

# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



## Report on the Status of Organic Agriculture and Industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Gefördert durch



aufgrund eines Beschlusses  
des Deutschen Bundestages

# Imprint

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## Disclaimer

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This report has been prepared to the best of our knowledge and belief. We cannot however accept any guarantee for the accuracy, correctness or completeness of the information and data provided.

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# Facts and Figures

## Map



Figure 1: Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina with entities and district

# Country Information

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**51,209.2** km<sup>2</sup>

Surface

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**1,163** millions<sup>1</sup>

Number of employees (2022)

---

**5,724**EUR

GDP per capita (2021)

---

**Bosnian, Serbian & Croatian**

Official languages

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**Convertible mark** BAM

Official currency

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**3.53** million

Population in BiH (2013)

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**14.8** %<sup>2</sup>

Unemployment rate (2022)

---

**7.05** %

Percentage participation of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in GVA (2020)

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**Latin and Cyrillic**

Official scripts

---

**Sarajevo**

Capital

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# Geographic Position and Basic Information

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Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country in Southeast Europe, located in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula. It is surrounded by three neighboring countries – the Republic of Croatia to the north, west and south, the Republic of Serbia to the east and the Republic of Montenegro to the southeast. The borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina are mostly of natural origin and mostly consist of the rivers Drina, Sava and Una, and mountains such as Dinara in the southwest. Bosnia and Herzegovina has one of the shortest sea coasts in the world. Namely, in the extreme south, it opens to the Adriatic Sea, with a length of 21 km. The characteristic shape of the state territory on the geographical map is most often identified with a right-angled triangle of equal sides, whose hypotenuse has a northwest-southeast direction. This motif was transferred to the national flag.

**The administrative and political constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)** is very complex and it includes the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina into two entities (one of which is further divided into cantons): the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and the Republika Srpska (RS) and into one District: Brčko District of BiH (BD BiH). The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of 10 cantons, and the cantons consist of municipalities and cities. The Republika Srpska is administratively divided into municipalities and cities. Brčko District is a special administrative unit.

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1 [https://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Saopštenja/2022/LAB\\_00\\_2022\\_Q3\\_1\\_BS.pdf](https://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Saopštenja/2022/LAB_00_2022_Q3_1_BS.pdf) (20.12.2022)

2 See *ibid.*

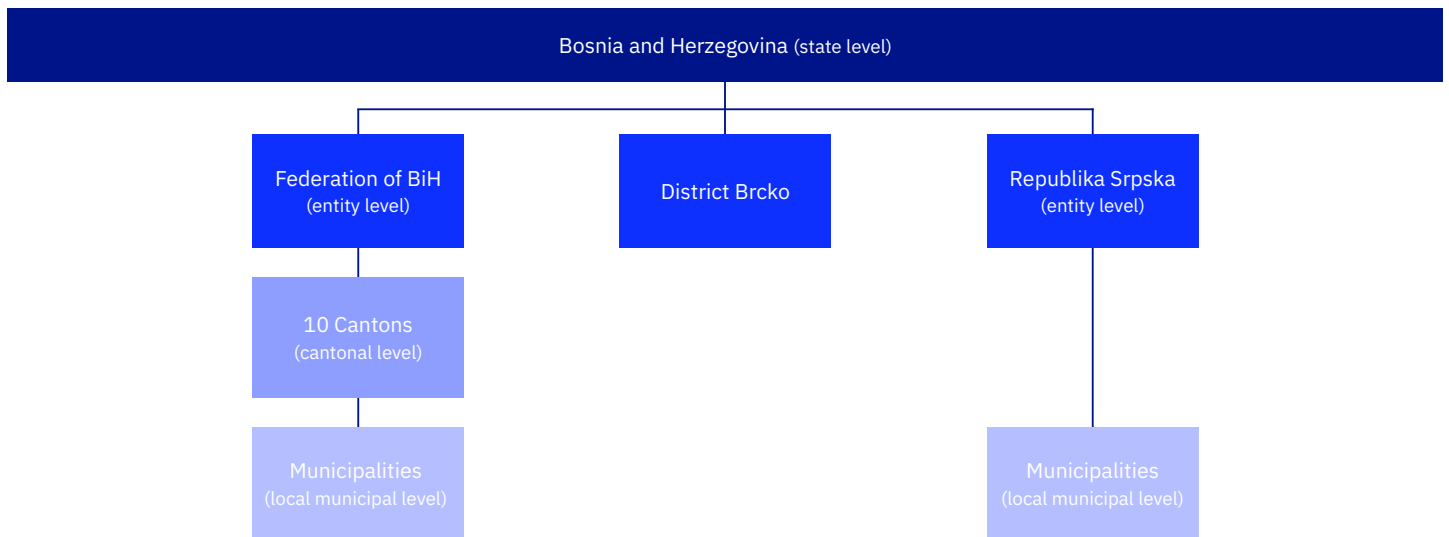


Figure 2: Administrative structure of BiH

## The Climate and Soil

The geographical latitude (42° to 46° north latitude) has positioned Bosnia and Herzegovina between the northern subtropical and northern temperate climate zones, in such a way that the former belongs to approximately one-third, and the latter to two-thirds of the country's territory. The most important modifier of climatic conditions is the relief that contributes the most to the diversification of the climate in this area. Thus, on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, three basic climate types can be distinguished. The most widespread is a moderately warm and humid climate, which covers the northern part of the country, penetrating the river valleys deeper into the interior. In this area, the climate is often called temperate continental. The lowland part of Herzegovina is domin-

ated by the Mediterranean climate, which is characterized by dry summers and rainy and mild winters. At higher altitudes (approx. above 900 meters), the boreal or mountain type of climate dominates, characterized by very cold winters and mostly cool summers.

Among the significant causes of insufficient production of basic agricultural products in BiH is the insufficient and inadequate use of agricultural land. According to statistical sources, there are 2.2 million ha of agricultural land in BiH, of which 1.6 million ha are arable land, and 600 thousand ha are pastures. According to BiH MAC<sup>3</sup> data for 2020, the total mine-suspected area in BiH includes 956.36 km<sup>2</sup> (1.96 % in relation to the total area in BiH).

## Agriculture

Agriculture and the food industry are important economic branches of the economy of BiH, its entities and the Brčko District of BiH, from the point of view of their contribution to the economy, total employment and socio-economic development.

Long-term trends indicate a decrease in the number of inhabitants engaged in agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to labour force surveys, employ-

ment in the agricultural sector was 7.5 % at the end of 2022. In BiH, 87 thousand inhabitants are engaged in agricultural production, full or part-time.

3 Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Center (↪)

Domestic sectors with the best available and productive natural resources are fruits and vegetables, livestock and poultry. The biggest crop is corn, followed by wheat and potatoes. Farms are mostly small and inefficient, and the

country remains a net importer of food. The primary imported food products are cereals and cereal products, beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic), and meat and milk products.

**Structure of arable land in BiH, entities, BD<sup>4</sup> (ha)**

| Administrative unit | Agricultural area | Arable surfaces (ha) |                         |          |           |         | Pastures | Ponds, reeds and ponds |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|----------|------------------------|
|                     |                   | Total                | Arable land and gardens | Orchards | Vineyards | Meadows |          |                        |
| BiH                 | 2.200             | 1.598                | 1.035                   | 101      | 5         | 457     | 599      | 3                      |
| Federation of BiH   | 1.181             | 747                  | 428                     | 45       | 5         | 269     | 432      | 2                      |
| Republika Srpska    | 983               | 816                  | 577                     | 52       | 0         | 187     | 166      | 1                      |
| Brčko District      | 36                | 35                   | 30                      | 4        | 0         | 1       | 1        | 0                      |

Figure 3

**Export and Import – Foreign trade with the EU (2021 | thousands of EUR )**

|   | Export    | Import     |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Total exports and imports   | 7.297.939 | 11.042.320 |
| Export and import in the field of agriculture, forestry and fishing | 132.510   | 426.120    |
| Export and import of BiH to/from EU countries                       | 5.314.685 | 6.509.207  |
| Export and import of BiH to/from Germany                            | 1.092.925 | 1.312.304  |

