



# Organic Knowledge Network on Monogastric Animal Feed OK-Net EcoFeed

## News stories 3<sup>rd</sup> project year

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## Document Versions

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## Executive summary

The Deliverable D3.5 “News stories 3rd project year” is part of the Horizon 2020 project - OK-Net EcoFeed, Work Package 3 – Coordination of innovation and thematic groups, lead by the Organic Research Centre (ORC). The Deliverable D3.5 reports about key dissemination activities that aim to maximise the uptake of the OK-Net EcoFeed project outcomes at regional and national levels.

The overall aim of OK-Net EcoFeed (Organic Knowledge Network on Monogastric Animal Feed) is to help farmers, breeders and the organic feed processing industry in achieving the goal of 100% use of organic and regional feed for monogastrics, in particular pigs, broilers, laying hens and parents of broilers and laying hens. Within this context, the aim of WP3 is to establish and maintain an environment of exchange/cocreation of knowledge among farmers, business actors, researchers and advisers as a common ground to identify needs, assess new tools and innovations and facilitate exchange. As part of WP3, IFOAM Organics Europe has provided 2 “new stories” per project year, based on the inputs of WP leaders. The Innovation Groups in the project have translated the stories and disseminated them through the most appropriate channels. The present Deliverable D3.5 “News stories 3rd project year” reports of the dissemination activities carried out over the course of the third project year and it is developed by IFOAM Organics Europe.

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## I. Introduction

The OK-Net-EcoFeed projects aims at the 100% use of organic and regional feed in organic monogastric production. Since the start of project in 2018, the OK-Net-EcoFeed partners and the members of the Innovation Groups (IG) have been working hard for this. The present report is the deliverable D3.5 “News stories 3rd project year” about the promotion and dissemination activities of the project outcomes, as carried out in task 3.4. During the third and final year of the project, IFOAM Organics Europe produced several articles that were promoted at regional and national levels. IFOAM Organics Europe has published 7 articles on the [IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter](#) and [OK-Net EcoFeed website](#) to disseminate the review of the [OK-Net EcoFeed thematic group meeting](#), the announce the start of the final year of the project and to promote the OK-Net EcoFeed international final conference “Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production”.

## II. The Organics Farm Knowledge Platform

The [Organic Farm Knowledge](#) (OFK) hosts a wide range of practical knowledge and tools for organic farmers and advisers that help improve farming practices. It also aims to serve as a virtual meeting place for cross-border learning, promoting the exchange of knowledge among farmers, farm advisers, and scientists to increase productivity and quality in organic farming across Europe.

Originally set up by ICROFS (International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems) in the framework of the OK-Net Arable project, Organic Farm Knowledge is currently being developed further by the project OK-Net EcoFeed under the responsibility of FiBL (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture) and IFOAM organics Europe.

During the course of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final OK-Net EcoFeed project year, the OFK was promoted by IFOAM Organics Europe within the EIP-AGRI services network (see deliverable D1.9), the OK-Net EcoFeed website and [IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter](#) and by the OK-Net EcoFeed [project partner Soil association](#). Below are the full news items published in the several channels.

### II.1 Full article in IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter October 2020: The Organic Farm Knowledge platform: a unique resource for the organic sector

The [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#) stimulates the exchange of knowledge among organic farmers, farm advisers and scientists. It provides and promote a wide range of tools and resources with the aim to enhance productivity and quality in organic farming across Europe. The platform covers a variety of themes spanning from crop production to animal husbandry, seeds and breeding. New tools such as practice abstracts, videos and online courses are regularly created and disseminated via the Organic Farm Knowledge newsletter and social media. Check out the latest tools on the platform provided by the OK-Net EcoFeed project: “[Guide for assessing the protein quality in soya feed products](#)” and the video “[Feeding organic laying hens with insects](#)” and do not hesitate to leave your comments. To further facilitate the practical knowledge exchange among organics interested parties, the Organic Farm Knowledge platform together with OK-Net EcoFeed are currently compiling a list of specialized organic advisory or related services. The [list of Advisory Services on Organic Farm Knowledge](#) is regularly updated. Additions should be sent to [Dr. Helga Willer](#). [Subscribe](#) to the newsletter to receive periodic updates via email, and do not forget to follow the Organic Farm knowledge platform on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the news and events.

