be gathered from Ireland and Denmark, which are the largest producers of organic fish. Aquaculture in general also faces numerous challenges, starting with the fact that obtaining new permits is often a very difficult, expensive and long-lasting process. Organic production has not been a priority issue, as the demand for fish is high in any case. In addition, eco-labels, such as the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) certificate, have been considered more important than organic production.

## Measures

### 7.1 Reviewing legislative obstacles and opportunities

Work is carried out in the aquaculture development group.

#### Indicators

- The survey has been completed

#### Potential funding sources

- As part of official duties

### 7.2 Hearing the experiences of Danish and Irish producers with expertise in organic fish production

#### Indicators

- Consultations in spring 2023

#### Potential funding sources

- As part of official duties

### **7.3 Assessing the profitability of organic production and the demand for organic fish as well as the significance of the ASC eco-label**

The work is carried out by an aquaculture development group appointed by the ministry together with experts in organic production.

#### **Indicators**

- The aquaculture development group from 2023 onwards

#### **Potential funding sources**

- As part of official duties and, possibly, a study (European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund EMFAF/national funds)

### **7.4 Considering solutions for possible obstacles and measures that enable initiating organic production.**

The measures include instructions issued by the authorities, establishing the parent stock, and supply of fish fry and feed.

#### **Indicators**

- The aquaculture development group from 2023 onwards

#### **Potential funding sources**

- As part of official duties and, possibly, a study (European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund EMFAF/national funds)

## 8 Objective 8: Increasing competence and knowledge on organic production

### Measures

#### 8.1 Inclusion of basic information about organic production in the curricula of upper secondary vocational education and training and higher education institutions

Developing education and training requires a study of the current state of education and training on organic production and the development needs of education. The study will investigate the current state of education on organic production in the entire food sector. It must cover teaching in agriculture and horticulture, fisheries and the collection of organic products from the wild and the further processing of food. International cooperation and networks must be explored as well. The study will be used to develop curricula and teacher education at different levels and to strengthen the available education and training.

#### Indicators

- Scope of the study
- Coverage of education and training on organic production, the scope and quantity of available education and training and education and training that has been completed
- Scope and number of final theses
- Number of teachers specialised in organic production

#### Potential funding sources

- Project funding
- Basic funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture

## 8.2 Increasing cooperation between agricultural and educational administration

In cooperation between the agricultural and educational administration, it is important to build a network of those working on organic production. Different kinds of visits and other events are an important part of the activities to further enhance this cooperation. Regular meetings and various kinds of events, such as webinars concerning specific themes, are needed for exchanging information. Building and maintaining cooperation require the coordination of activities and an action plan. The first step requires charting the current situation, i.e. a survey of the current information and information exchange methods. The work to build the network and determine key operators will start after this.

### Indicators

- Scope of the study
- Scope and coverage of the network
- Number of events
- Dissemination of topical information and learning about different themes

### Potential funding sources

- Project funding and investments by the organisations involved

## 8.3 Rapid dissemination of the findings of organic research for use by farms and businesses

The entire organic production chain from primary production to consumption needs to be developed through multidisciplinary research. The strategy of the Finnish Organic Research Institute 2021–2024 discusses the focus areas of organic research in Finland. Strategies should be created for organic research for the period 2025–2030 in cooperation between researchers and actors in the organic production sector. Research and development project activities supporting the development of primary production, food processing and business are needed. The aim is to put the results of organic research into practice and rapidly disseminate research knowledge through versatile multichannel communication. Communicating research knowledge in an understandable form also supports a wider understanding of organic production in society. Information can be disseminated through many methods of scientific communication, including webinars and online publications that are readily accessible to all and reach extensive target groups. Advisory services play a key role in disseminating research knowledge. Advisory services can be provided as group and farm counselling.



