



STRATEGY

The Organic Sector in Danish Agriculture & Food Council 2024-2026



Danish Agriculture & Food Council
Sector for Organic Farming

Hokkaido
Økologiske
Månsens egen produktion
25,- kr.
Månsen, Østergård

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Økologiske
Månsens egen produktion
25,- kr.
Månsen, Østergård
VIA MÅNSEN

Group strategy The Danish Agriculture and Food Council

DENMARK AS A PIONEER COUNTRY

Danish Agriculture & Food Council (DAFC) is a first mover and works towards a world-leading and sustainable food and bio cluster.

We develop groundbreaking solutions based on strong farms and companies and contribute to Denmark's position as a pioneer country.

We provide the framework for an industry with deep-rooted values and a vision, where we ensure healthy food and good lives for both people and animals.



PHOTO: HENRIK BJERREGRV



Strategy The Organic Sector in Danish Agriculture & Food Council

VISION

We aim to be at the forefront of developing sustainable, organic production and sales.

MISSION STATEMENT

We develop organic practices as part of a sustainable future and create good business opportunities for our members and collaborators.

At the forefront of developing sustainable, organic production and sales

The world is facing significant challenges related to climate, biodiversity, soil fertility, and global food supply. The Danish parliament aims for a 70% reduction in climate impact and a doubling of organic farming by 2030. As part of the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies in the EU's Green Deal, there is a target of 25% organic agricultural land.

In short, the green transition must be accelerated, and organic farming is an important tool in this transition. As stated in the Danish agricultural agreement from 2021, a doubling of the organic area will contribute to the overall goal of a sustainable agricultural and horticultural production in terms of both the environment and climate.

In the DAFC Organic Sector, we emphasize the importance of delivering on this contribution meaning that organic farming takes responsibility for a healthy aquatic environment, improved biodiversity, and lower climate footprint, while ensuring the welfare of our animals. This requires creating favourable conditions for organic farmers and businesses and strengthening sales and professional development in the organic sector.

Building on organic farming as a unique, Danish strength, we aim to be at the forefront of the development of sustainable organic production. The vision is unfolded in the strategy for the Organic Sector, which sets the direction for the DAFC's work with organic production for the period 2024-2026.

Enjoy your reading!

The Organic Sector in
Danish Agriculture & Food Council

ORGANIC
PRODUCTION
PART OF A
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



PHOTO: HENRIK BJERREGRAV

The Organic Sector in the DAFC has defined a series of strategic focus areas for the next three years.

Organic farming as a tool in the green transition

In the coming years, agriculture and the food sector face an ambitious, green transition. Environmental and climate impact must be significantly reduced, better protection of drinking water is essential, and there is a need for more nature to halt the decline in biodiversity. Organic farming plays a central role here, because it is based on a holistic approach to sustainability, where we develop our production in a natural interaction with living biological systems. We will strive for a food system with fewer chemicals, delivering a lower climate and environmental footprint, and enhancing nature and biodiversity.

Climate action in organic production

We will strive to further develop a resource efficient organic food system, delivering results aligned with national goals and meeting the demand for climate friendly products in the market. We will work to ensure that organic farmers have access to the knowledge and tools necessary to achieve these goals, and we will make it possible to document climate efforts across the farm. We will work towards exploring measures such as reducing methane emissions from grazing cows and utilizing natural nitrification inhibitors.

360-degree nature and biodiversity

We aim to contribute to making biodiversity measurable and to developing cultivation and livestock production systems that support biodiversity in cultivated soil, on cultivated areas, as well as in the surrounding areas. We will test new cultivation systems that can contribute to the establishment of robust populations of pollinators and other beneficial insects through functional biodiversity. We will also focus on how organic farmers can translate the requirement for 4 percent non-productive areas into as much nature as possible on their property.

