

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2020 ISSUE 2



Johannes Kahl †
Researcher, educator and bon vivant

We are deeply saddened to announce the death of Johannes Kahl, the lead coordinator of the Organic Food System Programme OFSP and chairman of the International Research Network for Food Quality and Health FQH. Prof. Dr. Kahl, 52, died on Thursday, 12th November 2020.

We remember Johannes for his openness, curiosity, his thirst for and tenacity in pursuing knowledge, for his ability to recognise and call forth what an individual could contribute, and for his enjoyment of life and generosity of spirit as our cherished friend and companion.

For your inspiration, we remember you in our heart hidden but not forgotten.

OFSP Steering Committee and Board of FQH
Carola Strassner, David Gould, Denis Lairon, Ewa Rembiałkowska,
Flavio Paoletti, Jostein Hertwig, Machteld Huber, Susanne Bügel

Dear Partners,

as you likely know, the Organic Food System Program (OFSP) is a Core Initiative of the United Nations Sustainable Food Systems Program (SFSP) and with the overall mission to offer “Organic food systems as models and living laboratories for transformation processes towards sustainable food systems”. OFSP is committed to producing a comprehensive 5-year report to SFSP, based on 8 Deliverables, on which many of you have already graciously contributed. In the coming weeks and months, you should expect to receive a **series of surveys** and related requests to further help our collective effort to generate these Deliverables. Please be on the lookout! Your timely responses will be influential and most appreciated. If at any time you have questions or suggestions, we welcome you to contact us.

The Steering Committee

Carola Strassner, Jostein Hertwig, David Gould, Denis Lairon, Ewa Rembiałkowska, Flavio Paoletti & Susanne Bügel

Announcement

Our next **Partner Meeting** will take place in **February 2021**. This time it will be a virtual online meeting. Please check our website for an update in the following weeks: <https://organicfoodsystem.net/>



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Indicators for assessment of health effects of consumption of sustainable, organic school meals in Ecoregions (INSUM)

Funded by Ekhgastiftelsen, 2021-22

Ecoregions are territories devoted to organic, where farmers, citizens, public authorities, realize an agreement on sustainable management of local resources, based on the principles of organic farming and agroecology. Research to determine physical and mental health and well-being and sustainability in such systems needs suitable indicators and biomarkers. Biomarkers are a topic of intensive research and new biomarkers are evolving fast. Their use and the interpretation of data needs careful and informed knowledge; therefore, it is necessary to bring together scientists from a wide range of fields in order to establish a catalogue of suitable biomarkers and other indicators useful for different fields of research.

The aim of our project is to create a network of experts in the field of school meals, nutrition, organic food and diets, child health and other relevant areas, to define the most suitable indicators to be used for future research aiming at assessing diet and health in Ecoregions focusing on sustainable, organic production and consumption. For this we will organize 2 international workshops, with invited experts, followed by the development and publication of the workshop proceedings with consensus statements and guidelines. School meal programs will be in focus, because of their proven importance for future habits and changes of consumer behavior. We will also carry out a systematic literature review on organic food and health, with an analysis of all reported indicators differentiating consumers of organic vs. conventional food. All the project outcomes and networking actions aim to set a strong background for a multicenter Horizon Europe project about dietary transition, consumption of organic and sustainable food, health and wellbeing of inhabitants in ecoregions.

The first workshop focused on indicators of mental and societal health is planned to take place in Münster late autumn 2021.

Applicants:

Prof. Susanne Bügel, shb@nexs.ku.dk, University of Copenhagen

Assoc. Prof. Dominika Średnicka-Tober, dominika_srednicka_tober@sggw.edu.pl, Warsaw University of Life Sciences &

Prof. Carola Strassner, strassner@fh-muenster.de, Münster University of Applied Sciences



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Global Alliance for Organic Districts- taking organic to the next level



(from left: Jennifer Chang, Arunas Svitojus, Jostein Hertwig, Mayor Lee Cha- Young, Salvatore Basile, Dr. Zhou Zejiang and Eduardo Cuoco)

On Feb 6th, 2020, in Rome, Italy, Asian Local Governments for Organic Farming (ALGOA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Network of Eco-regions (IN.N.E.R.), supported by IFOAM-Organics International, IFOAM Asia, IFOAM EU, the Baltic Foundation of Lithuania and Organic Food System Programme.

