

What is agroecology?  
What is organic agriculture?

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Agroecology and short supply chains, 25/03/2019, EESC



# Definition Organic Agriculture (IFOAM, 2015)

Organic Agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people.

It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects.

Organic Agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved.

# Principles of organic agriculture

## PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE



The Principle  
of **Health**.



The Principle  
of **Ecology**.



The Principle  
of **Fairness**.



The Principle  
of **Care**.

These principles are the roots from which Organic Agriculture grows and develops. They express the contribution that Organic Agriculture can make to the world. Composed as inter-connected ethical principles to inspire the organic movement -- in its full diversity, they guide our development of positions, programs and standards.

# Definition agroecology

- FAO: “Agroecology is based on applying ecological concepts and principles to optimize interactions between plants, animals, humans and the environment while taking into consideration the social aspects that need to be addressed for a sustainable and fair food system.”
- Nyéléni declaration (2015): agroecology is also political, not a narrow set of technologies, strong warning against co-optation by governments, and multilateral institutions
- IPES-Food (2018): “Agroecology is the application of the science of ecology [...] to the study, design, and management of sustainable food systems, the integration of the diverse knowledge systems generated by food system practitioners, and the involvement of the social movements that are promoting the transition to fair, just, and sovereign food systems.”





# Organic agriculture and agroecology

## Common principles

- Strong focus on dependency and interaction of environment, plant, animals and humans
- Application of ecological concepts in farming
- Integration of different knowledge systems
- Fair relationships and food systems
- Engagement with social movements

# The organic standard: a benefit and a burden

- Organic standards protect organic farmers: common basis for trade, protection against fraud, some internalisation of external costs and public benefits
- Standards protect the consumers: trust on the market and guarantees for consumers
- Standards provide official recognition: the possibility for public support
- **But**
- Standards focus on aspects which are easy to control (inputs and thresholds), while organic is not just about “pesticides-free”
- Standards are set by public authorities that do not necessarily share the values of the organic movement
- Organic movement has limited influence on organic standards
- Not all aspects can – or even should – be regulated
- Organic standard implements only some part of what we believe organic is





# Agroecology at the heart of organic farming practices

- Organic farming should not be judged on the EU organic regulation
- Organic farming is about permanent experiment and progress in the design of agroecosystems and implementation of agroecology
- Not all organic farms practice agroecology, but in Europe most agroecology practitioners are organic farmers in the first place, or apply practices that are common in organic farming even when they are not certified
- In European context, organic farmers are to large extent forerunners and a substantial part of the agroecological movement