Organic production is characterised by the efficient utilisation of local resources and production adapted to local conditions. Compiling a network of education and demonstration farms representing Finnish organic production to support organic research and the transfer of knowledge promotes the development of organic primary production across Finland. There is a need to build and promote cooperation between the ProAgria research farm network, Natural Resources Institute Finland, school farms and existing Living Lab networks and Lighthouse Farms. The main objectives of the network are the promotion of research in agricultural sciences, the testing of innovations in practice and the introduction of research knowledge into practice.

The aim of the AgriHubi Farmer's competence network ([www.agrihubi.fi](http://www.agrihubi.fi)) is to strengthen business expertise in agriculture and horticulture and to build a foundation for sustainable profitability in Finnish primary production, including organic production. The development of agricultural business management competence requires research, the renewal of education in degree programmes, and the construction of advisory services to help comprehensive farm management and projects promoting these goals. The projects contribute to putting new knowledge into practice. Meanwhile, the effective use of these tools requires active participation and commitment from the parties and stakeholders involved in the food chain to achieve the common objective. The involvement of all relevant parties, particularly entrepreneurs in agriculture and horticulture, is the key to enable education and training to provide better tools and capacity for working life and entrepreneurship, advisory services to meet the needs of entrepreneurs and research to explore issues arising from the practice.

Pilots and experiments enable the rapid utilisation of research knowledge. The sharing of good practices and examples, producers' stories, and examples of successful operations is important in communication. It is important to build an international network that fosters the exchange of information.

### Indicators

- A research farm network has been launched, including a comprehensive range of organic farms representing different production sectors and regions
- Number of cooperation projects, operators and activities
- Involving students in the development and business activities in the form of traineeships, excursions and visits
- Utilisation of the results from previous projects

### Potential funding sources

- Finnish Organic Research Institute's funding
- Financing of advisory services
- Project funding and organisations' and companies' self-financing

## 8.4 Use of EU research and innovation funds and EIB Agri funds

Joint European research and innovation funding schemes (e.g. Horizon Europe, EIP-AGRI, structural funds) serve as important funding instruments for the research-based development of expertise in the Finnish organic production sector. In order for Finnish research expertise to support the development of the sector, research must be targeted at key research needs in the field. The research strategy of the Finnish Organic Research Institute has been prepared in cooperation with business sector representatives and stakeholders, and it describes research priorities for the period 2021–2024. The research strategy should be updated for the period 2025–2030. In the near future, we should find ways to increase research related to organic food processing and livestock production as these volume has been relatively low in recent years.

Long-term efforts must be made to strengthen research and development activities that support the organic production sector. Information about the needs of the Finnish organic production sector must be provided already at the stage when different programme documents are prepared. It is important to include the perspective of organic production in regional strategies and programmes (e.g. concerning the Living Lab network) so that the needs of the sector are taken into account in background documents guiding rural and food sector development.

Increasing international research cooperation and promoting international networking of researchers and advisers are important steps to make full use of European research and innovation funds. Investing in researcher education in Finland enables to raise organic research experts in the country and the development of expertise in the field.

### Indicators

- Research strategy 2025–2030 of the Finnish Organic Research Institute has been published
- Horizon Europe projects including Finnish operators have been launched to develop the sector
- Structural fund projects developing the sector have been launched in Finland

### Potential funding sources

- Finnish Organic Research Institute's funding
- EU research funding

## 8.5 Ensuring high-quality advice on organic production and products, including in advisory services for businesses

Like in other rural advisory services, the competence of experts plays a key role in advisory services for organic production. It is important to provide experts educated by upper secondary vocational education and training and higher education institutions with good basic knowledge of organic production as they will also serve organic farms and food processing companies. The continuity of organic advisory services, the low turnover rate of new experts and attractive wages must be ensured.

The new experts need orientation in working with customers (operating methods, services and tools). To maintain the competence of experts in organic production, further education is also needed (internal and external training). Organic inspection activities, the NEUVO advisory services and the related training of experts ensure high-quality advice. Development funding for advisory services on organic production is needed to safeguard the quality of advisory services in the future. The development and project funding of advisory services must take into account the work of advisors in the general promotion of organic production at the regional level. Funding is needed for the development of both competence and tools. Digitalisation enables an efficient exchange of experiences and information both in customer work and in the advisory service network.

