

## Feed additives in organic farming

The use of feed additives in organic farming encourages innovative and more efficient production techniques, while remaining in line with organic principles. The lists of substances which can be used in EU organic farming is included in the Annexes of Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products (as amended). Feed additives should maintain animal health, welfare and vitality and/or contribute to an appropriate balanced diet to enable the fulfilment, and/or physiological and behavioural needs of the animals to be considered for organic production. Adjustments to the list of feed additives used in animal nutrition (ANNEX VI) are carried out in line with the principles and objectives of organic production and based on the recommendations of the Expert Group on Organic Production (EGTOP). Feed shall have already been authorised in the European Community under Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 (as amended). Official updates to ANNEX VI come after discussion and widespread support from Member States at the Regulatory Committee on Organic Production. Other additives would be considered for use in organic farming where it would be impossible to produce and/or preserve feed without recourse to them. These are areas where more guidance or harmonised enforcement is difficult because sufficient information is not available. This situation creates uncertainty for operators, control authorities and control bodies. It may also result in a different treatment of operators across the Union and in non-EU countries. This is why FEFANA started an exercise aiming at investigating the possibility of highlighting feed additives compatible with the organic regulation directly in the Community register of feed additives.

### 1. Organic farming in Europe

According to Eurostat data, during the last decade, the organic area in the EU increased by about 500 000 hectares per year. Data shows that permanent pasture represents the biggest share of the organic area (58%), followed by cereals (20%) and permanent crops (15%). Sheep (42%) and cattle (34%) are the most important types of organic animal production at European level, after poultry. However, other types of animal production should be mentioned in the *EU 28*, such as pigs, which registered 9%, and goats, which were at 7% of organic livestock in European Union in 2015<sup>1</sup>.



### 2. The EU organic farming legislative framework

The EU organic farming legislation defines the control and labelling requirements thereby providing a legal basis for supply chain activities. The regulatory framework follows the general structure of EU legislation with Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 for basic issues, and the Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 and 1235/2008 for implementing rules. The legislation provides a legal definition of organic farming and formulates certain objectives with respect to environmental protection, the preservation of natural resources (including biodiversity), application of high animal welfare standards and production methods based on natural substances and processes.

The Commission made a proposal for a revision of the political and legislative framework on organic production

and labelling of organic products in March 2014. The final round of negotiation, under the Maltese Presidency of the Council (trilogues with the EU Parliament and the Commission), was held on June 2017 and an agreement on a proposal was finally reached. On 22 May 2018 the Council adopted new EU rules. The new regulation will apply from 1 January 2021.

### 3. FEFANA activity

Through the years, FEFANA has continually monitored all relevant EU debates. Ad-hoc meetings have been carried out with authorities and inputs have been provided directly (e.g. on alignment with SFIs legislation). Via their specific taskforces first, and Expert Group after, FEFANA experts:

- Contributed to the development of the template documents relevant to introduce an application for inclusion in the positive list of additives suitable for organic production<sup>2</sup>;
- Established a constructive “communication line” with the relevant EU institutions and stakeholders.

### 4. What's next?

The EU Commission is also continually working on updating the implementing regulations. Simultaneously, FEFANA has started an exercise aiming at investigating the possibility of highlighting feed additives compatible with the organic regulation in the Community register of feed additives. Goal of FEFANA is to provide business operators with a reliable and user-friendly tool where relevant information on products suitable for organic production can be at users' disposal. The greater part of this activity should take place in 2018.

<sup>1</sup> Facts and figures on organic agriculture in the European Union: [https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/sites/orgfarming/files/docs/pages/014\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/sites/orgfarming/files/docs/pages/014_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Dossier templates: [https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/eu-policy/expert-advice/documents/dossier-templates\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/eu-policy/expert-advice/documents/dossier-templates_en)