Figure 4: Level of export and import<sup>5</sup>

**Export B&H per main trade partners<sup>5</sup> (2021 | %)**

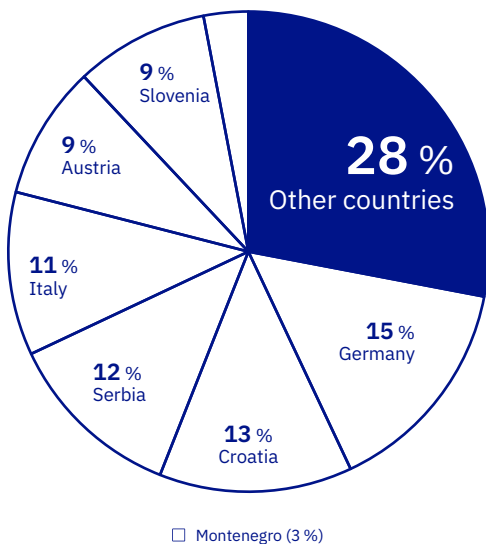


Figure 5

**Import B&H per main trade partners<sup>5</sup> (2021 | %)**

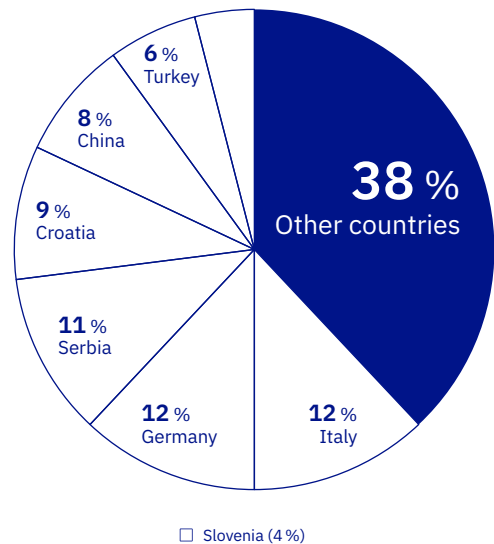


Figure 6

4 FBiH: Federal Bureau of Statistics, RS: Statistical Yearbook of RS, BD: BiH Statistics Agency

5 See (↪)

# The Organic Sector

Bosnia and Herzegovina with available areas of arable land can become a significant producer and exporter of organic food. Uncultivated areas and unpolluted expanses of natural pastures and forests in BiH create excellent preconditions for the development of this type of agricultural production. Therefore, organic production can be a great development opportunity for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Organic agriculture is such a production system that maintains the health of the soil, ecosystem and people. It is based on ecological processes, biodiversity and production cycles that are adapted to local conditions, rather than on the use of inputs with unwanted effects. Organic agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science for the benefit of the common environment and promotes fair relations and a good quality of life for all those involved in it (IFOAM).

In accordance with the positive legal norms in Bosnia and Herzegovina, organic production is defined as the production of agricultural and other products using the methods (production rules) of organic production in all its stages, which include primary production, processing, storage, transportation and trade (including foreign trade), distribution of organic products, advertising, as well as marking or declaring. In the system of organic production, agricultural producers must apply relevant regulations, and their final product must be certified, i.e. get confirmation that it was produced in compliance with those regulations.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, organic agricultural production mainly develops in the plant sector, collection of medicinal plants, forest fruits and mushrooms, production of honey, and distillation of essential oils. Recently, organic animal production and processing of organic products have appeared to a lesser extent.

## Historical Overview of the Development of Organic Sector

The story of organic agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina begins in the mid-90s of the last century, with the connection of professional associations from different areas, institutions and non-governmental organizations with the intention of combining knowledge and will for the development of organic agriculture. Already at the first donor conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina, after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, which was held in Brussels in 1995, organic agriculture was recognized as a development opportunity for BiH. In that initial period of development of organic production, the local non-governmental sector, with the support of international projects, made many efforts to develop the organic sector from scratch (Nikolić 2006).

The initial steps in the creation of the organic movement are realized by the establishment of the association BETA (Bosnian Environmental Technologies Association) by a team of researchers from the Faculty of Agriculture in Sarajevo, which is involved in a series of activities aimed at promoting the principles and values of organic agriculture. In 2000, BETA joined the regional project for the promotion of organic production in the Balkan countries (Introduction and development of or-



ganic agriculture in SEE countries), which was initiated by the Dutch foundation Avalon in 1999.

In the period between 2001 and 2005, with the support of the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA), the organization GroLink from Sweden implemented the project for the development of organic agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Development of Organic Agriculture in Bosnia Herzegovina - BIHOP), which enables further progress in spreading the practice among producers, development of a certification body and regulatory framework, marketing assistance and development of public awareness of organic agriculture. Through this project and thanks to the activities of the association BETA and the organization ECON, in 2002, the first association of organic farmers was founded, which later, in 2009, grew into the Association of Associations of Organic Producers of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Interest in organic production is particularly expressed at the local level, as farmers have recognized the possibility of developing new and more competitive products. Along with the development of organic production, the awareness of its importance also grew. A significant event for the organic sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its international recognition is the First IFOAM Conference on Organic Wild Production, which took place in 2006 in Teslić. This conference, which brought together 160 experts from 37 countries, contributed to raising awareness and a better understanding of the collection and production of organic wild plants and fruits.

In 2022, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republika Srpska established the Department for Organic Production, and **Dragana Zec** was appointed as the head of this Department.

When it comes to the legal regulation of this area, the current Law on Organic Production in the Republika Srpska was adopted in 2013, and in FBiH in 2016.

## Legal Framework

Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have legal regulations on organic production at the state level. Jurisdictions in the agriculture sector belong to the entities and the Brčko District, so the legal regulation of this area is carried out at the entity level. In the earlier period, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MVTEO) launched an initiative to create a law on organic production at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but due to this competence belonging to the entities, this initiative was never implemented.

## Historical overview of the development of organic sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina

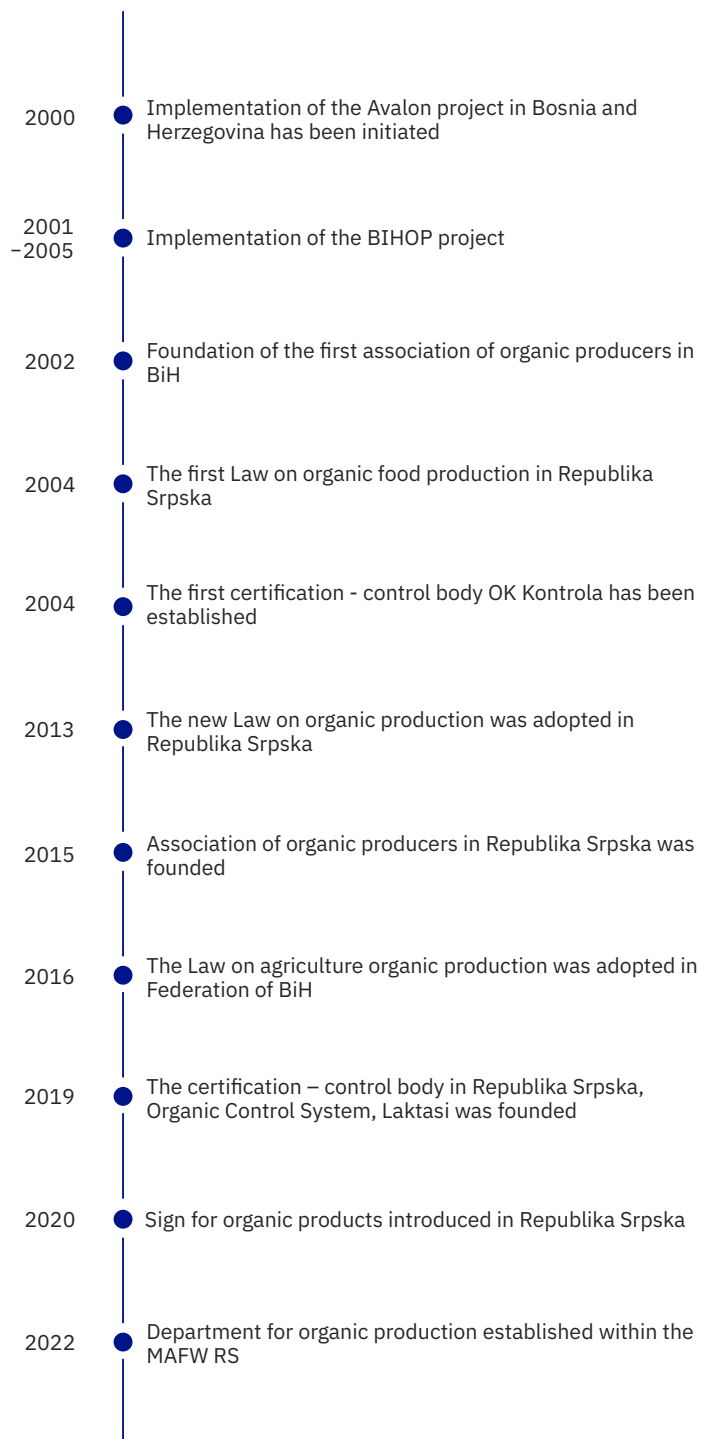


Figure 7

## Info

### Dragana Zec

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Bearing in mind that Bosnia and Herzegovina undertook the obligation to harmonize its legislation with the EU legislation on the basis of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) as well as the adoption of the Action Plan for the realization of priorities from the European Partnership, this obligation is currently being fulfilled through the harmonization of entity legislation with relevant EU regulations. In the rest of the text, we will refer to the review and status of organic regulation at the entity level of the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Brčko District has not developed and adopted regulations when it comes to organic production.

The first legal regulation of organic agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina was achieved in 2004 with the adoption of the Law on Organic Food Production in the **Republika Srpska** (Official Gazette of RS No. 75 / 04). The basis for the adoption of this law was EU Regulation No. 2092 / 91. Minor amendments to this law were adopted in 2009 and were published in the Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska No. 71 / 09. The by-laws that were passed on the basis of this law were insufficient and in practice, their implementation gave very modest results for the development of the organic sector in the Republika Srpska.

After the annulment of Regulation No. 2092 / 1 and the adoption of the new EU Council Regulation No. 834 / 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products, it was necessary, in order to further harmonize the system of organic production in the Republika Srpska, to adopt a new Law on Organic Production, which was adopted in 2013 (Official Gazette of RS No. 12 / 13). This Law as well as bylaws are harmonized with the relevant EU directives 834 / 2007, 178 / 2002, 882 / 2004, 889 / 2008, 1235 / 2008, 1169 / 2011 and 848 / 2020.