On April 15th, the signers of the MoU in February invited other organizations such as Regeneration International, League of Organic Municipalities, Cities and Provinces of the Philippines (LOAMCP-PH), and flowing from this the **Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD)** was born <https://gaod.online/>

INAUGURAL DECLARATION

Presented during the 6th ALGOA Summit “Building Alliances Beyond Asia” October 12th -16th

THE FUTURE WE WANT AND THE NEED FOR ACTION NOW!

Sustainable food production and consumption are keys to increasing both human and ecological capacities to cope with major challenges such as health, food and nutrition security, climate change and loss of biodiversity. The transformation of global food and farming systems is also crucial to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to this end, building effective partnerships and scaling out examples of practical solutions is highly important.

Climate Change is one of the greatest existential threats to all communities on this planet. Agricultural systems that regenerate soil organic matter by drawing down carbon dioxide via photosynthesis are more resilient to weather extremes caused by climate change. These systems can also make a considerable contribution to reversing climate change by drawing carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and storing it in the soil.

Many of the municipalities and regions of the parties in the alliance are in rural areas and their main activities are related to agriculture. As such, they produce food from the land with the supply also to the population living in cities, attending schools and being cared for and represent a cultural heritage with nature and landscape in living vital ecosystems. Seen in the perspective of the need for an integrated food system approach for healthy and environmental friendly dietary patterns, this opens up for developing new rural-urban linkages to provide more and better jobs for youth in agriculture and food systems and in general, a potential for the revitalization of rural areas.



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The founding parties have established working models and living laboratories for transformation processes towards sustainable food and farming systems based on actions from local and sub national governments and integrating public and private institutions, civil society, farms, small and medium enterprises.

With the cooperation established and reaching out to all continents we will also be working to support likeminded initiatives at national and pan national level and in particular in their focus to combat climate change and biodiversity losses and to build a new economic system that is more environmentally friendly, supporting health and social fairness globally.

More than ever, amidst the current Coronavirus situation, the Global Alliance for Organic Districts together with other likeminded organizations must lead the way making definite impact in the local, national and global levels – and action is needed NOW!

VISION

The vision of the Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD) is to co- create a global network able to support the local development of Organic Districts in different territorial contexts and scaling out examples of practical solutions; the transformation of global food and farming systems as key towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in general and Sustainable Food Systems in particular.



The 6th ALGOA Summit “Building Alliances Beyond Asia”

From Oct 12th to the 16th, the 6th ALGOA Summit was held with Keynote speeches, Official Launch of GAOD and the Official Launch of Asian Organic Innovation and Technology Platform and 7 breakout sessions for discussions on the GAOD Work Groups.

The topics discussed in the Work Groups covered the integrated management of Organic Districts; tourism/gastronomy; regenerative/organic farming; food processing from distribution to Consumption and food and nutrition security, quality and health; social issues, social agriculture – communities’ enforcement and urban-rural relations; communication; and youth and organic agriculture. More than one thousand six hundred participants from 46 countries took part in the Summit sessions.

As part of this event ALGOA, GAOD and LOAMCP-Ph signed a MoU on **Group Membership** and Membership Exchange whereby any member of ALGOA and LOAMCP-Ph gain automatic membership in GAOD, and any GAOD member in Asia would get automatic membership in ALGOA.