## II.2 Full article in OK-Net EcoFeed website and on [IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter](#) May and June 2020: Organic Farm Knowledge survey launched!!!

Share your views about [Organic Farm Knowledge!](#)

Do you know the online platform Organic Farm Knowledge? We would like to hear from you what you think about it! Your input and suggestions are invaluable when it comes to improving the platform.

Organic Farm Knowledge hosts a wide range of practical knowledge and tools for organic farmers and advisers that help improve farming practices. It also aims to serve as a virtual meeting place for cross-border learning, promoting the exchange of knowledge among farmers, farm advisers, and scientists to increase productivity and quality in organic farming across Europe.

Originally set up by ICROFS (International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems) in the framework of the OK-Net Arable project, Organic Farm Knowledge is currently being developed further by the project OK-Net EcoFeed. Both projects are coordinated by IFOAM EU and are funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. The third core partner of the Organic Farm Knowledge platform is FiBL (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture).

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey, and share the link widely with your networks. Deadline is 10 July. Your feedback will help us to improve the platform's user-friendliness and usefulness for end users and to turn it into a unique hub for knowledge about organic farming in Europe.

The survey is available in the following languages:

English (EN)

Bulgarian (BG)

Danish (DK)

Dutch (NL)

Estonian (ET)

French (FR)

German (DE)

Hungarian (HU)

Italian (IT)

Spanish (ES)

If you want to test the platform before responding to the survey, a guidance is provided here.

For more info please contact: [organic-farmknowledge@fibl.org](mailto:organic-farmknowledge@fibl.org)

### **III. OK-Net EcoFeed thematic group meeting, May 2020, online: More than 100 tuned in to the online OK-Net EcoFeed Thematic Group meeting!**

After the cancellation of the physical Thematic Group Meeting in Denmark, the OK-Net EcoFeed thematic group meeting was held online on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2020. The event brought together members of the Innovation Groups involved in the OK-Net EcoFeed project and it gave the opportunity to share and discuss about practical experiences. Moreover, the participation was extended to interested Operational Groups and other external networks to facilitate the exchange of knowledge beyond the OK-Net EcoFeed project. More than 100 registrations were recorded with an average of 75 attendants during the whole meeting. A review article about the event was published on [the IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter](#) as well as on the [project website](#). The full review article can be found in the following subchapter.

#### **III.1 More than 100 tuned in to online OK-Net EcoFeed Thematic Group meeting! 26 May 2020, online**

On Tuesday 26 May 2020, the Thematic Group meeting brought Innovation Groups involved in the OK-Net EcoFeed project together with external interested operational groups. During the webinar, practical experience carried out within the OK-Net EcoFeed project were presented and supported by videos and presentations to convey the OK-Net EcoFeed's knowledge and feed the discussion. All attendees participated with great enthusiasm, animating the debate on achieving 100% organic and regional feed for pigs and poultry. Chairman Bram Moeskops presided over the meeting that was organised in cooperation with [EURAKNOS](#). Participants discussed the new business area "Green protein" as a cost efficient and climate friendly system. Erik Fog and Kristian Lundgaard-Karlshøj from Denmark talked about their success on "[Grass Protein – local and climate friendly](#)" and "[Green protein for pigs and poultry](#)" respectively. Lindsay Whistance from the Organic Research Centre (ORC) moderated the session on the OK-Net EcoFeed practical experience in laying hens, broilers, and pigs. Mike Mallett and Jerry Alford from the Soil Association talked about the feed potential of sprouted seeds in laying hens. Lone and Lars Hedegaard and Sanna Steinfeldt (Aarhus University) explained how lactic acid bacteria might influence intestinal health in broilers while Carl Sheard with Antoine Roinsard from the French research institute of organic farming (ITAB) showed the latest results on foraging pigs on protein-rich fodder. Concluding the meeting, Helga Willer (FiBL) introduced the [Organic Farm Knowledge \(OFK\) platform](#) and announced the launch of the OFK survey. Positive feedbacks on the webinar brought up the potential and added value of online meetings. Despite the general lack of familiarity with the virtual meeting tools, a webinar is a perfect opportunity to reach a greater number of attendees, including the otherwise reluctant part of the public.

