

# Organic Perspectives

## Special Edition: International Update

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### Next Newsletter in May 2004

This edition is dedicated to recent news on the international organic products market. For further information, contact Stephanie Riddick, (202) 205-3771, [Stephanie.Riddick@fas.usda.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Riddick@fas.usda.gov).

### EKCONNECT Organizes in Central and Eastern Europe

“Organic agriculture experts and representatives from various parts of Europe recently set up an international information and co-ordination center for organic agriculture in Central and Eastern Europe. The new institution bears the name EkoConnect - International Centre for Organic Agriculture of Central and Eastern Europe. EkoConnect is a non-profit organization with headquarters in Dresden. The aim of the new center is to promote organic agriculture and increased co-operation and networking within and between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. EkoConnect is currently setting up an information and co-ordination office for this purpose and will organize meetings and training measures in the old and new EU countries in the future.”

Source: For more information visit <http://www.BioFach.de>.

### Organic Agriculture on the Rise in Turkey

According to the *Organic Standard*, organic agriculture is increasing rapidly in Turkey, supported by 15,795 certified farmers on approximately 111,300 hectares. Much of this production is in the Izmir region of Western Turkey. The number of organic products being produced in Turkey has increased from 8 products in 1990 to over 300 products presently. Approximately 100 of these products are processed. Organic crops for export include raisins, dried figs, olive oil, spices, fruit juices, and hazelnuts. European buyers were among those to encourage early organic production. However, more recently the, “Organic Agriculture Organisation (ETO)” was formed in 1992 to improve organic production and develop an internal market for organic products.

Source: For more information visit <http://www.organicstandard.com/>.

### OTA Adopts Organic Fiber Processing Standards

The Organic Trade Association’s (OTA) board recently approved organic fiber processing standards. The standards were developed over a five-year period with the input from OTA’s membership that wanted to ensure quality in organic fiber products. OTA has stated that they will license the standards and that the licensing agreements will be available by contacting the organization. Training on the new fiber processing standard will be held April 16-17, 2004 at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas.

Source: For more information visit <http://www.ota.com>.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 **EKCONNECT Organizes in Central and Eastern Europe**
- 2 **Organic Agriculture on the Rise in Turkey**
- 3 **OTA Adopts Organic Fiber Processing Standards**
- 4 **AOFF to Improve Organic Production and Marketing in Southern Africa**
- 5 **Austria: “The Highest Rate of Certified Organic Farms in the EU”**
- 6 **New Database Available to the International Organic Industry**
- 7 **Organic Meat Sales Expected to Increase in 2004**
- 8 **2004 BioFach Expands Global Participation**

## AOFF to Improve Organic Production and Marketing in Southern Africa

“The African Organic Farming Foundation (AOFF) is a registered non-profit organization founded in 2001. AOFF’s mission is to improve regional food security and foster economic self-reliance for poor Southern African rural farmers and communities by increasing organic farming capacity, agro-enterprise and market linkages, while conserving natural resources and wildlife. AOFF has announced that its Marketing and Agro-Enterprise Development (MAED) Program is underway. MAED identifies market-driven options for spurring indigenous private economic growth, creating market-driven employment, increasing trade-related capacity and long-term economic self-sufficiency. Local, regional and international trade linkages are targeted.”

Source: For more information visit <http://www.BioFach.de>.

## Austria: “The Highest Rate of Certified Organic Farms in the EU”

The *Organic Standard* reports that Austria now has 18,591 organic farms. Organic farms had reached a peak in 1998 when 20,316 farms were listed. This is a sizable increase since the organic agriculture movement started in 1927. Most of these farms are in the Alpine regions of the country and consist largely of grains and potatoes. Market share for organic products is significant, largely because supermarkets make up 70 percent of organic sales. The largest product sales in 2002 went to potatoes (12 percent), fresh milk and milk products (9 percent), butter (6 percent), and yogurt (5 percent). The market is considered mature and surplus production is exported to other countries.

Source: For more information visit: <http://www.organicstandard.com>.

## New Database Available to the International Organic Industry

“The database of the Internet service Ökoinform includes some 6,400 organic products that can be purchased via the organic food trade.