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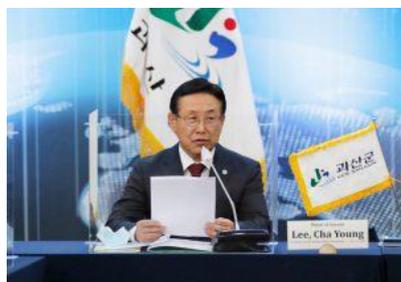
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Mayor Lee Cha Young delivers his Message of Greetings during the Opening Ceremony of the 6th ALGOA Summit and Jennifer Chang, Vice President, IFOAM Organics International and Executive Director of ALGOA, with South Korean officials at the Summit.

Task to be undertaken following the Declaration of the 6th ALGOA & Inaugural GAOD Summits

Based on the diverse representations at the Summit by notable persons from international organizations like the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and from local governments and from the in depth discussions by seven GAOD Working Groups ALGOA and GAOD agree to undertake the following tasks:

- Collect and disseminate research, best practices, mindsets, and values in Organic Districts facilitating the shift into healthy, sustainable, and inclusive food systems
- Develop a universally accessible platform on Organic Districts enabling interactions and knowledge sharing from different stakeholders
- Encourage local governments and other stakeholders to make action plans to develop Organic Districts and to provide access to affordable organic, sustainable food,
- Recognize the multi-functionality of Organic Agriculture to restore relationships in the food system and revitalize local communities through responsible production and consumption,
- Encourage the active participation of young people in the decision-making processes and in global networking as they are the key drivers of innovation and stewards of our future,
- Raise the awareness of the role of women in farming and food systems as they are the protectors of the land and mothers of our future generations.

ALGOA and GOAD express their utmost commitment to the fulfilment of these tasks compiled from the discussions at the 6 th ALGOA and the Inaugural GAOD Summits for delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



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A new study shows that organic food consumers have a reduced risk of Type 2 diabetes (T2M).

By Denis Lairon

Two cross-sectional studies recently showed that regular organic food consumers have a reduced risk of metabolic syndrome (- 31%; *Baudry et al, Eur J Nutr, 2017*) or of T2M (- 20/24%; *Sun et al, Nutrients, 2018*). The objective of this prospective study was thus to estimate the association between organic food consumption and the risk of T2D, controlling for potential confounding factors.

A total of 33,256 participants (76% women, mean age: 53 years) of the French NutriNet-Santé prospective cohort study who completed the organic food frequency questionnaire were included (2014-2019). The proportion of organic food (OF) in the diet (as weight) was computed. The associations between the proportion of OF in the diet and the risk of T2D were estimated using multivariable Hazard Ratio (HR) models adjusted for confounders (socio-demographic, anthropometric, lifestyle, medical and dietary/nutritional factors).

During follow-up (mean=4.05 y), 293 incident cases of T2D were identified. After adjustment for confounders, OF consumption was associated with a lower risk of T2D: participants with the highest quintile of OF consumption, compared with those with the lowest quintile, had 35% lower risk of T2D (95% CI= 0.43-0.97). Each increment of 5% in the proportion of OF in the diet was associated with 3% lower risk of T2D (HR 0.97, 95% CI= 0.95-0.99). Women showed a comparable T2M risk reduction but men not. Organic plant-based foods, but not animal foods, were associated with the risk reduction.

In this large prospective cohort study, a higher OF consumption was inversely associated with the risk of T2D. These data are in line with those previously published and with experimental data showing that chronic dietary exposure to pesticides promote type 2 diabetes traits, especially in females.

From: Kesse-Guyot E, Rebouillat P, Payrastré L, Allès B, Fezeu LK, Druésne-Pecollo N, Srour B, Bao W, Touvier M, Galan P, Hercberg S, Lairon D, Baudry J.

Prospective association between organic food consumption and the risk of type 2 diabetes: findings from the NutriNet-Santé cohort study.

Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act. 2020 Nov 9;17(1):136. doi: 10.1186/s12966-020-01038-y.

Thank you for reading. Stay healthy!



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