

# The potentials of organic farming in the European Innovation Policy

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## Organic farmers are innovative by nature

- they always tested on their farm alternatives and solutions
- they are keen, able and used to interact with researchers and advisors
- they always used a multidisciplinary approach
- they are often the source of innovation

that's why they have now the best potentials for being active part of the EIP-AGRI (*European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability*) initiatives

## Few examples of “*ante litteram*” implementation of EIP-AGRI

Compost to control weeds in organic carrots and the machine to facilitate its use



# Few examples of “ante litteram” implementation of EIP-AGRI

Participatory breeding for potatoes resistant to blight



**Groene Veredeling**

**BIOIMPULS 2009-2013: Perspectieven op phytophthora resistente aardappelrassen**

Na 2007 was ook 2012 een zwaar 'phytophthora seizoen'. Dat maakt voor de biologische sector de noodzaak van resistente aardappelrassen overduidelijk. Tot voor kort waren die er niet. Om meer prioriteit aan phytophthora veredeling te geven is vier jaar geleden het Bioimpuls veredelingsprogramma als 10-jarig project opgestart. Traditionele veredeling om nieuwe resistenties uit wilde soorten over te brengen mag dan wel een lange weg zijn, maar heeft het voordeel dat onderweg op meerdere eigenschappen geselecteerd kan worden. In deze brochure een overzicht van de stand van zaken na vier jaar.

**Nieuwe resistenties uit wilde soorten**

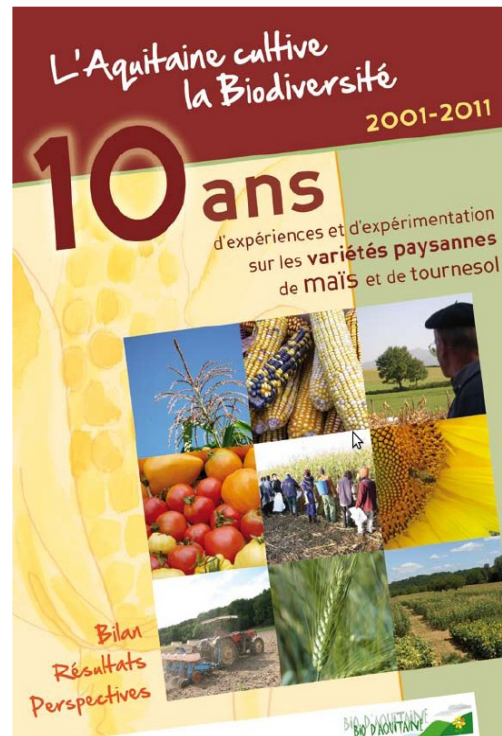
Het veredelingsproject Bioimpuls werkt via een korte, midden en lange termijn traject aan resistenties tegen phytophthora. De basis van het project is het kruisingswerk met wilde phytophthora-resistente aardappelsoorten (zie foto pagina 2) die Wageningse onderzoekers al decennia geleden verzameld hebben uit Midden- en Zuid-Amerika. Het is een lange weg om de wilde soorten met cultuurmateriaal te kruisen tot een niveau waarop ze als bruikbare geniteurs kunnen dienen voor een commercieel veredelingsprogramma. Dat vergt drie tot vier terugkruisingsgeneraties van elk vier of vijf jaar, dus in totaal 12 tot 20 jaar. Door herhaalde malen te kruisen met cultuurmateriaal (een modern ras) wordt geprobeerd het verkregen plantmateriaal aan te passen aan onze lange daglengte. Verder wordt geselecteerd op de gewenste resistentia's, maar ook tegen ongie-

Bioimpuls-klonen in de bezichtiging (foto: Aardappelen.nl)

**Aardappel**

## Few examples of “*ante litteram*” implementation of EIP-AGRI

Participatory breeding in cereals and other crops for characteristics that make them fit to organic and low input systems



