



## D1.6: European Progress Report on Organic Seed: Conclusions & Recommendations

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## Executive Summary

The LIVESEED European Workshop took place as an online event on 25 November 2020. It concluded the national workshops on policy recommendations on how to boost production and use of organic seed.

### *National progress since the start of LIVESEED*

**Database:** Increased awareness about database at national level was observed as a general trend. Many national authorities have recognized the essential role of database as result of stakeholder input, many databases were improved for better functionality and increased update frequency.

**Derogations:** Expert groups started working on (no-) derogation lists. Lists of equivalent varieties are under development, these can be used by farmers when the variety they ask for is not available, which is expected to lead to decreased amount of granted derogations.

**Expert Groups:** A seed expert group is crucial, also because it is often linked to a national Annex, a non-derogation list. Currently, many countries still do not have such an Annex. The farmers should be involved in the expert groups, as well as seed producers, crop experts from research institutes, a certifier and a database manager and the competent authority. Several national expert groups have been nominated and became official.

**Research:** Public research projects and breeding programs for organic varieties continued/started, Cultivar testing trials under organic conditions expanded.

**Training & Communication:** Information exchange in the form of workshops, training programs, demonstrational fields and brochures.

**Production & Use of Organic Seed:** Internal task forces for organic seed production set up to deal with variety registration were set up. Ministries were lobbied to include extra payment for farmers, specifically for use of organic seeds. Post-registration trial network established in to increase variety choice and volume of certified seed use, could serve as a model.

### *Launch of the European Router Database*

During the visits of LIVESEED project, it was found that in some countries there are barely any offers on the database and it is difficult for the farmers to find out where they can get organic seeds. Particularly in those countries with a small market, where seed suppliers might only receive 3 requests for a particular seed offer per year, facilitating the procedure for seed suppliers to place offers in different countries simultaneously proved to be quite effective. Generally, the aim of the European Router Database is to reduce the effort for seed suppliers to offer seed in different countries. For seed suppliers, the advantage of the Router Database is that it is possible to send or manage a seed offer to all member states with one login.

### *Expert discussion on achievements & best steps forward*

To get more crops on the National Annex and to work towards 100% organic seed, more **exchange between countries** is necessary. However, the pace of changes must go much faster to achieve the goal of 100% organic seed in time. To avoid this malpractice, the derogation system should be applied strictly. The database is just a tool to get out of the negative circle of not purchasing organic seed and companies consequently not producing seed.

Clear **roadmaps** must be developed to get more crops on the no-derogation list, and in the next step tackle crops where we have single derogation. Besides the national roadmap, we also need monitor progress in the countries. Provide financial incentives for those who use organic seed or a mandatory contribution for those who don't use organic seed.



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With the secondary legislation of the **New Organic Regulation**, there will be more transparency, more knowledge, and more control on what is really going on in terms of derogations, in terms of liability of not only organic seed but in conversion seed as well. The introduction of the non-derogation list is important to list the crops in which the member state will issue no derogations. In the context of our seed legislation, the Commission is preparing the temporary experiment on organic varieties for organic cultivation. The review of the seed legislation gives us the opportunity to adapt the entire legislative framework much better to the needs of different sectors, in the long term.

The point was made by experts to increase involvement of farmers in **participatory breeding and seed production**. Stakeholder collaboration and discussion on cultivars that are well adapted to organic farming and needed by the farmers is crucial. For farmers, one of the barriers is how to participate in such research or seed production collaboration to enhance the necessary technical skills.

For seed companies, **matching the supply & demand** of organic seeds is crucial. A lack of interest from the companies to supply organic seed is not the problem. Supply has been increasing and more companies are interested to step into the market of organic seed, so we can expect that the offer will increase even more. A roadmap would be very important also for seed suppliers, as they will need to adapt to the new situation. Seed companies consider it necessary to have a more intense cooperation with the organic growers, for example to test candidate material.

**Researchers** have a crucial role in **capacity building**. Research institutes are very important in organizing field trials, in on farm trials farmers are directly involved, which is very useful because it also builds trust and can initiate small plot trials in countries where there isn't an official one.

To achieve a large increase in the offer of organic seed, it is necessary to **join forces and involve all stakeholders**. This means involving the seed companies but also the farmers and the public institutions that play an important role in breeding. Training of organic farmers as seed producers must be supported by an infrastructure and we need to make sure that there's a real demand for organic seed on the market, not just a calculated one.

### *Summary of Recommendations*

Recommendations are a product of the national workshops in the countries visited, the North-Western European workshop, the special workshop on vegetative material and the LIVESEED European Workshop.

- 1) Develop roadmaps towards 100% organic seeds (at crop, country and EU level). This can be a powerful means to facilitate and monitor progress in the different countries and define actions needed.
- 2) Organize international cooperation between countries. Facilitate structural knowledge exchange between countries with similar challenges and circumstances.
- 3) Stimulate organic seed production. Seed companies need targets and deadlines for derogations in order to know how much they should invest as well as financial incentives. Finding good locations for organic seed production is now a major bottleneck.
- 4) Increase the development of organic varieties by stimulating public research projects and breeding programmes for organic varieties and increasing cultivar testing under organic conditions.
- 5) Install & expand national organic seed expert groups and improve national databases.
- 6) Implement and maintain the router database after LIVESEED.



## 1. Background

The LIVESEED European Workshop took place as an online event on 25 November 2020. It concluded the national workshops on policy recommendations on how to boost production and use of organic seed. The aim of this workshop was to bring together those stakeholders from the national and regional workshops to exchange best practices, lessons learned and future challenges that go beyond the time scope of the LIVESEED project.

The goal was to map the progress that has been made since the start of this project 4 years ago. In the first session, the key success factors were presented that have been identified to increase the production and use of organic seeds. Progress was shared that had been made since the start of the LIVESEED project and success factors that have been identified to increase the production and use of organic seeds were presented to the audience.

## 2. Outcomes of the Sessions

### 2.1. Key Success factors in implementing national policy recommendations<sup>1</sup>.

#### 2.1.1. Evaluation of progress made in countries explored by LIVESEED.

Presentation by Martin Sommer (IFOAM Organics Europe)

#### Database

- Increased awareness about database at national level; additional seed producers listed after national workshops.
- As a general trend, new seed offers were introduced to the database.
- Recommendations given to competent authorities on points to improve (bottom-up)
  - Stakeholders input crucial to improve the database;
  - Many national authorities have recognized the essential role of database.
    - as result of this input, many databases were improved for better functionality and increased update frequency

#### Derogations

- Expert groups started working on (no-) derogation lists.
- Derogation reports for several countries were made public.
- Lists of equivalent varieties are under development.
  - Lists that farmers can use when the variety they ask for is not available ➤ expected to decrease the amount of granted derogations.

#### Expert Groups

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<sup>1</sup> Full presentations and recordings are available here: <https://www.liveseed.eu/european-workshop-on-organic-seed-production-and-use/>



- Several national expert groups nominated and becoming official, including competent authorities, farmers, cert. bodies, seed producers and breeders, researchers.

### Research

- Public research projects and breeding programs for organic varieties continued/started.
- Cultivar testing trials under organic conditions expanded. Focus on:
  - Cereals;
  - Vegetable varieties;
  - Potato;
  - Participation in temporary experiment for organic variety testing by EU COM.

### Training & Communication

- Information exchange
  - Brochures with information about organic vegetable seeds (BU);
  - Workshops on organic seed at trade fairs or webinars;
  - Social media platform for exchange between organic seed producers and farmers (RO);
  - Training programs on organic seed for current and upcoming organic farmers;
  - Demonstrational fields to showcase varieties to farmers.
- Certification bodies start to actively inform organic farmers during certification field visits about the benefits of using organic seed and database.
- Stakeholder networks established:
  - Research
  - Breeders and end users

### Production & Use of Organic Seed

- Internal task forces for organic seed production set up to deal with variety registration (GR).
- Ministries lobbied to include extra payment for farmers, specifically for use of organic seeds:
  - In the payments of CAP;
  - National action plan for organic agriculture;
  - Already implemented for certain crops in LV, for example.
- Post-registration trial network established to increase variety choice and volume of certified seed use (HU).

## 2.1.2. Policy measures to increase production and use of organic seed in North-Western Europe.

Presentation by Maaike Raaijmakers (Project leader knowledge & innovation, Bionext).



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### Main policy measures implemented in North-Western European countries

- Involve stakeholders: seed expert groups;
- Increase availability and use of suitable varieties:
  - Variety trials;
  - Organic breeding research.
- Limit derogations:
  - National Annex/non derogation list.
- Private agreements:
  - Fund to promote organic breeding in Switzerland;
  - Farmers and seed supplier agree to use a certain % of organic seeds.
- **Importance of a national seed expert group:** A seed expert group is so important because in many countries, it is linked to a national Annex, a non-derogation list. At the moment, many countries still do not have such an Annex. To introduce a national annex, an expert group is key as a platform to discuss for which crops in your country there could be enough organic seed available and to discuss what main varieties the farmers need for this crop in order to put it on the non-derogation list. As a second step, clear criteria are needed to determine when a certain crop can go to this list. In the Netherlands, for instance, we look at the derogation list every year to see if for certain crop there are many derogations. If this is the case, this probably means that the amount of seed available is not enough and as a follow-up we try to find out (together with the farmers) what are actually the main varieties. Then, hopefully, the seed producers that own those varieties are willing to produce organic seed. The role of the expert group in most countries, is not to decide directly if a crop shall be put on the Annex or not. However, they give advice to the competent authorities that then still have to agree to put such a crop in the list.
- **Ideal composition of the national seed expert groups:** The farmers should be involved and, in this process, it is important that the farmers are representing other farmers. Also, the seed producers should be in this expert group, as well as some crop experts from research institutes, a certifier, and a database manager and the competent authority should be involved in the final decision. One piece of advice is to start with some crops in which your country is good at.

## 2.2 Smart Practices

### 2.2.1 Seed Expert Groups and how they function

Presentation by Ilze Skrabule & Ilze Diamante, AREI, Latvia.

- **Processors can contribute to improvement of the production and use of organic seeds:** In Latvia, there are two big processors that have organic processing tools mainly for cereals. They are interested in certain quality parameters for production and also in the use of certain varieties. Based on this, they provide some information to farmers about the varieties they need. In conclusion, the processors, as well as the farmers have some wishes about which varieties they prefer for processing. Including them in the expert group contributes to adequately match supply (by farmers) with



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demand (by processors) and the seed producers have the capacity to make sure there is enough organic seed for those varieties.

- **Profile of an organic farmer who produces seed in Latvia:** There are organic farmers who partly produce seed. In general, organic seeds are produced only by farmers in Latvia. There are only a few farms where both systems, conventional and organic, are operating-and those are research farms, like the farm of AREI and university farms.

### 2.2.2 Organic field trials & variety testing.

Presentation by Jaroslaw Stalenga, IUNG, Poland.

- **Research from IUNG shows that there are certain varieties that perform much better under organic conditions, they have higher yields and are less susceptible to fusarium.** These are mostly varieties that are already registered but were not yet available for farmers, so those varieties have not been tested yet in organic practice. Hopefully, the best varieties will become common in the next years. Based on the results of the project that started in 2018, IUNG is planning to disseminate these results and varieties.
- **Plans to do this kind of research for other crops:** IUNG is aiming to start the program with grand legumes in the next year. Focus will be first on lupins and field peas. In the crop rotations, there is space for grand legumes and the aim is to add these new crops in the next year.
- **Financing of the research:** The program is financed within the Polish national organic farming research program, so this is governmental funds, established 16 years ago, just after Poland entered the EU. Since then, each year there are open calls for research projects and in 2018, IUNG was able to successfully apply for money from this source.

### 2.2.3 National Seed Database.

Presentation by Matteo Pettiti, Rete Semi Rurali, Italy.

- **Organic seed use in Italy was quite high in the years from 2003-2008 and then it dropped dramatically.** Reasons for this decrease in organic seed use: The reason for this is that during that time, it looked as if derogations would be phased out and the organic seed producers started to get ready for that scenario. So they produced a lot of organic seed. However, when it became clear this scenario would not happen, both production and use dropped again. This shows that if regulatory actions are put into place to phase out derogation, the market will adjust quite quickly.
- **What it took for the stakeholders to actually start the process of setting up this expert group and new database in 2017:** The process was mainly an initiative from the Ministry of Agriculture to comply with the EU Regulatory Framework. The Organic Division of the Ministry and CREA-DC (which is the agency responsible for seed certification) also played an important role. The *Bioseme* technical advisory group lobbied for starting this process, because they saw that it was necessary to involve seed producers and other stakeholders and proceed in a consultant fashion. Involving the stakeholders to the process was certainly beneficial to successfully roll out the new database since they provided input from the beginning and constantly during the process.





- **Reasons why there is more organic seed on the market than there is on the database:** The Italian database is easy to operate for seed suppliers, they have been updating availability from the beginning and any technical difficulty was discussed and ironed out. Nevertheless, a substantial amount of transactions in the organic seed market is not represented in the organic seed database. This is because some farmers contact seed companies directly, to skip the extra step of going through the seed database.

#### 2.2.4 Regional Databases feeding the National Database.

Presentation by Aina Calafat Rogers, SEAE, Spain.

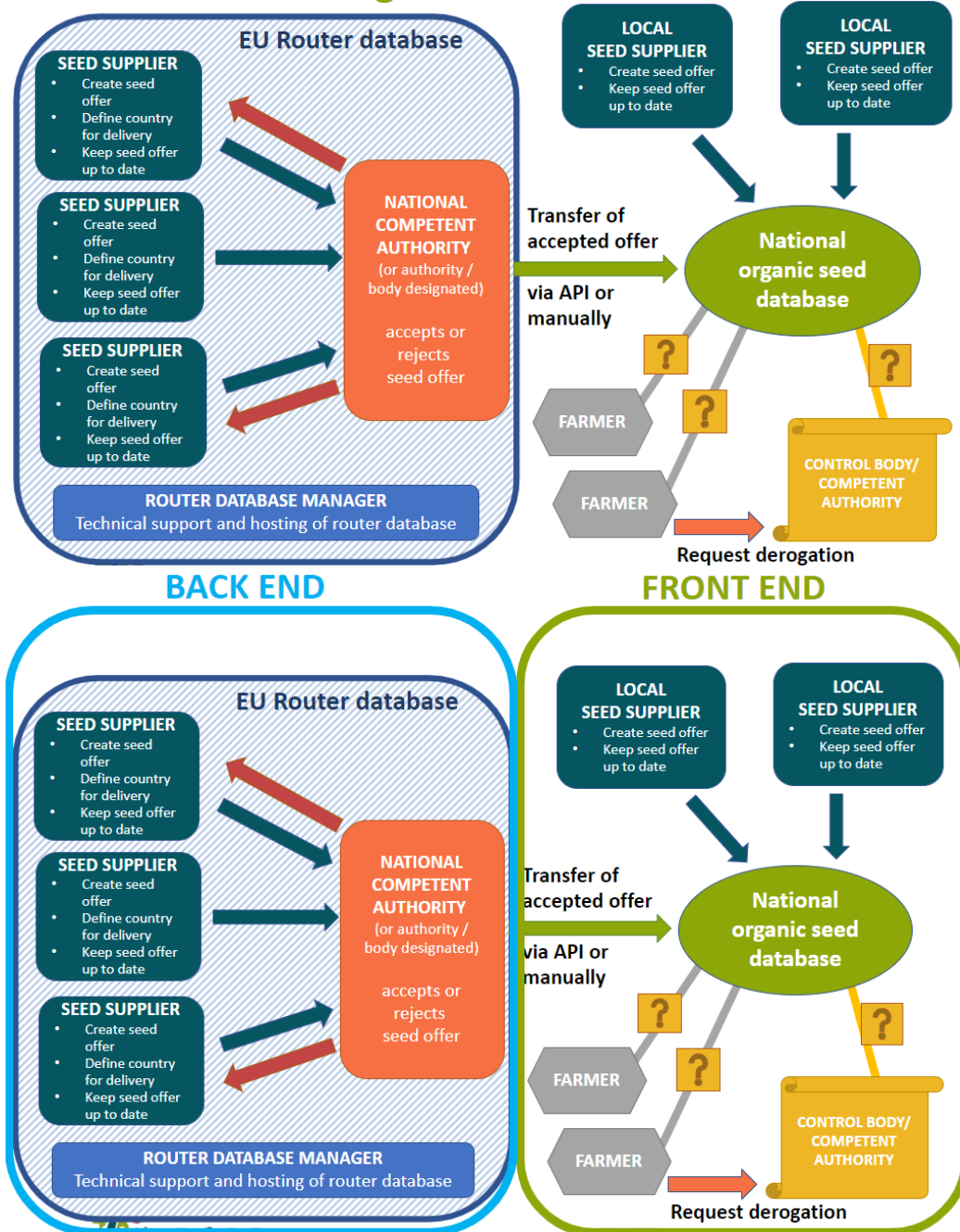
- **Awareness of seed suppliers of the National organic seed database in Spain:** The suppliers that had already been supplying and producing organic seed have been informed about the link between the regional and the national database. There are other suppliers who only supply on regional level that don't tend to register in the database. They have been informed through the LIVESEED project and some are now in the process of registering.
- **Advantages and disadvantages of having regional AND national databases:** Having the information regionally helps farmers to organize better in the region, but it is also important to have a national database where all the information is centralized. We have some regional databases that are used to search for local seed offers. However, most of the regions just feed the national database and list what is available in their area.
- **Role of SEAE and ECOVALIA in this process:** Our aim is to organize a big national activity on organic seed at the beginning of 2021. Also, having all the booklets ready and translated to Spanish will help to push this process forward.
- **The derogation report is still a matter of regional reports that are put together at the national level.** The derogations in most regions have been delegated to the control body or regional authority, so it is the control body that informs the competent authority and then the Central Ministry. It is not an exceptionally lengthy process, but it could be organized more effectively.

### 2.3 Launch of the European Router Database

Xenia Gatzert (FiBL), gave a presentation about the implementation of the European Router Database, including a tutorial.



## Aim of LIVESEED: Develop a EU-router database to link national organic seed databases



- Potential of router database to boost seed use:** During the visits of LIVESEED project, it was found that in some countries there are barely any offers on the database and it is difficult for the farmers to find out where they can get organic seeds. Particularly in those countries with a small market, where seed suppliers might only receive three requests for a particular seed offer per year, facilitating the procedure for seed suppliers to place offers in different countries simultaneously proved to be quite effective. Especially, when a seed supplier offers cultivars that are adapted to a region and therefore also neighbouring countries or countries with similar (pedo-)climatic conditions. Generally, the aim is to reduce the effort



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for seed suppliers to offer seed in different countries. We hope that once there are seed offers in the national databases, this will help to develop the market. Ultimately, a developed market is an incentive for the national seed suppliers to invest in organic propagation.

- **Ways to register offers for seed suppliers:** seed suppliers can use the established and well-known procedures to upload the offers to different countries via the national database and their authorities. Additionally, the Router Database can also be used for that. As there is an interface between the national databases and the router database, it is not necessary to register at both, one is sufficient. However, the advantage of the Router Database is that it is possible to send or manage a seed offer to all member states with one login.
- **Update frequency:** Seed suppliers update the offer as soon as there is a change. When a seed supplier changes the availability, it changes on the national seed databases automatically and national authorities will receive this information without delay.
- **Risk of unsuited varieties:** Since the national authority has to accept the offers before they are displayed in the national database, there is no increased risk that unsuited varieties will appear in the national databases. If in doubt, it can be checked with the seed supplier if a certain cultivar can be used in a certain country.
- **Connection to *OrganicXseeds*:** the router database will be connected to the *OrganicXseeds* databases from the beginning, which means that those countries that already use *OrganicXseeds* are equipped for smooth data exchange. For the countries that do not use *OrganicXseeds*, there is the possibility to manually extract information on available offers via an Excel file and include the cultivars from this list in their national databases. Nevertheless, the possibility to implement an automatic exchange is also available.
- **Specification of breeding method:** It is possible to share additional information and features on a cultivar, for example the breeding technique. The supplier provides this information. Suppliers can choose from the definitions in the new organic regulation.
- **The database hosts the listing of seed offers from in-conversion.** Those in-conversion offers will be marked for transparency.
- **Translation:** national authorities will be contacted and asked to check with their national login if the translations are correct.