Clean drinking water and a healthy environment

We have some of the world's best water, and we should be able to drink it safely. Therefore, we must take good care of the areas under which our drinking water is formed. One way to achieve this is through increased organic farming, where artificial pesticides are not used. We must ensure that no more nutrients are released than nature can tolerate. Organic farming can also play a role here if we ensure a gentle organic cultivation method, using less nitrogen and keeping track of our nutrients.



PHOTO: HENRIK BJERREGRAV



PHOTO: HENRIK BJERREGRAV



PHOTO: JESPER TRUELSEN

Strategic goals

- ✓ We will enhance resource efficiency by increasing organic crop yields by 5 percent with the same input.
- ✓ We will support the development of more documented climate measures for organic production.
- ✓ We will work towards making ESGreenTool Climate a relevant and utilized tool for the organic farmer.
- ✓ We will strengthen the narrative about the importance of grazing animals for biodiversity.
- ✓ We will support the development of Field Ecospace – a new model for assessing agricultural considerations for nature.
- ✓ We will work to ensure nature initiatives on all organic farms.
- ✓ We will work towards making organic farming an attractive production method in sensitive areas.

We will
contribute to
making
biodiversity
measurable

STRATEGIC GOALS AND FOCUS AREAS

Closer to the organic consumer

Denmark is no. 1 in the world when it comes to consumers buying organic products. However, with society's goal to double organic farmland, consumption, and exports by 2030, we need even more people to join the organic journey – both domestically and internationally. We must become even better at showcasing and communicating all the benefits that come with choosing organic products and meals. Additionally, we need to make organic living present, visible, and vibrant in local communities. It is about people, animals, and a healthy planet, where we think green and act green.



PHOTO: HENRIK BJERREGRÅV

To strengthen the narrative of organic products' added value

In a market where many consumers have become very price-conscious, there is a great need to strengthen the narrative of what organic products have to offer. Together with organic businesses and farmers, we need to work towards highlighting the many contributions of organic practices to climate, environment, nature, health, and animal welfare, thereby adding greater value in the market. We also need to make the principles of organic farming visible.

The value of organic products in retail

Families with children have been an important customer segment for organic producers for many years, as they often purchase many products with the organic label. However, in recent years, families with children have bought slightly less organic products. We will work to highlight the qualities, taste, and options of organic products for consumers, thereby supporting the value and increased sales of organic products in Danish retail chains. Danes are willing to join this journey. Looking 1-3 years ahead, they expect to buy more organic products – this also applies to the young generation, who are the future organic consumers.

More organic awareness in the food service sector

Danes are increasingly having meals

outside the home – in canteens, in restaurants, and on the go. Therefore, organic awareness will play a greater role in the food service sector. Chefs are experts in gastronomy and taste, but the knowledge and skills of professionals need to be developed so that organic products become a natural part of sustainable kitchens.

We aim to integrate gastronomy, taste, and organic ingredients and engage in promoting the transition to organic meals in professional, public, and private kitchens.

Danish organic products abroad

The interest in Danish organic products and gastronomy is great worldwide. We must leverage this potential for the benefit of organic businesses and farmers, and for Denmark as a green export nation. We aim to contribute to the growth of organic exports by initiating campaigns and branding activities that introduce Danish organic products to the world. Together with authorities, we will work to remove trade barriers and achieve smooth trade of organic goods across borders – especially outside the EU.

Organic, plant-based products

We will support the development of new organic, plant-based products by initiating development activities aimed at cultivating organic crops for human consumption. Additionally, we aim to become even better at harnessing the potential of growing organic vegetables and fruits – an area where Denmark currently imports significant quantities from abroad. Finally, we will strike a blow for the Danish organic potato.