For further updates and links to the videos visit the OK-Net EcoFeed website.

## IV. OK-Net EcoFeed final project year update, June 2020

IFOAM Organics Europe has announced the final project year publishing a news [item on the EIP-AGRI newsletter in June 2020](#) (see linked deliverable D1.9) as well as publishing an article on the [OK-Net EcoFeed project website](#). The article covers the main challenges tackled by the OK-Net EcoFeed project and includes statements from the project coordinator Bram Moeskops (IFOAM Organics Europe) and Lindsay Whistance (ORC) coordinator and leader of the OK-Net EcoFeed thematic group network.

### IV.1 Full article: Final project year for OK-Net EcoFeed: 100% use of organic and regional feed for organic pig and poultry farmers

Since the start of the project in 2018, OK-Net EcoFeed has been helping organic pig and poultry farmers to achieve the goal of 100% use of organic and regional feed.

A key objective of organic farming is that animals are fed with feed produced on or near the farm. Yet, this is difficult to achieve in large parts of Europe. Organic feed and livestock production are concentrated in different regions. Animal feed has to be imported from regions where the animals are raised, and they can be at quite a distance. The problem is most challenging for protein feed, and organic protein is sometimes not available at all.

Bram Moeskops, OK-Net EcoFeed project coordinator said: “Increasing the availability of organic and regional feed will further improve the sustainability of organic agriculture. For the past 2 years OK-Net EcoFeed has worked with farmers, breeders and the organic feed industry to make practical solutions available to improve the use of organic and regional feed.”

Lindsay Whistance, Senior Livestock Researcher at the Organic Research Centre said: “The OK-Net EcoFeed project is highly participatory, engaging pig and poultry farmers as well as other important stakeholders across Europe in research and problem solving. Innovation Groups are currently running trials that best fit with their regional potential and opportunities”.

Among the outcomes of OK-Net EcoFeed are the [OK-Net EcoFeed Knowledge Synthesis](#), which describes innovative resources of protein feed for organic monogastric animals (pigs, layers and broilers) and several videos showing the experiments carried out by the OK-Net EcoFeed Innovation Groups. All the videos including “[Feeding Insects for Organic Layers](#)”, “[Organic Poultry production in Denmark](#)” and others are available on the [OK-Net EcoFeed website](#).

The knowledge collected by OK-Net EcoFeed, including practice abstracts and videos, is available on the [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#). Organic Farm Knowledge hosts a wide range of tools and resources for farmers and farm advisors. The platform also serves as a virtual meeting place for cross-border and peer-to-peer learning. It provides ‘ready-to-use’ knowledge that can help improve production methods in organic farming. More than 200 tools are available in 13 European languages.

Visit the [OK-Net EcoFeed website](#) for the latest project updates.

OK-Net EcoFeed is coordinated by IFOAM EU and involves 19 partners from 11 countries throughout Europe. The project is financed by Horizon 2020.