This law, which is still in force today, more clearly defines the goals, principles and rules of production in the cultivation of plants, animals, aquaculture and seaweed, as well as the rules for collecting wild plants and mushrooms, as well as the rules for the production of processed food, including wine and food for animals. The law defines control and certification in organic production, including procedures for issuing accreditation to control organizations that carry out control and certification tasks in organic production, as well as keeping records of these organizations, as well as the conditions for persons who carry out controls and the method of issuing certificates and keeping records that are obliged to run by control bodies. This law also regulates the processing, labelling, storage, transportation, traffic, import and export of organic products, as well as the obligations

of producers in organic production and their inclusion in organic production. The law enables certain flexibility in terms of changing production rules, in order to adapt organic standards to local climatic and geographical conditions. With the adoption of this Law in 2013, legal conditions were created for the sustainable development of organic production, while ensuring the efficient functioning of the market, protection of competition on the market, ensuring consumer confidence and protection of their interests.

This Law served as the basis for the adoption of a large number of by-laws in order to provide guidelines for its implementation and to legally regulate the following areas: methods of organic plant and livestock production and the conversion period (2015); technological procedures of processing in organic production (2016); conditions for the work of control organizations and the way of performing control in the process of organic production (2016); content, forms and method of keeping records in organic production (2016); conditions and method of storage, transportation and marketing of organic products (2018); procedure for issuing a certificate for imported organic products (2020) and labelling of organic products (2020).

It is a common phenomenon that products appear on the market that are presented as organic, but that do not have a certificate, therefore the adoption of the sign for organic products of the Republika Srpska makes it possible to remove these doubts and for organic products to be clearly recognized on the market. The domestic certified organic product is marked with the entity **symbol of Republika Srpska** and the code of the authorized control organization that carried out the control and certification of organic production.



Figure 8: The organic mark of Republika Srpska

Regarding the marking of organic products at points of sale, shops, whether wholesale or retail, where organic products are sold must have clearly marked places separated from other products. The same applies to markets where organic products must not be mixed with other, or conventional, products. In retail stores, it is necessary to prominently display a board, poster, or sticker with a mark marking an organic product.

The Republika Srpska and the Republic of Serbia have agreed on the mutual recognition of labels for organic products as valid labels on the markets of the Republika Srpska and Serbia.

The legislative framework in the **Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina** did not follow the development of organic agricultural production, and neither did the state of the market in terms of supply and demand for organic products. The first attempt to legally regulate organic production in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was in 2008 when the competent authorities in the FBiH initiated activities to adopt a legal framework for organic agriculture. In 2009, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry drafted the preliminary Draft Law on Organic Agriculture, and the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina approved the Draft Law in April 2009. The House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina concluded in the 6th month of 2009 that the draft of Law on Organic Agriculture in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina can serve as a basis for drafting the Bill Law. However, at the beginning of 2010, all activities on the adoption of the federal law on organic agriculture were suspended due to activities at the state level initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, with the aim of legal regulation of organic production at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since these activities failed to get the consent of all entity authorities, the legal regulation of this area continued to be implemented at the entity level.

In this context, and continuing the previously started activities, in 2016 the Law on Agricultural Organic Production of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was drafted, which was adopted by the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and published in the Official Gazette of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina No. 72 / 16. With the passing of this Law, the conditions have been created for organic production in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to gain a more significant position in the total agricultural production in this entity.

The regulation of the field of organic production was primarily aimed at ensuring the conditions for this

sector to develop in accordance with the changes that have taken place in agricultural policy and production and on the market, as well as fulfilling the long-standing demands of subjects engaged in organic production in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure that the legal framework in the field of agriculture is harmonized with EU legislation, i.e. to ensure that all entities that produce, prepare, import or place on the market of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina products that bear labels indicating that these products were produced in accordance with production rules for organic production are under regular inspection supervision, meet the minimum requirements of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and that they are supervised by a control body and/or by an authorized body. This legislative act became the basis for the protection of consumers and producers of organic products from incorrect and misleading claims when it comes to certain products that they are organic production and products originating from that production.

Legal provisions are applied to products of agricultural origin that come from all stages of organic plant and livestock production, including aquaculture, when these products are placed on the market or are intended to be placed on the market of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely:

- a) raw or unprocessed agricultural products;
- b) processed agricultural products intended to be used as food;
- c) aquaculture products;
- d) feed for animals;
- e) agricultural reproductive material and
- f) yeasts used as food or animal feed.

Legal provisions are applied to all entities registered to perform some of the activities related to organic products and which participate in activities at any stage of production, preparation and distribution in the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Products obtained by hunting wild animals and fishing in open waters are not considered products of organic production, and the preparation of food within the catering business in restaurants, hospitals, canteens and other similar places of sale or delivery of food to the end consumer is not subject to the provisions of this law.

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, certain by-laws regarding organic production have been adopted (Regulations for organic plant and livestock production, Official Gazette of FBiH No. 14 / 18), but not all other necessary by-laws for organic production have been adopted, which include: conditions for the work of

control organizations and the way of carrying out control in the process of organic production, the register and the way of keeping records in organic production and marking of organic products.

In 2018, the European Union adopted Regulation 2018 / 848 of the European Parliament and the Council on ecological production and labelling of ecological products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) no. 834 / 2007, which applies from January 1, 2022. The aim of adopting this new Regulation is to revise and strengthen EU rules on organic production and labelling of organic products in relation to the control system, trade regime and production rules. Bearing in mind these changes in the legal regulation of organic production in the EU, and in order to **harmonize domestic legislation with the legal framework of the EU**, in the coming period it will be necessary to harmonize the existing legal regulations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Certain activities in this direction are carried out by the Permanent Working Group for Regional Rural Development (SWG RRD) through the formation of the Working Group for Organic Agriculture and concrete activities to harmonize legal norms in the Balkans with European legislation in this area of organic agriculture.

## Support Measures

In the **Republika Srpska**, support for organic production by the public sector (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the RS) is regulated and provided every year through the Rulebook on conditions and methods of obtaining financial incentives for the development of agriculture and villages. Based on this Rulebook for the year 2022, it is prescribed that the minimum area for which the premium for organic plant production and production in the conversion period can be realized is 0.1 ha for fruit and vegetable crops, 100 m<sup>2</sup> for vegetable crops in a protected area and 0.25 ha for agricultural crops.

The amount of the premium for organic plant production and production in the conversion period for arable crops is 500 BAM / ha, for fruit and vegetable crops it is 600 BAM / ha, while for vegetable crops in a protected area it is 200 BAM per 100 m<sup>2</sup>.

As for premiums for organic livestock production, which includes organic beekeeping, the amount of the premium is up to 500 BAM per conditional head or 20 BAM per beehive. The maximum amount of premium that one user can receive in one year for this type of incentive is 40,000 BAM.

The **Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management** of the RS provides support for the certification



Figure 9: Organic vegetable produced in the greenhouses

of organic production in the amount of 50 % of the cost of the certificate, and a maximum of 10,000 BAM per user in the current year.

Investments in organic production (acquisition of machinery and devices, equipment for preparation, washing, polishing, cleaning, sorting, calibration, packaging and labelling of agricultural products, equipment for processing on the agricultural farm, procurement of greenhouses and irrigation) are subsidized up to a maximum amount of 5,000 BAM.

The total allocations for organic production through incentive measures by the Ministry have increased many times over the last few years, from 40,000 BAM, which was the amount of this support in 2018, to 500,000 BAM, which was allocated for organic production in 2021.

Regarding support for organic production, it is important to emphasize that certain local communities allocate certain funds for organic producers as part of their support measures for agricultural production.

The development of organic production in the **Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina** is still not sufficiently supported by the public sector at the entity, cantonal and local levels.

Based on the Program of financial support in agriculture and rural development for the year 2022, it is stipulated that under Support measures within the framework of the rural development model, support for the certification of organic production is provided for producers, processors or collectors registered in the Register of Clients, who possess a valid certificate according to the requirements of the "ISO / IEC 17065 : 2014" standard. Based on the allocation of funds for this measure, an allocation of 70,000 BAM is foreseen for 2022, and the basic amount of financial support is 75 % of the value of eligible costs, while one client can exercise the right to a maximum amount of financial support of up to 10,000 BAM.

It should be pointed out that certain cantons and local communities have support for part of the costs for certification. Also, through the implementation of certain projects, certain measures for organic production have support increased by 10 % compared to conventional agricultural production.

In the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 32 producers received an incentive for certification costs from the **Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry**, Sarajevo Canton and Zenica-Doboj Canton in 2021.

As for incentives on the territory of **Brčko District**, they are regulated by the Rulebook on the manner and conditions for incentives in agricultural production, which is adopted every year. Based on this Rulebook for 2022, support measures are shown in the table below. Unfortunately, in the last few years, there has not been a single request to exercise the right to incentive funds in Brčko District.