Danes expect to
buy more organic
products in the
coming years



PHOTO: DAFC



PHOTO: ANETTE MARIA SYSKA



PHOTO: COLOURBOX

Strategic goals

- ✓ We will drive events and communication efforts that strengthen consumers' awareness of the achievements made by the organic sector.
- ✓ We aim to maintain and expand the world's highest organic consumption share in both retail and food service.
- ✓ We will stage organic production as a tool for sustainable menus in professional kitchens.
- ✓ We will put focus on gastronomy, raw materials, and direct sales as catalysts for local organic growth.
- ✓ We will work towards Denmark becoming a net exporter of organic foods.
- ✓ We will conduct at least three export initiatives with company participation in both neighbouring and foreign markets every year.
- ✓ We will initiate efforts to facilitate market access for Danish organic products in countries outside the EU.
- ✓ We will support initiatives aimed at increasing the volume of Danish organic horticultural crops and potatoes.
- ✓ We will strengthen the development efforts in plant-based foods and the cultivation of organic grains and protein for human consumption.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND FOCUS AREAS

High standard of welfare in organic livestock

Animals are sentient beings entitled to a good life. It is not just about a life free from suffering and pain, but also about a life where we recognise that animals can experience joy and quality of life. In the regulation on organic production, there are requirements of animals having access to the outdoors, extra space in the barns, access to roughage, and having additional bonding time between parent animals and offspring. In this way, we create the framework for offering animals a dignified life. We need to improve our communication to consumers about this. At the same time, we should work towards implementing initiatives that contribute to even more health and welfare in organic livestock production.

Communication on organic farming and animal welfare

Organic farming is in a league of its own when it comes to providing agricultural animals with life opportunities that align with their physiology, natural behaviour, and well-being. Organic farmers and businesses must collaborate to highlight the specific initiatives taken for organic livestock, so the value in the market increases.


Robust, organic animals through breeding

To achieve robust animals, adapted to organic conditions with requirements for natural feeding and access to out-

door environments, we will increase our focus on the development of organic breeding lines in livestock production and aquaculture. We will also support the testing of alternative pedigrees and breeds. Animals bred to exploit organic conditions optimally will provide greater survival, less stress, higher welfare, and better resource utilization.

Health and well-being

We will strive to enhance survival rates in organic systems. Simultaneously, we will work towards a healthy organic livestock production, where targeted disease prevention and the development of alternative treatment methods contrib-



We create the framework for a more natural life for animals – and we need to make our efforts visible

ute to the phase-out and reduction of veterinary drugs. This involves the use of dewormers in organic production, as well as the use of antibiotics in organic milk production and organic aquaculture.

Feed that meets the needs of the animals

In relation to feeding organic livestock, we will focus on improving the digestibility and nutrient composition of the feed to better match the physiological needs of the animals. Simultaneously, this has a positive effect in terms of reducing methane emissions and excess nutrient discharge.

The natural animal life

We aim to promote stable systems where animals can engage in natural behaviour. This may involve improving stables and outdoor areas to eliminate stress-related behaviours such as tail-biting. It may also entail promoting systems where ruminants are predominantly fed on grass, or systems where cow and calf are together for a longer period. Furthermore, we will work towards fewer physiological interventions in organic farming. This may include promoting breeding for polled cows to phase out the need for dehorning on organic dairy farms. In organic pig production, we will work towards eliminating the need for physical castration of piglets.

Strategic goals

- ✓ We will drive events and communication efforts that strengthen consumers' awareness of animal welfare initiatives in organic farming.
- ✓ We will support the development of organic breeding lines and the testing of alternative pedigrees and breeds.
- ✓ We will contribute to communication efforts and development work aimed at increasing the survival rate of organic livestock.
- ✓ We will carry out initiatives that contribute to reducing the use of antibiotics in organic cattle production by 30%.
- ✓ We will contribute to development activities that reduce the need for anthelmintics (parasiticides) in organic egg production.
- ✓ We will support efforts aimed at optimising digestibility and nutrient composition in feed for organic livestock.
- ✓ We will support the development of organic stable systems that focus on animals engaging in a more natural behaviour.
- ✓ We will work towards ensuring that across breeds, at least 75% of genetic material from polled bulls is used by the end of 2026.
- ✓ We will work towards making immuno-castration possible in organic pig production.