The on-the-job competence development of experts in organic production is supported by cooperation projects between research, advisory services, food business operators and farmers. These projects have been discussed in more detail in previous measures concerning competence and increasing knowledge on organic production. The international network of advisors offers an opportunity to expand competence. However, additional resources are needed to boost the operations.

The advisory services for organic farms require multidisciplinary expertise. ProAgria's customer teams composed of various experts can offer extensive competence that benefits customers. The Finnish Organic Farmers Association publishes the only professional journal for organic producers, with articles and a question/answer column written by experts. The association's experts have unique competence acquired over a long period, as well as social networks. Organic producers, researchers, other advisers,

developers, journalists and authorities turn to the experts to obtain independent information on issues related to organic production and products.

Advisory services must be expanded to cover food processing and the collection of organic products from the wild. Advisors on the collection of organic products can be trained in a collaboration between the Finnish Forest Centre and ProAgria. An information kit can be compiled on the collection of organic products for business advisory services and development organisations. In particular, small food processing operators must have advice to support them in the conversion to organic production. Advice on organic food processing can be developed in cooperation with industry, trade, farmers and test kitchens.

### Indicators

- Amount of government grants awarded to advisory services on organic production
- Project funding
- Basic and further education programme
- Customer satisfaction
- Amount of advice targeted at small food processing operators

### Potential funding sources

- Government grants targeted at advisory services on organic production
- Project funding
- Customer financing
- Funding allocated to the NEUVO advisory services
- Horizon projects
- Cooperation with educational institutions
- Funding for the Luomua metsäluonnosta ("Organic products from forest nature") project

## 9 Objective 9. Legislation and development of control

### Measures

#### 9.1 Development of the organisation and quality assurance of control

The regional government reform also concerns the appropriate organisation of control and certification in the organic production sector. The aim must be to harmonise the control measures across the country to improve the effectiveness and performance of control. These goals can be achieved by compiling the controls into regionally appropriate entities. Sufficient resources are allocated to the Finnish Food Authority to carry out the tasks assigned to it.

Regular annual meetings between collectors of organic products and the Finnish Food Authority will be held to discuss matters related to the collection of organic products from the wild. The collection of organic products, particularly from forests, is still evolving. Dialogue is needed to promote the development of guidelines and legislation related to the collection of organic products from the wild.

To support the consistency of the control, the manual for inspectors of organic production will be updated. The manual contains instructions of the Finnish Food Authority for practical situations.

Contacts with stakeholders created in preparing guidelines for organic production will be maintained. In addition, the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment will organise annual farmers' events on issues such as ways to take the practices required for the control of support payments into account in the control of organic production.

Professionals will be trained to implement control measures in the organic production sector and their expertise on the collection of organic products from the wild will also be enhanced.

New operating methods for the supervision of the collection areas of organic products from the wild, including contractual arrangements for rental or use rights, will be promoted. A model will be examined in which the investigator or another service provider takes care of joining the control system for organic collection on behalf of the forest owner, using a so-called basic model.

By 2030, Finland will examine whether the control system for organic collection activities can be fully separated from the control of crop production as a distinct working environment. Amendments must be proposed, if necessary, to influence EU legislation in a timely manner. The expertise of specialists in support payments at the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment will be utilised and a report that takes into account the requirements of the control system, forest owner's needs, resources, etc. will be prepared.

### Indicators

- Development of the number of employees at the Finnish Food Authority for control of organic production (person-years)
- Development of the number of employees at the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for control of organic production (person-years)
- Number of landowners and other persons and surface areas covered by control, and the turnover of organic production activities
- Number of farmers' events organised by the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment and their participants annually in different regions or via remote connections

### Potential funding sources

- As part of official duties, business funding, project funding

## 9.2 Group certification

Finland will participate in the EU's joint efforts to identify best practices and find innovative solutions. Companies that recognise the opportunities brought by group certification take the initiative.