#### Support measures for organic production in District Brcko (2022 | BAM)

| Production                         | Min. unit of measure | Incentive amount (BAM/ units of measure) |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| <b>Plant production</b>            |                      |  |
| Arable crops                       | ha                   | 1000                                     |
| Planting material (except berries) | pc.                  | 2.0                                      |
| Planting material of berry fruit   | ha                   | 0.5                                      |
| Perennial plantations              | pc.                  | 1000                                     |
| <b>Livestock farming</b>           |                      |  |
| Calves for fattening               | pc.                  | 300                                      |
| Cattle fattening                   | pc.                  | 450                                      |
| Pig fattening                      | pc.                  | 100                                      |
| Fattening of lambs                 | pc.                  | 60                                       |
| Chicken fattening                  | pc.                  | 0.5                                      |
| Breeding cows                      | pc.                  | 600                                      |
| Cows in the cow-female calf system | pc.                  | 300                                      |
| Sheep, rams, goats and goats       | pc.                  | 80                                       |
| Female breeding rabbits            | pc.                  | 10                                       |
| Turkey fattening                   | pc.                  | 10                                       |
| Pigs                               | pc.                  | 150                                      |
| Bee colonies                       | beehive              | 50                                       |

Figure 10

## Key Organizations / Institutions in Organic Sector

In the **Republika Srpska**, there is a newly established and active Association of Organic Producers and Processors BIOTOP, which includes small producers who have an organic certificate. This Association was founded in 2022 and the association currently has around 50 members. The president of the association is Ružica Mauna Bošnjak.

The earlier association of organic producers, which was founded at the end of 2015 and which gathered mostly certified agricultural producers engaged in the collection and processing of mushrooms, forest fruits and medicinal plants, as well as the production of essential oil, is no longer active.

In the Republika Srpska, the Group of Organic Producers and Processors was also established within the Chamber of Commerce of the Republika Srpska, which includes legal entities active in the sector of organic production and processing.

As for other institutions that are involved in organic production in the Republika Srpska, they are: the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Banja Luka, the Agricultural Institute of Banja Luka, the Republic Administration for Inspection Affairs, which together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republika Srpska is in charge of supervision and control in the sector of organic production as well as local governments that develop and support organic production in their territories.

### Info

#### RS Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

[www.vladars.net/sr-SP-Cyrl/Vlada/Ministarstva/mps](http://www.vladars.net/sr-SP-Cyrl/Vlada/Ministarstva/mps)

#### Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

[www.fmpvs.gov.ba](http://www.fmpvs.gov.ba)

#### Government of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

[www.psv.bdcentral.net](http://www.psv.bdcentral.net)

Positive examples of the development of the organic sector in the Republika Srpska:

- 1. **Agroplan, Bijeljina** is a social enterprise that employs women from the Roma population and is one of the most important producers in the North-Eastern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Agroplan completed the production cycle from organic production to vegetable processing, and in the last five years, they built greenhouses on an area of 3,000 square meters and another 4,000 square meters of outdoor production, where they grow peppers, tomatoes and other vegetables, and produce ajvar and juice from tomatoes.
- 2. **The organic farm Jokić from Prnjavor** was founded in 1980 on the Jokić family farm in the small village of Kalabe. Fertile land and forest resources provide excellent conditions for growing and producing healthy food. Farm Jokić has 1,500 square meters for housing livestock, 70 hectares of land and 120 head of cattle, and production is divided into the production of milk, cheese, organic flour and cereals, as well as fodder for feeding its own cattle.
- 3. **Sutjeska National Park** is located at the junction of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro and represents a kind of natural, cultural and historical specificity and is the oldest national park in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The example of the Sutjeska National Park in Tjentište shows that the potential in organic production is increasingly recognized, whereby the National Park put 16,000 hectares into the process of land conversion, and the main products are ramsons, elder, blueberries and mushrooms, which are collected in the amount of about 50,000 tons and are of organic origin and are in the process of certification.
- 4. **The Domestica estate from Laktaši** was founded by the Center for Economic and Rural Development (CERD) with the intention of building an example of the functioning of a sustainable community through the joint work of the members of the Domestica community with the aim of promoting people's lives in harmony with nature and on the principles of brotherhood, freedom and equality. Domestica actively works on promotion and strengthening of knowledge about organic agriculture and it is one of the first pioneers in Bosnia and Herzegovina that applies biodynamic agriculture methods.



Figure 11: Organic production on Domestica farm

## Info

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### The Association of Organic Producers and Processors of the RS “BIOTOP”

— Contact: [bosnjakmauna@gmail.com](mailto:bosnjakmauna@gmail.com)

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### Agro-Plan, Bijeljina

[www.agroplanbn.com](http://www.agroplanbn.com)

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### Organic farm Jokić

[www.instagram.com/farma\\_jokic](https://www.instagram.com/farma_jokic)

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### Sutjeska National Park

[www.sutjeskanp.com](http://www.sutjeskanp.com)

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### Domestica community

[www.facebook.com/domesticabih](https://www.facebook.com/domesticabih)

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The following associations are currently registered in the territory of the Federation of BiH:

- Association of organic producers USK (Una-Sana Canton)
- Association of organic producers SBK / KSB (Srednjo-Bosanski Canton / Canton Srednja Bosna)
- Association of organic producers TK (Tuzlanski Canton)
- Association of organic producers ZDK (Zeničko-Dobojski Canton)
- Association of Organic Producers KS (Canton Sarajevo)
- Association of organic producers in the city of Zenica
- Organska brazda / Organic furrow Association, Visoko

For many years in the territory of the Federation of BiH, there was an active association at the federal level, the Federation of Organic Producers of FBiH, which was created by the voluntary association of associations of organic producers from the territory of the Federation of BiH, with the aim of more successfully solving issues related to organic production, mutual assistance and exchange of experience, as well as out of necessity connections with other associations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the field of organic production. Unfortunately, this Association is currently not active and this association is being re-registered as an association with the Chamber of Commerce of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Federation of Organic Producers of FBiH is one of the founders of the Network of Organic Producers of Southeast Europe, which was registered in 2014 in Germany, Berlin (SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE ORGANIC NETWORK – SEEON). The network was founded by associations from BiH, Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia. In 2016, the SEEON network was reorganized, and associations from Slovenia, Kosovo and Albania were then included in this network. SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE ORGANIC NETWORK – SEEON did not have any significant activities except that within this network a platform was created for the review of activities in the organic sector and review of information from individual countries for organic production.

Positive examples of the development of the organic sector in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- 1. **The family company BONATURA d.o.o.**, based in Tešanj (Bosnia and Herzegovina), was founded in 2016 with the aim of presenting the rich and unpoluted nature of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the

German and European markets. The main activity is collection, purchase from experienced collectors, processing and sale of forest fruits, medicinal plants and mushrooms.

- 2. **Social enterprise Greens d.o.o.** was founded in 2018 as a response to the needs of modern man for healthy nutrition, but also with the aim of work integration and economic empowerment of people with disabilities. It is the first company for the production of fine vegetables, herbs and edible flowers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was created with the support of the non-governmental organization ProReha, which deals with work rehabilitation, education, training and employment of people with disabilities and other difficult-to-employ people.
- 3. **BioHalilović – company Halilović d.o.o.** Ilijaš is one of the leaders in organic production in BiH. It has a range of products that it markets for Germany, which includes teas, soaps, natural cosmetics and essential oils. With its “Liliya” brand, it deals with the organic production of medicinal and aromatic herbs, teas, essential oils, decorative items made of medicinal and aromatic herbs, etc.
- 4. **Organic production Herceg** from Novi Travnik has been engaged in organic production and processing for more than 20 years with a range of products that includes: teas, salves, creams, syrups, jams, and they are best known for the widely famous marigold cream.

## Info

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### Bonatura d.o.o. Tešanj

[www.bonatura.ba](http://www.bonatura.ba)

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### Greens d.o.o.

[www.greens.ba](http://www.greens.ba)

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### Halilović d.o.o. Ilijaš

[www.biohalilovic.ba](http://www.biohalilovic.ba)

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### Organic production HERCEG

[www.herceg.ba](http://www.herceg.ba)

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## Control Bodies

In the **Republika Srpska**, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management has authorized 2 control organizations for control and certification in accordance with the Law on Organic Production, namely:

- Organic Control System (OCS) – Subotica, OU Laktaši,
- Organska kontrola/Organic Control (OK) – Sarajevo, Istočno Sarajevo Branch

It should be noted that on the territory of the Republika Srpska there are control organizations that work without the authorization of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republika Srpska and that they represent control organizations that are registered in foreign countries and as such do not have a registered HQ in the Republika Srpska or in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The number of organic producers certified by these control organizations is rather small.

Control bodies operating in the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2021 are:

- Organska kontrola/Organic Control – OK, Sarajevo
- AgriMax, PJ. BH-BIOCERT, Mostar
- ECOCERT France, Belgrade,
- DKS BH-BHcert Germany, Sarajevo

All certification bodies recognized by the EC are listed in Annex IV of Regulation 1235 / 2008. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, these are:

- **Agreco R.F. Göderz GmbH**, Witzenhausen, Germany
- **Albinspekt 'Rr. Kavajes'**, Tirana, Albania
- **Bio.inspecta AG**, Ackerstrasse, 5070, Frick, Switzerland
- **Ecocert SA "IMOsuisse AG"**, Switzerland (Ecocert Balkan d.o.o. Zemun – Serbia)
- **LACON GmbH**, Offenburg, Germany
- **ORSER**, Cankaya-Ankara-Turkey
- **Organic Control System**, Subotica, Serbia
- **Organska Kontrola**, Kranjčevićeva 15, 71 000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Control Union Certifications**, Zwolle, The Netherlands
- **DQS Polska sp. z o.o.** Poland
- **Ecogruppero Italia**, Catania, Italy

Compared to the previous years, when the only ones really active in Bosnia and Herzegovina were "Organic Control" from BiH and "Ecocert" from Serbia, the opera-

tions of the certification body "Organic Control System" from Subotica with a business unit in Laktaši - BiH has also started, and slightly DQS Polska from Poland (one producer) and ORSER (one producer) from Turkey. They certify organic production in Bosnia and Herzegovina or the import of organic products in the territory of BiH and are recognized in accordance with Annex IV of Regulation 1235 / 2008.

