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# Learning module 3

Organic Agriculture



# EQF definition

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## Knowledge

- To understand the term Organic Agriculture; how producers work in organic products and have an idea about business opportunities in this field.

## Skills

- To identify the opportunities, options, and added value as well as to present constructive proposals for developing and/or supporting Organic Agriculture.

## Competences

- To understand that sustainable and effective organic agriculture is closely connected production of quality and nutritious foodstuffs.

# Introduction (1)

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Organic Agriculture, which is also biological, is a production and processing system that aims to obtain food of optimum quality, free of waste, minimizing the human impact on the environment. It uses natural resources optimally, helping to preserve plant and animal biodiversity, and betting on promoting sustainable local development in the area. This means using nature without breaking its biological cycle, extracting from the earth what the earth is capable of giving without over-exploiting it with the use of polluting substances.

The standard regulates the production of live, or non-processed, agricultural products (vegetables, animals, aquaculture animals and algae), processed agricultural products intended to be used for human consumption, feed, vegetative reproductive material and seeds, as well as yeasts.



Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

## Introduction (2)

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Through Organic Agriculture, it is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- Produce food of the highest quality, sanitary and organoleptic;
- Preserve food security;
- Be environmentally sustainable and economically profitable;
- Promote rural development;
- Work in an integrated way with ecosystems;
- Increase or maintain soil fertility;
- Make the most of renewable and local resources;
- Avoid the forms of contamination that may result from agricultural techniques;
- Maintain the genetic diversity of the agrarian system and its environment.



Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

# Soil

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In Organic Agriculture, soil assumes a vital importance and is not a mere support of plants, but a complex web of life that must be enhanced and pampered. It is the only method of agriculture that seeks to harmonize the functioning of natural systems with the interests of the human being, obtaining healthy food with sustainable yields and ensuring the conservation of natural resources, the health of people and contributing to mitigate the effects of global warming.



# Key points of Organic Agriculture

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Biodiversity

Chemical  
Additives

Soil Tillage

# Biodiversity

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- A combination of different crops and plant varieties (crop association) is grown in the same field, fleeing from monocultures that are used in industrial agriculture. In this way many synergies between crops are achieved.
- Agricultural biological diversity increases the resistance of plants to climate change. It has been scientifically proven that, both in nature and in agriculture, biodiversity offers a natural insurance policy against extreme weather events.
- Boosting natural biodiversity, wild plants, beneficial insects, predators ... is another way of guaranteeing a fundamental balance for agricultural exploitation.

# Chemical Additives

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- Pest control is done naturally by enhancing natural control systems, for example by introducing beneficial insects and birds that feed on pests, and plants that repel pests and attract beneficial insects. The use of hazardous chemicals or the use of transgenics is not allowed.
- Natural fertilizers are also keys to organic farming. A fertile soil is achieved with green manures by, for example, the cultivation of legumes. The incorporation of animal manure and compost also enrich the soil. These are just some of the ways to increase organic matter and soil fertility without synthetic fertilizers. The use of natural fertilizers also allows savings for farmers, and also eliminates the need for artificial inputs. With natural fertilizers, the soil is rich in organic matter, better able to retain water, and allows better protection against erosion. The use of chemical fertilizers is not allowed.

# Soil Tillage

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Soil is the main protagonist, and it is treated as what it is: a very complex living entity, respecting the infinity of organisms that make it up, working to maintain fertility. For this, it is essential to carry out the minimum possible tillage, even none in some cases, so as not to alter its intrinsic complexity and not lose the layers (horizons) with a greater amount of organic matter.

Another of the basic points in organic farming is the rotation of crops so that the soil is not impoverished: on the contrary, it is enriched to prevent the appearance of pests.



Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

# Benefits of Organic Agriculture

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Organic farming allows communities to produce the food they need to feed. This type of agriculture favours a future with respectful agriculture and healthy food for all people. Ecologically grown foods taste better and are healthier. A recent study in California shows that ecologically grown strawberries are sweeter than those produced conventionally. The organic variety also contains 10% more antioxidants, related to the prevention of many diseases.

In economic terms, this method of modern agriculture leads to higher crop yields. Globally, organic farming can produce an average of approximately 30% more food per hectare than conventional agriculture. In developing countries, organic farming can produce approximately 80% more food per hectare. By not using synthetic chemical inputs that are also very polluting, there is a very important saving for farmers.

It is also the best way to mitigate the effects of climate change and help the world population adapt to the changes that global warming entails.

# Organic Farmers

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Currently, 2.6 billion people (about 40% of the world's population) are small farmers. These are the farmers who produce most of the food we consume.



Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)



Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

Millions of farmers around the world practice organic farming, demonstrating that it is possible to produce enough food with cost-effective organic methods.

# Organic Agriculture in the World

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Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

Spain is the country that, for the fourth consecutive year, has been at the head of the platoon in the European Union in terms of the area devoted to organic farming, already reaching the figure of more than 1,845,039 hectares, which represents a growth in the recent years. It is the clear example that organic farming is viable and that it is the only solution to save agriculture and allow rural development, especially at this time of deep socio-economic and ecological crisis.