In 2023, the possibilities of group certification will be investigated with a jointly owned forest/cooperative to determine the time and costs of the process. The aim is to create workable organic collection operations, determine the costs of group certification and investigate a model to be used to track progress.

### Indicators

- Report completed

### Potential funding sources

- Business funding, project funding

## 9.3 Development of control methods, especially electronic approaches

The situations appropriate for control measures taken via remote connections will be assessed. Based on this assessment, practical procedures will be prepared for control activities carried out remotely. The regulation on organic production and on controls enable some new practices in organising the control. The use of electronic procedures used in the administrative branch for control tasks must be developed, and the aim must be to provide customers with more opportunities to interact with the authorities through applications.

The development of electronic forms for control of organic production will continue within the framework of the Salli project.

The collection of information through remote tools will be developed and inspectors will be trained in the utilisation of tools and information. The introduction of new tools requires investments in the competence of inspectors to make control smooth and appropriate.

### Indicators

- Transfer of control forms for organic production to electronic format
- A registration form for control introduced to retailers

### Potential funding sources

- As part of official duties, project funding

## 9.4 Preventing fraudulent activities related to organic products

Organic production will be taken into account in connection with food fraud prevention measures. In 2020–2022, the Finnish Food Authority developed the preparedness to control and combat fraud in organic production as a focus area in food control.

In line with the action plan for organic production in the EU, the Commission has developed a database for certificates of all EU stakeholders. The database provides Finnish operators with a practical tool to ensure the authenticity of the certificates of operators in the organic production sector.

It will be ensured that different authorities have introduced practices and resources for cooperation in preventing and combating fraud. The EU's action plan for organic production emphasises the importance of smooth cooperation between national and EU authorities in preventing and combating fraud. It is important to have information about the key contact persons and operating methods for preventing and combating fraud related to organic products. Finnish authorities must be prepared for both national and international cooperation.

Smooth import control practices will be ensured and Finland will participate in traceability exercises for organic products coordinated by the Commission. According to the EU's action plan for organic production, the Commission coordinates traceability exercises for organic products with Member States and third countries. In order to maintain the professional skills of the authorities and establish contacts, it is important to participate in the exercises coordinated by the Commission. Finland will participate in the workshops organised by the European Commission and share experiences and best practices.

### Indicators

### Potential funding sources

- As part of official duties



## 9.5 Investigating current needs related to data processing in the organic production sector. Targeting development and innovation funds to improve the efficiency of data processing in organic production from farm to fork

Finland will ensure that the information systems work together and the information is automatically updated in all the required systems. The planning and implementation of new programmes or systems must ensure the flow of information between the systems maintained by the authorities and accommodate solutions that facilitate the flow of information.

In connection with the control of organic production vast amounts of up-to-date data is generated from farms and other parties covered by controls. It must be possible to utilise this data in the development of the organic production chain, including in the further processing of foods.

The digital technology solutions produced by the Commission will be utilised without delay to identify, trace, locate and share product-specific data, when available to the Member States, including solutions such as electronic product passports. Finland must be active in introducing new joint systems and be at the forefront of utilising digital technology solutions. When the data includes no commercially sensitive information, it must also be available to the supply chain at some level and not only to the authorities.

Horizon Europe activities will be utilised to promote the use of blockchain technologies in the agricultural and food sectors and other targeted research and innovation activities aimed at developing innovative solutions for tracing organically produced food products.

Where possible, Finland will contribute to pilot projects carried out by the Commission to improve the traceability of organic products through blockchain or other digital technologies.

### Indicators

- Use of Horizon Europe funds in Finland to promote the use of blockchain technologies in the organic agricultural product and food sector

### Potential funding sources

- Horizon Europe



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ISBN: 978-952-366-863-8 PDF

ISSN: 1797-397X PDF