## 2.4 Main Outcomes of the Panel Discussion

There are new prospects for organic farming with the publication of the green deal by the new EU Commission, including the biodiversity strategy on the one hand and the farm to fork strategy on the other hand. Both aim at reaching sustainable food systems in Europe by 2030. This includes a new European target to reach 25% organic land by 2030. This is an ambitious objective but IFOAM Organic Europe believes that is achievable, provided it is supported by the right policies for organic food production and consumption. All of this will be accompanied by a new European action plan, which is expected early 2021. As part of this action plan, efforts to increase the production and availability of organic seeds and organic breeding are crucial as well.



### 2.4.1 Panellists

- *Stefan Dreesmann*, Head of Unit, Lower Saxony Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, Germany.
- *Dr. Pier Giacomo Bianchi*, Research Manager, CREA-DC, Italy.
- *César Gonzalez*, Manager Public Affairs, Euroseeds.
- *Joanna Bojczewska*, Consultant for Organic Farming & Agroecology.
- *Melanie Molnar*, Vitalis Organic Seeds, Spain.
- *Judit Feher*, Researcher, ÖMKi, Hungary.
- *Dr. Monika Messmer*, Group Leader Plant Breeding, FiBL-CH.
- *Patrizia Pitton*, Policy Officer, EU Commission DG Agriculture and Rural Development.
- *Thomas Weber*, Policy Officer, EU Commission DG Health and Food Safety.
- Moderator: *Eric Gall*, Deputy Director, IFOAM Organics Europe.

### 2.4.2. Discussion on achievements and best steps forward.

#### *Tasks for National Authorities*

##### Increase Cooperation between countries with a national annex:

*Stefan Dreesmann (Lower Saxony Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection)* highlighted that the National Annex has been in place in Germany since 2012. Up to now, there are nearly 30 crops listed and the expectation is to continue this path in the next years. First steps of cooperation between countries started around 2010 with the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and France in the form of knowledge exchange. To get more crops on the National Annex and to work towards 100% organic seed more exchange between countries is necessary. However, the pace of changes must go much faster to achieve the goal of 100% organic seed in time.

The role of the European Commission in this is to help, finance and establish specific interest groups. It would also be good from the European Commission to overlook this process to keep track of how fast the countries work and where they are in this process, maybe in every 3 years.

##### Implement a stricter derogation system:

*Pier Giacomo Bianchi (CREA-DC)* elaborated that the original goal of the database is a platform on which supply and demand is matched and to manage the derogation procedure on a fair basis. This assumes that suppliers trust the power of the database to deliver the seed to the market and the database users buy organic seeds from the suppliers as far as it is available. Seed companies see market opportunity, they invest, produce and then register their seeds in the database. Then the farmer decides which variety they intend to use. However, sometimes the farmers already made a decision not to purchase organic seed and to bring forward arguments, for example that there is not enough time for delivery. To avoid this malpractice, the derogation system should be applied strictly. The database is just a tool to get out of the negative circle of not purchasing organic seed and companies consequently not producing seed.

According to *Monika Messmer (FiBL-CH)*, the first step would be to get rid of the general derogations, after that individual derogations and in the end no derogations at all. Only if the rules for derogations are strictly implemented, the seed companies have the confidence to invest.

##### Develop Roadmaps to limit derogations:



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*Monika Messmer (FiBL-CH)* also suggests clear roadmaps must be developed to get more crops on the no-derogation list, and in the next step tackle crops where we have single derogation. Besides the roadmap, we also need monitor progress in the countries. The danger is that there is a good intention, but nothing will happen and everybody will think that 2036 is long time from now.

*Melanie Molnar (Vitalis Organic Seeds)* agrees that national roadmaps are needed, because we don't have the same approach in all countries, so coming up now with a 'one size, fits all' approach will not be appropriate.

### Create financial incentives for seed producers and users:

The farmers survey shows us that farmers with a short value chain or that do direct sale are using much more organic seed compared to bigger organic farms that produce for the long value chain, so the value chain can also play a major role in setting these limits. To motivate farmers to invest and to get the knowledge and infrastructure to produce organic seed, subsidies for the organic seed producers are needed. Provide financial incentives for those who use organic seed or a mandatory contribution for those who don't use organic seed.

### *Tasks for EU Authorities*

#### DG AGRI contribution to regulatory framework:

*Patrizia Pitton (EU Commission DG Agriculture and Rural Development)* highlighted that DG AGRI is working on the finalisation of the secondary legislation for the proper implementation of the regulation on organic farming that will finally be applicable from January 2022. With the secondary legislation, there will be more transparency, more knowledge, and more control on what is really going on in terms of derogations, in terms of liability of not only organic seed but in conversion seed as well.

The introduction of the non-derogation list is important to list the crops in which the member state will issue no derogations. This is a crucial point that had been already stressed by the experts and will give more certainty for the seed suppliers in terms of knowledge for future investment.

The Commission has taken commitment to publish the complete report that compiles the data from member states on availability and derogations in the future. This will be a valuable tool to monitor the progress in the upcoming years.

#### DG SANTE contribution to regulatory framework:

*Thomas Weber (EU Commission DG Health and Food Safety)* emphasized that DG SANTE is responsible for the seed marketing legislation and therefore plays a crucial role. In the context of our seed legislation, the Commission is preparing the temporary experiment on organic varieties for organic cultivation. This experiment is a crucial contribution as it boosts the breeding sector. It will be able to provide varieties appropriate for a large share of organic farmers, and we are looking at specific DUS and VCU tests for organic varieties for organic cultivation.

The Commission has been requested by the Council to conduct a study on the options on update its seed marketing legislation. It will take into account the policy frameworks like Green Deal or Farm to Fork Strategy. This gives us the opportunity to adapt the entire legislative framework much better to the needs of different sectors, in the long term. This creates a good outlook for the 2030's. However, one should be aware that the economic framework is also important and organic breeding will need sufficient financing, also by private actors, to flourish.



### *Tasks for Farmers*

#### Increase the involvement of farmers in participatory breeding and seed production:

Stakeholder collaboration and discussion on cultivars that are well adapted to organic farming and needed by the farmers is crucial, according to *Joanna Bojczewska (Consultant for Organic Farming & Agroecology)*. For farmers, one of the barriers is how to participate in such research or seed production collaboration to enhance the necessary technical skills. It is relatively easy to turn farmers into seed producers with contracts, but it is a little bit different to empower them as well. Farmers need support to convey their voice, in Poland this is a challenge and very often no farmers are represented in research institutes. Also, farmer organisations are not very strong in incorporating newcomers as their membership is often tilted towards the older generation. It is important to increase technical competence of farmers to enable them to produce some share of seed on their farms.

### *Tasks for Seed Companies*

#### Match the supply & demand of organic seeds:

According to *Cesar Gonzalez (Euroseeds)*, a lack of interest from the companies to supply organic seed is not the problem. Supply has been increasing and more companies are interested to step into the market of organic seed, so we can expect that the offer will increase even more.

The question for the European seed sector is, whether this increase in offer will meet the possible demand or if the demand will increase much faster than the offer. One year ago, the sector had been confident that it will be able to supply sufficient seeds for the organic sector within the next few years. Meanwhile, with the Green Deal and the objective of 25 % of land under organic, it will be a challenge for the sector to reach this goal. It will need to increase by 6 times the supply of organic seed. Whether more seed companies will engage in breeding for organic will ultimately also depend on whether this increase in organic land will also lead to a real increase in the demand for organic seed.

#### Opportunities for seed companies:

*Melanie Molnar (Vitalis Organic Seeds)* told the participants that one of the biggest success stories is the LIVESEED project because it really provides the first European overview about the state of the art on the use of organic seed. The Router Database is also a crucial step forward because it makes it easier for a seed company to offer seed on the international market and also for farmers to have an easy access the organic seeds that are available.

A roadmap would be very important also for seed suppliers, as they will need to adapt to the new situation. Also, the Green Deal gives seed companies that produce for organic a good push forward, but a plan is needed especially for biannual crops that you can't produce from one day to the next. Some kind of guideline is needed on what will be the next steps, what are the targets and when we have to reach those targets.

Seed companies consider it necessary to have a more intense cooperation with the organic growers. Vitalis already tests candidate material with organic growers on their fields to see if they are suitable for organic production and if its resilient enough. During this cooperation, seed companies get feedback from the growers on what are they doing differently and how the varieties react and what needs to be improved.



*Tasks for Research Institutes*

Role of researchers in capacity building:

Researchers, *Judit Feher (ÖMKi)* stressed, have the important role to create new knowledge and new cultivars and to disseminate this information. Research institutes are very important in organizing field trials, in on farm trials farmers are directly involved, which is very useful because it also builds trust and can initiate small plot trials in countries where there isn't an official one. The organic open field days are useful to disseminate outcomes and can be good also to exchange knowledge between farmers.

Involve all stakeholders:

To achieve a large increase in the offer of organic seed, it is necessary to join forces, according to *Monika Messmer (FiBL-CH)*. This means involving the seed companies but also the farmers and the public institutions that play an important role in breeding, especially in eastern European countries. Also, economic institutes are involved in seed production and there could be political shift so that they focus more on organic seed production instead of conventional. At the moment, it is very difficult to find sufficient organic farmers that are experienced in seed production. Training of organic farmers as seed producers must be supported by an infrastructure and we need to make sure that there's a real demand for organic seed on the market, not just a calculated one. Therefore, it is very important that the new organic regulation will be implemented much more strictly than in the past and the countries have to start right now to reduce the amount of derogations.

### 3 Policy recommendations

The following recommendations follow from the national workshops in the countries visited, the North-Western European workshop, the special workshop on vegetative material and the LIVESEED European Workshop.

**1) Develop roadmaps towards 100% organic seeds (at crop, national and EU level).**

a.	A guideline/template for such a roadmap would be helpful and could be developed within LIVESEED that national authorities can use as a base and adapt.
b.	Analyse bottlenecks and describe actions needed to reach 100% organic PRM.
c.	Make a long term timetable/plan for each crop. This should include steppingstones to allow a step-by-step approach.
d.	The Commission should monitor progress in the different countries. Preferably on an annual basis.
e.	Each country should establish a baseline. Otherwise, you cannot monitor progress. Standardized templates are needed for this. For instance, for the derogation reports.
f.	Involve all relevant stakeholders (breeders, farmers, processors, retailers) and ask them to commit to the aim to reach 100% organic PRM.



g.	Give the expert groups an important role in this process. They can make plans for the different crops.
h.	Integrate the measures needed in national and EU organic action plans.
i.	Reserve budget for research (on seed quality, variety testing, breeding) where needed.
j.	In addition, it would be helpful if this topic (towards 100% organic PRM) would regularly be on the agenda of the EU COP meeting and the European seed expert committee (for the more technical issues).

## 2) Organize international cooperation between countries.

a.	Facilitate structural knowledge exchange between countries with similar challenges and circumstances. Build upon the informal exchange that is already happening among some countries with a National Annex. To formalize this, some budget is needed to set up annual online meetings and to follow up on the action points.
b.	Exchange information on: (i) What crops are to be put on category 1 (no derogation possible); (ii) Results from variety trials; (iii) Technical references on specific varieties.
c.	Make a plan for some promising crops (e.g. potatoes, lettuce) to put on the national Annex in different countries at the same time.
d.	Organize international technical workshops on specific topics such as seed mixtures and vegetative propagation material.
e.	Get inspired by practices of the conventional sector on how to share information on seed and varieties between countries.
f.	We have learned from the ECO-PB meetings that the exchange of information is not enough. There must be some obligations to make progress.

## 3) Stimulate organic seed production.

a.	Seed companies need targets and deadlines for derogations to know how much they should invest.
b.	Finding good locations for organic seed production is now a major bottleneck. Seed companies should collaborate more in choosing locations for organic seed production.
c.	Create financial incentives for seed producers and users.
d.	Introduce a pre-ordering deadline for vegetative material, to enable producers of vegetative material to adequately assess market demand (and to produce accordingly).





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| e. There is a lack of farmers that are good seed producers. Educate organic farmers to become seed producers, in cooperation with seed companies. |
|---|

#### 4) Increase the development of organic varieties.

- |   |
|---|
| a. Stimulate public research projects and breeding programmes for organic varieties.              |
| b. Increase cultivar testing under organic conditions.  |
| c. Use stakeholder networks to create synergies in research related to organic breeding and seed. |

#### 5) Improve seed expert groups & national databases.

- |  |
|--|
| a. Install & expand national organic seed expert groups. (i) Include relevant stakeholders. This includes processors since they often play an important role in which varieties the farmers use. (ii) Install different expert groups for the different crop groups. For instance, for vegetables, arable crops and vegetative propagating material. |
| b. Update the national organic seed databases as soon as there are changes, also to live up to the new requirements in the New Organic Regulation (2018/848).  |
| c. Use the account in the router database (free of charge) to improve your national database. Check the router database account at least every second week.  |

#### 6) Implement and maintain the router database after LIVESEED.

- |  |
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| a. It is important that all EU-member states use the router database and transfer offers to their national databases. If offers are not accepted, the reason should be communicated to the supplier. |
| b. Stimulate the use of the router database among seed suppliers. This will stimulate the national organic seed market and incentivizes also local seed supplier to invest in organic production.    |
| c. Some seed supplier would like to make the use of the router database by the member states obligatory to reach points a and b.   |
| d. The EU Commission should pay for the maintenance of the router database, otherwise it will not be sustainable as there is currently no legal basis to charge for it.                              |



## Annex I: Summary of bottlenecks & opportunities identified during the international workshop for North-Western Europe (June 25-26, 2020)<sup>2</sup>

### *Bottlenecks*

#### No level-playing field:

- There are still big differences in the availability of organic seed and in the rules for the use of organic seed, between EU countries.
- Due to the big price difference between conventional and organic seeds; producers who can buy conventional seed now have a competitive advantage over farmers (in another country) that are obliged to use organic seed.
- This is not only the case for seeds but also for transplants (seedlings). Organic transplants can be produced with organic or with conventional seed.

#### Insufficient availability of organic seed:

- LIVESEED research shows this is the main disincentive for farmers to use organic seed.
- The obligation to use organic seed limits the choice for farmers; varieties that are not propagated in organic quality, will no longer be available for organic farmers.
- Seed companies won't invest in organic seed production unless farmers are buying their seed.
- Therefore, more incentives for farmers to use organic seed need to be created.

#### No clear plan or roadmap to get to no derogations in 2035:

- We need stepstones and intermediate checks to come to 100% organic PRM.
- There is no sense of urgency. We all need to go full force ahead to reach our goals.
- There are no reliable statistics to calculate the supply of and demand for organic seeds in different countries and crops.

#### Scaling up organic seed production:

- Looking at the data we collected within LIVESEED on the current supply and use of organic seed the seed production must at least double until 2036. And if we keep in mind that the farm-to-fork strategy aims to increase the organic farming area from 7,7% to 25% in 10 years, much more organic seeds will be needed. It will be a big challenge to produce all this seed.
- It is already difficult to produce sufficient organic seeds for all countries, especially for crops that must be propagated outdoors.
- Sufficient quality is sometimes difficult to reach, it is possible that we must accept a different quality standard for organic propagated seeds, maybe we cannot reach a 92% germination rate, for instance for carrots.
- When seed availability is lacking behind and untreated remains the standard, it is hard to make progress, because the standard is setting the price.

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<sup>2</sup> See full report: [https://www.liveseed.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/LIVESEED\\_Report-NWE-workshop-June-25-26.pdf](https://www.liveseed.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/LIVESEED_Report-NWE-workshop-June-25-26.pdf)



## D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

- It is very challenging to find sufficient organic farmers to produce the seed in the different regions in Europe. Farmers need to be skilled and it must be economically interesting for them to switch to seed production.

### *Opportunities and Recommendations*

#### Good implementation of the rules for organic seed use in every EU country:

- Strict derogation rules work: category 1 is a very powerful tool to increase production and use of organic seed.
- No derogation when organic seed is available works for farmers. At the same time, it is important that derogations remain possible for new or very specific varieties for which no organic seed is available (yet).
- By establishing a level playing field there will be a better competition and market.

#### A roadmap towards 100% organic PRM:

- Every country should have a roadmap on how they want to reach 100% organic PRM by 2036.
- Make it obligatory for each member-state to develop a timeline, with stepping stones, for the main species that are grown in their country on how to reach the aim of 100% organic PRM.
- Monitor progress at the national and the European level.
- Cooperation between countries and companies is important to avoid monopolists or no offers at all in certain countries.
- Set realistic goals. First try to achieve 80% organic PRM in all European countries for the main crops. Then we can talk about the last 10-20% which will be more difficult.
- Once we have reached 90%, we can discuss if 95% is sufficient to reach but now we should set this strict goal of 100% by 2036, to have a clear timeline.

#### Varieties with an added value for organic farmers:

- Breed varieties adapted to organic farming so farmers can derive added value from them.
- Companies must produce more unique products for the organic market. This can create a very strong demand. For instance, mildew-resistant onions.
- Support organic farmers in adapting to climate change; produce resilient varieties.
- Heterogenous material offers great opportunities and will help to reach the aim of 100% organic PRM. Market access can be supported.

#### The EU router database:

- This will increase the transparency in the organic seed market and give more security to farmers and seed companies.
- Not every country has enough producers, so they need seeds from abroad.
- The router database can help to get more organic seeds on the market.

#### Support local) organic seed production:

- Support farmers cooperatives on a regional level to produce their own seeds. Support them in capacity building, the infrastructure (drying, cleaning, packaging) and quality testing so no diseases will be spread.



#### D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

- New seed companies should start to invest in organic PRM. It is a growing market.
- In some countries subsidies for organic seed producers can be an option.



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090.



## Annex II: Summary of the international workshop on vegetative propagating material (September 10, 2020)<sup>3</sup>

Vegetative propagation material such as seed potatoes, rootstocks and cuttings were in the spotlight of a LIVESEED workshop on 10 September 2020. This type of plant propagating material is used for the production of crops, like apples, grapes and potatoes. Since all vegetative propagating material is going to be included in the category of 'plant reproductive material (PRM)' in the New Organic Regulation it is an important part of the strategy to work towards 100% organic PRM. The workshop was the first of its kind in the context of the LIVESEED project.

The workshop started off with a presentation on seed potatoes, a product for which already a solid supply is available on the market in organic quality. According to Maaïke Raaijmakers (Bionext) a key success factor for the use of organic seed potatoes in the Netherlands was the introduction of a pre-ordering rule. This means that a derogation (to use non-organic seed potatoes) can only be requested if 1) there is a shortage in supply and 2) the producer showed they ordered the organic material in time. This measure is effective against fraud and prevents a degradation in the quality of the supply due to long storage times.