**Organska kontrola / Organic Control – OK** is the first domestic certification body in Bosnia and Herzegovina founded in 2004. OK has developed its own certification program and OK standards for organic production and processing, in accordance with which it implements the certification program. OK was first accredited by the international accreditation service IOAS (International Organic Accreditation Service) in 2007, and later received IFOAM accreditation. In December 2011, the Standing Committee for Organic Agriculture of the European Commission officially recognized "OK" for the certification of organic products in third countries, intended for sale on the markets of EU member states.

**Organic Control System – OCS** is a certification body from Serbia that established its branch office in the Republika Srpska in Laktaši in 2019 to operate on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. OCS is the leading control organization for organic production in Serbia and was founded in 2003. OCS is a member of EOCC (European Organic Certification Council) and IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements).

## Info

**Organska kontrola / Organic Control – OK**

[www.organskakontrola.ba](http://www.organskakontrola.ba)



**Organic Control System – OCS**

[www.organica.rs](http://www.organica.rs)





## Research, Development, Education and Donor Support

Research, development and education in the agricultural sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in the organic sector, rests on research-development and scientific-educational institutions such as institutes and faculties, with additional activities carried out by civil society organizations, the private sector, and occasionally public sector, primarily in the field of informal education. Unfortunately, it must be stated that research and development work in the field of organic production in Bosnia and Herzegovina is carried out sporadically and at an insufficient level for faster growth and development of this sector.

As for formal education, organic agriculture is studied to a certain extent at the following faculties in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- Faculty of Agriculture and Food, Sarajevo, organic agriculture is partially studied in the II cycle of studies within the study programs: Sustainable food production systems and Sustainable management of land and rural space
- Faculty of Biotechnology in Bihać, majoring in organic agriculture in the 1st cycle of studies
- Faculty of Technology in Tuzla, Study program of the second cycle of Agronomy, majoring in Ecological Agriculture
- At the The Faculty of Agromediterranean in Mostar, organic agriculture is studied in the first and second cycles within the field of Ecology and Environmental Management in Agriculture.

**The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republika Srpska** has included certain trainings in its **activity plan**. Thus, in the past period, training was organized for producers, consumers, representatives of media companies, supermarkets / stores / green markets that sell food and cosmetic products, specialized stores that sell domestic and organic products, and consultants. The Ministry will continue to organize this type of training in the coming years, and so far more than 220 users have passed the training of interested producers for organic production, and of that number, 45 have already entered the transitional period, the period of conversion from conventional to organic agriculture.

The RS Ministry of Agriculture has also created a guide for producers (How to become an organic producer - first steps) who are interested in joining the organic production system, and a guide for consumers has also been

created so that consumers can recognize organic products on the market in the easiest way.

Within the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republika Srpska, a group of extension agents was formed within the Department for

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## Info

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### Faculty of Agriculture and Food, University of Sarajevo

[www.ppf.unsa.ba](http://www.ppf.unsa.ba)

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### Faculty of Biotechnology, Bihać

[www.btf.unbi.ba](http://www.btf.unbi.ba)

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### Federal Institute for Agriculture, Sarajevo

[www.fzzp.gov.ba](http://www.fzzp.gov.ba)

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### Federal Institute for Agropedology, Sarajevo

[www.agropedologija.gov.ba](http://www.agropedologija.gov.ba)

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### Faculty of Agriculture, University of Banja Luka

[www.agro.unibl.org](http://www.agro.unibl.org)

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### Faculty of Agriculture, University of Istočno Sarajevo

[www.pof.ues.rs.ba](http://www.pof.ues.rs.ba)

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### Agricultural Institute of the Republika Srpska

[www.poljinstrs.org](http://www.poljinstrs.org)

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### Faculty of Agronomy and Food Technology, Mostar

[www.agro.unibl.org](http://www.agro.unibl.org)

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### Agro-Mediterranean Faculty, Mostar

[www.poljinstrs.org](http://www.poljinstrs.org)

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the extension service in agriculture in all regional units of Srpska – who undergo training in order to be at the service of potential organic producers and be able to provide adequate advices.

**Donor support** for the development of the organic sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina was significant at the beginning of the development of the organic movement through several larger projects financed by the Dutch and Swedish international aid for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Within the FARMA I and FARMA II projects, which were financed by USAID and Sweden, certain activities were aimed at the development of organic agricultural production, but on a smaller scale. Currently, USAID is implementing Sustainable Tourism Development project in Bosnia and Herzegovina that aims to include the agricultural sector (especially organic and domestic/traditional local products) in the tourism value chain. Also significant is Italian development support for the organic sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina through several projects that have been implemented continuously in Bosnia and Herzegovina for many years.

The current project that provides support for organic production in BiH is in cooperation with the **Standing Working Group (SWG) for Regional Rural Development in SEE**, in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food, in accordance with the **Implementation Program of the Dialogue on Agricultural Policy – Western Balkans (APD)**. The project was created to contribute to the strengthening of the policy framework for agriculture and rural development in the Western Balkans region in connection with the implementation of the EU Green Agenda for the Western Balkans in accordance with the adopted Action Plan for the Green Agenda and alignment with the CAP 2021–2027. The main task for the states / territories of the Western Balkans in the field of organic agriculture: Harmonize the national legislation in the sector of organic agriculture by drafting the Law on Organic Agriculture together with the basic by-laws, harmonized with EU Regulation 2018 / 848 which must be relevant for all subjects / bodies involved in any phase of production, preparation, labeling, distribution, marketing and other activities related to production and trade.<sup>6</sup>

The project **European Union Support for Agricultural Competitiveness and Rural Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EU4AGRI)** is a four-year initiative (2020–2024), with the aim of modernizing the agricultural and food sector, opening new and maintaining existing jobs. The EU4AGRI project is primarily funded by the European Union (EU) within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), and the value of the project is 20 million euros, with joint co-financing

by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Czech Development Agency (CzDA). The focus of the project is on increasing investment in the agri-food sector and raising the level of knowledge and skills of agricultural producers and other participants in value chains through the expanded provision of advisory services, as well as improving economic opportunities in rural areas. Organic farming and certification are activities that are also supported through the **EU4Agri project**.

In 2013, the Association of Associations of Organic Producers of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina implemented the project of cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was financed by the EU. Several smaller-scale projects dealt with the improvement of the strategic framework for the development of organic agriculture.



Figure 12: Livestock farm Burkić in Livno

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## Info

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### EU4Agri Project

[www.eu4agri.ba](http://www.eu4agri.ba)

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### Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group

[www.seerural.org](http://www.seerural.org)

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### Developing sustainable tourism in BiH

[www.turizambih.ba](http://www.turizambih.ba)

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6 Minutes from 6. meeting of subcommittee for agriculture and fisheries between the EU and BiH

# Current Status and Developments of Organic Production

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina has natural resources that are suitable for the development of organic production and despite the positive trend of interest in organic products, the number of certified producers engaged in this production is small, and the quantities of organic food produced are modest. Certainly, the growth trends in the number of organic producers, processors and areas in the organic regime in recent years are certainly encouraging for the development of the organic sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Organic Production

Reliable information on the volume of organic production, the number of organic producers, as well as the types and quantity of organic products cannot be found in one place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, primarily due to the lack of an efficient system for collecting statistical data in this area, as well as due to the division of competence in this sector by entities. However, because of the organic certification that is done by several different certification houses, which do not have accreditation from the competent ministries, the ministries do not collect data about their work.

In the absence of official statistical data, for the purposes of this report, various sources were used where it was possible to find information on the status of organic production in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For this reason, certain minor deviations and differences in the presented data, which were collected from different sources, are possible.

One source of data is the data of the Research Institute for Organic Agriculture – FIBL (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture), an independent, non-profit scientific institute that for many years has been engaged in the international development of organic production and data collection from around the world. ([↪](#))

**Surface areas under organic production (2013–2019 | ha)**

|                                       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Bosnia and Herzegovina                | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
| Surface area under organic production | 292  | 353  | 576  | 659  | 974  | 896  | 1692 |

Figure 13

**Data on the status of organic production (2019 | ha)**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| The area under organic production (ha)                                    | 1,692  |
| The share of organic land in the total agricultural land                  | 0,1 %  |
| Surfaces in organic mode, which are used for collection (wild collection) | 11,579 |
| Number of organic producers (2019)  | 337    |
| Number of organic processors (2019)                                       | 74     |
| Number of organic exporters (2019)  | 20     |
| Number of organic producers (2018)  | 251    |
| Number of organic processors (2018)                                       | 23     |
| Number of organic exporters (2018)  | 20     |
| Number of organic beehives  | 150    |
| The area used for the production of cereals in the organic regime (ha)    | 138    |
| Areas used for the production of legumes in the organic regime (ha)       | 24     |
| Areas used for the production of oilseeds in the organic regime (ha)      | 29     |
| Areas used for organic vegetable production (ha)                          | 9      |

Figure 14

**Number of producers and quantity of organic land presented per certification bodies**

|  | Organic control        | Ecocert             | Organic Control System | DQS Polska | ORSER    | Total     |
|--|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|
| Home country of the certification body       | BiH                    | Serbia              | Serbia                 | Poland     | Turkey   |           |
| Number of producers                          | 54 <sup>7</sup>        | 23                  | 11                     | 11         | 90       | 90        |
| Area (ha)<br>(agriculture + wild collection) | 1,825.4<br>+162,057.00 | 670.0<br>+31,675.00 | 63.7                   | 2.2        | 1,870.00 | 198,163.3 |

Figure 15

Based on data collected by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH, in 2021, organic production in Bosnia and Herzegovina takes place on 198,163.3 ha (together with collection areas for wild plants- spontaneous vegetation), of which over 2,500 ha are agricultural land.

