



European Information Systems for Organic Markets

EISfOM is a European Commission-funded Concerted Action (CA), which aims to build up a framework for reporting valid and reliable data for relevant production and market data about the European organic sector in order to meet the needs of policy makers, farmers, processors, wholesalers and other actors involved in organic markets.

Valid, accurate and up-to-date data information is essential

European markets for organic products are developing fast; more and more farming land is converted to organic production.

In order to adjust production and consumption levels, detailed market information is needed; especially for decisions on converting specific land or livestock enterprises requiring high investments into glasshouses, housing, processing facilities etc. Likewise, valid, accurate and up-to-date data information is essential for policy-makers, consultants, processing industry etc.

In most European countries only very basic data on organic farming are gathered. Furthermore, there is no standardization in the collection of data and data are therefore seldom comparable. This means, there are only rough estimates of the levels of production and consumption of organic food in Europe.

Objectives

In this context the objectives of EISfOM are to:

- ▶ Review existing systems of data collection and processing for organic as well as conventional markets in order to understand their characteristics and identify opportunities for development and improvement
- ▶ Develop proposals for harmonizing existing data collection and processing methods, assess measures for improving data quality and provide tools for the development of new data collection systems at various levels within national frameworks/institutional circumstances
- ▶ Co-ordinate and evaluate pilot data collection and processing systems
- ▶ Stimulate further development of data collection and processing by integrating with national and international statistical affairs offices and preparing a framework for the development of a European wide database for organic markets
- ▶ Provide relevant recommendations to the EU in order to better coordinate and support data collection on organic production, processing and imports as well as prices

Analysis of existing systems and development of a Quality Management System

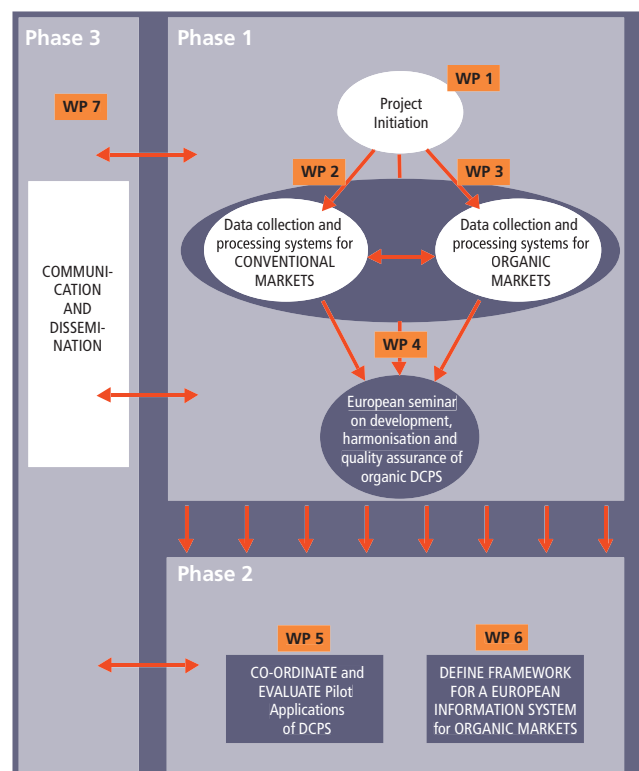
The EISfOM project consists of two main phases (see the figure).

In Phase 1, an analysis of existing systems took place. This included:

- ▶ Analysing existing data collection and processing systems (DCPS) for conventional markets
- ▶ Defining a reference model for the development of DCPS for organic markets
- ▶ Analysing existing data collection and processing systems (DCPS) for organic markets
- ▶ Identifying first possibilities of integrating both types of systems

The analysis was carried out in 32 European countries, and the results were presented at seminar held in Berlin on the 26th and 27th of

Figure on phases in EISfOM (from TA)



April 2004. Furthermore, the seminar discussed proposals for developing new or enlarging existing data collection and processing systems (see www.eisfom.org for proceedings & notes).

The proposals at the seminar formed the basis for developing improved systems for data collection, processing and ensuring data quality. In Phase 2, examples of these improved systems were tested by co-ordinating the implementation and evaluation of pilot data collection and processing systems implemented by partners and/or national/international statistical agencies.

