



Progress Report: ITALY

Work Package: WP01 - Regulation & policy framework regarding production, use, and transparency of organic seed

Dissemination level: Public

Publication Date: 23/12/2020

Authors: Livia Ortolani, Matteo Petitti & Riccardo Bocci (Rete Semi Ruali), (IFOAM Organics Europe)

WP Leader: Freya Schaefer (FiBL-DE)



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090. The information provided reflects the views of the authors. The Research Executive Agency or the SERI are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



1. About the report

This report is part of the Work Package 01 of the [LIVESEED project](#), which explores EU Member States in terms of their implementation and best practices connected to the EU Organic Regulations, in the contexts of national regulatory and policy frameworks.

After the [Country Report on the National Visit](#) and the Report of the [Regional/National Workshop](#), this Progress Report shall, on one hand, reflect on actions taken by stakeholders ([blue tables](#)). Those actions have been formulated during the National workshop, but such actions might also have been carried out by the stakeholders without having made a respective commitment before. On the other hand, this report shall elaborate developments in regulation compared to the previous reports, ergo the previous years, of the LIVESEED project ([green tables](#)).

To promote an easy assesment, actions and developments are sub-categorized into different topics, similar to those used in the workshop report.

This report has been produced in the framework of the Horizon 2020-funded project LIVESEED. The main aim of LIVESEED is to boost the production and use of organic seeds and plant breeding for organic agriculture across Europe. It is co-ordinated by IFOAM EU, and its scientific coordinator is FIBL-CH.

For further information concerning this report, please contact:
Martin Sommer: martin.sommer@organicseurope.bio

For further information concerning the LIVESEED project, please contact:
IFOAM EU Group
Bram Moeskops: bram.moeskops@ifoam-eu.org

LIVESEED has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090. The information provided reflects the views of the authors. Neither the Research Executive Agency nor SERI is responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090. The information provided reflects the views of the authors. The Research Executive Agency or the SERI are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



2. Evaluation of Progress

1.1. Database

1.1.1. Actions identified during the national workshop

| Stakeholders work together to improve the database | |
|--|---------|
| The project BIOSEME SIB, managed by CREA-DC which is working to improve the database has entered in a second phase. The importance of investing in database improvement have been recognized by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture and the stakeholders have another opportunity to contribute in this process. This project is managing the expert group, working on derogation lists. | Ongoing |

1.1.2. Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

| Improving the database | |
|---|---------|
| Stakeholders have tested the new organic DB and sent their comments to Rete Semi Rurali. RSR is then collecting comments and sending them to the CREA-DC. | Ongoing |

1.1.3. Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

| Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project | |
|---|---------|
| <p>The confirmation of the project BIOSEME, and the related expert group, represents a new investment in database improvement and it is a significant progress in general development for increasing the use of organic seeds in Italy.</p> <p>To improve the user experience of the database, RSR is informally collecting feedbacks by users and then pass them to the CREA-DC.</p> | Ongoing |

1.2. Derogations

1.2.1. Regulatory and general developments concerning derogations

| Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project | |
|--|---------------|
| <p>The new organic DB just entered into force in 2019 and we still have a lot of crops in the green list, i.e. crops that are not available as organic seed, resulting in automatic derogation. Some are in the yellow list, i.e. crops that need a derogation request, and we still have no crops on the red list. For 2020 we don't have yet any information about derogations, the last statistics have been presented by CREA-DC at LIVESEED National workshop. There is the idea to start the red list with alfalfa, but this decision should be made in the next meeting of the expert group and then validated by the Organic Committee within the Ministry of Agriculture.</p> | Period / Date |

1.3. Expert Group

1.3.1. Actions identified during the national workshop

| The work of the expert group will be improved and allows to include some species on the red list |
|--|
|--|



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090. The information provided reflects the views of the authors. The Research Executive Agency or the SERI are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



| | |
|---|---------|
| The expert group is planning new meetings from September 2020. Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 crisis the expert groups did not have the opportunity to meet in the last months. | Ongoing |
|---|---------|

1.3.2. Regulatory and general developments concerning the expert group

| Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project | |
|---|---------|
| The Covid-19 crisis did not allow to have general developments concerning the expert group. However, the group, nominated last year, is still in place and will continue their activity starting from September 2020. | Ongoing |