From the same data source, information is obtained that 90 certified producers are active in BiH, of which a large number are also processors, and they create added value to their products, which is of particular

importance. Two producers run a group certification in which 338 members are involved.

Below is presented additional information that was collected from several sources (competent ministries, certification houses and field research with relevant associations and producers), and which is presented by entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

<sup>7</sup> Of these, two group certification operators with 338 members

Arable areas under organic production in **the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina** have been varying for the last few years, although a constant growth under organic areas is noticeable. There is no official data on the actual condition, there is no register of producers and processors of these products. The only data on the volume of organic production can be obtained through certification companies, of which Organic Control (OK) covers the largest number of clients. In this regard, these variations in organic areas can potentially be attributed to the use of the services of different certification houses by organic producers, which leads to the inability to consistently monitor the areas sown under the organic system.

Based on the collected data from certification houses and organizations in the field, a total of 67 certified organic producers or processors were registered in the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2021. According to the types of production/processing, manufacturers are divided into:

- plant production – 36 producers:
  - fruit production: 7 producers,
  - farming and cultivation of medicinal plants: 19 producers
  - vegetable production: 10 producers
- beekeeping – 11 producers
- collection of medicinal herbs, forest fruits and mushrooms – 8 producers
- processing – 12 producers

Out of a total of 67 producers in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2021, 26 of them have a certificate for the EU market according to standards (EC) No 834 / 2007, while the other 41 producers have a certificate for the domestic market according to standards compatible with (EC) No 834 / 2007.

The total area under annual and perennial crops in 2021 was about 955 ha. Of that, annual crops are grown on 650 hectares, perennial crops on 300 ha and greenhouse production on 5 ha. Of the total area, 655 ha is in the status of organic production, and 300 ha is in the transitional period, i.e. the period of conversion.

The largest area in the certification process in 2021 was in the area of collection of medicinal and wild herbs (these areas are not included in 955 ha), followed by meadows and pastures, followed by arable areas - annual field crops, cultivated medicinal plants and vegetables, and then perennial plantings and green-

house production. The area where the production of medicinal and aromatic plants takes place is about 35 % of the total area under organic cultivation.

In the Register of Organic Control (OK), the first domestic certification house in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose standards include the largest number of producers in **Bosnia and Herzegovina (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the RS)**, in 2022, 20 producers certified their production for the Bosnia and Herzegovina market, while 28 manufacturers performed certification for the EU market.

Of these 28 producers who are certified for the EU market, 16 of them have certified plant production, 9 producers are engaged in collecting wild fruits, and only 1 certified producer is engaged in animal production. At the same time, 21 producers have certified processing/canning, and 3 producers are also engaged in certified trade in organic products. Within plant production, most producers are engaged in the production of soft fruits, berries and nut fruits, and a smaller number in the production of cereals, vegetables and other fruit types. In terms of collection and processing, medicinal and aromatic herbs and mushrooms and the processing of essential oils are leading the way.



Figure 16: Organic sunflower field

Also according to OK data, in 2019, 1,237 ha were sown. Medicinal herbs, cereals and berries are the dominant crops grown. In addition to cultivation, it is necessary to mention the collection of wild herbs, mushrooms and berries. In 2017, of the total collection area (150,604 ha), medicinal plants account for 103,575 ha.

It is interesting to note that in 2018, approximately 200 producers were recorded in the OK register who directly or indirectly passed the certification process, either as individual producers or were included through the certification of projects, i.e. group certification. However,

in that year 2018, a total of 58 producers were owners of the organic certificate, of which 45 were for the EU market and 13 producers for the BiH market. According to these data, the number of certified producers for the EU market decreased compared to 2018 from 45 to 26 producers in 2021.

In the **Republika Srpska**, there were a total of 64 organic certified producers in 2021. The area under organic certification in 2021 is 1,280 ha. When it comes to animal husbandry, the number of certified heads is 1,530 and 170 bee hives were certified organic.

The table below provides data on areas under organic production and the number of animals in organic farming in 2021.

In recent years, a significant trend of growth in the number of organic producers and areas under the organic certified production regime has been noticed, which can be seen from the diagram under serial number 18.

This increase in the volume of production and the number of producers can primarily be linked to the increased activities of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the RS on the promotion and support of the organic sector. A significant volume of increase is also connected with the establishment of the Organic Control System (OCS) representative office from Serbia for the territory of the Republika Srpska.

## Organic Processing

Regarding the processing of organic products in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is no available official data on the types and quantities of processed products that are covered by organic certification. From experience and through conversations and interviews with relevant parties, it can be concluded that processing is currently being carried out to obtain the following final products or semi-products: dried mushrooms, powdered mushrooms, medicinal herbs – teas, lyophilized raspberry, blackberry, blueberry, flour from several types of cereals (buckwheat, spelt, whole grain, corn), ajvar, tomato juice, hazelnut products, juices/jams (cherry, apple, grape, beet, chokeberry, blackberry), apple cider vinegar, blackberry wine, dried pomegranate, honey, various cosmetic products.

**Based on unofficially collected data, 12 producers are engaged in the processing of organic products in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.** Six producers engaged in the production of medicinal plants are engaged in processing into essential oils, 3 producers

### Areas and number of animals under organic production in RS (2021)

| No.                           | Type of production   | Area in ha / Number of heads |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Plant production              |                      |                              |
| 1.                            | Fruits               | 91                           |
| 2.                            | Vegetables           | 12                           |
| 3.                            | Cereals              | 190                          |
| 4.                            | Fodder plants        | 47                           |
| 5.                            | Medicinal plants     | 40                           |
| 6.                            | Industrial plants    | 6,5                          |
| 7.                            | Meadows and pastures | 770                          |
| 8.                            | Collector production | 120                          |
| 9.                            | No crops             | 5                            |
| <b>Total plant production</b> |                      | <b>1281,5</b>                |
| 1.                            | Cattle               | 710                          |
| 2.                            | Goats                | 495                          |
| 3.                            | Sheep                | 190                          |
| 4.                            | Chickens             | 140                          |
| <b>Total animal husbandry</b> |                      | <b>1535</b>                  |

Figure 17

### Organic production in Republika Srpska (2017–2021)

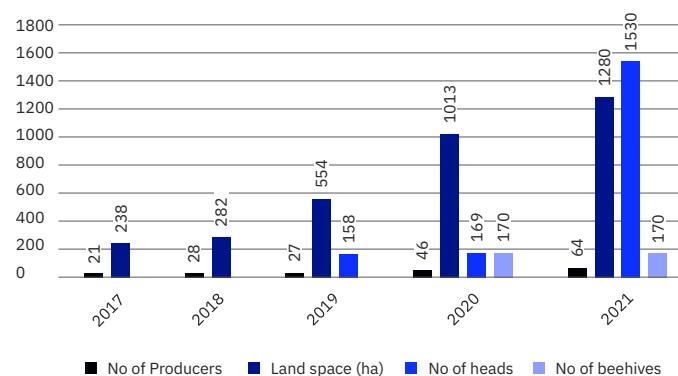


Figure 18

are engaged in processing into tea mixtures, salves and various cosmetic preparations, and three producers are engaged in the processing of vegetables and fruit juices.

Beekeeping producers, 11 producers, are also engaged in packaging honey and honey preparations. These 11 producers had about 1,500 beehives, and the production of honey amounted to about 18 tons of honey, which is placed on the BiH market, through direct sales, specialized stores and sales exhibitions.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, we have organic agricultural production, which produces flour that is sold on

the domestic market in a percentage of about 40 % of the total production. The remaining part of agricultural production (60 %) is placed in bulk on the EU market, with a larger part in Germany (buckwheat, wheat, spelt).

Within the production of medicinal and aromatic herbs, chamomile, mint, immortelle, calendula, and other annual crops are mostly produced. About 60 % of the product is processed into essential oils, 10 % is processed into teas, and the remaining 30 % is exported to the foreign market.



Figure 19: Organic tomato

# Market of Organic Products

The market of organic products is still not sufficiently developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and this is primarily affected by the poor purchasing power of consumers, but also insufficient awareness of the values and advantages of these products. Among other things, there is a certain amount of scepticism among consumers who believe that it is enough to buy products on the market directly from the manufacturer and thus get quality and healthy nutrition.