Sturdiness and balance in organic production



PHOTO: HENRIK BJERREGRAV

In a world increasingly shaped by fluctuations in climate and economy, it is crucial that we have a robust food system. We therefore need to strengthen the circular approach in organic production and maintain a focus on a healthy and fertile soil, where we rely on living biological processes and minimize dependence on external inputs. We also need to enhance the financial resilience of organic production by promoting versatile production methods, where collaboration between farmers and businesses fosters more diversity, thereby minimizing risk.

The concept of ecology

The concept of ecology revolves around producing on nature's terms and recycling resources. Therefore, we need to promote a cultivation system where more nitrogen-fixing crops are used, and more recycled and degassed nutrients are employed. We must take new steps towards climate neutral and fossil free organic farming that is self-sufficient in energy and feed.

At the same time, we should support the establishment of more biogas plants that receive organic waste from society and convert it into green energy and fertilizer for organic farmers.



PHOTO: JESPER TRUENSEN

A vibrant and fertile organic soil

We will work to enhance the fertility of the soil on organic farms and disseminate knowledge about the positive contributions of livestock to this goal. We aim to gain new insights into gentle and regenerative organic field management with minimal soil tillage. We will encourage the widespread use of soil analysis as a tool for all organic farmers. Additionally, we will support the adoption of modern technology and lightweight machinery in the fields to maintain a porous soil teeming with life.

A profession in balance

With a political goal of doubling organic farming, the path for ambitious development has been paved. However, for those who advance organic practices every day, it must also be a sustainable livelihood. More individuals need to be financially resilient in a market with significant fluctuations from year to year. For some, optimization within existing branches of operation may be the solution. For others, greater diversity in production, direct sales, in-house processing, and agritourism could lead to a better balance. For both farmers and organic consultants, it is crucial that state administration improves to maintain job satisfaction and foster the development of organic practices.

The credibility of organic production

The high level of consumer trust that organic production has gained domestically is largely due to a robust government eco-label. Behind the label is a monitoring system where all farms and businesses are inspected annually. All inspection results are made public, and demonstrating inspections with as few errors as possible provides great transparency and credibility. The monitoring system must be credible and motivating, and the occurrence of errors should be kept to a minimum.



More organic farmers need to be financially cushioned for a market with significant fluctuations from year to year.

PHOTO: HENRIK BJERREGRAV

Strategic goals

- ✓ We will work towards making it possible to use more recycled nutrients in organic farming.
- ✓ We aim to increase the national self-sufficiency with protein and feed grain in organic livestock production.
- ✓ We will support development activities aimed at fossil-free organic farming based on solar, wind, and biogas energy.
- ✓ We will disseminate knowledge about good organic farming practices and support the use of soil analysis.
- ✓ We will work towards integrating more organic functions into digital tools and promote robot-driven solutions in organic farming practices.
- ✓ We will work to increase organic farmers' focus on financial indicators such as return on investment and solvency ratio.
- ✓ We will support the development of advisory and decision support tools for the versatile organic farms.
- ✓ We will implement initiatives that contribute to improving the subsidy system and organic regulations.
- ✓ We will strive to strengthen collaboration between farmers and businesses throughout the organic value chain.
- ✓ We will undertake efforts aimed at reducing the number of remarks in organic inspections by the end of 2026.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND FOCUS AREAS

The organic farmers of the future

Currently, many organic farmers are ready for a generational change. There is a need to attract young farmers who can take up the baton of future organic farming. At the same time, the current era calls for solutions that reflect new consumption patterns as well as new ways of viewing modern agricultural production. Even in organic production, there is a renewed need to research, develop, and experiment with new crop types and production systems that are not widespread today but have the potential to contribute to the green transition while also taking social responsibility.

Generational change

We will disseminate knowledge about organic farming to future farmers and support the development of sustainable generational changes, enabling young farmers to take over. We will make it easy for all organic farmers to network and access knowledge and research, ensuring that development and innovation continue to flourish and emerge from agriculture. We will strive to create good jobs in organic farming that can contribute to innovation and development. This applies throughout the chain from farm to fork and among those who work to produce and disseminate knowledge to the organic industry.