The partners of OK-Net EcoFeed are:

- IFOAM EU (Belgium)
- ICROFS (Denmark)
- FiBL (Switzerland)
- Organic Research Centre (UK)
- The Soil Association (UK)
- ITAB (France)
- IFIP (France)
- CRAPL (France)
- ITAVI (France)
- FNAB (France)
- Bioland & Bioland Beratung (Germany)
- AIAB (Italy)
- SLU (Sweden)
- Danube Soya Austria & Danube Soya Serbia, Ecovalia (Spain)
- Universidad de Córdoba (Spain)
- CIHEAM Bari (Italy)

## **V. OK-Net EcoFeed final conference, joint effort with PPILOW, FreeBirds and POWER projects**

For its final project conference [OK-Net EcoFeed](#) joined effort with the Horizon 2020 and Core organics projects: [PPILOW](#), [Freebirds](#) and [POWER](#). The conference “*Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production*” was held remotely on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2021. The event was announced on the [IFOAM Organics Europe news](#) and [OK-Net EcoFeed project website](#). The December 2020 news items include the [save-the-date](#), [article](#) and [press release](#). The online event will also hosted a policy debate targeting a wide range of audience including policymakers, farmers and animal welfare associations, processors, feed companies and retailers. Discussions deepened and consolidated the importance of organics within the feed sustainability and animal welfare concept.

### **V.1 Full article in OK-Net EcoFeed website: Save the date for ‘Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production’, an online conference – 25-26 January 2021**

It is with great excitement that [OK-Net EcoFeed](#) announces its final project conference bringing together four research projects: OK-Net EcoFeed, [PPILOW](#), [Freebirds](#) and [POWER](#). Mark 25-26 January 2021 in your calendar and join the projects for ‘Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production’ from the comfort of your (home) office.

Production systems with monogastric animals rely mainly on high quality feeds from external sources that compete with food for human consumption. Also, in organic farming, monogastric systems tend to be highly specialised and decoupled from other areas of farming. The challenge is to design systems which



overcome the contradiction between animal welfare and “naturalness” on one hand and feed and resource efficiency on the other.

Within such context, ‘Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production’ is a perfect opportunity to share the unique knowledge acquired during our projects and foster the transition towards more sustainable organic production systems. Themes include: ration-planning tools, sustainable and regional feeding for pigs and poultry, welfare self-assessment tools and the further development of the [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#).



To conclude the three-year project, OK-Net EcoFeed joins forces with the multi-actor project PPILOW and the CORE Organic Co-fund projects FreeBirds and POWER. Information about the projects can be found [here](#). Discussions are expected to deepen and consolidate the importance of organics within the feed sustainability and

animal welfare concept.

Stay up-to-date by visiting the OK-Net Ecofeed project on [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#).

## V.2 Full article in OK-Net EcoFeed website: Registrations are now open! Online conference: “Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production” 25-26 January 2021

Four research projects: OK-Net EcoFeed, [PPILOW](#), [Freebirds](#) and [POWER](#) will meet to discuss the transition towards more sustainable organic production systems.

The event will also host a policy debate targeting a wide range of audience including policy makers, farmer and animal welfare associations, processors, feed companies and retailers to deepen and consolidate the importance of organics within the feed sustainability and animal welfare concept.

Please notice that the number of participants is limited. Register now following this [link](#) to secure your pass. Full agenda [here](#).

### **V.3 PRESS RELEASE in OK-Net EcoFeed website: Solutions for sustainable feeding and animal welfare in organic farming – Research projects contribute**

25-26 January 2021, online conference – Organic farmers strive to feed their animals with feed produced at or near the farm while ensuring animal well-being. In a joint conference, four research projects, OK-Net EcoFeed, [PPILOW](#), [Freebirds](#) and [POWER](#), presented solutions helping farms to implement these objectives in practice.

Bram Moeskops, IFOAM Organics Europe, coordinator of OK-Net EcoFeed said “Adopting a multi-actor approach, all four projects worked with farmers, advisers and researchers to improve animal welfare, identify sustainable feed sources and improve ration-planning for organic pigs and poultry.” Anne Collin, INRAE, coordinator of PPILOW explained that PPILOW “Evaluates animal welfare according to the One Welfare concept.” Anne elaborated “This concept considers animal welfare, economic, environmental, and social impacts including human well-being. The one welfare concept recognises that animal welfare, biodiversity and the environment are interconnected.”