Based on the results of these case studies and the situation analysis undertaken in Phase 1, concepts for a European data information system for organic markets are being elaborated. These concepts will be discussed at a 2nd European seminar with national key players in statistical affairs and stakeholders, as a basis for developing a long-term framework for organic statistics (see below).

Key publications from EISfOM (provisional list)

- ▶ Development of a European Information System for Organic Markets – Improving the Scope and Quality of Statistical Data. Proceedings of the 1st EISfOM European Seminar, held in Berlin, Germany, 26-27 April, 2004
- ▶ Report on proposals for the development, harmonisation and quality assurance of organic data collection and processing systems (DCPS)
- ▶ Report on Data collection and processing systems (DCPS) for the conventional markets & Data collection and processing systems for organic markets
- ▶ Report on the evaluation of the pilot case studies

The publications are available at www.eisfom.org and <http://orgprints.org>

Recommendations

Finally, recommendations will be made to the Commission, to Eurostat and FAO for the development of the European information system for organic markets. This will include proposals on how to unify systems for organic as well as conventional markets. Throughout, information from participants as well as Eurostat, the FAO and market stakeholders will be utilised.

Seminar

Towards a European Framework for Organic Market Information

The second EISfOM Seminar will take place on 10 and 11 November 2005 in Brussels. It will define a framework for a European Information System for Organic Markets. The discussions at the seminar will be based on the recommendations of the EISfOM project. The seminar is open to all parties interested in the subject of organic data collection and processing including researchers, official and commercial agencies and other stakeholders, in order to meet the data needs of policy-makers, regulators, farmers, processors, traders, retailers and others.

More information on the seminar can be found at www.eisfom.org



Facts on EISfOM

European Information System for Organic Markets (EISfOM) is a European Concerted Action (CA) initiated within the fifth framework programme: Key Action n° 5 on "Sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry and integrated development of rural areas including mountain areas" (contract number QLRT-2001-02400). The project was initiated in February 2003 and will last for three years.

Project partners

The project covers 32 countries. There are nine core partners with regional liaison and specific task co-ordination responsibilities:

United Kingdom	University of Wales Aberystwyth
Austria	Leopold Franzens Universität Innsbruck (Uni Ibk)
Germany	University of Kassel & Zentrale Markt- und Preisberichtsstelle für Erzeugnisse der Ernährungs-, Land- und Forstwirtschaft GmbH (ZMP)

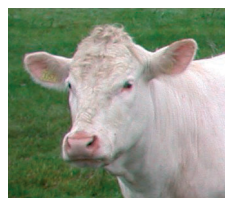
Italy	Università Politecnica delle Marche
Denmark	Danish Research Centre for Organic Farming (DARCOF)
Poland	Warsaw Agricultural University (WAW/SGGW)
Netherlands	Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI)
Switzerland	Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL)

Co-ordinator

Dr. Nicolas Lampkin, Senior Lecturer in
Agricultural Economics
Alison Vaughan (administrative issues)

Contact address

University of Wales, Institute of Rural Sciences
Llanbadarn Campus, Aberystwyth
SY23 3AL, Wales, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1970 624471
Fax: +44 (0)1970 622238
E-mail: acv@aber.ac.uk



How to follow the project

The primary website for the EISfOM project is at <http://www.eisfom.org>. Interactive exchange of information takes place on the EISfOM member network or at the discussion forum located at www.organicforum.org.

Under the auspice of the project several reports on the development of a European Information System for Organic Markets and the improvement of the quality of statistical data has been issued. All publications are uploaded to the EISfOM website and to the open access electronic archive, Organic Eprints (<http://orgprints.org>). Via the archives the publications will be available for all interested parties.

EISfOM organize workshops and seminars for representatives of user groups, stakeholders and policy makers, etc. The second seminar of EISfOM will take place November 10 and 11 in Brussels (see above).

In May 2006, the project results will be presented at the major organic congress to be held in Odense, Denmark. The congress will be held in collaboration with a number of other EU funded projects.