



## Improving veterinarian's knowledge of animal husbandry in organic agriculture in Switzerland

### Context

Organic farming aims at closing nutrient cycles, maintain soil fertility, robust and health plants and animals with resilient performance.

Moreover, in organic farming a lot of effective substances are banned or their use is restricted and treatments only acceptable if their active substances are included in the positive list of the annex of the regulation VO (EU) 2018/848. In Switzerland, the use of antimicrobials in organic farming is only allowed to ensure animal welfare and avoid suffering (Organic Farming Ordinance, SR 910.18).

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### Keywords

Veterinarian, husbandry, organic agriculture, Switzerland

### Problem

For the Swiss organic sector, there are strict guidelines and strategies to maintain animal health and reduce antibiotics. The veterinarians are not aware of these guidelines. They make prescriptions as on conventional farms and the communication between farmers and veterinarians is often difficult.

### Solution

Education and further trainings for veterinarians to familiarize them with the strategies of organic farming.

### Outcome

Together with farmers and veterinarians, a training course was developed about animal husbandry in organic farming. This training course was composed of subjects such as the organic guidelines and mentality, as well as providing information on how to be able to treat diseases with alternative medicine such as homeopathy and phyto therapy. Furthermore, the veterinarians were informed on where to find detailed information on organic recognised products. The training was carried out as part of the official further training of veterinarians. The training was evaluated and resulted in a good rating from the participants.

During the university training of young veterinarians, FiBL introduced them into the guidelines and strategies to maintain animal health and reduce antibiotics. A focus was given to the potential of treatments with medicinal plants.

### Practical recommendations

If case you plan a training for vets working in the organic sector:

- Involve farmers and vets into the curriculum development.
- Focus on the relevance of prevention and complementary medicine.
- Evaluate the trainings also from the perspective of veterinarians and farmers.



## On-farm / Market application

- Look up usable products under: <https://www.inputs.eu/>
- Strengthening calves and piglets with medicinal plants: <https://www.fibl.org/de/shop/1596-phytotherapy>
- Successful piglet weaning: <https://www.fibl.org/de/shop/1656-absetzen-ferkel>
- Mother-bonded and Fostered Calf Rearing in Dairy Farming: <https://www.fibl.org/de/shop/1660-mother-bonded-calf-rearing>
- Regulation of endoparasites in laying hens (available in German and French): <https://www.fibl.org/de/shop/4131-endoparasiten-legehennen>



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