This example also demonstrates the crucial role of the national seed databases, where seed potato supplies are listed. With the entry into force of the new EU Organic Regulation, supplies of all other vegetative propagation material will have to be inserted into the database as well. In this context, one participant in the workshop raised the point that a great amount of sales deals are sealed directly between the supplier and the customer. In this well-established business practice, the database is not used as a marketplace, but suppliers still have to make sure to insert their offers also in the database to act in compliance with the Organic Regulation. This is important because the supply in the database is the basis on which national authorities decide whether a derogation request is granted or not.

While organic seed potatoes are widely used, the situation is different for other crops like hard fruit (apples, pears), soft fruit (berries) and grapevines. Even though organic apple breeding is ongoing in Germany and Switzerland, for example, mostly non-organic propagation material is used, as explained by Freya Schaefer (FiBL DE). The production of (organic) fruit trees takes a long time and is quite costly. Since trees cannot be stored for a longer period they are mainly produced on order. Fruit tree producers are able to offer most (not all) varieties in organic quality if ordering takes place with sufficient time (a year and a half) before planting.

A bottleneck for the production of organic PRM for soft fruit (berries) is the fact that the production process includes an in-vitro stage (without soil), which does not align with the definition of 'organic plant reproductive material' in the EU Organic Regulation. At the same time it was emphasized that the in-vitro stage is crucial to ensure that growers receive healthy starting material. The participants agreed, however, that progress can be made by producing the following stage (long/short canes, rooted cuttings) under organic conditions. In that case at least the starting material for the farmers is organic. After that, the next step would be to produce organic mother plants as well.

The situation is unique for organic grapevine material, as highlighted by an organic winemaker. Due to the limited options for plant protection in organic systems, growing organic propagation material for grapevines is a challenge in North/Western Europe mainly due to fungal diseases. At the same time, consumers and retailers still demand the classic (conventional) varieties such as Chardonnay, Riesling etc. which is why breeding varieties that are suitable for organic input conditions are currently not economically viable. A possible solution to this problem is research on innovative production techniques that manage the fungus problem. One project on this topic is currently financed by the German Ministry of Agriculture.

<sup>3</sup> See full report: [https://www.liveseed.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/LIVESEED-report-international-workshop\\_Vegetative-propagating-material.pdf](https://www.liveseed.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/LIVESEED-report-international-workshop_Vegetative-propagating-material.pdf)



#### D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

It is evident that for many vegetative crops, progress should be made and measured in small steps, as it is not in all cases an easy undertaking to produce organic starting material. The participants of the LIVESEED workshop agreed that National and EU-wide roadmaps per individual species and an EU expert group on vegetative material could be a decisive factor to gradually increase the percentage of organic vegetative propagating material.



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## Annex III: National Progress Reports

### ESTONIA

#### Database

##### Committed actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Karen Ratsep (Estonian Seed Association) cooperates with the Agricultural Board to improve the organic seed database	
<p><u>Report from Estonian Seed Association</u></p> <p>No changes in organic seeds database, but improvement in general seed production database: public Excel table that shows all produced seed in Estonia. It was a general list before, but now organic seed has special marking and can be found among other seeds easily.</p> <p><u>Estonia Crop Research Institute</u></p> <p>An organic seed database is available at: <a href="https://www.pma.agri.ee/">https://www.pma.agri.ee/</a></p>	Period / Date

#### Expert Group

##### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Karin Zereen (Ministry of Rural Affairs) initiates the establishment of an organic seed expert group together with the Organic Farming Platform	
<p><u>Ministry of Rural Affairs:</u></p> <p>Last year, several seminars on the use of organic seeds were held in which also the establishment of an organic seed expert group was discussed. The interest, readiness and need for such an expert group is still very high, and although this has not yet been achieved, there is a consistent effort to achieve this goal.</p>	Period / Date

#### Research

##### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Ilmar Tamm (Estonian Crop Research Institute) does regular testing of varieties in organic field trials to find more suitable varieties for organic production and improves the dissemination of the results of these trials	
<p><u>Estonia Crop Research Institute</u></p> <p>Regular variety testing trials of cereals and potato in organic conditions have been organised and will be continued regularly. The trials are introduced to organic farmers in yearly field days, in tutorial days and publications.</p> <p>Organic field days were held on July 06 and 12, 2018; July 05 and 11, 2019; July 09, 2020. Seminars on potato were organised on December 06, 2018 and on December.</p> <p>Territorial day for seed producers was carried out on April 03, 2018.</p> <p>Information day introducing the varieties and agro-technology of vegetables were carried on in July 17, 2018; on July 22, 2020.</p>	2018 - 2020



Samples of publications:	
<p>Tamm, I. 2018. Kaera sortide mahekatse tulemused Eesti Taimekasvatuse Instituudis 2016.–2018. Mahepõllumajanduse leht, 83. 4/2018, lk. 2-4 (available at: <a href="http://www.maheklubi.ee/upload/Editor/maheleht_4_2018.pdf">http://www.maheklubi.ee/upload/Editor/maheleht_4_2018.pdf</a>) IT ETKI</p> <p>Tupits, I., Tamm, I. 2019. Talirukki ja kaera sortide väetamine mineraal- ja orgaaniliste väetistega. Agronoomia 2019. I. Tupits, S. Tamm, Ü. Tamm, A. Toe (Toim.). Jõgeva: Vali Press, lk. 70-77.</p> <p>Tamm, Ü., Tamm, I., Küüts, H. 2019. Uue odrasordi 'Tuuli' katsetulemused maheviljeluse tingimustes. Teaduselt mahepõllumajandusele. Toimetised. L. Metspalu, A. Luik (Toim). Eesti Maaülikooli Mahekeskus (available at: <a href="https://www.etki.ee/taim/public/pdf/Trukised/Agronoomia2019.pdf">https://www.etki.ee/taim/public/pdf/Trukised/Agronoomia2019.pdf</a>)</p> <p>Tamm, I., Tamm, Ü. 2019 9. Uus kaerasort 'Kusta. Agronoomia 2019. I. Tupits, S. Tamm, Ü. Tamm, A. Toe (Toim.). Jõgeva: Vali Press, lk. 50-53. (available at: <a href="https://www.etki.ee/taim/public/pdf/Trukised/Agronoomia2019.pdf">https://www.etki.ee/taim/public/pdf/Trukised/Agronoomia2019.pdf</a>)</p>	
<b>Ilmar Tamm (Estonian Crop Research Institute) includes breeding varieties that are suitable for organic farming into the new Estonian breeding program</b>	
<p><u>Estonia Crop Research Institute</u></p> <p>Variety breeding for organic production has been included in the Estonian national breeding program 2020-2030 as one of the breeding objectives.</p> <p>State breeding program 2020-2030 was confirmed by Estonian Ministry of Rural Affairs in 10.12.2019.</p>	2020 - 2030

### Regulatory and general developments concerning research

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
<p>The Ministry of Rural Affairs has developed a comprehensive Estonian organic economy program 2018–2021</p>	2018-2021

### Training/Information/Communication

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>Elen Peetsmann (Research Centre of Organic Farming of Estonian University of Life Sciences) continues the knowledge transfer program and includes organic seed production and use in the information days</b>	
<p><u>Research Centre of Organic Farming of Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonian seed Association</u></p> <p>Two information days were organized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•18th of November 2019 in Estonian Crop Research Institute, organized by Estonian Organic Farming Foundation. Topics: introduction of new plant breeding center of ECRI, discussion about co-operation between farmers and scientist in order to develop organic seed production in Estonia;</li> <li>•9th of January 2020 in Estonian Crop Research Institute (ECRI), organized by Estonian Organic Farming Foundation. Topics: organic seed production regulation, introduction of</li> </ul>	2019-2020





new varieties bred in ECRI suitable for organic production. Seminar about growing organic seed, where old and new seed producers exchanged their experiences. It was held by Estonian Crop Research Institute and Estonian Organic Production Foundation Organic seed production and the use of organic seeds have also been discussed in other information days organized within the knowledge transfer program.	
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning training/information/communication

#### Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project

##### Estonia Crop Research Institute

Long-term knowledge transfer program, which also includes the dissemination of information related to organic farming is under the development by the Ministry of Rural Affairs.

Period  
/  
Date

### Production and Use of Organic Seeds

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

#### Karin Zereen (Ministry of Rural Affairs) makes the suggestion to the organic farming support measure to increase the support for the use of organic seeds and to widen it to other crops

##### Ministry of Rural Affairs

The proposal to widen the organic farming support for the use of organic seeds to other crops besides grain and potato has been made in the official description of interventions of the new organic farming support measures. The new support rates depend on the final budget and are therefore yet to be calculated, but the aim is to increase the support rates in the new period compared to the current rates.

Period  
/  
Date

##### Estonia Crop Research Institute

Organic producers receive a separate support for cereals and potatoes sown with certified seed.

#### Airika Rahuoja (organic farmer and seed producer) in cooperation with the Estonian Seed Association start the discussion and make a proposal to change the requirements to get extra points for investments in seed producing equipment in the investment support measure in RDP

No progress observed.

Period  
/  
Date

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

#### Elen Peetsmann (Research Centre of Organic Farming of Estonian University of Life Sciences) includes the importance of organic seed use and production in the new organic farming action plan and makes it a priority

##### Research Centre of Organic Farming of Estonian University of Life Sciences

The Estonian Organic Farming Platform is preparing the organic farming action plan and organic seed production will be included.

Period  
/  
Date



## Summary of Progress – Estonia

- The seed database is still an Excel file and requires considerable improvement to live up to the requirements of the New Organic Regulation EC 2018/848.
- The establishment of an organic seed expert group was discussed. While interest, readiness and need for such an expert group is still very high, a consistent effort by stakeholders and authorities will be needed to establish this expert group.
- Organic included as one priority in the national breeding programme. Variety testing trials of cereals and potato in organic conditions have been organised and will be continued regularly.
- National action plan for organic farming includes organic seeds. Ministry aims at increasing the support rates for the use of organic seeds.

## LATVIA

### Database

#### Committed actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

The Ministry of Agriculture, State Plant Protection Service improves the organic seed database to make it more user-friendly	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> Amendments have been made to Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 485 “Procedures for Supervision and Control of Organic Agriculture”, setting additional conditions for the information to be included in the database in order to make the database more user-friendly. Amendments to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers were adopted on 19.02.2019.</p> <p><u>Report from State Plant Protection Service (SPPS)</u> Amendments to Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 485 (19.02.2019.) extended database platform availability: Prior to 2019, information on organic seed or vegetative propagation material <u>produced</u> only in Latvia was published in the database. Currently there is information published on organic seed or vegetative propagation material <u>available</u> in Latvia. SPSS has informed the seed retailers operating in Latvia about the expansion of the availability of the database platform by sending information to the e-mails of the responsible representatives. So far, only one company offers seed certified in another country (Estonia) for the database.</p>	From Feb 19, 2019 up to now
The Ministry of Agriculture, State Plant Protection Service includes information about characteristics of varieties, expenses of deliveries etc. in the database	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> Amendments have been made to Cabinet Regulation No. 485 “Procedures for the supervision and control of organic farming”, stipulating an additional condition that</p>	From Feb 19, 2019 up to now



<p>additional information on where the seed may be delivered must be entered in the database. Amendments to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers were adopted on 19.02.2019.</p> <p><u>Report from State Plant Protection Service (SPPS).</u> SPSS is a public administration institution, the operation of which is strictly regulated by the regulatory framework established in the state. The information to be indicated in the organic seed database is determined by the Cabinet of Ministers on 26.05.2009. Paragraph 29 of Regulation No. 485 “Procedures for Supervision and Control of Organic Agriculture”.</p>	
<b>The Association of Organic Agriculture, organic farmers and producers’ representatives maximise the information included information from field inspections to seed certification</b>	
<p><u>Report from producer’s’ representative “Aloja Agro”:</u> No actions taken</p>	

Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

Reports	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA )</u> Work has begun to specify the time when information about derogations application will be available in the database. The meeting took place on 27.05.2020.</p>	Starting May 2020
<p><u>Report from AREI</u> in 2020 Cabinet Regulations No. 485 were opened again for amendments. AREI proposed the following changes and additions to database: to include information about seeds of heterogeneous material; to include information about the location of seed production field, expected amount of seeds and expected time when seed will be available to customers. Proposals are not accepted so far.</p>	
<p><u>Report from Association of Seed producers (LSA)</u> The LSA submitted proposals to the Ministry of Agriculture, but there is no result yet. As a representative of the MoA organic seed production working group, the LSA has participated in a meeting organized by the MoA (once a year), where proposals for improving the legislation are also submitted, including on improving the database. No information available whether the implementation of the proposals has been discussed</p>	

Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA )</u> Work has begun to improve organic seed database. Introduction of the improvements is planned in 2021</p>	
<p><u>Report from State Plant Protection Service (SPPS).</u>  In 2019, amendments were made to Paragraph 29 of the above-mentioned Cabinet Regulations, slightly changing the information to be published on the offered organic seed</p>	From 2019 up to now



and propagating material (it would no longer necessary to specify a category the seed, number of seed quality document and quantity offered for sale. The data bases should be supplemented with information on the area to which the seed may be supplied). No funds were allocated for changes to the database maintenance platform in the State Crop Monitoring Information System. Technical changes to the database are planned for 2021, when a new EU regulation will have to be introduced, which will make it mandatory to indicate the amount of organic seed and propagating material available after its entry into force.

## Derogations

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

#### The Association of Organic Agriculture, organic farmers and producers' representatives raise criteria to apply for derogations to use non-treated conventional seed

Report from producers and processors representative dealing with organic potato processing (Aloja Starkelsen):

No criteria have been raised

Period  
/  
Date

Report from producer's representative "Aloja Agro":

No progress

### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

#### Actions taken to reduce the demand for derogations

Report from producers and processors representative dealing with organic potato processing (Aloja Starkelsen):

New seed growers have been approached, but they are not working well enough and the price of seed is often inadequately high. This reduces the use of organically certified seed rather than encouraging it.

Since  
2019

Report from producer's representative "Aloja Agro":

we have fully converted to organic and provide certified organic seed of several crops. Thus, we have increased availability of organic seed potato, peas and oats seeds.

Report from AREI

in May 2019, a proposal to MoA submitted in cooperation with the Latvia Organic Farming Association regarding stricter conditions under which farmer can apply for derogation. The farmer should prove that he has tried to purchase the organic seed (for example, there has been an agreement with the organic seed grower or retailer but the seed has not been delivered). The proposal has been rejected as difficult to implement so far.

Report from Association of Seed producers (LSA)

LSA, acting in the working group of organic seed production of the Ministry of Agriculture, has submitted proposals that are not currently approved in legislation

### Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090.



Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> Amendments have been made to Cabinet Regulation No. 485 “Procedures for the Supervision and Control of Organic Farming”, establishing additional conditions that promote the use of organic seed material - the authorization to use germinating grains (uncertified seed) for green manure and green fodder is suspended, as well as a sanction is provided for the use of such material. Amendments to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers were adopted on 19.02.2019.</p> <p><u>Report from State Plant Protection Service (SPPS).</u> Since 2019 the database also provides an opportunity to include information on certified organic seed or vegetative propagation material certified in other EU countries, which is available in Latvia - thus making information on available organic seed more widely available. Retailers of organic vegetable seeds have not responded to the call to include information on distributed organic seeds in the database.</p>	Since 2019 up to now

## Expert Group

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

The Ministry of Agriculture, State Plant Protection Service expands functions and membership of organic seed expert group – including representatives of processing industry with aim to clear out the needs of industry	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> The expert group has made a decision to include representatives of the processing industry. Decision taken on 05.12.2019. Experts from two joint-stock companies - JSC “Rīgas dzirnavnieks” and JSC “Dobeles dzirnavnieks” included.</p> <p><u>Report from State Plant Protection Service (SPPS).</u> _No actions taken</p>	Dec 5, 2019
Researchers from AREI, University of Agriculture, TimacAgro participate in organic seed expert group, communicate with organisations and society	
<p><u>Report from AREI.</u> Representatives from AREI have worked in expert group on list of species with general derogation and on specifying the data necessary to apply for derogation. Experts have been involved in decision making in an emergency situation when no organic seed was available due to unfavourable climatic conditions. Communications with society:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field day at Priekuli and Stende (2 research centers of AREI), importance of organic varieties and organic seed, heterogeneous populations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>July 7th, 2019, Priekuli</li> <li>July 2nd, 2019, Stende</li> <li>July 3rd, 2020, Priekuli</li> <li>July 7th 2020, Stende</li> </ul> </li> <li>Workshop on heterogeneous populations and varieties mixture and development of network – heterogeneous crop populations – February 13th, 2020. Riga</li> </ol>	From 2019 up to now



3. Workshop for seed producers ‘How to become a certified seed producer’ (conventional and organic). April 5th, 2019. Priekuli	
<b>The Association of Organic Agriculture, organic farmers and producers’ representatives participate in expert groups and express coherent opinion</b>	
No progress observed.	Period / Date

Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

<b>Representatives from other related field included in organic seed expert group</b>	
<u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> Representatives from seed retailers - “Kurzemes sēklas” Ltd, “Scandagra Latvija” Ltd and “Baltic Agro” Ltd included in seed expert group. The meeting with the representatives “Scandagra Latvija” and “Baltic Agro” took place on 05.12.2019. The meeting with the representatives of “Kurzemes sēklas” took place on 27.05.2020.	Dec 5, 2018; May 05, 2020

## Research

Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>Researchers from AREI, University of Agriculture, TimacAgro organises trials for evaluation of suitability of varieties to organic growing conditions in different locations</b>	
<u>Report from AREI</u> Research projects supported by MoA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstration of leguminous species under organic farming system in different regions, including non-traditional species in Latvia (3 locations in Latvia)</li> <li>- Demonstration of cereals and potato varieties created in Latvia which promising for organic farming (3 locations in Latvia)</li> </ul> Research projects supported by Council of Science, Latvia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Genetically diverse populations of self-pollinating cereals for organic farming: agronomic performance, effect of environment, and improvement techniques (trials in 2 locations in Latvia, heterogeneous populations and varieties mixtures of barley and wheat, demonstrations and information available for stakeholders in field days and seminars)</li> <li>- Potato breeding for low input and organic farming systems: nitrogen use efficiency and quality aspects of potato protein (trials in 3 locations in Latvia, potato varieties and breeding material, demonstrations and information available for stakeholders in field days and seminars).</li> </ul> Research projects supported by Rural Support service, European Regional Development Fund: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New technologies and economically viable solutions for the production of local feed for pig production: cultivation of non-genetically modified soybeans and new barley varieties in Latvia (trials in 3-4 locations of Latvia, soya and barley varieties, demonstrations and information available for stakeholders in field days and seminars)</li> </ul>	Period / Date



Collaborative projects with merchants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project with AmeLat, evaluation of potato varieties suitability for organic farming (trials in 3 locations in Latvia, demonstrations and information available for stakeholders in field days and seminars)</li> </ul>	
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning research

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u></p> <p>The development of organic breeding has been stimulated, starting from 2020 by increasing the state support for the breeding of organic varieties of certain species.</p> <p><u>Report from AREI</u></p> <p>Within the framework of research projects in 2019 and 2020 we have organized field trials and evaluated spring barley breeding material (including heterogeneous populations) and organically grown varieties in two locations: Vidzeme (Priekuli) and partly Kurzeme (Stende). The report of results for 2019 has been submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and The Association of Organic Agriculture.</p>	2019-2020

