Organic farming is a production method that combines best environmental practices, respecting biodiversity, the preservation of natural resources and the assurance of a high level of animal welfare.

Throughout the industry, operators engaged in the mode of production and biological transformation meet strict specifications that emphasizes non-polluting environmentally friendly processes that respect the ecosystem and animals.

It is also a mode of production which exclude the use of GMOs and which limits the use of inputs. Rather, it focuses on the use of natural and renewable resources in the context of agricultural systems organized at the local level, and strictly limiting the use of synthetic chemicals.

Finally, organic farming is also keen to strengthen its links with the whole of society: through creation of employment, management participation in planning, preservation and promotion of local skills ...

In summary, the AB is:

- a system of **sustainable management** for agriculture.
- a wide variety of quality food and agricultural products,
- a source of **innovations** for agriculture, in an **agro-ecological** approach

› Some data
In France:
- Nearly 16 500 organic farms (i.e. 3.14% of holdings)
- 677 513 ha (i.e. 2.46% of useful French agricultural surface)
- 6 000 operators certified to process organic products
- More than 25 000 organic operators (producers, processors, distributors and importers)

Organic food market in France:
- Growth of over 10%/years in the last 10 years
- Increase purchases by the final consumer of 19% between 2008 and 2009

Within the European Union:
- 4.3% of total useful farming surface
- 2.9% of agricultural holdings

0.1 Regulatory documents

European Regulation


Règlement (CE) n° 889/2008 de la Commission du 5 septembre 2008 portant modalités d’application du règlement (CE) n° 834/2008 en ce qui concerne la production biologique, l’étiquetage et les contrôles

Règlement (CE) N° 1235/2008 du 8 décembre 2008 portant modalités d’application du règlement (CE) no 834/2007 en ce qui concerne le régime d’importation de produits biologiques en provenance des pays tiers

0.2 French documents

En l’attente de règles de production harmonisées pour ces produits et activités au niveau européen, des cahiers des charges ont été homologués en France:

- Cahier des charges concernant le mode de production biologique d'animaux d'élevage et complétant les dispositions des règlements (CE) n° 834/2007 du Conseil et (CE) n° 889/2008 de la Commission
- Cahier des charges "aliments pour animaux de compagnie à base de matières premières issues du mode de production biologique"
- Cahier des charges pour la restauration hors foyer à caractère commercial
1. Guides

- Inputs guide (french)
- Reading guide for enforcement of the rules (french)
- Labelling guide specifying the use of organic farming logo (composition, size, colors and logo position) (french)

2. Rules of use of the mark

The collective mark Organic Farming (AB) is governed by the provisions of the Code of intellectual property rights in force. Its use is subject to a regulation defined by INAO and the Ministry of Agriculture, Agro-food and Forestry.

- Rules of use of the mark (french)
- Briefing note, providing clarifications on the scope of the mark for certification purposes

Related Documents

› Download on our website www.inao.gouv.fr : L'INAO au service de l'Agriculture Biologique

Related content

› In the beginning...

Organic farming was developed in the 1920s in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and England. It made its appearance in France in the 1950s. The will to respect the balance of nature and biodiversity, in reaction to the initiation of the intensification of agriculture, were the principal motivation, and at the origin. Improving techniques, increasing interest of producers and consumers, development of public policy incentives have marked its history. The first private standard specifications appeared in 1972. France was one of the precursors, recognizing in 1980 "farming without synthetic chemicals" and then approving in 1981 and harmonizing the existing private specifications. 1991 was an important year for the AB with the adoption of a regulation at European level for crops. This was extended to the livestock sector in 1999. This regulation harmonizes the practices of the various Member States. In May 2013, the Minister of Agriculture launched the "Bio Ambition 2017" program. Its announced objective : to give new impetus to the development and the structuring of the sector, doubling the surfaces and greatly.