

## Short description of project funded by CORE Organic II partners in the second call of CORE Organic II

<p><b>Project short name and title</b></p> <p>(HEALTHYGROWTH) Healthy growth: From niche to volume with integrity and trust</p>
<p><b>Project summary</b></p> <p>Organic markets are different in different European countries, but common to all is that local organic market chains have inherent problems in moving from niche to volume, and mainstream large-scale market chains have inherent problems in securing and advancing organic values. HEALTHYGROWTH aims to investigate a range of successful mid-scale organic value chains in order to learn how they are able to combine volume and values, and to use this knowledge of the prerequisites for healthy growth to support the further development of the organic markets. The project builds on the following hypotheses, derived from previous research: 1) these mid-scale value chains are based on new forms of organisations and partnerships between farmers, businesses and consumers, and a different form of marketing logic and strategies than either small- or large-scale chains; 2) this enables them to combine growth in volume with a high and growing level of organic values throughout the market chain as a sound foundation for organic integrity and consumer trust; 3) these new organisational forms constitute a substantial potential for development and growth of organic markets; and 4) lessons learned from the successful mid-scale chains will provide new options for small-scale producers to act and compete on the market while ensuring a premium prize for their added organic values. The research work will be done in a close cooperation and interaction between the eleven partners. In-depth case studies of mid-scale organic value chains will be carried out in nine participating countries, followed by a comparative analysis across countries. The cross-country comparison of value chain cases will be based on six different research perspectives, plus a multi-perspectival meta-analysis, to obtain a nuanced and coherent understanding of the underlying mechanisms and principles for healthy growth. Stakeholder involvement in joint learning processes and transnational dissemination of the results are planned as a dynamic and integrated part of the project in order to share and adapt knowledge between countries and to enhance network building among actors within regions and across borders. The project will provide knowledge on how integrity and trust can be maintained in the growth from niche to volume, and develop general as well as locally adapted recommendations for the development of organic markets. The target groups are not only other mid-scale value chains, but also smaller organic producers, consumers, and potential new organic actors in new forms of partnership and cooperation, as well as large-scale market chains</p>
<p><b>Aim, objectives and hypotheses</b></p> <p><b>The main rationale</b> of this project is that a healthy and sustainable growth in the organic market depends on the ability of market chains to combine volume marketing with measures that secure integrity and trust based on the organic values and principles, and thereby generating a prize premium that can be distributed along the chain. The organic markets have developed differently in different countries, but common to all is that the bifurcation process of organic market chains into either focusing on volume or on quality hampers a healthy growth of the organic market share. Local small-scale market chains have inherent problems in moving from niche to volume and mainstream large-scale market chains have inherent problems in securing and advancing the organic values. <b>The main hypotheses</b> of this project are</p>

that there are mid-scale value chains which operate by a different marketing logic than either small- or large-scale chains, based on different forms of organisations, partnerships and strategies; that this enables them to combine growth in volume with a high and growing level of organic values throughout the market chain as a sound foundation for organic integrity and consumer trust; that these new organisational forms constitute a new potential for development and growth of organic markets; and that lessons learned from successful mid-scale chains will provide new options for small-scale producers to act and compete on the market while ensuring a premium prize for their added organic values.

**The aim of this project is to study a range of successful mid-scale food value chains and show the fundamental prerequisites for their success in combining volume and values in order to support the development of new organic value chains and provide new opportunities for organic actors.**

To achieve this aim **the objectives are:**

- To explore what characterises successful food value chains, and to describe the strengths and weaknesses of different organizational forms and pathways.
- To analyse and extract the main principles and lessons learned and jointly derive the main mechanisms and generalizable organizational principles underlying successful food value chains – taking into account the contextual importance of national, cultural and geographical settings.
- To support exchange of knowledge, network building and cooperation between (currently involved and potential future) actors, and jointly develop locally adapted recommendations for improvements. This also includes the exchange of ideas between relevant actors across national borders and the stimulation of national and international cooperation utilizing existing networks and relevant websites.

A close cooperation and interaction between the partners will be the cornerstone in obtaining these objectives.

#### **Expected results and their impact/application**

A market supported growth of organic farming is dependent on marketing strategies that can combine values and volumes without jeopardizing integrity and trust. New forms of mid-size food value chains shows promising potential for growth and development of the organic markets. The project will promote organisational forms and marketing strategies which meet not only differentiated consumer expectations, but also the requirements of farmers, and thus support a sustainable increase in organic production. Based on a better understanding of dedicated medium scale businesses and initiatives, we will, together with practitioners and decision makers, derive locally adapted recommendations for improvements in this segment as well as in large chains and retailers and in local food initiatives, co-operations and networks. This is to support the exchange of ideas between actors across boundaries and to stimulate national and international cooperation.

#### **Coordinator, partners and countries involved**

Coordinator	AU-AGRO	Aarhus University	Denmark	Assoc. Prof. Egon Noe
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Partner	KTH	Royal Institute of Technology	Sweden	Assoc. Prof. Rebecka Milestad
Partner	INRA SAD	INRA	France	Dr. Claire Lamaine
Partner	CRR	Centre for rural research	Norway	Dr./Senior Researcher Hilde Bjørkhaug
Partner	FALS	University of Maribor, Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences	Slovenia	Assos. Prof. Andreja Borec
Partner	UIBK	University of Innsbruck	Austria	Assoc. Prof. Markus Schermer
Partner	SDU	Suleyman Demirel University	Turkey	Assistant Prof. Handan Giray
Partner	MTT	MTT Agrifood Finland	Finland	PhD, Senior Researcher Helmi Risku-Norja
Partner	HNEE	University of Applied Sciences in Sustainable Development in Eberswalde	Germany	Dr./Senior Researcher Susanne von Muenchhausen
Partner	MARIM	GDAR Fruit Growing Research Station Manager	Turkey	Dr./Researcher Adem Atasay