### Training/Information/Communication

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

The Ministry of Agriculture, State Plant Protection Service supports educational activities	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u></p> <p>Training of organic farmers, including the training on the importance of seed production have been supported by MoA in the frame of activities of the Latvian Rural Development Program 2014-2020.</p> <p>Training has been provided by the Rural Advisory Center. In 2019, 202 participants were trained and 151,500 euros were spent. 133 participants were trained and 99,750 euros (excluding VAT) were spent in 2020.</p> <p>More data still expected from Agricultural data center.</p> <p><u>Report from State Plant Protection Service (SPPS).</u></p> <p>State Plant Protection Service provided online (ZOOM platform) lectures to organic farming consultants of Rural Advisory Center on the issues of SPPS competence, including the database of organic seeds and derogations issuing procedure.</p>	2019-2020
Researchers from AREI, University of Agriculture, TimacAgro carry out educational measures that could promote users to require transparency of production	
<p><u>Report from AREI</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Field days at Priekuli and Stende (2 research centers of AREI), importance of organic varieties and organic seed, information on heterogeneous populations.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>July 7th, 2019. Priekuli</i></li> <li>b. <i>July 2nd, 2019 Stende</i></li> <li>c. <i>July 3rd, 2020 Priekuli</i></li> <li>d. <i>July 7th 2020 Stende</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <i>Workshop on heterogeneous populations and varieties mixture and development of network – heterogeneous crop populations – February 13th, 2020. Riga</i></li> </ol>	From 2019 up to now



## D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

<p>3. <i>Workshop for seed producers. "How to become a certified seed producer" (conventional and organic). April 5th, 2019. Priekuli</i></p> <p>Articles in local press:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Sproģe M. 2019. Bioloģiskajai sēklkopībai jāveido labi pamati. Atbalsts tieši sēklas lietotājiem. Druva, 13.02.2019. – The organic seed production needs good base.</i></li> <li>- <i>Sproģe M. 2019. Ceļavārdi sēklām pavasarī. Druva, 10.04.2019.- Best wishes for seeds in the spring</i></li> <li>- <i>Zariņa L. 2019. Labību sējumu kopšana bioloģiskajā lauksaimniecībā, Agrotops Nr. 2 (246), 22.-23. – Cereal management in organic farming</i></li> <li>- <i>Zariņa L. 2019. Kas jāpatur prātā audzējot pākšaugu-labību maisījumus, Agrotops Nr. 6 (262), 32.-33. – What have to be kept in mind if cereal-legume mixtures are grown</i></li> <li>- <i>Skrabule I., Dimante I. 2019. Kartupeļi. Lauku Avīzes tematiskā avīze. Nr. 296 (9), 64 lpp. Magazine on topic – potato</i></li> <li>- <i>Sproģe M. 2019. Nacionālā selekcija vajadzīga. Kas par to maksās? Druva, 30.10.2019. National plant breeding is needed. Who will pay for it?</i></li> <li>- <i>Ločmele I., Legzdiņa L. 2019. Kas ir pašapputes sugu populācijas un pirmie rezultāti to veidošanā Latvijā. Agrotops Nr. 11 (267), 22.-25. What is self polinated populations and first results in development of them in Latvia</i></li> <li>- <i>Dimante I., Skrabule I. 2019. Vai Eiropa gatava jaunajai bioloģiskās lauksaimniecības regulai? Agrotops Nr. 12 (268), 22.-24. Is Europe ready for new regulation for organic farming?</i></li> <li>- <i>Graudiņš U. 2019. Kā augu selekcija var veicināt pārmaiņas vidē un sabiedrībā. Agrotops Nr. 12 (268). 10.-13. How plant breeding promote changes in environment and society</i></li> <li>- <i>Sproģe M. 2019. Selekcija un jaunas metodes. Druva. 18.12.2019. Plant breeding and new breeding techniques</i></li> <li>- <i>Sproģe M. 2019. Selekcijas loma nākotnes lauksaimniecībā. Saimnieks Nr.11., (185), 30.-32.lpp. The role of plant breeding in agriculture of the future</i></li> <li>- <i>Sproģe M. 2020. Sēklas apcirķņos pārpārēm. Druva, 12.03.2020. Availability of seed is high</i></li> <li>- <i>Piliksere D. 2020. Bioloģiskajai audzēšanai perspektīvu kartupeļu šķirņu salīdzinājums. Saimnieks, Nr. 4 (190), 64., 66. lpp. Comparison of potato varieties perspective for organic farming</i></li> <li>- <i>Zute S., Vīcupe Z. 2019. Kuras auzu šķirnes veismīgāk pārcieta sausumu. Agro Tops Nr.4, 34 – 36. – Oat varieties more resistant to drought</i></li> </ul>	
<b>The Association of Organic Agriculture, organic farmers and producers' representatives requires more support for educational, information and research activities</b>	
<p><u>Report from producers and processors representative dealing with organic potato processing (Aloja Starkelsen):</u> Processors are currently spending funds and engaging in projects for education and research.</p> <p><u>Report from producer's representative "Aloja Agro":</u> No actions have been taken.</p>	Period / Date

Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

<b>Participation in seminars organized by other experts</b>	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> MoA experts participated in the seminar "Let's sow diversity" on 30.06.2019 and in the seminar "HETEROGENEOUS CROP POPULATIONS: research results, first cultivation experience, forthcoming changes in legislation" on 13.02.2020. MoA experts introduced the participants of the seminars about the legal requirements in organic seed production.</p>	2019/2020 0

Regulatory and general developments concerning training/information/communication

## Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project



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## D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> It is proposed to grant support for training and consultations of farmers in the new programming period. Consideration of the proposal and decision is scheduled for 2021.</p> <p><u>Report from State Plant Protection Service (SPPS).</u> Up-to-date information is published twice a year on the website of the SPPS. During the growing season, a large number of telephone consultations are provided, focusing on the database and the use of organic seed. One month before the start of the derogations application period, seed retailers are individually informed about the possibilities of the organic seed database.</p>	2020
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## Production and Use of Organic Seeds

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

The Ministry of Agriculture, State Plant Protection Service proposes area-based subsidies in Agricultural policy documents to support organic farmers using organic certified seed	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> MoA has proposed to grant additional support to farmers using certified organic seed in the new programming period. Consideration of the proposal and decision is scheduled for 2021.</p> <p><u>Report from State Plant Protection Service (SPPS).</u> No actions have been reported by SPPS.</p> <p><u>Report from Association of Seed producers (LSA).</u> It is not known whether specific support for users of certified organic seed is planned in the future. But this has been discussed in the meetings of the Ministry of Agriculture with the producers, where the conditions for receiving EU support payments in the next period 2021 - 2027 have been discussed, which are still under development and may enter into force no earlier than 2023.</p>	2020
Researchers from AREI, University of Agriculture, TimacAgro promote cooperation in seed production, create EIP groups for research on seed production	
<p><u>Report from AREI</u> No progress observed.</p>	Period / Date
The Association of Organic Agriculture, organic farmers and producers' representatives request additional support for the use of organic certified seed	
<p><u>Report from producers and processors representative dealing with organic potato processing (Aloja Starkelsen):</u> There has been discussion on support, but it is clear that changes in the support system can only be introduced in the new EU's CAP. Discussions on the new CAP payments and conditions are not over.</p> <p><u>Report from producer's representative "Aloja Agro":</u> No actions were taken.</p>	ongoing

### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

Actions taken to promote the production and use of organic seed	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u></p>	Period / Date



## D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

<p>In the autumn of 2019, MoA authorities had meeting with the representatives of JSC “Rīgas dzirnavnieks” and JSC “Dobeles dzirnavnieks” on the importance of certified organic seeds. The information was provided to processors to inform organic farmers supplying organic grain for processing on the importance of the use of certified organic seeds that can help increasing yields and reducing the spread of diseases and weeds.</p> <p><u>Report from producers and processors representative dealing with organic potato processing (Aloja Starkelsen):</u> I have already mentioned the activities to attract new seed growers. For me, as a processor, the main problem is the very unstable volume of organic seed grown. There is a danger of meeting the need for production.</p>	2019 up to now
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> Amendments are made to Cabinet Regulation No. 485 " Procedures for the Supervision and Control of Organic Farming " to provide for the possibility for farmers to use heterogeneous propagating material.</p>	Period / Date

### Other

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

The Ministry of Agriculture, State Plant Protection Service strengthens control institutions	
<p><u>Report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</u> Amendments are being drafted to Cabinet Regulation No. 485 “Procedures for the supervision and control of organic farming” to include a section on the procedure for approval of control bodies. The requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of control institutions is specified and the catalogue of sanctions is clarified in order to strengthen control institutions. Amendments are being made to the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development to authorize the Cabinet of Ministers to develop a unified price list for paid services of control institutions. Work has begun on the development of a price list for paid services of control institutions.</p>	ongoing
No actions have been reported by <u>State Plant Protection Service</u>	

### Summary of Progress – Latvia

- Additional conditions for the information to be included in the database were introduced to make the database more user-friendly. Other recommendations were not included yet, a technical update for the database is expected for 2021.
- A new criterium that farmers should prove that it has been tried to purchase the organic seed before a derogation to use non-organic seed is authorised – has been rejected.
- Expert group worked on list of species with general derogation and on specifying the data necessary to apply for derogation. Processor representatives have been added to the composition of the expert group.



## D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

- Several research projects on breeding for organic ongoing; demonstration of several species under organic farming system in different regions, including non-traditional species in Latvia.
- Training of organic farmers, including the training on the importance of seed production have been supported by Ministry in the frame of activities of the Latvian Rural Development Program 2014-2020. Decision on budget for following period still open.
- Ministry has proposed to grant additional support to farmers using certified organic seed in the new programming period (in the context of the new CAP). Consideration of the proposal and decision is scheduled for 2021.

## LITHUANIA

### Database

#### Committed actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

LTD Agrolitpa proposes technical improvements (direct modification by users,...) for the database	
LTD Agrolitpa has applied to the State Enterprise Agricultural Information and Rural Business Center, which manages the Lithuanian database of organic seeds; with a proposal to make technical changes so that the database data can be updated as quickly as possible. No technical updates were carried out during the reporting period, as Regulation (EU) No. 2018/848 introduces new requirements for the database and the update will be carried out in response to the new requirements.	Period Date 2019-2020

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

Working group on the new regulation	
In 2020, the Minister of Agriculture established a working group consisting of representatives of the organic sector - representatives of the competent authorities, producers and scientists - to instruct in the preparation of proposals for the new Regulation (EU) No. 2018/848 implementation principles and coordination of the implementation progress. One of the issues to be addressed by the working group is under Reg. 2018/848 Art. 26 Paragraph 1 and Art. 26 Paragraph 2 (a) which requires the exchange of databases on organic plant propagating material (excluding seedlings, but including seed potatoes) available during the conversion period in the territory of Lithuania. According to the primary data there is an intention to improve the current seed database or to join to an international EU based database. The OrganicXseeds project is being considered as one of the options.	2020

#### Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

#### Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project



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The number of published organic seeds suppliers has not changed recently and only 6-8 (depending on the season) producers provided organic seed to the Lithuanian market.

2019-2020

## Derogations

### Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations

#### Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project

Lithuanian organic farms are subject to the rule that if they do not have the opportunity to buy sufficient seed and / or plant propagating material of the desired variety and species produced by organic production (the supply of organically grown seeds can be checked in the Lithuanian organic seed database at: <http://www.vic.lt/paslaugos/e-paslaugos/lietuvos-ekologisku-seklu-duomenu-baze/> ) the certification body may issue to an operator, with the exception of organic seed farms or farms growing seed under contract, an authorisation to use non-organically grown seed and / or propagating material for one season in the current year.

Authorizations shall not be granted for non-organic seeds of the species listed in the general authorization of the certification body ([https://www.ekoagros.lt/media/1/documents/seklu\\_sara%C5%A1as\\_2020\\_m.\\_be\\_leidimo.pdf](https://www.ekoagros.lt/media/1/documents/seklu_sara%C5%A1as_2020_m._be_leidimo.pdf)) and for certified seed of plant species. This authorization is approved by the certification body in January-February, taking into account the recommendation provided by the State Enterprise Agricultural Information and Rural Business Center, which administers the database of organic seeds, and in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania.

Operators wishing to obtain an authorization for the use of non-organic seed and / or plant propagating material shall submit an application to the certification body for the authorization of the use of non-organic plant reproductive material / seeds on an organic farm. The number of permits issued by the certification body for the use of certified non-organic seed: 2019 - 3338; 2018 - 3893; 2017 - 4257; 2016 - 4309; 2015 - 2714.

During inspections, the certification body recorded a number of non-compliances with the requirements for the use of seed. In 2019 it identified 367 cases when unauthorized propagating material was used - conventional non-certified, organic non-certified (from another organic farm) or conventional certified propagating material without the authorisation of the certification body. The number of cases where unauthorized propagating material is used decreased. In 2019 367 cases were identified, in 2018 – 550, in 2017 - 349; in 2016 - 600; in 2015 - 638. The reasons for this decline may be complex, however, this change was probably influenced by a change of provisions in the catalogue of sanctions. When non-organic seed is used for the second time in a row without the authorisation of the Control Authority (PI Ekoagros), then the producer is subject to a sanction (non-certification of production).

## Research



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### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

The Institute of Agriculture of the Lithuanian Center for Agrarian and Forest Sciences is developing new varieties suitable for organic production	
<p>New organic varieties are being developed. The institute's program includes a small part of research devoted to organic, and we do targeted work to develop new genotypes using hybridization techniques. For example, a new winter wheat variety DS 7259-2 has been developed, which is resistant to hard bunt, tall and broadleaf. It is now registered with the State Crop Service and has been under investigation for 2 years. The variety synthesizes a large amount of protein of an extensive type. An essential feature of this organic wheat is its resistance to hard bunt, as it is not possible to treat organic seeds with synthetic pesticides.</p>	2018-2021

### Regulatory and general developments concerning research

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>The question regarding the most appropriate to local conditions plant varieties list remains relevant. The main attention is given to crop varieties because they represent the largest amount of production of organic products. The Institute of Agriculture, a branch of the Lithuanian Agricultural and Forestry Science Center, has a certified organic field, in which cereals are tested before being transferred to VCU testing in order to identify cereal varieties adapted to organic farming. Promising lines with characteristics suitable for organic farming - yield and disease resistance - are selected for these studies. However, the research of the institute is only indicative. There still no official VCU testing for organic farming in Lithuania.</p> <p><u>Private initiatives:</u></p> <p>The Academy of Sustainable Farming of farmer V. Genys was established in 2019 in May by the decision of two founders - LTD "Agrolitpa" and the owner of the organic farm Valentinas Genys.</p> <p>The main activity of this institution is educational. The organic nine-field crop rotation is exposed in 10-hectare field at Valentinas Genys organic farm, where plants of various species and varieties are sown every year following crop rotation.</p> <p>About a hundred of different varieties are sown every year, so it is possible to choose the most suitable varieties for organic farms. All crops are grown organically and in no-tillage farming conditions.</p> <p>Various observations are made in these demonstration experiments, and the experience gained and accumulated by Valentinas Genys is passed on to all those interested. Various techniques for the insertion of catch crops and weed control in an organic no-till farm are also tested and demonstrated here.</p> <p>V. Genys Academy of Sustainable Farming annually organizes a conference "Practical experience of V.Genys sustainable farming in the context of climate change. Soil process management". The first practical conference took place in 2019, on the 1st of August. About a hundred of participants took part in the theoretical part at Taujėnai manor later everybody went to the fields of Valentinas Genys Academy. The second practical conference took place in 2020, on 15th of July. A large group of participants (over a hundred) listened to lectures at the Farmers Circle farm, which is developing an organic</p>	2019-2020



concept, and later everyone went to the fields of Valentinas Genys Academy, where they were interested in demonstration of varieties and techniques.	

## Training/Information/Communication

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

PI Ekoagros prepares a proposal for the Agency for Rural Business and Market Development to develop organic production trainings for organic producers	
<p>PI Ekoagros prepared the letter and received a reply that the training programs requirements approved by the Minister of Agriculture are devoted to the topic of organic seeds. The training program is intended for farmers seeking to certify organic farming, those wishing to start organic farming and those interested in organic farming, environmental protection in agriculture and the production of safe and healthy food. The following topics related to organic seed production are covered during the training: Selection of varieties in organic farming. Requirements for organic seed production. Lithuanian National List of Plant Varieties. Requirements for the acquisition of propagating material for organic production. Requirements for the renewal of organic seed.</p> <p>The trainings are held regularly, several times a year. The training program under the program "Basics of Organic Farming" are administered by the Rural Business and Market Development Agency. The trainings are organized by institutions approved by the agency. Currently, four institutions have been approved that can organize these trainings.</p>	2019 March

## Production and Use of Organic Seeds

### Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>In Lithuania, the areas of all approved organic seed crops is increasing significantly: in 2013 - 1270 ha, in 2015 - 3362 ha, in 2017 - 7828 ha, in 2019 - 11.602 ha (without potatoes).</p> <p>A number of organic seed producers in Lithuania in 2019 was over 190.</p> <p>Dynamics of the total organic certified area: 2019 - 246,631 ha (8,4%); 2018 - 244,346 ha (8,1%); 2017 - 239.002 ha (7,9 %); 2016 - 225,542 ha (7,6%) ; 2015 - 220.163 ha (7,4% of the agricultural land area).</p>	2019

## Other

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

PI Ekoagros, LTD Agrolitpa, LTD Scandagra and Lithuanian association of seed producers prepare a proposal for the State Plant Service of the Ministry of Agriculture formulating a definition of variety suitable for national organic production	
The draft letter has lost its relevance and was not prepared because in the newly adopted Organic Production Regulation (EU) 2018/848 Art. 3 (19) an organic variety suitable for organic production is defined.	Period / Date



### Summary of Progress – Lithuania

- The seed database still requires considerable improvement, also to incorporate the new requirements of the new Regulation (EU) No. 2018/848.
- A considerable achievement is the establishment of a working group, consisting of representatives of the organic sector to instruct in the preparation of proposals for the new Regulation (EU) No. 2018/848.
- The number of cases of unauthorized use of propagating material has decreased, probably due to a stricter catalogue of sanctions.
- There is limited research on breeding for organic in public institutes. However, there is still no official VCU testing for organic farming in Lithuania. Private initiatives play an important role in educational activities and in organizing demonstrational fields.
- Training programmes for current and upcoming organic farmers now include material on organic seed.
- In general, the area of land used for growing organic seed crops is showing a clear increasing trend.

## BULGARIA

### Database

#### Committed actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>Bioselena writes a letter to the Ministry with recommendations for requirements regarding the organic seed database (improvement of current database of return to organicXseeds)</b>	
<p>Almost one year after our meeting in Sofia, there were some developments regarding the Bulgarian national organic seeds database.</p> <p>Bioselena sent a letter to the Deputy Minister with a proposal to return Bulgaria to the OrganicXSeed database last year. The same subject was discussed again with Mr. Chavdar Marinov on 20.02.2020, but there was no response. This deputy minister was fired in April and communication with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry on the topic of OrganicXSeed stopped. Our database continues to be an Excel file with 4 organic seed producers.</p> <p>On August 26, 2020, a new letter was sent to Deputy Minister Virginia Krasteva, who oversees the organic farming department, with a proposal to return to organicXseed, but we have no official answer yet.</p>	<p>September 2019-September 2020</p>

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

<b>Reflection on developments/progress</b>	
<p>Our national database is still an Excel file. We succeeded in helping some of the Bulgarian seed producers to be listed in the database. However, it is very difficult to communicate with the Ministry and farmers are having trouble placing their offers on the database. The big Dutch seed producer Vitalis (Enza Zaden) is also on the list now.</p>	<p>September 2019-2020</p>

#### Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

### Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project



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## D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

The department for organic production from the Bulgarian ministry of agriculture, food and forestry is responsible for management of the database and for the derogation policy. The technical management of the database is done by an external IT company. They maintain the website and update the database. Until 2014, Bulgaria worked with OrganicXSeeds hosted by FIBL. Since 2015, they have a different database system. This database is updated twice a year. Before the update, the ministry sends all the seed suppliers on the database a letter to check if they still have organic seed available. If they do not react their offer on the database will be marked as “exhausted”. If they are sold out, the seed suppliers can also send an e-mail to the ministry themselves and their offer will be removed directly from the database.