# Examples of Organic Agriculture in the World

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**Profitable agriculture:** In Andhra Pradesh, India, organic farming helped increase farmers' net income. The savings in chemical products varied between 600 and 6,000 Indian rupees (USD \$ 15-150) (7.66 to 76 Euros) per hectare, while crop yields remained stable.

**More fertile soil:** A study carried out for 21 years on European farms showed that ecological fertilizers offer better soil stability, greater fertility, and greater biodiversity (including earthworms and more microorganisms) than fertilized soils synthetically



# Organic Agriculture and the EU

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European Union (EU) organic farming rules cover agricultural products, including aquaculture and yeast. They encompass every stage of the production process, from seeds to the final processed food. This means that there are specific provisions covering a large variety of products, such as:

- Seeds and propagating material such as cuttings, rhizome etc. from which plants or crops are grown;
- Living products or products which do not need further processing;
- Feed;
- Products with multiple ingredients or processed agricultural products for use as food.

EU regulations on organic production exclude products from fishing and hunting of wild animals but include harvest of wild plants when certain natural habitat conditions are respected. There are specific rules for wine and aquaculture.

# EU Eco-labelling and Logo

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The EU organic logo on food products ensures that EU standards on organic production are respected. It is mandatory for prepackaged foods. In the case of processed foods, it means that at least 95% of the ingredients of agricultural origin are organic. Supermarkets and other retailers can label their products "organic" only if they comply with the rules.



Source: <https://www.plataformaecologica.com/certificacion/certificaciones-ecologicas/>

# Business Opportunities in Organic Agriculture (1)

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Agricultural businesses are increasingly in fashion, especially those that are somehow related to the growing ecological sector. On the other hand, the collaborative economy and conscious consumption are also making their place in the population, being able to observe an increase in the consumption of organic products and other services aligned with this type of values.

Health care is more than a fad, for many people it has become a way of life, so opening agricultural businesses can be a way to take advantage of this growth in the market.

Let's see some business opportunities related to Organic Agriculture!



# Business Opportunities in Organic Agriculture (2)

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## Ecological fruit and vegetables

Organic products usually cost a little more money than non-organic products and this is an incentive to open a company, while it can raise costs significantly. The strict quality controls that these products have to pass for the acquisition of the ecological seal causes the price to rise, but it is also a way to support the people who produce them.

Agricultural businesses of organic fruit and vegetables can be production, distribution and / or sale. Production is responsible for the cultivation of food, the distribution of connecting farmers with product buyers and the sale takes place in different stores and markets. You can set up agricultural businesses that cover one of these areas or all 3 at the same time.



Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

# Business Opportunities in Organic Agriculture (3)

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Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

## **Workshops and training**

This is another of the most common agricultural businesses. People and families who are dedicated to agriculture or have a lot of knowledge in the field can pass on their knowledge through workshops and some type of courses to teach others to make their own crops, or to make different types of food with products that are in season. Although this is a common way to supplement the income for the work that one already does in the field, anyone can organize this type of event so that others can transmit their knowledge and earn a living from it.

# Business Opportunities in Organic Agriculture (4)

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## Agricultural business online

Online businesses are the most innovative and profitable that exist since their ideal clients are not limited to a physical place and a specific population. Nor do they depend on the time and place because all people have access to them.

Agricultural businesses can be directed to the online sector perfectly, especially that of infoproducts. The idea is that any kind of knowledge that you can transmit through a video course can be done without problems since on the Internet there may be people interested in learning about topics related to the agricultural world.



Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

# Marketing and Organic Products

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The increase in the consumption of organic products is favoring the entry of large manufacturers in the food sector in the category of bio products. This entry assumes that the ecological line is increasingly present in the corporate strategy of these manufacturers and that it is accompanied by an increase in the investment in marketing of organic products in line with the increase in consumption and the expectations of sector growth.



Source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

# Organic Marketing Mix

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Distribution	The distribution strategy is different according to manufacturer. Some only work with modern distribution while others direct their efforts to a specialized channel directly or through distributors or wholesalers of organic products.
Price	The manufacturers that are recently launching brands of organic products are striving to have high turnover products with a price differential that is closer to that of their conventional counterpart.
Product	Practically all the big manufacturers of all the categories are having representation of ecological products. While it is true that manufacturers of organic food products lead the process.
Comunication	The ecological lines are being treated, in a general way, with a marketing strategy that is different from the rest of conventional products in what corresponds to the message and positioning. The new messages of the ecological products are elaborated based on the motivations and expectations of the ecological consumer as they are mainly the health, environment and proximity.

# Example of Marketing Organic Products

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Danone: The 2 Cows

Communication: proximity, sympathy, pedagogical

Message: Eating better is living better

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFEHg8cuZnl&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFEHg8cuZnl&feature=emb_title)



## References:

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