It can be stated with great confidence that recently there has been an increasing interest of consumers in organic products (fresh fruits and vegetables and processed products), but it is also noticeable that consumers are not fully informed on how to recognize an organic product on the market, i.e. consumers generally do not make the difference between the so-called “domestic” product, i.e. product that is grown in a “traditional-domestic” way and organic product. For this reason, it is necessary to work more and more on educating consumers so that they are able to recognize an organic product and thus enable them to be able to consume these products regardless of where they come to the market, whether domestically produced or imported. That is why it is necessary to have a logo that indicates a visible difference between organic and conventional products. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the organic production logo of the Republika Srpska is used, while the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet adopted a logo for organic products.

Currently in the market of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in addition to domestic organic products, there is also a large number of imported organic products. A part of domestic organic products is also sold on the foreign

market (EU, Serbia, Switzerland, Canada, USA ...). These are various products such as dried mushrooms, herbal teas, herbal tinctures, cosmetic products, frozen fruit, juice products, jams, etc.

## Market Channels

For placing organic products on the market, all available market sales and distribution channels available to producers are used, depending on their preferences and capabilities as well as market orientation. In the Republika Srpska, the Rulebook on the Conditions and Methods of Storage, Transport and Marketing of Organic Products stipulates that the sale of organic products can be carried out at the production unit, retail and wholesale facilities, at stands, fairs and promotional events, as well as long-distance and sales through electronic media. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, no by-laws have yet been passed that cover this area of organic product sales.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the number of specialized stores that offer healthy food is on the rise, although



there are only organic stores where you can buy only organic products, or there are none at all or very few.

These **organic stores** that exclusively sell organic products do not exist in the territory of the Republika Srpska, but throughout the Republika Srpska, there are specialized stores that deal with the sale of goods that are promoted as domestic, traditional and organic products. These stores are often associated with certain regions of Srpska, and organically certified products find their place in them. For now, there are such stores in several cities, and the emphasis is on local producers from those regions where the stores are located. As an example, we cite the opening of sales points in Banja Luka and Trebinje, where citizens can buy local and organic products from Herzegovina and Krajina in **Herzeg House** and **Krajiška House**.



Figure 20: Herzeg House

Certain processed organic products can also be obtained in **pharmacies**, especially those products that serve as dietary supplements, herbal teas or cosmetic products.

Some **supermarkets and commodity shopping centres**, such as Konzum, Mercator, Maxi, and Bingo, sell organic products within their facilities and in this case, these products are separated in separate places from other products and adequately labelled as organic products. Although the quantity of organic products at these sales places is not large and varied, it is still significant for the organic products market because, unlike smaller shops and stores where their selection is very poor or non-existent, consumers in these outlets can find a clearly marked organic product. One of the difficulties in the distribution of local organic production in larger supermarkets and shopping centres is the production capacity, which is often unable to guarantee an

adequate amount of products throughout the year.

In some specialized supermarkets, organic and personal care products can be found, such as Germany's DM (Drogerie Markt), which offers a range of herbal teas, fruit juices, jams, biscuits, pasta and other dry and processed products.

**Direct and online sales** are one of the best sales channels for small organic producers and processors. These producers, who are mostly known to consumers at the local level, sell their products either directly on the property or by direct delivery to the end consumers. In the promotion of this type of sale of organic products, social networks (Facebook, Instagram or Viber communication via Viber groups) are mainly used. In this way, the order and delivery date are generally agreed upon. This type of distribution is suitable for smaller quantities of products and for a narrower group of consumers, and a special, personal relationship based on trust is established between producers and consumers. Through this type of sale, it is possible to achieve much higher prices than through classic sales through intermediaries.

Sales through web shops have grown significantly in recent times, especially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, because consumers can easily order organic and other domestic products from the comfort of their homes. Certain examples of web shops and online sales in Bosnia and Herzegovina are given below:

**BIOfan shop** Sarajevo and web shop - BIOfan is a brand owned by FAN-Commerce d.o.o. Visoko, which, among other things, is involved in the production and wholesale of organic products. BIOfan is a brand that looks at the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina through the prism of organic production and processing and thus supports small local farmers who grow vegetables and fruits and who have a valid organic certificate.

**FARMER.ba** is a platform that offers the promotion of local farmers' products in a very simple way. This is one of the first services in Bosnia and Herzegovina with a serious database of **food producers**, with detailed insight and review of domestically grown fruits and vegetables, which is updated daily. The platform is designed to gather agricultural producers in one place and serves as a good tool for buying domestic and organic products.

**Butik zdrave hrane / Health food boutique.** This website offers a variety of nuts, seeds, spices, oils, teas, marinades, natural juices and many other products. In the offer, they highlight their own domestic brand Mak-suz, to which they have devoted a lot of time and attention. The best ingredients were carefully selected to make homemade products.

Among the means of distribution, we should not forget **restaurants**, which are often an expression of social and cultural trends. Organic products are primarily used in high-end restaurants, as well as those that offer vegetarian or macrobiotic cuisine. Therefore, it is not the case that the combination of organic and macrobiotic nutrition is very common.

**Export** is also a special and very important sales channel for organic products. However, the nomenclature of goods in the BiH Customs Tariff, which is in accordance with the harmonized system and the combined nomenclature used by the European Union, does not contain organic products as a separate category, so there are no official statistical data for the export of goods of organic origin.

According to available data from the Report “The World of Organic Agriculture 2021” prepared by FIBL and IFOAM, the amount of exported goods certified as organic from **Bosnia and Herzegovina** to the countries of the European Union totals **1,475 tons**.

A number of organic producers of the Republika Srpska export their products to the foreign market as well (members of the European Union, primarily Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, and Sweden, as well as to the market of Serbia, Canada, Switzerland, etc.). We are talking about various products: dried mushrooms, herbal teas, herbal tinctures, cosmetic products, frozen fruit, and processed products in the form of juices, jams, etc. From the Republika Srpska, up to 8 million marks of organic products are exported annually.

Anđelić d.o.o. from Trebinje is one of the largest exporters of essential oils, medicinal plants and herbs in the Republika Srpska, and significant exporters are also the following companies: Smrčak d.o.o., Zvornik; OPZ Agrofood, Konjević Polje; OPZ Insieme, Bratunac; Mushroom d.o.o., Čelinac; OPG Jokić, Prnjavor.

More important exporting companies with headquarters in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina are Bonatura d.o.o., Tešanj; Heko d.o.o., Bugojno; Halilović d.o.o., Ilijaš; Bionatura d.o.o. Vareš; Boletus d.o.o., Sarajevo; PZ Eko Life, Stolac.

Based on data obtained from relevant sources, the value of organic products that were placed on the domestic market in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2015 amounted to 300,000 euros, while in the same year organic products worth two million euros were exported. An increase in exports was also recorded in 2016 when 3.5 million euros were exported, while in 2017, exports already reached four million euros, while in 2018, that value grew to 5.2 million euros. In 2021, we have a slight increase in the export of organic products and it will exceed 7 million euros.

## Promotion of Organic Production – Positive Examples

Regarding the promotion of organic production, it should be noted that the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republika Srpska, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce of the Republika Srpska, has been providing space for a group of organic producers where organic products are promoted for the past two years within the framework of trade fairs in which businessmen from the Republika Srpska participate. Until now, through this initiative, it has been possible for organic producers from the Republika Srpska to be present at fairs in Novi Sad, Belgrade, Subotica, Bijeljina, Mostar, and Rimini-Italy. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republika Srpska has been organizing the **Organic Fest of Srpska** fair for the past two years, which is intended for the promotion of certified organic products from the Republika Srpska, although guests from the region (Serbia, Croatia) also participate to a lesser extent in this fair as well as producers from another BiH entity.

Also, starting in 2021, this Ministry organizes the **Day of Organic Production in Srpska**. The event is designed so that other organic producers gather at the place of one organic producer, connect with each other, exchange experiences and agree on possible cooperation. Each time, in addition to this event, certain thematic units are organized as part of this manifestation, where through targeted presentations, other subjects and other producers are tried to be included in the system of organic production.



Figure 21: Promotion of organic production through Organic Fest Srpske

**ORGANSKO FBiH / ORGANIC FBiH** developed a project of direct sales and promotion of organic products by organizing events, sales and promotional exhibitions in 16 cities and municipalities of FBiH under the name **Organic Production Days** and organized visits to international fairs of organic production and eco-tourism so that domestic organic producers marketed a larger amount of their products through these events.

In December 2021, a B2B meeting of organic producers with representatives of hoteliers was organized in Jahorina in order to include organic products in the gastronomic offer of tourist destinations in the Republika Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina (mountains, spas, etc.).

## Info

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### Andelić d.o.o. Trebinje

[www.andjelic.ba](http://www.andjelic.ba)

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### Smrčak d.o.o. Zvornik



d.o.o. Smrčak Zvornik

[www.smrca.com](http://www.smrca.com)

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### OPZ Agrofood Konjević Polje

[www.agrofood.ba](http://www.agrofood.ba)

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### Heko d.o.o. Bugojno

[www.hhf.heko.ba](http://www.hhf.heko.ba)

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### Bionatura, d.o.o. Vareš

[www.bionatura.ba](http://www.bionatura.ba)

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### Bio time, Mostar

[www.biotime.ba](http://www.biotime.ba)

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### BIOfan shop and web shop

[www.shop.biofan.ba](http://www.shop.biofan.ba)

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### Butik zdrave hrane

[www.butikzdravehrane.ba](http://www.butikzdravehrane.ba)

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### Farmer

[www.farmer.ba](http://www.farmer.ba)

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### Dunja zdravo i organsko

[www.dunja.ba](http://www.dunja.ba)

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# Closing Considerations

The demand for organic products is increasing in the BiH market due to the increasing awareness among citizens that these are of higher quality and healthier products. However, despite the demand, without a real and strategic determination of official policies and adequate measures, additional investments and incentives and the creation of a broader social movement for the development of the organic sector, accelerated growth of organic agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be expected.