To offer seed on the database, it is required to provide proof that you are an authorised seed producer or supplier and your seed must be certified organic. Seed suppliers must submit all documents to the ministry, which will respond within a month. Foreign companies (traders or producers) need to present an additional certificate from the Seed Control Agency. In addition, they must submit the contract between the original seed producer and the certifying body. When offering seed on the database, seed suppliers must include information about the quantity and delivery period of the organic seed or vegetative propagating material and about the region where it can be delivered.

Period  
/  
Date

## Derogations

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

#### Bioselena requests the Ministry to make the Derogation report public

Reflection on developments/progress: The derogation report for Bulgaria is public information since last year. It is uploaded on the website of the Ministry of agriculture, food and forestry as a part of the database for organic seeds.

November  
2019

### Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations

#### Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project

A farmer can ask for derogation if the variety he wants to use is not available on the database. The derogations are granted by one of the certification bodies according to a standardized procedure, checked by the ministry.

To receive a derogation, farmers must fill in a form with information about the variety they want to grow, the quantity of seed needed, and where (on which field) and when (day of planting) they are going to sow it. Besides that, they must show proof of their search on the seed database (screenshot) and they must provide proof that the seed they want to use is untreated, non-GMO and not produced by hydroponic production methods. If it turns out a farmer used conventional seed without a derogation, the product can't be sold as organic anymore.

Developments regarding the number of derogations: 2014 – 1065 number of derogations; 2015 – 849 number of derogations; 2016 – 1478 number of derogations. The total number of derogations for 2019 are 1340.

Period  
/  
Date

## Training/Information/Communication

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

#### Two organic demonstration fields will be organised

The idea was to organize 2 demonstration fields in 2 different places:

- Agricultural University in Plovdiv will provide fields, Vitalis will provide vegetable seeds
- Bonevi Perfect will provide fields, Research Institute Sadovo will provide seeds for cereals

June 2020





## D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

<p>Due to national Covid-19 restriction measures, the Agricultural University was closed during spring semester and the working team did not have the opportunity to organize a demonstrational field. When they got back to work, it was too late to plant vegetables.</p> <p>Bonevi successfully managed to fulfil the commitment and planted a demonstrational field with 3 wheat varieties. The organic seeds were provided by the Institute of Plant Genetic Resources in Sadovo. These 3 varieties are created by the Institute - Murgavets, Boryana and Sadovo.</p> <p>The field that Bonezhi provided, is located in the area of the village of Elenovo, Nova Zagora. The total area of the demonstration field is 10.5 ha. After harvesting, seed samples were taken for analysis and the results were very good. Bonevi are happy with the yield, despite the very dry year.</p> <p>Due to national covid-19 restriction measures, public gatherings were not allowed and demonstrational events on the field were canceled.</p>		
<p><b>Boril Nikolov (Vitalis) collects and disseminates information about different types of organic seed and the difference to conventional seed</b></p>		
<p>Reflection on developments/progress: Boril Nikolov actively collects information about organic seeds and explains the difference between organic and untreated conventional seeds of organic farmers who are his clients. He and Tsvetanka Dincheva, who participated in the cross-visit in Italy, created a brochure with information about organic vegetable seeds, uploaded on the Bioselena website.  <a href="https://bioselena.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/%D0%91%D0%98%D0%9E-%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B7%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%87%D1%83%D1%86%D0%B8-2020.pdf">https://bioselena.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/%D0%91%D0%98%D0%9E-%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B7%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%87%D1%83%D1%86%D0%B8-2020.pdf</a></p>	<p>April 2020</p>	
<p><b>Eli Vitanova and Mihaela Metodieva start a group in social media where stakeholders of the organic farming sector can keep in touch and share information.</b></p>		
<p>No progress was observed.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>	

## Production and Use of Organic Seeds

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<p><b>Assoc. prof. Marina Marcheva (Agricultural University Plovdiv) writes a proposal to the Ministry for funding registration of varieties for organic production</b></p>	
<p>Reflection on developments/progress: Assoc. prof. Marina Marcheva from the Agricultural University discussed the idea with colleagues from different institutions last autumn. Currently, they cannot agree on whether it is right to seek a change in the legislation allowing conventional varieties to be tested and registered as organic. The solution is to follow the law and seek funding for establishing organic breeding gardens and centres. But this action will not happen this autumn.</p>	<p>November 2020</p>
<p><b>The Bulgarian association of organic producers asks the Ministry to include extra payment for production and use of organic seeds in the payments of CAP</b></p>	
<p>Reflection on developments/progress: This proposal has been made during a working group to develop the National Action Plan for organic agriculture, followed up by a written proposal. The idea would take the form of an additional payment when calculating subsidy rates. Farmers would receive an additional subsidy when using certified organic seeds.</p>	<p>May 2020</p>

## Summary of Progress - Bulgaria

- The national organic seed database is still an Excel file that is updated twice a year and will require updates to live up to the requirements of the New Organic Regulation EC 2018/848.
- Thanks to the derogation report made public, there is more transparency now regarding the amount and details of derogations.



#### D1.6 Report on the European Workshop

- No developments yet regarding national expert group.
- A demonstrational field with several wheat varieties was planted and the results were good despite the challenging (dry) climatic conditions.
- A brochure on organic vegetable seeds was created that will be helpful to communicate the advantages of organic seed to producers.
- A proposal for an extra payment for the use of organic seed has been made, will require follow-up in the context of the national action plan for organic agriculture.



# GREECE

## Database

### Committed actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>Aegilops drafts a letter addressed to the ministry with all the recommendations regarding the organic seed database and circulate it among participants.</b>	
The letter (16/4) was sent to the authorities and also circulated among participants. A second letter (15/5) followed on the commitments of stakeholders related to the Common Declaration and a reminder(18/9) prior to reporting.	16/4/2020
<b>The Ministry responds to the letter and takes recommendations into consideration.</b>	
The Ministry delayed the response due to COVID-19 situation during summer. The letter includes details on commitments undertaken and the following comments: 1. For some information suggested during the Athens workshop that the Database should have, related to the characteristics of propagated material, this requires interest from seed providers. 2. Eradicating the registration fee in Database, setting the seed quantity thresholds for registration and making the quantity of seed offered invisible for the farmers in the Database are points that require the amendment of decision no. 295194 / 09, which is something that is examined to be continued in the near future. 3. On September 16 <sup>th</sup> , 4 new registrations have been completed (vetch, lupin and pea) and will soon be visible on the official Database webpage (Ministry of Rural Development). These small quantities of organic propagation material are a positive step in promoting organic seed. However, there are problems regarding the update of the database page. For this reason, these new registrations are not yet visible.	1/10/2020

### Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
The previous year, no seed suppliers were registered on the database. It was empty. This might change with the registrations that are currently work in progress.	Period / Date

## Derogations

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>The Ministry publishes the most recent issue of the derogation report on their website.</b>	
The ministry has uploaded the most recent figures.	Spring 2020

### Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: Up to now, the empty database favors obtaining derogations. Recent developments regarding the database (new registrations) have therefore been important. Additionally, a number of local heritage varieties, adapted to low input, are in	Period / Date

<p>process of registration since last year. The procedure will hopefully finalize soon and make available new organic propagation material and seed. This will be a good investment in local seed production and has the potential to reduce derogations. One the other hand, the general discussion last year (Athens 2019 and Thessaloniki 2020 meetings) on ways to limit the number of derogations was very vivid last year and popular among certifiers, authorities, seed experts and farmers.</p>	
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### Expert Group

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>The Ministry commits to activate the scientific committee for organic farming.</b>	
<p>Due to COVID_19 urgency crisis, the scientific committee that has been already foreseen will be activated as soon as the circumstances allow it.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>

### Research

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

<b>AEGILOPS sent two abstracts to 18<sup>th</sup> Greek Plant Breeders Conference a. on LIVESEED national recommendations on organic seed and breeding role and b. on landrace vegetable organic selection criteria</b>	
<p>Reflection on developments/progress: 18<sup>th</sup> Plant Breeders Conference was planned for October 2020 in Volos but was cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>
<b>AEGILOPS ,IPBGR, University of Thessaloniki, Union of North Greece Organic Growers and other stakeholders of agrifood chain submitted common research proposals for national funding on heritage varieties conservation including organic breeding , registration and seed production</b>	
<p>Some proposals have been accepted in the first phase.</p>	<p>Autumn 2019 - summer 2020</p>
<b>IPBGR enhances research related to organic breeding and seed production</b>	
<p>IPBGR has an organic field for research on cereals and there is an increasing interest from researchers from all crops to be involved in related research topics. Recent related IPBGR research results were to be announced at the 18<sup>th</sup> National Breeding Conference (Volos, October 2020), which was cancelled and postponed for the next year. There is a multilevel cooperation between AEGILOPS and IPBGR, including LIVESEED, Farmers Pride, Fruitrees2Safegaurd, and also national research projects. Organic Cereal field trials of Kostas Koutis (AEGILOPS) were hosted at IPBGR fields for the period 2019- 2020 in cooperation with the Greek Gene Bank and Cereal Institute and will be continued.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>

#### Regulatory and general developments concerning research



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090.



<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: There are ongoing activities and synergies exploited regarding research related to organic breeding and seed. Biodiversity conservation bodies, breeders and end users are key actors of interaction in this field.	Period / Date

### Training/Information/Communication

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>The Union of organic farmers of northern Greece organizes a workshop on organic seed at the Agrotica fair in February 2020.</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: The workshop focused on the status on organic seed and new organic regulation (presentation to farmers by Kostas Koutis, AEGILOPS) and drew organic growers' attention.	2/02/2020
<b>IPBGR sets up a course on organic seed production, if there is sufficient interest.</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: Due to the COVID-19 situation, such an activity did not occur but will be foreseen for the next period if COVID situation allows.	Period / Date
<b>The Agroecology network of Greece puts education and training on the issue of organic seeds on the agenda when meeting in September 2020.</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: Due to Cov19, the training scheduled for September 2020 was cancelled but a new date is planned for spring 2021. Also, in October 2020, an e-mail will be delivered to all Agroecology network members to inform them about organic seed developments. Additionally, the network continues to try to inform the members through social media on the relevant issue	Period / Date
<b>The Union of organic farmers of northern Greece invites Jiannis Mylonas from IPBGR as a speaker to elaborate on advantages of organic seed at the Agrotica fair in February 2020.</b>	
Kostas Koutis (AEGILOPS) spoke instead of Jiannis Mylonas, who was invited but could not attend on that day and hour.	2/02/2020
<b>Rallou Tsingou provides suggestions for breeders on how to organize a platform in the internet to connect young farmers</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: The commitment has not been done as there was no interest from the breeders to create a platform through social media. It had been proposed to researchers to create a group where they could announce research results and approach young farmers, having in mind that young farmers in Greece are very familiar to social media, especially to facebook.	Period / Date
<b>Kiriakos Palasidis (Association of Organic Farming Certifiers) disseminates information about advantages of organic seed to organic auditors and agronomists.</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: The Association of Organic Farming Certifiers (through Mr Palasidis) encouraged organic auditors to inform organic farmers during certification field visits about the benefits of using organic seed.	Period / Date

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

<b>AEGILOPS organised workshop on organic fruit breeding and new organic seed regulation at the AGROTICA Fair in February 2020</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: The workshop was attended by nearly 50 people (representatives of organic farmers cooperatives, breeders, national research institutes, nursery keepers, national and regional	Period /



authorities, seed savers, professional organic agrifood stakeholders and growers). ). It focused on organic fruit breeding and fruit biodiversity	Date
<b>National authorities (Ministry) provided information on new organic regulation at the workshop organised by AEGILOPS at the AGROTICA Fair in February 2020</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: The participants asked a lot of questions and discussion helped to clarify many aspects of the new regulation and the need for cooperation among stakeholders and authorities to implement the new regulation and contribute to the further development of the organic sector.	31/01/2020
<b>AEGILOPS organised workshop on organic vegetable selection from Cretan heritage varieties and breeding in summer 2020</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: The workshop was attended by nearly 40 people, mostly professional vegetable growers, retailers, chefs and scientists and investigated opportunities for future organic seed production from selected cretan heritage vegetable varieties.	1-2/08/2020
<b>The Union of Organic farmers of northern Greece organizes a workshop on seed production</b>	
The workshop will be organized in mid-October 2020 and will focus on vegetable crops.	Period / Date

### Regulatory and general developments concerning training/information/communication

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
There is high and growing activity in this field. LIVESEED outcomes (cross visits, national and international workshops, research and practice) and information from IFOAM was disseminated to stakeholders and played a key role in the development of synergies and increased awareness related to organic seed and breeding issues. Information on organic seed laws and policy increased the interest of stakeholders for participation in the co-evolution and implementation of regulations and will affect policy makers.	Period / Date

### Production and Use of Organic Seeds

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>Giorgos Duomous and BioFRU get involved in organic seed production</b>	
Giorgos Doumos had been involved in the process of einkorn variety registration in cooperation with Kostas Koutis (AEGILOPS). Biofru , as AEGILOPS Focal point at Kastoria region, holds and enhances a mother nursery collection of fruit heritage varieties of apple and pear and keeps selecting the most promising material for organic seedling production in the near future. Both Giorgos Doumos and Biofru are actively involved in the AEGILOPS task force group on organic seed production.	Period / Date
<b>Farmers associations do an inventory among their members to find out how many farmers would be interested to become organic seed producers and what kind of training they would need.</b>	
The Union of Organic Farmers of Northern Greece will organize a training workshop in mid-October 2020 on organic seed production where organic farmers will be trained and communicate their interest in being professionally involved.	Period / Date

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)



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<b>AEGILOPS created an internal task force for organic seed production and is making an online platform for organic growers' products of its network and organic nurseries also</b>	
The seed production task force will elaborate opportunities for varietal registration and seed production in various crops (cereal, vegetable, legumes, aromatic and fruits). The online platform of products (crops and nursery) will be uploaded in autumn 2020 and will be updated every year. It is foreseen to add organic seed producers to the platform.	2020

**Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds**

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
There is a growing interest in seed production, valorising biodiversity and heritage crops or varieties. The interest comes from seed savers organizations (AEGILOPS) and organic farmers, mainly. There is no interest yet from seed companies except nurseries (vegetable ,aromatic, fruit).	Period / Date

**Other**

**Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds**

<b>Kiriakos Palasidis (Association of Organic Farming Certifiers) puts organic seed high on the agenda in meetings with the ministry of organic agriculture</b>	
Mr. Palasidis, who was the representative of Organic Farming Certifiers, informed all the members of the Association about the results of the LIVESEED meeting in Athens (2019) and they agreed that each of them would push the organic seed issue when contacting the national authorities. They are appealing for a reduction in derogations within the next two years.	Period / Date

**Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)**

<b>Greek IFOAM council members support seed issues</b>	
In the last gathering of the Greek members of IFOAM (held in Thessaloniki, 17/9/2020), it was decided that a letter would be written to the Ministry of Agriculture to promote organic agriculture in the context of the new regulation. In this open letter that will be also signed by other stakeholders and that will be sent before the end of October 2020. A special paragraph will be dedicated to the promotion of organic seed.	(Progress) Period / Date

**Other regulatory and general developments**

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
There is a broad range of activities supporting organic seed issues as a result of LIVESEED activities, affecting directly and indirectly Greece and greek organic sector stakeholders. This will help Greece to be able to implement the new organic regulation and contribute to its future development .	Period / Date



## Summary of Progress - Greece

- New registrations to a previously empty database is a step in the right direction, as well as the eradication of the registration fee that was in conflict with the organic regulation. Improvements in the functionality and usability of the database still have to be implemented to make it easier for seed producers to place their offers.
- A number of local heritage varieties are in the process of registration and will lead to additional organic propagation material and seed on the market. However, the low amount of seed on the database still makes it very easy to obtain a derogation and decisive steps to limit derogations will have to be taken the develop the market for organic seed in Greece.
- A scientific committee on organic farming is planned to be established as soon as the public health situation allows it. The work of this group could be crucial if it will receive the mandate to work on a no-derogation list.
- Multilevel cooperation in research on organic breeding is a promising model for the future if funding can be maintained. The organic field trials in 2019/2020 are another crucial step forward and it is good news that they will be continued.
- Information dissemination on organic seeds during trade fairs, to organic auditors and agronomists. In addition, workshops on organic fruit and vegetable breeding have been organized. Together, those communication and training events play an essential and valuable role in informing stakeholders in Greece about the benefits and requirements regarding organic seed.
- An internal task force for organic seed production and variety registration has been established, which is a great example for how ‘internal expert groups’ can also contribute to the production and use of organic seeds.