1.4. Research

1.4.1. Actions identified during the national workshop

| Specific experiments to facilitate the registration of new varieties suitable for organic production are set up at national level and with the support of public funding | |
|--|----------|
| The specific Seed Action Plan for organic farming, asked by the stakeholders during the National Workshop, is still not in place. However, those type of actions require a longer political discussion process. Considering the Covid 19 crisis all those types of processes have been slow down in Italy. | On going |

1.4.2. Non-committed, concrete actions by stakeholders (may be left empty)

| Definition of experts in the EU groups on the temporary experiment on organic varieties | |
|--|----------------|
| RSR defined together with CREA-DC the Italian expert for the EU expert groups on different crops | September 2020 |

1.4.3. Regulatory and general developments concerning research

| Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project | |
|--|---------------|
| The National Workshop was an important opportunity to make clear with all the stakeholders and with the Public Institutions the connection between Database Management, Seed Availability and Research to develop Organic Seeds. A new National Plan on Organic Seeds could be negotiated in 2021. | Period / Date |

1.5. Production and Use of Organic Seeds

1.5.1. Regulatory and general developments concerning production and use of organic seeds

| Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project | |
|--|---------------|
| No data available on the amounts of organic seed used and produced. | Period / Date |

1.6. Other

1.6.1. Actions identified during the national workshop



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090. The information provided reflects the views of the authors. The Research Executive Agency or the SERI are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



The Ministry asks the stakeholders for support for the discussion of delegated acts of the new organic regulation (848/2018)

Rete Semi Rurali, with the contribution of other stakeholders, had a series of communications with the Ministry of Agriculture in which gave specific recommendations to support the discussion on delegate acts related to organic heterogeneous material, as asked by the Ministry during the National workshop in September 2019.

January-
July 2020

3. Summary of Progress

- The importance of investing in database improvement has been recognized by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture. The confirmation of the project BIOSEME, and the related expert group, has the potential to drastically improve the quality of the database and to use derogations. A key factor on which the success of such an improved database will depend on in Italy, is whether enough seed producers will be stimulated to offer more supplies on this platform rather than relying only on the already established channels.
- A large amount of work still lies ahead with regard to derogations. For most crops, not even a derogation request is required. A major task will be to move more crops to the 'yellow list' (derogation authorization required) and into category 1 (sufficient organic seed available, no authorizations for derogation). The movement of alfalfa into category 1 is an important step in this process and the newly established expert group will play a crucial role in adding further crops to this list.
- Italy will participate in the temporary experiment on organic variety testing, coordinated by DG SANTE. Other activities regarding variety testing and research will depend on the upcoming organic action plan.
- No information and training activities have taken place regarding organic seed or the seed database.
- Unfortunately, very little information is available on the market of organic seed in Italy. This makes it impossible to assess the exact progress in the production and use of organic seed.
- Italy was the only country without a 'declaration on organic seed', listing stakeholder commitments. It can be speculated that the absence of such a list of commitments was a contributing factor to relatively small steps in Italy, compared to other countries that had a national workshop.



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090. The information provided reflects the views of the authors. The Research Executive Agency or the SERI are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



Annex I: Overview of Organic Regulation

The following tables show relevant articles in the organic regulation and give support to the evaluation on national developments/progresses in this report.