Consumers and dealers can quickly and easily obtain information about individual articles on the Internet.

Ökoinform offers a directory of supply sources and detailed product information at a glance, including useful information on health and nutrition matters (e.g. allergy risk). Around 700 organic food stores that operate one of the three familiar inventory management systems will shortly have direct access to the online organic food information system.”

Source: For more information visit <http://www.BioFach.de>.

## Organic Meat Sales Expected to Increase in 2004

According to the *Organic Monitor*, Canadian organic meat sales expanded 35 percent in 2003, largely due to the Mad Cow or BSE situation that year. The report expects a similar trend in the United States in 2004 for the same reason. Typically organic poultry has produced the largest organic meat sales due to shorter production cycles, integrated production, and lower price premiums. Organic beef production has been slower in developing because of smaller scale production and distribution, but is expected to increase as well. Some in the industry believe that there is a perception that organic meats are healthier, which may encourage increased demand.

Source: For more information visit <http://www.organicmonitor.com/>.

## 2004 BioFach Expands Global Participation

“The World Organic Trade Fair closed its doors again on 22 February after welcoming around 29,556 trade visitors. 1897 exhibitors from 68 countries presented their products and 86 percent rated the overall success of their exhibiting activities favorably. Many companies expect distinct growth this year. Two thirds of the exhibitors and one third of the visitors traveled to Nuremberg from abroad. A total of 99 nations were represented. The international participation at the event demonstrates the increasing global interest in organic production, processing and products.”

Source: For more information visit <http://www.BioFach.de>.

## USDA News

### FAS Organic Products Web Site

The FAS Organic Products Web site at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/organics/organics.html> offers constant updates in the "Hot Markets" section. Visit the page frequently for the latest news!

The most recent FAS international reports on organics markets and issues includes:

- European Union: European Hearing on Organic Food and Farming
- Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ag Situation and Update
- Taiwan: The 2003 Report

The FAS organic products Web site also features an article from USDA-ERS (Economic Research Service), "[Organic Agriculture: Gaining Ground](#)".

### Trade Shows: Ready for "All Things Organic"?

All Things Organic (Chicago, May 2-4, 2004)

We invite you to exhibit your products at All Things Organic. The trade show is an annual event, and will be located in Chicago for the first time.

Organic agriculture and demand for organic products is a sector that has been growing. Organic products have gained their space increasingly on supermarket shelves. *All Things Organic 2004* will be an excellent opportunity for U.S. companies to exhibit organic products in a show visited by domestic and international buyers.

For more information on exhibiting at these events, contact Sharon Cook in the USDA/FAS Trade Show Office at [Sharon.Cook@usda.gov](mailto:Sharon.Cook@usda.gov) or (202) 720-3425.



## Upcoming Events

For a complete list of events, visit the FAS Organic Products Website "[Calendar of Events for the Organic Industry](#)".

### International

- **March 24-28, 2004** – Third International IFOAM Coffee Conference, Kampala, Uganda. For more information visit: <http://www.fao.org/organicag/meet-e.htm>.
- **April 4-5, 2004** – Natural Products Europe/Organic Products Europe. For more information visit <http://www.naturalproducts.co.uk>.
- **May 11-13, 2004** – Vitafoods International Trade Show, Geneva, Switzerland. For more information visit: <http://www.vitafoods.eu.com>.

### Domestic

- **March 29-31, 2004** – First World Congress on Organic Food: Meeting the Challenges of Safety and Quality on Fruits Vegetables and Grains, East Lansing, Michigan. For more information visit <http://www.foodsafe.msu.edu/events>.
- **April 16-18, 2004** – National Nutritional Foods Association-Midwest, Louisville, Kentucky. For more information visit <http://www.nnfmw.org/pages.index.cfm>
- **May 2-4, 2004** – All Things Organic (Organic Products Trade Show), Chicago, IL. For more information visit <http://www.ota.com>.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- ❑ FAS, **AgExport Services Division's Organic Page** <http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/organics/organics.html>
- ❑ **National Organic Program** Web site - <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop>

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