## HUNGARY

### Database

Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

Hungarian Organic Seed Expert Group input on database improvement	
Action: The Hungarian Organic Seed Expert Group (HOSEG) (newly established expert group, see reflection under “Other” with members such as the Hungarian Seed Association, seed producers, certification bodies, breeders, researchers, farmers, National Food Chain Safety Office (NÉBIH) Ministry of Agriculture) recommended development suggestions to the competent authority, NÉBIH in order to transform the database into an easier accessible real-time updating database, containing relevant information for farmers.	Ongoing / Date
Freya Schäfer gives a presentation on OrganicXseeds and European router database	
Action: On 29.01.2020 in the frame of a HOSEG meeting Freya Schäfer has given a presentation on OrganicXseeds and European router databases to inform NÉBIH about a good example and the plans related to organic seed databases in the EU and to influence the national database development.	January 2020
The Organic Seed Database available on ÖMKI’s website	





<p>Action: In July 2020 ÖMKi published the link of the Hungarian organic seed database on its website, with information about the advantages of organic seed use and the function of the database. Additionally, ÖMKi is promoting its use when communicating with seed producers.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>Development: Unfortunately, to date none of the recommendations were implemented by NÉBIH. Moreover, after several meetings and the presentation of Freya, seed producers and NÉBIH were concluding to not to invest into the database at the moment, because there is not enough organic seed offer and demand for such an expensive development. However due to this intensive communication, the Hungarian organic seed database is now regularly updated, but despite all the effort there are only a few more lots published than before.</p> <p>Expected progress: We still hope that with the combined activities supported and performed by the HOSEG (see further actions) the database will improve for the benefit of farmers and seed producers as well. NÉBIH undertook to reconsider joining OrganicXseeds when organic seed use and production grows in the country.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

### Derogations

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

Analysis of the current regulation by Hungária Öko Garancia Ltd. certification body and ÖMKi for introducing the possibility of general derogation for certain crop species (mainly vegetables and herbs)	
<p>Action: In order to move from the solely option of individual derogation to no derogation (see further action) and general derogation for crops, where sufficient organic seed and variety choice is not foreseen for several years, the Hungária Öko Garancia Ltd. examined the current regulation and ÖMKi contacted NÉBIH, as logical responsible authority, to find a solution and overcome this bottleneck.</p> <p>Development: after consulting the legal text, it turned out the responsible authority for general derogation is not defined in the regulation. NÉBIH declared they do not have sufficient human and financial resources to work on this issue, as they are not officially designated as responsible authority. In the coming weeks the certification bodies together with ÖMKi are going to contact the Ministry of Agriculture in order to solve this deficiency.</p> <p>Expected outcome: After designating the responsible authority who can enable the list of species for general derogation, the administrative work of farmers and certification bodies will significantly decrease. The responsible authority is expected to collaborate in the development of this list with the HOSEG.</p>	<p>February 2020/ ongoing</p>

### Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>Due to regular dissemination on LIVESEED project outcomes, stakeholders awareness and knowledge increased significantly. With the coordination of ÖMKi, stakeholders started for the first time a progressive action plan on different derogation categories.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

### Expert Group Developing the foundations of introducing species



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Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

Developing the foundations of Category I.	
<p>Action: The newly established organic seed expert group was setting up a roadmap, first for winter wheat, as the most important and most widely grown organic crop in Hungary, to achieve the necessary seed offer variety and quantity wise as well in the database in order put the species in Category I.</p> <p>This roadmap includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishment of a small plot post-registration variety testing network and widely disseminate its results, coordinated by ÖMKi</li> <li>- Analysing the derogation lists provided by the certification bodies for variety use</li> <li>- Analysing EUSTAT data for the crop species grown on more than 1000 ha</li> <li>- Involvement of seed produces and suppliers to nominate their varieties in this trial</li> <li>- Involvement of seed produces and suppliers to keep part of their organic seeds for the domestic market and publish their offer on the national organic seed database</li> </ul>	Ongoing

Regulatory and general developments concerning the expert group

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>Development: The first steps have been made to work on Annex X.</p> <p>Expected progress: Within 2 to 3 years, winter wheat might go into Category I.</p>	Ongoing

Research

Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

ÖMKi and ATK continue their on-farm tests	
<p>Action: In 2019/2020 ÖMKi performed on-farm tests on 8 locations with 15 varieties. Small plot test were performed by ATK (2 locations) and the Cereal Research Non-Profit Ltd. (1 location) with 45 varieties.</p> <p>Development: trial data is always available in the yearly report of ÖMKi</p> <p>Expected progress: the data will feed into the variety offer list which could trigger organic seed production and motivate farmers to use certified seed.</p>	2019-2020, but ongoing as well
Öko Garancia and Biokontroll Hungária processes the data collected on variety use and/or certification results. Anna Divéky looks for students for this task	
<p>Hungaria Öko Garancia Ltd. collected data from EUSTAT in order to filter the species (and their varieties used) cultivated on 1000 hectares or more.</p> <p>Hungaria Öko Garancia Ltd. and Biokontroll Hungária Ltd. provided data on derogation/variety use which still need to be processed.</p>	September 2020/ongoing
Freya Schäfer sends the methodology of the German data analysis	
<p>Methodology sent by Freya Schäfer.</p>	February 2020

Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

Organic small plot post-registration winter wheat trial network	
<p>Action: ÖMKi with support from ATK established an organic small plot post-registration trial network. The Hungarian Seed Association supported the initiative, by sending out several calls to their seed producer members to nominate varieties for the experiment.</p>	Ongoing



Development: The trials will start in October 2020 on 7 locations with 21 winter wheat varieties. Expected progress: on a long term better variety choice, higher volume of certified seed use, support from the Ministry of Agriculture and NÉBIH to develop the network and include more species. Furthermore the network is planned to be used in the future for organic VCU testing as well.	
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning research

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
On-farm tests are going to be complemented with small plot post-registration trials to support farmers in variety choice and promote organic seed use. For the first time NÉBIH is transforming one of its stations into organic.	Ongoing

### Training/Information/Communication

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

ÖMKi and ATK organises a field day for stakeholders of the arable crop value chain	
Action: ÖMKi organised an on-line field day in June covering on farm variety trials, threshing, milling with stone mills and artisanal bread baking using landrace emmer and einkorn cereals. During this event ATK was giving a presentation on the advantages of hulled cereals in organic agriculture and related breeding projects.	June 2020 / ongoing
Szent István University, Horticulture Faculty, Anna Divéky launch a farmer training from January 2020	
Action: Anna Divéky-Ertsey organised a training for farmers on organic seed use in case of field crops, highlighting the importance of variety choice, the advantages of certified seed and the rationale of the organic seed database. Expected progress: after regular training farmers will be aware where to find information about the most suitable varieties for their farm and purpose, they will use more certified seed and they will be updated on the latest results of research in the sector.	6 March 2020
Anett Fekete shares information available on EIP Agri portal	
Anett Fekete is no longer working at the Ministry of Agriculture, but the connection with EIP Agri is good, recently an article on ÖMKi's on farm trials was published in EIP Agri magazine.	ongoing
Tibor Kruppi (Tradisco Seeds and Hungarian Seed Association) shares summary of the national workshop to the seed producers	
Tibor Kruppi and the Hungarian Seed Association have shared the summary of the National Workshop with seed producers.	May 2020/ ongoing

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

Article on the newly established organic seed expert group and its first activities	
ATK, with contribution from ÖMKi, wrote an article to introduce the Hungarian organic seed expert group, its activities and future plans to the stakeholders. The article was published in the Biokultúra magazine and it is available on the website of ÖMKi.	July 2020

### Regulatory and general developments concerning training/information/communication



Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
It is a significant development, that regular communication has been started among the different actors and stakeholders of the organic seed sector, while their understanding on current lock-ins and the possibilities provided by new organic regulation have largely developed.	Ongoing

## Production and Use of Organic Seeds

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

ÖMKi coordinates the consultation between seed producers	
Action: Initially coordinated by ÖMKi, but now it is done in the frame of the HOSEG. Development: Seed producers are informed about the variety choice of farmers, data collected and shared by the certification bodies. Seed producers also made their offers of keeping organic seed on the Hungarian market. They were informed about the small plot post-registration trials in which some of them nominated varieties.	Ongoing

### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

ÖMKi in the Commission working group of temporary experiment on organic varieties suitable for organic agriculture	
Involving the Ministry of Agriculture in the HOSEG and regular communication on LIVESEED outcomes, the Ministry delegated a LIVESEED project partner (employee of ÖMKi) to represent Hungary in the Commission working group. Recently an expert from ÖMKi was designated to the 'cereal alternative DUS protocol' working group.	Ongoing
ÖMKi plans a campaign on organic breeding and seed use in 2021	
ÖMKi is working on a campaign involving multiple actors of the farm and food sector, including processors and retailers.	Ongoing

### Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
In order to improve organic seed supply, ÖMKi succeeded to bring together the main seed producers interested in organic and facilitates discussion among them. As a result of regular communication, seed producers are going to keep more organic seed on the Hungarian market from autumn 2020 and are willing to produce organic seed of those varieties which will turn out successful in the variety tests.	Ongoing

## Other

### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

Establishment of the organic seed expert group	
Action: During the National Workshop it became clear that an organic seed expert group is necessary to involve stakeholders, coordinate the sectors' needs and share information. In October 2019 ÖMKi with the help of ATK initiated the first expert group meeting, which was followed by 4 consecutive meetings since	(Progress) October 2019/Ongoing



<p>then, 2 of them organised by ÖMKi, with the participation of the Hungarian Seed Association, the National Food Chain Safety Office, the organic certification bodies, the Ministry of Agriculture, breeders, researchers, seed producers and farmers.</p> <p>Development: In March 2020 the organic seed expert group became official, when the Hungarian Seed Association founded a working group on organic seeds, but ÖMKi is still playing a major role in the coordination of the group. The latest meeting was organised online in September 2020 with dissemination on the status quo of the small plot post-registration trial network, collection of offers from seed producers to the organic seed database and quick update on the organic regulation.</p> <p>Expected progress: With the help of regular meetings and good coordination the collaboration between the different stakeholders will strengthen in order to support farmers in variety choice, promote organic breeding and improve organic seed use. In the coming period farmers and retailers will be invited and better involved in the work of the expert group.</p>	
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>Development: The establishment of HOSEG is an important milestone, the stakeholders, who previously had no information about each other's activities and difficulties, now have regular contact and gained a good overview on the sectors' opportunities and barriers, and the implementation of the current legislation. In the frame of HOSEG, ÖMKi regularly disseminates the results of the LIVESEED project and started a communication on the new organic regulation and its concomitant developments. One of the major outcomes of these meetings was that in 2020 Hungary participated in the OHM temporary experiment, with ÖMKi and ATK conducting trials on EPO durum populations. The establishment of the organic small-plot trial network is a huge development and opportunity for the sector, which besides post-registration trials, can host VCU trials for organic varieties as well in the future.</p>	ongoing

### Summary of progress - Hungary

- The seed database remains a problem issue in Hungary. To date, none of the recommendations were implemented by NÉBIH. Investment is not considered at the moment, because there is not enough organic seed offer and demand for such an expensive development. At least, the Hungarian organic seed database is now regularly updated, but despite all the effort there are only a few more lots published than before. Stepping over to OrganicXSeed could be an option for the future.
- With the coordination of ÖMKi, stakeholders started for the first time a progressive action plan on different derogation categories. This is a key element in tackling derogation reduction in Hungary.
- A newly established organic seed expert group set up a roadmap, first for winter wheat, as the most important and most widely grown organic crop in Hungary. This roadmap will be a valuable tool and guiding map to turn winter wheat into a category I crop.
- On-farm tests and small plot test trials were performed in several locations with a large amount of varieties. The data will feed into the variety offer list which could trigger organic seed production and motivate farmers to use certified seed. Furthermore, NÉBIH is transforming one of its stations into organic, which is a first for Hungary and an essential step to start testing more under organic conditions.
- It is a significant development that regular communication has been started among the different actors and stakeholders of the organic seed sector, while their understanding of current lock-ins and the possibilities provided by new organic regulation have increased greatly.



#### WP1 T1.6 Report European-wide Workshop

- The organic seed expert group became official, when the Hungarian Seed Association founded a working group on organic seeds, with ÖMKi playing a major role in the coordination of the group. With the help of regular meetings and good coordination, the collaboration between the different stakeholders will strengthen in order to support farmers in variety choice, promote organic breeding and improve organic seed use.



## ITALY

### Database

#### Actions identified during the national workshop

Stakeholders work together to improve the database	
The project BIOSEME SIB, managed by CREA-DC which is working to improve the database has entered in a second phase. The importance of investing in database improvement have been recognized by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture and the stakeholders have another opportunity to contribute in this process. This project is managing the expert group, working on derogation lists.	Ongoing

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

Improving the database	
Stakeholders have tested the new organic DB and sent their comments to Rete Semi Rurali. RSR is then collecting comments and sending them to the CREA-DC.	Ongoing

#### Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>The confirmation of the project BIOSEME, and the related expert group, represents a new investment in database improvement and it is a significant progress in general development for increasing the use of organic seeds in Italy.</p> <p>To improve the user experience of the database, RSR is informally collecting feedbacks by users and then pass them to the CREA-DC.</p>	Ongoing

### Derogations

#### Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
The new organic DB just entered into force in 2019 and we still have a lot of crops in the green list, i.e. crops that are not available as organic seed, resulting in automatic derogation. Some are in the yellow list, i.e. crops that need a derogation request, and we still have no crops on the red list. For 2020 we don't have yet any information about derogations, the last statistics have been presented by CREA-DC at LIVESEED National workshop. There is the idea to start the red list with alfalfa, but this decision should be made in the next meeting of the expert group and then validated by the Organic Committee within the Ministry of Agriculture.	Period / Date

### Expert Group

#### Actions identified during the national workshop



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<b>The work of the expert group will be improved and allows to include some species on the red list</b>	
The expert group is planning new meetings from September 2020. Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 crisis the expert groups did not have the opportunity to meet in the last months.	Ongoing

### Regulatory and general developments concerning the expert group

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
The Covid-19 crisis did not allow to have general developments concerning the expert group. However, the group, nominated last year, is still in place and will continue their activity starting from September 2020.	Ongoing

## Research

### Actions identified during the national workshop

<b>Specific experiments to facilitate the registration of new varieties suitable for organic production are set up at national level and with the support of public funding</b>	
The specific Seed Action Plan for organic farming, asked by the stakeholders during the National Workshop, is still not in place. However, those type of actions require a longer political discussion process. Considering the Covid 19 crisis all those types of processes have been slow down in Italy.	On going

### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

<b>Definition of experts in the EU groups on the temporary experiment on organic varieties</b>	
RSR defined together with CREA-DC the Italian expert for the EU expert groups on different crops	September 2020

### Regulatory and general developments concerning research

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
The National Workshop was an important opportunity to make clear with all the stakeholders and with the Public Institutions the connection between Database Management, Seed Availability and Research to develop Organic Seeds. A new National Plan on Organic Seeds could be negotiated in 2021.	Period / Date

## Production and Use of Organic Seeds

### Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
No data available on the amounts of organic seed used and produced.	Period / Date





## Other

### Actions identified during the national workshop

<b>The Ministry asks the stakeholders for support for the discussion of delegated acts of the new organic regulation (848/2018)</b>	
Rete Semi Rurali, with the contribution of other stakeholders, had a series of communications with the Ministry of Agriculture in which gave specific recommendations to support the discussion on delegate acts related to organic heterogeneous material, as asked by the Ministry during the National workshop in September 2019.	January- July 2020

### Summary of progress - Italy

- The importance of investing in database improvement has been recognized by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture. The confirmation of the project BIOSEME, and the related expert group, has the potential to drastically improve the quality of the database and to use derogations. A key factor on which the succes of such an improved database will depend on in Italy, is whether enough seed producers will be stimulated to offer more supplies on this platform rather than relying only on the already established channels.
- A large amount of work still lies ahead with regard to derogations. For most crops, not even a derogation request is required. A major task will be to move more crops to the 'yellow list' (derogation authorization required) and into category 1 (sufficient organic seed available, no authorizations for derogation). The movement of alfalfa into category 1 is an important step in this process and the newly established expert group will play a crucial role in adding further crops to this list.
- Italy will participate in the temporary experiment on organic variety testing, coordinated by DG SANTE. Other activities regarding variety testing and research will depend on the upcoming organic action plan.
- No information and training activies have taken place regarding organic seed or the seed database.
- Unfortunately, very little information is available on the market of organic seed in Italy. This makes it impossible to assess the exact progress in the production and use of organic seed.
- Italy was the only country without a 'declaration on organic seed', listing stakeholder commitments. It can be speculated that the absence of such a list of commitments was a contributing factor to relatively small steps in Italy, compared to other countries that had a national workshop.

## POLAND

### Database



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### Committed actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>Ewa Sadowska (PRIORIN) takes the initiative to analyse possible ways to improve the database based on recommendations mentioned in the workshop</b>	
<p>One of the key improvements since May 2019 in the Polish organic seed database maintained by PIORiN (Main Inspectorate of Plant Health And Seed Inspection) has been its extension with information on the amount of seed material offered by the seed supplier. Moreover the lot numbers for some main crops were added.</p> <p>However, an introduction of the description of variety, storage and sowing time is not foreseen for the moment. At the moment, it is also not foreseen that seed companies will have access to the database to update their offer. If the number of offers sent to PIORIN increases, the update frequency of the database could be update to more than once a month.</p> <p>PIORIN with great interest follows the development and implementation of the EU router database. There is no doubt that such a tool should improve the interactivity, updateability and searchability of the existing database. The reduction of the administrative burden for organic seed suppliers would be its another strong advantage. The supply of the organic seeds for Polish farmers should also significantly increase. However, there are concerns among farmers that the price of seeds coming from foreign countries will be high.</p>	05/2019 – 09/2020

### Derogations

#### Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
<p>Number of authorisations granted by PIORIN to use seed or seed potatoes not obtained by organic production methods (so called derogations) was stable in last years (2016-2018) and amounted to about 6000 per year. Cereals were the main crops covered by this derogation. This reflects the dominant position of cereals in the cropping pattern in arable organic farming in Poland. In case of non-arable crops, apple trees dominated. A list of equivalent varieties that farmers can use when the variety they ask for is not available is under development. It is expected that launching such a list should decrease the amount of granted derogations.</p>	05/2019 – 09/2020

### Expert Group

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>The upcoming organic fairs are used by the expert group to meet and discuss further the roles of a national organic seed expert group. Coordination happens through IUNG.</b>	
<p>There has been a special Council for Organic Farming under the Minister of Agriculture for many years in Poland. The Council is composed of stakeholders from different sectors of organic farming (research institutions, certification bodies, NGOs, farmers and farmer associations, etc.). The Council's main tasks are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- giving opinions, consulting and proposing systemic solutions in organic farming and submitting initiatives in this area;</li> <li>- to support undertakings aimed at developing organic farming and the organic food market;</li> <li>- disseminating knowledge about new legal regulations and guidelines of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development concerning organic farming in Poland and abroad;</li> <li>- popularization of the achievements of organic farming in Poland and abroad;</li> <li>- giving opinions, consulting and presenting proposals for solutions, actions and implementation of the objectives indicated in the Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming in Poland for 2014-2020.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that there is no need to establish a second, new Council focused only on organic seeds, but rather to establish a working/expert group for these issues within already existing Council for Organic Farming. So far the Head of the Council appointed three permanent working/expert groups for the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- legal regulations,</li> <li>- improvement of efficiency of organic farms,</li> </ul>	05/2019 – 09/2020



<p>- development of the domestic organic food market.</p> <p>The Council for Organic Farming used to meet once per quarter. However, because of the covid-19 there were no typical Council meetings since autumn 2019 until beginning of October. Most recently the Council was reconstructed, and the number of members decreased. Last meeting took place at 02.10.2020.</p> <p>Moreover, the Ministry of Agriculture within a special Fund for organic farming research is going to announce at 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2020 a call for the project aimed to analyze the organic seed market in Poland with a special focus on the scale of the supply and the demand on organic seeds. The results of this research should be the base for further steps towards improvement of the organic seed sector in Poland.</p>	
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning the expert group

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>The Council for Organic Farming decided on 02.10.2020 to pass an official resolution on the actions that should be undertaken in order to reverse the negative trends in organic farming development in Poland. One of the key points that will be included in this Resolution is the recommendation to introduce the subsidies for organic farmers who use qualified organic seeds.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>

## Research

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Wieslaw Podyma (IHAR) coordinates the formulation of a letter addressed to the Ministry concerning the barriers in the current law towards organic plant breeding together with other research institutions	
<p>In 2018 the <b>Plant Breeding and Acclimatization Institute - National Research Institute (PBAI)</b> provided to the Ministry of Agriculture opinion on the possibility of producing certified organic seed material. It was shown in it that one of the key barriers limiting the development of organic farming is the low availability of certified organic seeds. Due to the research specificity of the Institute, this opinion concerned mainly arable crops.</p> <p>The Institute has been aware of the problem of the lack of certified seeds for a long time. A number of studies carried out concerned the issues of grain, legume and potato seed production in the conditions of organic farming.</p> <p>The technical, economic and structural difficulties related to the development of the supply of organic seed material include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lack of profitability, especially in the case of some minor species,</li> <li>- technical difficulties in the production of certain species, especially in the protection against pests and diseases,</li> <li>- organic seeds, in some cases, are more expensive than conventional ones due to the higher risk of their production.</li> </ul> <p>Actions that should be taken concern three areas related to the production of seed material:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the offer of varieties tested in organic farming conditions.</li> </ol> <p>Experiences of other countries show that most varieties suitable for cultivation in organic farming would not be approved if they were tested in conditions of conventional agriculture. It is imperative to test varieties under conditions appropriate to their intended use, especially in the case of varieties requiring economic value assessment. In Poland, the suitability of varieties for organic farming is assessed after the registration process is completed as part of research for organic farming, the so-called "National Organic Cultivar Testing Program (NOCTP)".</p>	<p>05/2019 – 09/2020</p>