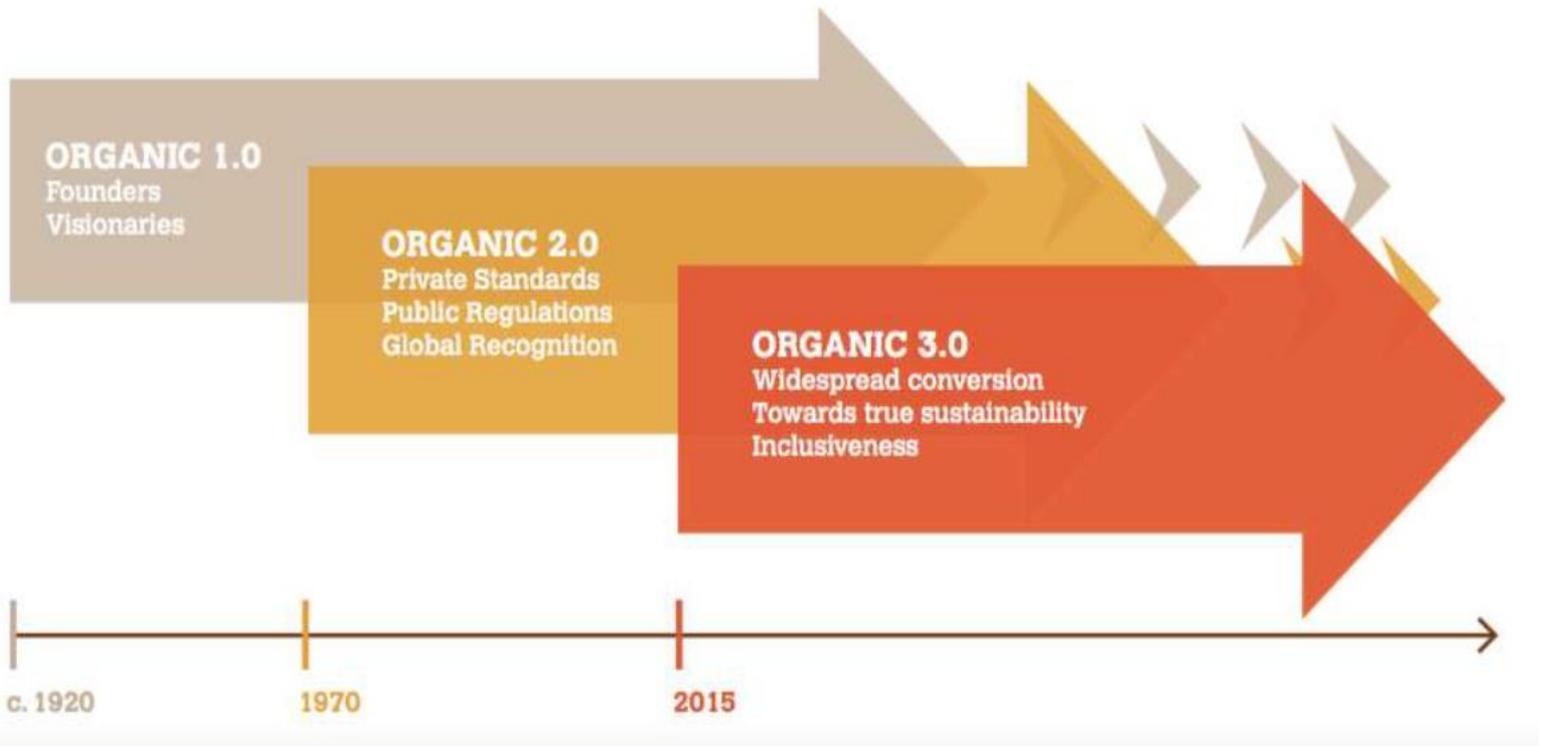


# Future of organic?

- Organic market is growing fast
- From a niche to mainstream
- From value driven to economy driven?

# Organic 3.0

FIGURE 1 | Widespread Conversion Development Towards True Sustainability Inclusiveness



# Organic 3.0

The overall goal of **Organic 3.0** is to enable a widespread uptake of truly sustainable farming systems and markets based on organic principles and imbued with a culture of innovation, of progressive improvement towards best practice, of transparent integrity, of inclusive collaboration, of holistic systems, and of true value pricing.

- #1 A culture of innovation
- #2 Continuous improvement towards best practice
- #3 Diverse ways to ensure transparent integrity
- #4 Inclusive of wider sustainability interests
- #5 Holistic empowerment from farm to final consumer
- #6 True value and cost accounting



# Transforming food and farming



# TRANSFORMING FOOD & FARMING

## VISION 2030 – Key messages

**FOOD AND FARMING SYSTEMS ARE FAIR, ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS,  
HEALTHY AND CARING ACROSS EUROPE AND THE WORLD**

### **ORGANIC ON EVERY TABLE**

- Policy makers & citizens widely recognize the contributions of organic farming and promote it
- Citizens continue to choose organic food and have easy access to it
- Organic and agroecological practices are employed on more than half of EU farmlands

### **IMPROVE INSPIRE DELIVER**

- Organic food & farming systems are resilient, continuously improve & inspire change
- A shift in how we teach & learn reconnects society with food & farming
- Organic contributes to delivering healthy & sustainable diets

### **FAIR PLAY – FAIR PAY**

- Farmers and workers are fairly paid: value and power are fairly distributed across the system
- New business models and communication channels foster trust between all actors
- The environmental, social, and public health costs of farming are reflected in the payments to producers and in the cost of food



# Conclusions

- Organic farming and agroecology share common values, principles, practices and objectives
- They should not be opposed, and should reinforce each other
- Organic farming may be the best chance for further development of agroecology in Europe
- Agroecology offers inspiration for the organic movement to remain in control of its development, in line with its principles



**Thank you for your attention**

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