Growing consumer awareness of food safety and environmental protection, as well as preferences in consuming “healthy food” in recent years, has had a significant impact on the growth of organic production. The market of organic products is taking an ever-increasing share in the total trade of agricultural products, both in terms of quantities and types, which is especially pronounced in EU countries.

Such trends require an adequate legal framework and a comprehensive multi-sector approach that will enable, on the one hand, consumers to receive a quality product, and on the other hand, to enable an easier re-orientation of farmers to this type of production. This is particularly relevant for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which must harmonize its policies and legal framework with relevant EU policies. This alignment will inevitably lead to a shift away from conventional agriculture towards sustainable and more environmentally friendly forms of agricultural production that focus on care for the land,

and the environment and compliance with standards related to ecology, food safety and animal health and welfare. Such policies will provide a significant incentive for the development of organic production, which will occupy an increasingly important place in the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Although there are natural resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina that are suitable for the development of organic production, the number of producers engaged in such production is still small, and the quantities and types of organic food produced are quite modest compared to conventional production. In addition to natural resources, which are certainly the most important prerequisite for the development of organic production, it is necessary to provide a harmonized legal framework with EU legislation, to develop the local market and to pay more attention to the promotion of organic products both on domestic and export markets.

## SWOT Analysis

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### Strengths

- The existence of a legal framework at the entity level
- The existence of areas of agricultural land that are not polluted or intensively cultivated, accelerates and facilitates the conversion
- Traditional farming systems with preserved autochthonous varieties and local populations of plants that are suitable for growing in organic systems and have a characteristic taste and smell that is appreciated by consumers
- Positive trend of attitude towards organic agriculture amongst consumers
- Favourable geographical location of many cities and towns for marketing organic products through tourism
- Many cities and towns are already well-known tourist destinations
- The existence of desire of organic producers to join together and form an association of organic producers
- Initiatives by the non-governmental sector for the development of strategic documents and plans
- The international community's interest in supporting the Green Agenda and the development of organic production
- Cheap labor
- The interest of the highly educated population, especially younger people, in organic production
- Different climatic regions suitable for the development of different organic productions

### Weaknesses

- Absence of a harmonized legal framework at all levels of BiH with relevant EU policies
- The absence of an official database (registry) at the entity and state level
- Non-enforcement of regulations and non-established system of supervision by the relevant authorities
- Absence of a common sign for organic products (for BiH and the Federation of BiH)
- Lack of organic plant protection products on the market
- Lack of certified reproductive material (seeds, seedlings, reproductive material) as well as a base that should be managed by relevant institutions, i.e. organs
- There was no promotion of organic production
- Failure to carry out continuous education of interested farmers
- Small sector and underdeveloped domestic market
- Insufficient utilization of international (EU) markets
- Failure to establish cooperation between participants in the value chain
- Insufficient development of extension service in the field of organic agriculture and the absence of such service on the territory of FBiH
- Lack of systematic formal and informal education in the field of organic production
- Unfavourable structure of agricultural farms (a large number of small farms that do not cooperate)
- Insufficient finalization of organic products
- A large number of intermediaries in the organic value chain
- Lack of labour and low mobility of labour for the purpose of producing organic products

### Opportunities

- Continuously growing consumption trend in the European market of organic products
- High demand for the import of organic products into the European market
- Development into a leading regional exporter of organic medicinal herbs and herbs and essential oils
- Smallholdings that can only be competitive by producing value-added agricultural products
- Marketing of products through tourism and rural tourism (the offer of organic, especially local and traditional products is desirable)
- Modernization and transition of the agricultural system using organic production as a leading driver
- The possibility of developing rural areas through the development of competitive organic production and the retention and return of the population
- Connection with markets in the region and joint entry into foreign markets to ensure quantity
- Encouraging self-employment in organic production

### Threats

- The sector will not be recognized at the political level as a significant force of agricultural development, as well as failure to recognize the potential of organic agriculture
- Absence of a real strategic commitment of public authority holders who are in charge of the agriculture sector to direct the focus towards organic agriculture, i.e. towards sustainable food systems
- Unrecognizability of organic products on the domestic market
- Weak control of products that are declared as organic on the domestic market
- Farms cannot be developed to the level of satisfactory sustainability and competitiveness at the domestic and international level
- Weak development of the domestic market due to weak purchasing power and insufficiently developed public awareness
- The sector will not be able to build international connections and will not penetrate the relevant markets
- Impossibility of mobilizing domestic and international investments
- Producers will remain fragmented and will not be organized in order to increase competitiveness in domestic and foreign markets
- The market of raw materials and means for nutrition and protection of organic production will not develop in the future
- Climate change will threaten organic production in Bosnia and Herzegovina

## Recommendations

- Ensure the adoption of adequate policies (laws and by-laws) regarding organic production in Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Republika Srpska, Federation of BiH, Brčko District), with the aim of harmonizing with relevant EU regulations (Regulation 2018 / 848) and enabling easier export of organic products to the market of EU.
- To ensure the real and strategic determination of the holders of public authority who are in charge of the agriculture sector to direct the focus towards organic agriculture, i.e. towards sustainable food systems, which would ultimately accelerate the growth and development of the agriculture sector towards these sustainable systems and towards organic production. Encourage the creation of strategic documents for the development of organic agriculture with clearly defined goals and measures at all levels (entity, cantonal, city/municipal) while providing adequate financial support at these levels.
- Find adequate mechanisms for the transformation of conventional production towards organic agriculture and ensure the creation of adequate support measures that would creatively strengthen this transformation process and give it the necessary momentum and acceleration.
- Ensure the establishment of a wider organic movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which should include various entities that have an interest in or are connected to this topic and ensure the application of a “bottom-up” approach instead of a “top-down” in which “ownership” of activities and initiatives will be left to civil organizations / groups and sectoral associations
- Encourage and strengthen associations of organic producers (associations, cooperatives, clusters) at various levels and work on improving the professional and organizational structure of organic producers’ organizations with the aim of increasing the number of products, educating consumers, achieving competitiveness, standardizing quality and product branding, and organized exit to domestic and foreign market of organic products
- Encourage the development of PGS – Participatory Guarantee Systems – which, as a locally focused quality assurance system based on trust between producers and consumers, but also on well-developed rules of functioning of PGS groups, has proven to be a very good alternative to the system of official certification by certification houses.
- Systematically improve expertise, knowledge, and technologies and develop innovations in the organic sector and identify best practices from other EU countries and the world, try to adapt them for our conditions and apply them in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Organize education of agricultural producers about organic production including formal education and carry out its promotion through promotional campaigns, holding fairs, thematic workshops, seminars and schools of organic production
- Promote organic certification and explain to producers that despite the strictly prescribed procedure and demanding practice, certification is still “not a bogeyman” and that getting certified does not have to be a complicated process that is also not expensive.
- Establish centres for the development of organic production, which will serve as crucial points for the dissemination of knowledge and techniques of organic production based on practical examples.
- Create a database (register) of organic producers in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and enable public access to the register of organic producers in the Republika Srpska.
- Work on consumer education and on building and strengthening consumer trust in organic production, through strengthening the control system and agile promotion of all the benefits that are realized through organic agriculture as well as other types of sustainable agricultural production .
- Develop the domestic market of organic products through the inclusion of organic products in the meals of public and social-educational institutions and through support for contracting the production and processing of organic products as well as through the organization of mini markets and specialized organic stores.
- Improve the work of inspection services that will check in detail the compliance of practices in the production, trade, labelling of organic products and

strictly sanction violations of positive legal provisions and practices, with the aim of strengthening control and creating greater trust, as well as directing producers to accept the prescribed norms in production, processing, trade and other segments related to the production and market of organic products.

- Overcome “politicization” and ensure that decision-makers overcome "political confrontations" and try to reach a common agreement on strengthening the organic movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina without imposing a solution, while respecting the legal framework of Bosnia and Herzegovina and while looking for the best solution that will ensure the accelerated development of the organic sector in BiH.

## Instead of a Conclusion

Ensuring the conditions and setting the basis for the production of quality and health-safe food is extremely important for every country. The high quality and safety of food products can best be valorized by applying the system of certified organic production.

The implementation of the recommendations listed here, which were defined with the participation of interested actors in the organic sector, would ensure uniform and accelerated development of organic production as a high-income branch of agricultural production, which would improve the position and market orientation of organic producers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and at the same time ensure healthy and safe food for the local population.



Figure 22: Sheep breeding – investment potential in organic agriculture

In order to preserve people's health, the development and improvement of the organic production sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina has no alternative, so it is necessary to direct all available resources towards a better arrangement of the organic sector and a better organization of organic production, increased investments and greater association of producers and actors in organic production chains, development of a better business environment for organic producers, better promotion of organic products and strengthening awareness of the benefits of consuming organic products.

We hope that this report will contribute to the development of organic agriculture and encourage all relevant actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina to proactively act in order to develop the organic movement and the organic sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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