## Few examples of “*ante litteram*” implementation of EIP-AGRI

Networking and  
exchange of  
experiences on  
organic viticulture  
and  
wine-making



# Few examples of “*ante litteram*” implementation of EIP-AGRI

- Peri-urban organic agriculture
- In Gallec (Barcelona): participation, natural resources preservation, education,
- minimum tillage and organic





## EIP-AGRI Focus group on organic farming

### Optimising Arable Yields and reduce the yield gap

Running in 2013-2014, composed by 20 experts of different background

Main outcomes:

“redefinition” of yield: **performance stands for production, its quality and ecosystem services provided**


“redefinition” of gap: **difference in performance between best organic farmers and their organic colleagues in similar conditions**

- list of **main areas where to act** to improve farm performance
- ideas for **topics and methods** to be used in the establishment of local operational groups (OGs)
- **examples** of existing OGs

*Side products: list of **research needs** and proposals for training and education*







## EIP-AGRI Focus group on organic farming

### Optimising Arable Yields and reduce the yield gap outcomes

Causes of yield losses/ area for improvement:

- 1) *Poor soil fertility management;*
- 2) *Inadequate nutrient supply;*
- 3) *Insufficient weed management;*
- 4) *Pest and disease pressure*
- 5) *Variety choice*

Main topics suggested for Operational Groups relate to:

- *farming systems co-design;*
- *information and decision support systems;*
- *how to increase soil microbial activity and biodiversity by farming techniques;*
- *fine-tuning of composting techniques;*
- *nutrient release of organic fertilisers;*
- *Fine-tuning of new machines;*
- *organising joint purchase/use of machinery;*
- *selecting locally appropriate varieties;*
- *developing innovative tillage techniques;*
- *fostering the use of companion planting and cover crops;*
- *introducing new crops and variety trials;*
- *developing new fertilisers appropriate to the organic concept*

## Innovation in RDPs 2014-2020

It is a key-word! Several measures to tackle it and specific attention to agroecological methods is recommended.

Main tool: **Operational Groups**

*Multi-actor group active on a specific problem using experience and knowledge (scientific and practical) of participants.*

It is not a discussion group and it is not research (i.e. mis. 124)

**Driven by practitioners** and focused on a problem to be solved

**Innovation is not only technology but also organization or social change**

And is not only “new knowledge” but often stems by a **combination of experience, existing knowledge with new knowledge**



## Innovation in H2020

### Thematic Networks

Projects aiming to facilitate and speed up the combined use of available knowledge (empirical and scientific)

### Multi-actor research and innovation projects

Research and innovation projects where non-researchers (farmers, associations, advisory, Smes ...) have a relevant role (not stakeholder!)

### But also vice-versa

### from OGs requests to H2020 for specific topics

(also from already existing OGs)



## Focus Groups outcomes and OGs

Topics and recommendations from FGs may be considered and used by OGs but each managing authority should assess local needs

and viceversa OGs and RDP managing authorities may suggest further FGs topics

**Problem is timing!**





## How to be active at local level

make use of FGs (not only the organic) outcomes  
in OGs setting up

OGs: Regional, interregional or National?

**There is the need of active and proactive organic farmers  
and associations!**

**We have all the knowledge and skills to be front-runners!**

## For example?

Soil management and organic matter preservation

Water conservation (quality and quantity)

Biodiversity efficient “use”

Several pests management

Alternatives to copper

Innovative systems for perennials  
(vineyards and olive grooves)

Extensive animal husbandry





## How to keep the contacts internationally?

Thematic network on organic arable farming  
starting in March 2015

Thematic network on grapevine wood diseases  
Starting in March 2015

Formal and informal cooperation with other MSs OGs  
(via Ministries but also via associations and researchers)

Using EIP-AGRI facilities.

# How to know more?

Dossier from

[www.ifoam-eu.org](http://www.ifoam-eu.org)





And keep an eye on the EIP-AGRI web page

www.eip-agri.com



**Thank-you for the  
attention!**