1.1. Database (T1)

| EC No 889/2008 | |
|---|--|
| Article 48: Database | <p>1. Each Member State shall ensure that a computerised database is established for the listing of the varieties for which seed or seed potatoes obtained by the organic production method are available on its territory.</p> <p>2. The database shall be managed either by the competent authority of the Member State or by an authority or body designated for this purpose by the Member State, hereinafter referred to as 'manager of the database'. Member States may also designate an authority or a private body in another country.</p> |
| Article 49: Registration | <p>3. Each Member State shall decide in which period of the year the database has to be regularly updated for each species or group of species cultivated on its territory. The database shall hold information with regard to that decision.</p> |
| Article 51: Registered information | <p>1. For each registered variety and for each supplier, the database referred to in Article 48 shall contain at least the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the scientific name of the species and the variety; (b) the name and contact details of the supplier or his representative; (c) the area where the supplier can deliver the seed or seed potatoes to the user in the usual time needed for the delivery; (d) the country or region in which the variety is tested and approved [...] (e) the date from which the seed or seed potatoes will be available; (f) the name and/or code number of the control authority or control body in charge of the control of the operator <p>2. The supplier shall immediately inform the manager of the database if any of the registered varieties are no longer available. The amendments shall be recorded in the database.</p> <p>3. Besides the information specified in paragraph 1, the database shall contain a list of the species listed in Annex X (Species for which organically produced seed or seed potatoes are available in sufficient quantities and for a significant number of varieties [...]).</p> |
| Article 52: Access to information | <p>1. The information in the database referred to in Article 48 shall be available through the internet, free of cost, to the users of seed or seed potatoes and to the public. [...]</p> <p>2. The Member States shall ensure that all users [of seed and seed potatoes] are informed, at least once a year, about the system and how to obtain the information in the database.</p> |
| Article 53: Registration -fee | <p>3. Each registration may be subject to the levying of a fee, which shall represent the cost of inserting and maintaining the information in the database [...]. The competent authority of the Member State shall approve the amount of the fee charged by the manager of the database.</p> |



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090. The information provided reflects the views of the authors. The Research Executive Agency or the SERI are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.



1.2. Derogations (T2)

| EC No 889/2008 | |
|---|---|
| Article 49: Registration | 2. Any variety which has not been registered in the database shall be considered as unavailable. |
| Article 6: Specific principles applicable to agricultural activities | (i) without prejudice to Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 and to the national plant variety rights granted under Member States' national law, the possibility for farmers to use plant reproductive material obtained from their own farms in order to foster genetic resources adapted to the special conditions of organic production; |
| Article 45: Use of seed or vegetative propagating material not obtained by the organic production method | 3. Species for which it is established that organically produced seed or seed potatoes are available in sufficient quantities and for a significant number of varieties in all parts of the Community are set out in Annex X. The species listed in Annex X may not be subject of authorisations pursuant to paragraph 1(b), unless these are justified by one of the purposes referred to in paragraph 5(d). |
| | 4. Member States may delegate the responsibility for granting the authorisation referred to in paragraph 1(b) to another public administration under their supervision or to the control authorities or control bodies referred to in Article 27 of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007. |
| | 5. Authorisation to use seed or seed potatoes not obtained by the organic production method may only be granted in the following cases: (a) where no variety of the species which the user wants to obtain is registered in the database referred to in Article 48 (b) where no supplier, meaning an operator who markets seed or seed potatoes to other operators, is able to deliver the seed or seed potatoes before sowing or planting in situations where the user has ordered the seed or seed potatoes in reasonable time; (c) where the variety which the user wants to obtain is not registered in the database referred to in Article 48 and the user is able to demonstrate that none of the registered alternatives of the same species are appropriate and that the authorisation therefore is significant for his production; (d) where it is justified for use in research, test in small-scale field trials or for variety conservation purposes agreed by the competent authority of the Member State. |
| Article 45: Use of seed or vegetative propagating material not obtained by the organic production method | 6. The authorisation shall be granted before the sowing of the crop. |
| | 7. The authorisation shall be granted only to individual users for one season at a time and the authority or body responsible for the authorisations shall register the quantities of seed or seed potatoes authorised. |
| | 8. By way of derogation from paragraph 7, the competent authority of the Member State may grant to all users a general authorisation: (a) for a given species when and in so far as the condition laid down in paragraph 5(a) is fulfilled; b. for a given variety when and in so far as the conditions laid down in paragraph 5(c) are fulfilled |
| Article 45: Use of seed or vegetative propagating material not obtained by the organic production method | 9. Authorisation may only be granted during periods for which the database is updated in accordance with Article 49(3) |
| | 1. The authorities or bodies designated to grant authorisations in accordance with Article 45 shall register all authorisations and shall make this information available in a report to the competent authority of the Member State and to the manager of the database. |
| Article 54: Annual report | |
| Article 55: Summary report | The competent authority of the Member State shall, before 31 March each year, collect the reports and send a summary report covering all authorisations of the Member State from the previous calendar year to the Commission and to the other Member States.[...] The information shall be published in the database [...]. The competent authority may delegate the task of collecting the reports to the manager of the database. |



LIVESEED is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under contract number 17.00090. The information provided reflects the views of the authors. The Research Executive Agency or the SERI are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