Organic farming in educational institutions

In agricultural and food training programmes, we aim to inspire a cohesive organic mindset all the way from farm to fork. Through activities such as "From Farm to Fork," "Eco-Trainee of the Year," and the "Young Organic Farmers' Network," we aim to motivate young individuals towards a future in sustainable agriculture and food industries. We will collaborate with agricultural schools to implement specialized courses in organic farming and facilitate networks for educators in the field of organic farming.

We want to motivate young people to take part in organic farming and a sustainable food industry.



Rural life and green care

Organic farming and organic food businesses have a significant role to play in contributing to growth, employment, and communities in rural areas. Organic farming also has the potential to address social responsibility, where the positive effects of nature and livestock are used as tools to provide new courage and opportunities to vulnerable youth or individuals at the edge of the job market.

Future organic varieties

We will strive to establish frameworks for variety development and plant breeding that can support the advancement of organic production, both through traditional breeding methods and new techniques. We aim to ensure access to robust plants with high disease resistance, better nutrient utilization, and increased yields.

In the EU's organic regulation, goals have been set for the eventual use of 100 percent organic seeds. We will support this by advocating for a well-functioning system for the handling and qualification of suitable organic seeds. Additionally, we will set targets for the new steps to be taken towards increased utilization.

Agroforestry and regenerative agriculture

The future of organic agriculture should be developed towards an increased contribution to biodiversity and landscape quality, as well as climate resilience and carbon sequestration. We will contribute to the development of agroforestry and other alternative cultivation systems, where trees and crops are grown in integrated systems, making the operation multidimensional, and exploring opportunities both in depth and height. We will also support the application of regenerative cultivation methods in an organic context.

Strategic goals

- ✓ Together with DLBR's (Danish advisory service collaboration owned by Danish farmers) advisors on organic production, we will create attractive workplaces and good conditions for generational changes in organic farming.
- ✓ Together with the Innovation Centre for Organic Agriculture, we will contribute to disseminating innovative knowledge about organic farming to a wide audience.
- ✓ Alongside International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems (ICROFS), we aim to ensure an ambitious research effort within organic production.
- ✓ We will create networks for young farmers and facilitate a networking group for teachers in organic production at the agricultural technical schools.
- ✓ We will support organic production acting as a catalyst for local growth and green care.
- ✓ We will work for variety development and plant breeding that ensure robust plants for organic production.
- ✓ We will strive for the use of 100 percent organic seeds in selected organic field crops of grains, grasses, and legumes, as well as an increased share of organic seeds in vegetable production.
- ✓ We will support the development of organic agroforestry and the use of regenerative methods in organic farming.



What we will work for in the period 2024-26

FOCUS

Organic farming as a tool in the green transition

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THE PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

The Principle of Health

Organic agriculture must sustain and improve the health of soil, plants, animals, humans, and the planet as an indivisible unit.

The Principle of Fairness

Organic agriculture should build on relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the common environment and life opportunities.

The Principle of Ecology

Organic agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them, and help sustain them

The Principle of Care

Organic agriculture should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well-being of current and future generations and the environment.

Source: IFOAM

PURPOSE ACCORDING TO THE EU'S ORGANIC REGULATION

Organic production is a comprehensive system of agricultural management and food production. It combines best practices in environmental and climate areas, a high level of biodiversity, conservation of natural resources, and the use of high animal welfare standards and high production standards in line with the increasing demand from consumers for products produced using natural substances and processes. Organic production thus plays a dual role in society, where on the one hand it supplies a specific market meeting consumers' demand for organic products, and on the other hand, it provides publicly available goods that contribute to the protection of the environment and animal welfare as well as rural development.

Source: EU-Kommissionen



PHOTO: HENRIK BIERREGRAV



Danish Agriculture & Food Council
Sector for Organic Farming

Danish Agriculture &
Food Council, Sector for Organic
Farming, Axeltorv 3, DK 1609
Copenhagen V.

+45 3339 4000
info@lf.dk
lf.dk