<p>In Poland, to the best of our knowledge, there is a very limited breeding of plant varieties intended for organic farming. The solution is to establish a financial support program for plant breeding for organic farming.</p> <p>2. Supporting the registration of regional varieties The second solution that can be considered complementary, is promoting the registration of regional varieties. In many cases, old varieties are sought by organic farmers. The current rules on registration, adopted for this type of material, include derogations on the quality of the seed and use the economic mechanism of the abolition of the registration fee and the fee for maintaining the variety in the register. However, the registration process is complicated. Practical activities on the production of certified organic seed material were initiated in 2013 by PBAI Grodkowice Breeding Station. Within this activity the Station registered three regional wheat varieties in this year: Ostka Grodkowicka and Ostka Gruboziarnista Grodkowicka, Square Head Grodkowicka.</p> <p>3. The minimum area of organic seed plantations. The minimum area of seed plantations shall be adequate for the seed production of conventionally bred varieties. Article 37 of the Seed Production Act provides that for the production of seed of the seed category, the certified area of seed plantations of agricultural plants may not be less than: 1) 2 ha - in the case of seed of cereal plants; 2) 1 ha - in the case of seed potatoes; 3) 0.5 ha - in the case of other agricultural plant species. The main problem that occurs when qualifying seed plantations for organic farming is their infestation by weeds. Establishing smaller minimum areas should keep the plantation clean without compromising the quality of the seed. In 2020 PBAI proposed a special research task for organic breeding within Multiannual Agricultural Program 2021-25 financed from the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture. The domestic seed market currently does not have cereal plant varieties bred in conditions of organic farming. To meet this challenge, it is necessary not only to conduct research on the selection of already existing cereals varieties for organic farming, but also to assess the breeding material in such conditions what should allow a selection of prospective material for this system. The results of the planned work might be also a source of support for plant breeding companies. It is also very important to support the seed production process in organic conditions. This direction is currently a niche, therefore PBAI proposes a research on the optimization of seed material production in organic conditions.</p>	
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning research

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>In 2019, Wiesław Podyma from Plant Breeding and Acclimatization Institute - National Research Institute (PBAI) received from a special Fund for Organic Farming Research of the Ministry of Agriculture. The 1 year grant, among others, focused on evaluation of newly produced oat breeding lines for organic farming and searching for genotypes with high resistance to diseases while maintaining high nutritional quality.</p> <p>Post-registration organic evaluation of varieties is on-going in Poland.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>

### Training/Information/Communication

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds



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<b>IUNG initiates educational actions based on their developed network of field trials to demonstrate to farmers the advantages of using organic seeds</b>	
<p>In 2018 IUNG-PIB in cooperation with the Research Centre for Cultivar Testing (COBORU) established in Poland the National Organic Cultivar Testing Program (NOCTP). In 2018 organic field trials started for winter (rye, wheat, triticale) and spring cereals (barley, oat, wheat). As a result of this testing, a list of recommended cultivars for organic farmers is being developed. The IUNG collaborates with the Centre for Agricultural Advisory Services for the dissemination of results among farmers. In the period from 05 2019 to 09 2020, the following activities were conducted to target various groups of recipients, including advisors and farmers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jończyk K.: Field experiments on comparing different farming systems in Osiny, Plant protection in organic production system. Agricultural Training Center in Okszów - 22 persons.</li> <li>2. Jończyk K.: NOCTP. Plant protection in the organic system - Wielkopolska Agricultural Advisory Centre in Poznań - 4 persons.</li> <li>3. Jończyk K.: Long term experiment on comparing different crop production systems in Osiny. Research on the selection of varieties for organic farming - NOCTP. The Centre of Agricultural Education in Jabłoń - 18 persons.</li> <li>4. Jończyk K.: Visit of farmers and administration employees within the project: "NATURE-LOCALLY - a campaign for the creation of short supply chains in the łomża district".</li> </ol> <p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organic farming as a specific system of agricultural production.</li> <li>- Plant protection in organic farming - principles, problems, selected research results.</li> <li>- Research on the selection of varieties for organic farming -- NOCTP.</li> </ul> <p>Traditionally, open field days for farmers and advisors were planned for late May/early June. However, due to the covid-19, almost all of them were cancelled.</p>	<p>05/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>28.05.2019</p> <p>30.05.2019</p> <p>20.06.2019</p> <p>26.09.2019</p>

### Regulatory and general developments concerning training/information/communication

<b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b>	
<p>In October 2020, Polish national authorities launched one-year postgraduate studies “Organic farming” for 183 agricultural advisors all over Poland. The topic of organic seeds will be included within this study. In this way a communication platform will be established to transfer this knowledge in the next step directly to farmers. In parallel to this, Polish national authorities are planning to launch a training campaign (also covering the topic of organic seeds) all over Poland for 4800 organic farmers and farmers interested to convert into organic.</p>	<p>2020 - 2021</p>

### Production and Use of Organic Seeds

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>Dorota Metera monitors the drafting process of the new action plan for Poland (2020-2026) concerning the inclusion of organic seed production issues and makes recommendations based on the suggestions made during the workshop</b>	
<p>On 4 of September 2020 Janusz Wojciechowski, Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner announced that „in the frame of the strategy „From farm to fork“ the Commission will support the organic sector towards the achievement of the 25% target of agricultural land under organic</p>	<p>05/2019 – 09/2020</p>



<p><i>farming by 2030 with the appropriate policy and legal framework</i>". The public consultation of the roadmap is open until 23 October and on the Action Plan - until 27 November. The Member States will also develop and consult own Action Plans. The share of organic farming in Poland in 2019 is appr. 3,1% of UAA. One of the barriers is the availability of organic seed and vegetative planting materials. First meeting on the new National Strategic Plan took place on 1 of July 2020 in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, but there is no document for consultation yet. The drafting of the Action Plan for Organic Farming hasn't started yet and no documents are available at the moment.</p>	
<p><b>Marcin Moczulski initiates a survey to farmers on seed and variety demand</b></p>	
<p>The survey has been not conducted. The following information comes from the experience the company gathered on the Polish market (mainly based on communication with its main customers -organic farmers):</p> <p>The demand for seeds for market organic production is strongly linked to the sale of a given crop. Valuable varieties particularly appreciated by the producer are a minority. Changes of varieties and seeds are frequent and are caused by the price and availability of seeds in a given season. Production of organic vegetable seeds is developing quite dynamically in Poland. In 2020, new amber coloured eco-friendly seed treatment has been introduced for organic seeds, as opposed to NCT seeds - white seed treatment and conventional ones - green seed treatment. Seed production plans are created on the basis of the sale of previous years and a sense of prosperity for individual vegetable species. However, organic production is more stable than conventional. NCT seeds are still sought after, especially when production contracts are concluded late, e.g. in spring. Lack of seed treatments for conventional seeds, e.g. cucumber, leek, asparagus, makes it easier to access NCT seeds which blurred the picture of how many seeds went into organic production. The turbulence on the market of registration or lack of registration for chemical seed treatment in conventional vegetables is intensified by unexpected changes on the seed market. At the same time, there are new trends, e.g. in France for the production of conventional vegetables in the zero residue certified formula. This is a new strong competition for organic production.</p>	<p>05/2019 – 09/2020</p>

**Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds**

<p><b>Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project</b></p>	
<p>Farm-saved seeds are still the main source of seeds in organic farms in Poland. According to the opinion of main companies selling organic seeds, situation on the market is stable or rather slightly downward. In general since 2013 organic farming in Poland in terms of farm area and number of farmers is in regression. Between 2013 and 2019, organic area decreased by about 25% from 670 000 to 508 000 ha and the number of organic farms decreased by 30% from 26 598 to 18 637.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>

**Other**

**Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds**

<p><b>Agnes Bruszik IFOAM EU reaches out to the representative of the Ministry, Bartosz Pytlak, to communicate the different suggestions concerning subsidies for farmers</b></p>	
<p>The recommendations were sent, with a couple of reports attached to the mail.</p>	<p>October 2020</p>



### Summary of progress - Poland

- Some minor improvements have been made regarding the functionality and the update frequency of the database, for example the addition of the number of available lots. However, seed producers are still not allowed to add and modify offers in the database.
- While the number of derogations remain stable, a list of equivalent varieties (that farmers can use when the variety they ask for is not available) is under development. Outcomes from organic field trials that started in 2018 are flowing into the process of constructing this list. This list is a good step and has the potential to decrease the amount of granted derogations.
- Poland does not have an expert group on organic seed but rather intends to establish a working group on organic seed within the already existing council on organic production. A new project is planned to analyze the organic seed market in Poland, with a special focus on the scale of the supply and the demand on organic seeds. This project could be very useful to shed more light on the organic seed market in Poland and suggest actions to improve production and use of organic seed.
- As outlined in a letter to the ministry that was already sent in 2018, Poland has technical, economic and structural difficulties related to the development of the supply of organic seed material. This includes (1) lack of profitability, especially in the case of some minor species, (2) technical difficulties in the production of certain species, especially in the protection against pests and diseases, (3) organic seeds, in some cases, are more expensive than conventional ones due to the higher risk of their production. A proposal to introduce subsidies for organic farmers who use qualified organic seeds could be a crucial step to address some of these problems. In general, the decreasing area of organic land, coupled with a great amount of farm-saved seed used, makes for difficult conditions for the market of organic seeds to develop.

## ROMANIA

### Database

#### Committed actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

The Tulcea farmers send a letter to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development suggesting the possibilities for improvement of the database	
The Tulcea farmers did not send to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development the letter suggesting possibility for improvement of the seeds database.	Period / Date

#### Regulatory and general developments concerning the database



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Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>The Agriculture Ministry improved its internal management system of organic agriculture operators but not yet the seeds database operability and user-friendly interface. This is due to the fact that the organic seeds availability is low. A lot of efforts are still needed to tackle the basic concerns of organic agriculture and organic seed production.</p> <p>There are several problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The cost justification. The ministry has the perception that a better seed database will not solve the problem of organic seeds availability.</li> <li>2. There's a lack of data on the amount of seeds needed. Information is needed on the amount of seed that farmer uses and the ratio of farm-saved seed and seed from external sources.</li> </ol>	<p>Period / Date</p>

## Derogations

### Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>Romania is adapting its internal regulations to sustain more organic farmers and to comply the EU Regulation. Organic farmers have been consulted to modify the internal Ministry Order for 1253/2013 about the rules for operators registration in organic agriculture.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>

## Research

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

The Tulcea farmers set up trials on a surface of 58 ha for organic inputs, including different organic varieties	
<p>The process is on-going. The land proposed for trials was not in the farmer's property and it is not organic. It has been leased and started the conversion for organic agriculture.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>

## Training/Information/Communication

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Certification bodies actively inform organic producers about the organic seeds database existence	
<p>Certification bodies actively inform organic producers about organic seeds database existence and organic seeds regulation during the annual inspection.</p>	<p>Period / Date</p>
Participants of this workshop are actively involved in the debates regarding the implementation of the new Organic Regulation	





Participants of the LIVESEED National Workshop were actively involved in implementation of the new Organic Regulation , mainly, in the first two month of 2020, like Eco-Start symposium at Iasi, on 28.02.2020  <a href="https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=305272627496111&amp;id=101421377881238&amp;set=a.140394560650586&amp;source=48&amp;refid=13&amp;_tn_=%2B%3D">https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=305272627496111&amp;id=101421377881238&amp;set=a.140394560650586&amp;source=48&amp;refid=13&amp;_tn_=%2B%3D</a>	Period / Date
<b>Teodor Terpez (Permaculture Institute) initiates a social media platform that will help the exchange of information between organic seed producers and farmers about organic seed offers and demands</b>	
A facebook platform was established (seed house): <a href="https://www.facebook.com/casasemintelor/">https://www.facebook.com/casasemintelor/</a> It is a platform for seed savers in Romania. It is a community seed bank. One of their objectives is to cultivate conservation varieties in organic agriculture and organic seed.	Period / Date
<b>Tulcea farmers organize a meeting in the coming year in Tulcea on the topic of organic seeds</b>	
The meeting of Tulcea farmers was postponed in the end of 2020, due to Covid-19.	Period / Date
<b>Marius Casis (Romanian Association for Sustainable Agriculture) organizes a special session on Organic Seeds at the 3rd edition of organic agriculture fair ECO-INT Natural Taste</b>	
The 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition of organic agriculture fair ECO-INT Natural took place in Bacau, on 11 – 12 October 2019. During this meeting, there was a presentation and discussion on organic seed.	Period / Date

## Production and Use of Organic Seeds

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>Donau Soja offers support for specific soybean seed multiplication of organic seeds if it will be requested from producers</b>	
Reflection on developments/progress: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/dragos.costin.522/videos/3343826122378599/">https://www.facebook.com/dragos.costin.522/videos/3343826122378599/</a>	Period / Date

## Other

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

<b>NARDI Fundulea researchers offer adapted seeds and technical support for organic agriculture</b>	
NARDI Fundulea offered technical support of organic farmers. A special session was organised as well as a field day with organic farmers, authorities, researchers and breeders in which the LIVESEED plots of organic research centre were presented. This session has stimulated questions about organic agriculture practice and policy.  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/lapar2019/posts/2915195265255600">https://www.facebook.com/lapar2019/posts/2915195265255600</a>  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/lapar2019/posts/2911979118910548">https://www.facebook.com/lapar2019/posts/2911979118910548</a>  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/lapar2019/posts/2911772952264498">https://www.facebook.com/lapar2019/posts/2911772952264498</a>  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/cameraagricolanationala.2015/posts/1981838921946301">https://www.facebook.com/cameraagricolanationala.2015/posts/1981838921946301</a>	2019-2020



<p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/cameraagricolanationala.2015/posts/1981845838612276">https://www.facebook.com/cameraagricolanationala.2015/posts/1981845838612276</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58j8rjsjVUo&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;fbclid=IwAR3nX_BAnTpQUqmXoRveSYNinI3utMqjJf_C_PcCN4TvWYFTL6U9-GIPcg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58j8rjsjVUo&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;fbclid=IwAR3nX_BAnTpQUqmXoRveSYNinI3utMqjJf_C_PcCN4TvWYFTL6U9-GIPcg</a></p> <p><a href="https://agro-tv.ro/agricultura-ecologica-o-noua-provocare-pentru-romania-emil-dumitru-este-nevoie-de-masuri-de-sprijin-speciale/?fbclid=IwAR3AjkdEJRPgWZ9lr2QmpqgilGAeT8-esfCVayZQtvH3j20q5DEwdG2we80">https://agro-tv.ro/agricultura-ecologica-o-noua-provocare-pentru-romania-emil-dumitru-este-nevoie-de-masuri-de-sprijin-speciale/?fbclid=IwAR3AjkdEJRPgWZ9lr2QmpqgilGAeT8-esfCVayZQtvH3j20q5DEwdG2we80</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutul National de Cercetare-Dezvoltare Agricola (NARDI) Fundulea/Romania organized the traditional “Field Day of the Wheat and Barley ” on 25 June 2020, together with LAPAR, the biggest farmers Association in Romania. The number of participants had to be limited due to COVID restrictions.</li> <li>• Farmers, policy makers, researchers and media visited the LIVESEED experiments. Screening field trials of wheat and barley genotypes for T2.1.1, „Development of new testing and organisational models for high quality seeds for the organic sector” and T3.2.2. "New breeding methods and co-design approaches for optimised perennial crop mixtures, with a focus on grass/legume mixtures (alfalfa and red clover x Lolium, Dactylis, Festuca and Trifolium alexandrinum).</li> <li>• The participants remarked the heterogeneous materials – dynamic populations and CCPS, some old genotypes from wheat collection and the very low number of ears in relation to plants/m<sup>2</sup>. This could be due to extreme dry spring and other limiting factors of the soil that are still unknown.</li> </ul>	
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### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

NARDI Fundulea activities	(Progress)
<p>Research, Innovation and Technological Assistance Centre for Organic Farming of NARDI Fundulea cultivates each year about 12 ha pre-base organic seeds of wheat, soybean, camelina, alfalfa, coriander or Silybum marianum and open pollinated maize and sunflower, that are available to organic farmers from different regions of Romania. In this organic research centre, over 300 crop varieties are tested of wheat, barley, triticale, spelt, oats, maize, millet, peas, lentil, soybean, alfalfa, sunflower, linseed, camelina and herbs plants. Also, different sowing times, crop rotations and organic inputs are tested.</p>	<p>2019-2020</p>

### Summary of progress - Romania

- The Agriculture Ministry improved its internal management system of organic agriculture operators but not yet the operability and user-friendly interface of the seed database. This is also because the Ministry does not share the perception that a database can make a substantial change to increase the production and use of organic seed. In general, more information is needed on the use and production of seed by organic farmers in Romania. This information could be collected in a system that is connected to a future Romanian seed database.
- In general, Romania is still very much in a process of adapting its procedures to the EU Organic Regulation. This implies that Romania progresses at a different pace than other Member States regarding organic seeds.



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090.



## WP1 T1.6 Report European-wide Workshop

- Efforts have been started to conduct testing trials under organic conditions. As the land is still in-conversion, first results are not expected soon.
- Information sharing and communication on organic seeds has increased since the LIVESEED national workshop in Rumania.
- Activities such as a field day with organic farmers, authorities, researchers and breeders, in which the LIVESEED plots of organic research centre were presented, showed that these sessions stimulate questions and discussion about practices of organic agriculture and policy.

## SPAIN

### Database

#### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

Ministry & expert group	
The new person in charge of the database in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policies has been contacted and informed on the Liveseed Project and has received the “How to implement the organic regulation to increase production & use of organic seed – Policy Recommendations for national and authorities” Liveseed booklet in Spanish version.	August 2020
The database was discussed during the MECOECO meeting of autumn 2019 and in October 2019, the MecoEco members and other experts across Spain were invited to become part of the National Expert Group on Organic Seeds and Organic Heterogeneous Vegetable Material.	

#### Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
The Ministry of Agriculture has made an effort to increase the frequency of the update of the National Database of Organic Seeds, although changes in the Ministry structure and the retirement of the person who had created the database and had been in charge since its creation have limited it’s update seasonally. The department in charge of the national database is now the Sub-direction General for Food Quality and Sovereignty.	Since June 2019

### Derogations

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Analysis of causes of exceptions to the use of organic seeds, to be able to define better requirements in a harmonized way through improvement of the application of authorisations	
The information concerning the derogations has been asked to the National Competent Authority but as Derogations are authorised by each of the 17 Regional Competent Authorities, the information from last year’s (2019) derogations is still being compiled and will be analysed by the Ministry’s public workers due to the data protection law and then shared with the organic sector.	Expected date for having the report:



From the information received from different Organic Control Authorities and Bodies, it seems that, although the production offer and use of organic seeds have increased, the number of derogations has also grown in the last years because the surface of organic production is growing faster. (according to provisional data of 2019 the increase is more than 108.475 Ha and was more than 164.000 on 2018).	end of 2020
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### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

Delegation of derogation process	
<p>The person in charge of the Derogations in each of the 17 Regional Competent Authorities will be contacted personally and the “How to implement the organic regulation to increase production &amp; use of organic seed – Policy Recommendations for national and authorities” LIVESEED booklet (in Spanish version) will be presented to them.</p> <p>Competent Authorities of most of the Regions have delegated the derogations process to Control Authorities or Control Bodies (depending on whether the control and certification has been delegated in a public or private body). The regions that haven’t delegated the derogations process are those where Competent and Control Authority are in the same department: the Canary Islands or Extremadura. Castilla la Mancha’s and Aragón’s Competent Authorities have kept the final decision on whether to authorize or not the derogations, but the Control Bodies are responsible for receiving the petitions form the farmers and then transferring them to the CA and then going back to the farmers with the CA’s final decision.</p>	4th quarter 2020 and 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2021

### Expert Group

#### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Request the Ministry to create a working group in which representatives of all competent authorities, control authorities, organic producers, actors of the agri-food chain and representatives of civil society are involved	
<p>The request for the creation of a working group was presented to the Subdirector General for Food Quality and Organic Farming in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policies in April 2020. The Department of Organic Agriculture contacted all stakeholders involved in organic and seed production aiming to create a mixt working group. The invitation to participate was sent to: all Regional Competent Authorities and Spanish Organic Control Authorities and Bodies that are part of the National Advisory Body MECOECO, the organic sector organizations (such as SEAE, ECOVALIA and INTERECO), the Spanish Networks for seed producers and for local and traditional varieties conservation and production and the Spanish Office for Vegetable Varieties. The response on behalf of most of the regional competent authorities and of the Spanish Office for Vegetable Varieties was nil so it has been postponed until the beginning of 2021. This process is still ongoing as SEAE and ECOVALIA will continue insisting and also accompanying the Ministry.</p>	From April 2019

### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

SEAE workshop	
<p>A workshop is being organised by SEAE to try to get regional competent authorities and the Spanish Office for Vegetable Varieties in the establishment of a task force on the implementation of the new organic regulation on seeds and plant reproductive propagating material.</p>	13 <sup>th</sup> October 2020



<p>It will be an online event with the participation of a member of the organic department and one from the Spanish office of vegetable varieties (both from the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture), a member of a Spanish regional competent authority and a member of the Organic Area from the Commission that could explain the Commission's view and aim of the changes in the new organic regulation. It will be organised in coordination with INTERECO (organic control authorities association), some competent authorities that we've managed to get involved, breeders, the national network of local varieties associations, organic control bodies and, of course, ECOVALIA.</p>	
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### Regulatory and general developments concerning the expert group

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>New structure in the Ministry concerning Organic Farming: There have been changes in the Ministry Of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policies structure and from the beginning of 2020, the National Competent Authority on the Organic Control System is a different Sub-direction than the one responsible for Organic Regulation and the organic seeds database. However, up to now, the resources allocated for Organic in the Ministry are still the same.</p>	<p>Since 2020</p>

### Research

### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

## Several activities



<p>Different Research centres and entities have been contacted by UPV, SEAE, NEIKER and ECOVALIA and many have become interested in starting research on organic production and some, in organic seeds' production. These research groups or centres are established in different regions in Spain and there is no coordination between them.</p>	2020
<p>The Research Task Force of SEAE has the commitment of setting a public database where this information will be centralised.</p>	2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITACYL has included several hectares of different varieties of cereals and quinoa testing their behaviour when applying organic methods.</li> <li>• GENVCE (Group for the Evaluation of New Varieties of Extensive Crops in Spain) has created a network with essays on organic wheat, as a result of the PANECO Project developed by NEIKER (among others) including trials in Castilla y León, Basque Country, Navarra, Aragón, Catalonia, Castilla la Mancha and Andalucía.</li> <li>• INEA is also starting some trial son organic management of cereals in coordination with ITACyL.</li> <li>• In Navarra, INTIA, has 20 ha of organic cereals, vegetables (in green houses and at open sky), fruit trees and quinoa.</li> <li>• IRTA is developing several trials on organic grown wheat and barley trigos</li> </ul>	2019-2020
<p>Adrián Rodríguez (UPV), through the Liveseed project, has focused on 300 traditional varieties of tomato and divided the trials into two blocks (Valencia and Cádiz). Tested was: field response, acceptance in tastings and selecting 20 to 25 for the trials in Valencia and also 20 to 25 for the ones in Cádiz, to end the process with a selection of 10 to 12 varieties per region.</p>	2018-2021
<p><i>Adrian Rodriguez is also in charge of the paprika peppers initiatives, where several ecotypes (bell fleshy type) have been selected for their adaptation to organic conditions, their high nutritional value (ascorbic acid, flavonoids and carotenoids) and organoleptic quality (sugars and volatiles), after 5 years of evaluations of about 60 accessions.</i></p> <p><i>The same process has been applied for the white (wax) peppers in the territory of Villena (Alicante). After two years of evaluations with about 20 accessions (ecotypes kept by old farmers, accessions from the UPV seedbank and modern F1 varieties as controls), two ecotypes have been selected, based on adaptation to organic cultivation in this area and their nutritional value and organoleptic quality (aroma and taste, including panel tests with consumers). Villena's Agrarian Cooperative's collaboration has been very strong and important in the project.</i></p>	2015-2021
<p>This task has been complemented with non-committed trials on different varieties of brassica; cabbages, broccoli, cauliflowers and kohlrabi, planted in Valencia and Murcia.</p>	
<p>Valencia's Region Competent Authority is developing trials on field acceptance and nutritional quality of White pepper, Villena's White pepper, Villena's Cherry and Purple carrot, grown organically from traditional varieties, kept by local farmers. This entity has other ongoing research projects such as the nutritional and organoleptic characterization of 20 monovarietal oils obtained from organic olives and the recovery of several wine vines grown, comparing conventional and organic management.</p>	2019-2021
<p>The Spanish Network for Local Varieties is raising funds for different trials to be developed organically on farm fields on cereals in Andalucía and on apples and walnuts in the Basque Country, and the establishment of a private germplasm bank.</p>	



## Regulatory and general developments concerning research

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>Regional Public Research Centres are including Organic Trials with different vegetable varieties.</p> <p>NEIKER (Basque Institute for Agrarian Research) will participate in the temporary experiment on organic potato variety testing, managed by the EU Commission.</p>	<p>Starting mainly on 2019-2020</p>

## Training/Information/Communication

### Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Improvement of transmission/dissemination of existing information to promote use and production of organic seeds, through platforms of the representative organisations of the sector	
<p>SEAE included a presentation on the Liveseed Project and the need of increase the production and use of organic seeds in a meeting of the National Rural Network (a consultative body at the state level coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge and which brings together all representatives of the agricultural sector and the competent regional authorities) that took place in the Ministry on 25/2/2020.</p>	<p>2020</p>
<p>ECOVALIA and SEAE will develop a National Workshop on the learnings and progresses of the LIVESEED project.</p>	<p>2021</p>
Sharing of initiatives and successful results with participants	
<p>SEAE's National Workshop 2019; a Communication on Liveseed project was presented and a tasting and information point on the importance of the use of organic seeds was set during the whole of the Workshop.</p>	<p>2019</p>
<p>2 dissemination workshops to share good practices and knowledge from the Cross visits have been developed in the North and East of Spain (Vitoria in May 2019 and Gandía in October 2019)</p>	<p>2019</p>
<p>SEAE's 2020 National Workshop will be virtual and on indicators for organic farming, including communications on planted biodiversity and organic seeds.</p>	<p>2020</p>
<p>A webinar on the use of organic seeds and organic heterogeneous material in the Neu Organic Regulation was developed on April the 6<sup>th</sup> with 97 participants from the organic and seed sectors.</p>	
<p>2 Articles focussing on organic seeds have been published in Ae magazine for the organic sector and information on the Liveseed project, the importance of the use and production of organic seeds and the first Liveseed Booklet available in Spanish, has been shared in ECOVALIA and SEAE's social media (facebook and twitter) and websites.</p> <p>Since 2017 several articles had been published in Ecovalia's magazine "Valor Ecológico", informing about the project, the cross visits, new regulation and the project activities in the country.</p>	
Compilation of information on the benefits of using organic seeds to promote incentives for its use	
<p>Publication of SEAE's compilation document "Scientific evidences in favour of organic production" (<a href="https://www.agroecologia.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Evidencias-cientificas-produccion-ecologica-va.pdf">https://www.agroecologia.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Evidencias-cientificas-produccion-ecologica-va.pdf</a>)</p>	<p>2019</p>
<p>SEAE's Research Task Force has the commitment of setting a public database where this information will be centralised.</p>	<p>2021</p>



Gathering of information on the possible ways to develop organic seeds for legumes	
NEIKER and UPV have contacted several researchers, such as Valencia’s Regional Competent Authority’s Research Centre to promote trials on organic seeds for legumes. SEAE’s Research Task Force in coordination with NEIKER and UPV, will set a specific area on the public database where this information will be centralised.	2020 2021

## Production and Use of Organic Seeds

### Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders

Organic control bodies information	
The information received from different Organic Control Authorities and Bodies confirms that the production, offer and use of organic seeds have increased, although it is not growing as fast as the organic production. Connecting regional trials and researchers on organic seed production with regional seed producers and multipliers could help increase this production. SEAE and ECOVALIA will include regional researchers from those research groups in regional trainings on organic production and/or organic regulation.	Last quarter of 2020 and 2021.

### Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
Amendments and suggestions were presented to the Ministry of Agriculture, asking for the inclusion of local landraces as Organic Heterogeneous Materials and several meetings with regional seed networks and organic farmer’s associations were held to inform on the new organic regulation on seeds. The basque group called “Organic seeds’ Group” met on 11/2/2020.  Some Seed producers have substantially increased organic production as i.e. Semilas Clemente and new seed producers have been included in the National Database.	2020

## Summary of progress - Spain

- The Ministry of Agriculture has made an effort to increase the frequency of the update of the National Database of Organic Seeds. However, changes in the internal structure of the Ministry and personal rotation mean that connections of the organic sector with the responsible person have to be re-established.
- At current rates, the area of land under organic conditions grows faster than the increase in use of organic seed. This has led to a de-facto increase of derogation authorizations. Connecting regional trials and researchers on organic seed production with regional seed producers and multipliers could help increase this production. SEAE and ECOVALIA is planning to include regional researchers from those research groups in regional trainings on organic production and/or organic regulation.
- The expert group is still work-in-progress: first steps to establish a working group on organic seeds have been initiated and an invitation was sent to some stakeholders already. However, the process was postponed and will require continued attention, also from sector organizations SEAE and ECOVALIA.





#### WP1 T1.6 Report European-wide Workshop

- A considerable number of variety testing trials under organic conditions have been conducted. More coordination between the research initiatives could yield great benefits. The commitment of the research task force of SEAE to set up a database where the information is centralized could be a first step to achieve more coordination.
- Since the LIVESEED national workshop, the dissemination of information was effective. Results from LIVESEED was translated to compile booklets in Spanish language, outcomes were presented in stakeholder meetings and more webinars are planned.



## Annex IV. Agenda of the European Workshop

25 November 2020

### Parallel session II: LIVESEED European Workshop – Implementation of the organic seed regulation and national progress made in the context of LIVESEED

Time	
09:30-10.00	Time for connecting and getting familiar with the online tool
10.00-10.10	<b>Welcome</b> Eric Gall, Deputy Director, IFOAM Organics Europe
10.10-11.15	<b>Key success factors in implementing national policy recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Martin Sommer, Policy Coordinator, IFOAM Organics Europe</li> <li>• Maaïke Raaijmakers, Project leader knowledge &amp; innovation, Bionext</li> </ul>
11.15-11.30	<b>Break</b>
11.30-13.00	<b>Smart Practices</b> Case-studies on seed expert groups, organic field trials and national seed databases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seed Expert Groups and how they function (Ilze Skrabule &amp; Ilze Diamante, AREI)</li> <li>• Organic field trials &amp; variety testing (Dr. Jaroslaw Stalenga, IUNG)</li> <li>• National seed database (Matteo Pettiti, Rete Semi Rurali)</li> <li>• Communication (Aina Calafat Rogers, SEAE)</li> </ul>
13.00-14.00	<b>Lunch break</b>
14.00-15.00	<b>Launch of the European Router Database</b> Xenia Gatzert, Research Associate, FiBL Germany
15.00-15.15	<b>LIVESEED film - strategies to produce organic vegetable seeds</b>
15.15-16.45	<b>Panel Debate – Steps to increase production &amp; use of organic seed</b> Discussion on achievements & best steps forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patrizia Pitton, Policy Officer, EU Commission DG Agriculture and Rural Development</li> <li>• Thomas Weber, Policy Officer, EU Commission DG Health and Food Safety</li> <li>• Stefan Dreesmann, Head of Unit, Lower Saxony Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection</li> <li>• Dr. Pier Giacomo Bianchi, Research Manager, CREA-DC</li> <li>• César Gonzalez, Manager Public Affairs, Euroseeds</li> <li>• Joanna Bojczewska, Consultant for Organic Farming &amp; Agroecology</li> <li>• Judit Feher, Researcher, ÖMKi</li> <li>• Dr. Melanie Molnar, Community Manager Organic, Vitalis-Organic Seeds</li> <li>• Dr. Monika Messmer, Group Leader Plant Breeding, FiBL-CH</li> <li>• Moderator: Eric Gall, Deputy Director, IFOAM Organics Europe</li> </ul>



These sessions are financed by the LIVESEED project. LIVESEED has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation under contract number 17.00090.



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## Annex V. Participants of the European Workshop 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020

First Name	Last Name	Company	Position
Lili	Barta	IFOAM Organics Europe	Volunteer
Pier Giacomo	Bianchi	CREA-DC	Scientific coordinator seed area
Lucia	Holmer	Bavarian Research Centre for Agriculture	Researcher
Agnes	Bruszik	IFOAM Organics Europe	Project Coordinator LIVESEED
Ilaria	Barbonetti	IFOAM Organics Europe	Communications consultant
Molly	Mathews	IFOAM Organics Europe	Events & Membership Assistant
Angela	Morell Perez	ECOVALIA	International Project Coordinator
Lāsma	Rābante	INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES AND ECONOMICS	Scientific assistant
Daniel	Timpabi	University of Ghana, Legon	Sudent
Anna	Pettersson	The Swedish Board of Agriculture	Senior Administrative Officer
Thyra	von Creyzt	BDP	staff lawyer
Eva	Winter	FiBL	PhD Student
Dr. Melanie	Stadlmeier	Saatzucht Donau GmbH & CoKG	Breeder
Maren	Ricken-Heischel	Natur-Saaten GmbH	Product manager
Katharina	Meyer	FiBL - Research Institute of Organic Agriculture	Researcher
Ilze	Skrabule	Institute of Agricultural Resources and Economics	lead researcher
Xenia	Gatzert	FiBL	Research assistant
Franziska	Löschenberger	Saatzucht Donau	Wheat Breeder
Kaja	Gutzen	FiBL DE	Research assistant
Szilvia	Bencze	ÖMKi	senior researcher
Rumyana	Todorova	Bulgarian Herb Association	trade and research consultant, manager
Andrea	Penazzi	Freelance	Agronomist
Stefano	Balestri	C.A.C. Soc. Coop. Agr.	Director operations
Arieke	de Vries	Enza Zaden	Trade Compliance Specialist
Alessandro	Politano	Italian Seed Association	Coordinator of the industrial crop section
Kjell	Sjödahl Svensson	Swedish Board of agriculture	Expert Organic production
Bettina	Jorek	KWS	Productmanager organic seed
Barbara Maria	Rudolf	Saat:gut e.V.	Ceo
Gebhard	Rossmann	Bingenheimer Saatgut AG	CEO



Monique	Faber-Decker	Ministry of agriculture	Chief officer of organic farming service
Kostas	Koutis	AEGILOPS	Executive director
Saskia	Derksen	Green Organics	QA manager
Christoph	Reithofer	Bio Forschung Austria	Scientific Assistant
Jürgen	Held	German Plant Breeders Association	Referent-Staff Lawyer
Tom	Wood	Robin Appel Ltd	Director
Melanie	Molnar	Vitalis organic seeds/Enza Zaden	International manager
Freya	Schaefer	None	None
Troels	Battrup	The Danish Agricultural Agency	Special Consultant
Jenny	Matthiesen	KWS Saat SE & Co. KGaA	Organic Variety Developer
Alexander	Mayer	Nunhems Germany GmbH	Organic Certification, Procurement
Petya	Pencheva	FOA Bioselena	Technical assistant
Satu	Paananen	ProAgria Länsi-Suomi	Specialist
Abco	de Buck	Louis Bolk Instituut	researcher
Antonio	VALENTINO	Greenaus S.p.A.	Project Manager
André	Pereira	IPC-ESAC	Researcher
Marianna	Fenzi	École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne	Postdoctoral Researcher
Péter	Mikó	Centre for Agricultural Research (ATK)	senior researcher (cereal breeder)
Judit	Fehér	ÖMKi	Researcher
laurence	fontaine	GEVES	research officer
Pedro	Mendes-Moreira	IPC	Assistant Professor
Kaija	Hakala	Natural Resources Institute Finland	Senior researcher
patrizia	pitton	EU Commission	officer
Petra	Faitsch	No.	
Vladimir	Meglic	Agricultural Institute of Slovenia	Research Programme Leader
Laura	Casella	SA.PI.SE. Coop. Agr.	R&D Manager
Piotr	Burczyk	FLORA SEEDS	Owner
Bettina	Gerike	Living Seeds Sementes Vivas S.A.	Public Relations
Alexandra	Fuss	BLE	Officer
Stefan	Doebelin	Sementes Vivas SA	Director
Andrea	Vugrinovic	Lokvina d.o.o.	Organic agriculture advisor
Monika	Messmer	FiBL Research Institute of Organic Agriculture	Group leader of plant breeding
Magdalena	Aigner	ARCHE NOAH	Project manager



Lisa-Maria	Krasa	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	Student, Organic Agriculture
Inese	Nicmane	State Plant Protection Service	Senior inspector
Niels	Heining	Bionext	Project manager
Mariateresa	Lazzaro	FIBL	researcher
Antje	Kölling	demeter e.v.	Head of Policy and Public Relations
Stefan	Ruhnke	SAATEN-UNION GmbH	Project Manager
Marleen	Maassen	Bayer	Regulatory Manager Seed Movement EMEA
Karen	Uudeberg	Estonian Seed Association	Secretary general
Gian Luca	Bagnara	Cà Colonna srl	partner
Vanessa	Hoffmann	Landesvereinigung für den Ökologischen Landbau in Bayern e.V.	consultant for research
MP (Paola)	Andreoni	-	student MSc Organic Agriculture
Roberto	Ruiz de Arcaute	SEAE and NEIKER	Advisor / Organic Production Researcher
Leonie	van der Velden	Bionext	Communication
Victor	Petcu	Centre for Agroecological Research St. Maximus, NARDI Fundulea	Researcher
Matteo	Petitti	Rete Semi Rurali	Participatory research facilitator
Paul	Totterdell	Cotswold Seed Ltd	Manager
Cesar	Gonzalez de Miguel	Euroseeds	Manager Public Affairs
Marian	van Leeuwen	Naktuinbouw	manager of Dutch Database Biodatabase
Tsvetanka	Dintcheva	Maritsa Vegetable Crops Research Institute	Assist. prof. PhD
Livia	Hendriks	Plantum	Public Affairs
Liliana	Vasilescu	NARDI Fundulea	Scientific researcher
Tamara	Neuhaus Gea Navarro	HSRW	Student
Gabriela	Serban	NARDI Fundulea	researcher
Simon	Stalder	Terralog ag	Product manager seed potatoes
Karin	Ulmer	ACT Alliance EU	Senior Policy Officer, Food Security (Trade)
Maximilian	Mayer	Secobra Saatzucht GmbH	Breeder (winter wheat)
Ilze	Dimante	AREI	Researcher



Ana Maria	Barata	INIAV	Responsible for the National Genebank
Dagmar	Janovská	Crop Research Institute	Researcher
Georgescu	Emil	National Agricultural Research Development Institute Fundulea	Entomologist
Ion	TONCEA	INCDA (NARDI) Fundulea	Researcher
Maria José	Amaral	EC/REA	Research Programme Officer
Jaroslaw	Stalenga	IUNG-PIB	Researcher
Catrina	Fenton	Garden Organic	Head of the Heritage Seed Library
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