



Bergamo Organic Charter

THE ORGANIC MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND FOOD CONSUMPTION



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We consider that:

- global hunger is rising for the first time in more than a decade, given that today, according to FAO, some 815 million people, i.e. 11% of the world population – mainly children – are still food-insecure and that difficulties arising from limited access, poor infrastructure, climate change, the macroeconomy and political stability are a big challenge in the achievement of hunger reduction. Furthermore, the increase in food-related diseases, obesity and diabetes first of all, besides growing resistance to antibiotics (also favoured by conventional food systems and livestock farming) are putting serious pressure on health-care systems in the developed countries;
- despite the unpredictability of factors such as climate change, crop losses and price volatility in agricultural commodities – which cannot be controlled by any production model yet – organic farming represents one of the key innovations in the domain of food and agriculture over the last century, based on a socially inclusive, economically and ecologically resilient systems approach for the production of foodstuffs and renewable raw materials; its global success is demonstrated by about 2.4 million operators (2015), in 179 countries, who contribute to food production by using local resources, thus reducing their dependence on external inputs and increasing their own resilience to external shocks and natural calamities;
- organic farming relies upon an agroecological approach and represents the most advanced and effective model for the application of agroecology principles to agricultural production also in the G7 countries;
- the G7 countries play a major role and are taking the lead worldwide in spreading successfully and developing the organic farming model as demonstrated by the organic agriculture growth over the last 10 years with a 57.8% increase for a total of 7.4 million hectares.¹

We recognise that:

- placing the 17 United Nations sustainable development goals at the core of the global economic strategy can generate inclusive growth and enhance productivity and that, in the agrifood sector alone, 2,300 billion dollars might be generated every year, mainly by reducing food waste throughout the value chain, strengthening the ecosystem services of agriculture and forestry and stabilising the food markets in low-income countries. Results that could be strengthened through the transition to the organic model;

¹ Willer, H. and Lernoud, J.(Eds) (2017) The World of Organic Agriculture - Statistics and Emerging Trends, FiBL and IFOAM Organics International, 2017; Canada Organic Trade Association, Current status of the Canadian Organic Sector, 2017



- the G7 countries have outstanding research, education and enterprise competences, experience and infrastructure in the field organic agriculture, in addition to the most advanced regulatory and certification frameworks worldwide;
- today the G7 members already represent 79% of the global organic consumption market, with a growth potential of 60% for the next 5 years which can drive the transition to the organic model at global level;

We are aware that:

- at EXPO Milano 2015 the Organic Action Network collected suggestions and remarks through its 244 member organisations representing ethical and environmental movements, and through an online public consultation, three thematic events on ecology, health and climate change, in order to prepare and deliver the Organic Charter of EXPO Milano 2015 to Minister Martina whose contents we fully endorse;

Accordingly, we ask the Italian G7 Agriculture Presidency to commit the Ministers of Agriculture of the 7 members to consider the need to:

- include and support transition to the organic farming model in the national agricultural policies and strategies to reconcile economic, environmental and social sustainability and favour a circular economy;
- consider the organic farming model as an efficient and effective approach to combat climate change, as well as to preserve biodiversity, soil fertility and public health;
- improve cooperation in the scientific, regulatory and commercial domains with a view to developing knowledge and technology in organic farming and further improving performance by adoption of best practices, supporting market integrity and incentives to trade in compliance with regulatory standards increasingly harmonized and more focused on the principles of organic agriculture;
- favour the development of joint research and technology transfer projects, encourage international dialogue, especially among young researchers, by adequately backing international organic farming networks and platforms;
- create synergies among education, research and development projects targeting the youth in order to stimulate the establishment of new organic enterprises and to make truly sustainable farming an economically viable and attractive career;
- strengthen international dialogue, above all with least-developed countries, to encourage the development of organic agriculture as a model of sustainable agriculture which favours resilience of local populations, especially young people and women, to face climate change and food insecurity;
- pave the way for recognition of organic farming as a common good taking into account the role played by farmers in protecting and preserving the environment, enhancing biodiversity and the rural landscape.

Bergamo, 12 October 2017

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