Stefan Gunnarsson, SLU, coordinator of FreeBirds added that “Keeping layers and broiler chickens outdoor promotes bird welfare and health. Yet, outdoor production comes with challenges such as sanitary threats or predator pressure. Researchers and practitioners need to work together to find solutions.”

Anne Grete Kongsted, Aarhus University, coordinator of POWER elaborated that the POWER project is looking for solutions in pig production: “We look for practical solutions in the most prevalent organic pig production systems and we evaluate new practices developed by creative farmers across Europe.”

The conference showed access to knowledge is crucial for farmers wanting to improve their practices. That is why [Organic Farm Knowledge](#) was created. This online platform hosts a wide range of tools and resources, including almost 100 tools in the theme animal husbandry. [The ration-planning tool](#) developed within the OK-Net EcoFeed project is an example of such a tool. It allows calculating a balanced ration based on the composition of organic feedstuffs and the nutritional needs of slow-growing breeds.

More information: Bram Moeskops, Research & Innovation Manager, IFOAM Organics Europe, +32 (0)2 416 27 61, [bram.moeskops@organicseurope.bio](mailto:bram.moeskops@organicseurope.bio) or visit [www.organicseurope.bio](http://www.organicseurope.bio)

## **VI. Conclusions**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and final year of the OK-Net EcoFeed project has been extremely prolific in terms of dissemination and exploitation of the project outcomes. The DoA states that IFOAM Organics Europe must published 2 news stories per project year based on the input of project partners. The 8 news stories mentioned in the present report are a reflection of the strong dissemination activities and dedication of the OK-Net EcoFeed consortium in achieving the goal of the 100% use of regional and organic feed in pig and poultry. Despite the end of the project, the dissemination of the project results will continue thanks to the continuations of the OFK and the network and collaboration established among the partners consortium.

### D.3.5 – News stories 3rd project year

Table 1 Summary of the news stories relative to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of OK-Net EcoFeed project.

No.	Item	Channel and related link	Date
1	The Organic Farm Knowledge platform: a unique resource for the organic sector	<a href="#">IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter</a>	06/10/2020
2 <sup>a</sup>	Organic Farm Knowledge survey launched!!!	<a href="#">IFOAM Organics Europe news</a>	08/06/2020
2	Organic Farm Knowledge survey launched!!!	<a href="#">OK-Net EcoFeed website</a>	09/06/2020
2 <sup>b</sup>	EcoFeed: working towards sustainably sourced feed	<a href="#">Soil association partner' megazine</a>	12/10/2020
3	More than 100 tuned in to the online OK-Net EcoFeed Thematic Group meeting!	<a href="#">IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter</a>	10/07/2020
		<a href="#">OK-Net EcoFeed website</a>	June 2020
4	Final project year for OK-Net EcoFeed: 100% use of organic and regional feed for organic pig and poultry farmers	<a href="#">OK-Net EcoFeed Website</a>	
5	Save the date for 'Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production', an online conference – 25-26 January 2021	<a href="#">OK-Net EcoFeed website</a>	22/10/2020
5 <sup>a</sup>	Conference "Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production", Register now! 25-26 January 2021, online	<a href="#">IFOAM Organics Europe news</a>	11/01/2021
6	Registrations are now open! Online conference: "Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production" 25-26 January 2021	<a href="#">OK-Net EcoFeed website</a>	07/12/2020
7	Press release: Solutions for sustainable feeding and animal welfare in organic farming – Research projects contribute	<a href="#">OK-Net EcoFeed website</a>	26/01/2021
2 <sup>a</sup> News item; 2 <sup>b</sup> Published by OK-Net EcoFeed partner SA; 5 <sup>a</sup> News item			