



Progress Report: SPAIN

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

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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 and committed to during the National workshop by the Declaration of Organic Seed (see Annex I in Report of the Regional/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.

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2. Evaluation of Progress

1.1. Database

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

Xxx	
<p>The new person in charge of the database in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policies has been contacted and informed on the Liveseed Project and has received the “How to implement the organic regulation to increase production & use of organic seed – Policy Recommendations for national and authorities” Liveseed booklet in Spanish version.</p> <p>The database was discussed during the MECOECO meeting of autumn 2019 and in October 2019, the MecoEco members and other experts across Spain were invited to become part of the National Expert Group on Organic Seeds and Organic Heterogeneous Vegetable Material.</p>	<p>August 2020</p>

1.1.2. Regulatory and general developments concerning the database

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>The Ministry of Agriculture has made an effort to increase the frequency of the update of the National Database of Organic Seeds, although changes in the Ministry structure and the retirement of the person who had created the database and had been in charge since its creation have limited its update seasonally. The department in charge of the national database is now the Sub-direction General for Food Quality and Sovereignty.</p>	<p>Since June 2019</p>

1.2. Derogations

1.2.1. Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Analysis of causes of exceptions to the use of organic seeds, to be able to define better requirements in a harmonized way through improvement of the application of authorisations	
<p>The information concerning the derogations has been asked to the National Competent Authority but as Derogations are authorised by each of the 17 Regional Competent Authorities, the information from last year's (2019) derogations is still being compiled and will be analysed by the Ministry's public workers due to the data protection law and then shared with the organic sector.</p> <p>From the information received from different Organic Control Authorities and Bodies, it seems that, although the production offer and use of organic seeds have increased, the number of derogations has also grown in the last years because the surface of organic production is growing faster. (according to provisional data of 2019 the increase is more than 108.475 Ha and was more than 164.000 on 2018).</p>	<p>Expected date for having the report: end of 2020</p>

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

Xxx	
<p>The person in charge of the Derogations in each of the 17 Regional Competent Authorities will be contacted personally and the “How to implement the organic regulation to increase production & use of organic seed – Policy Recommendations for national and authorities” LIVESEED booklet (in Spanish version) will be presented to them.</p>	<p>4th quarter 2020 and 1st quarter 2021</p>



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Competent Authorities of most of the Regions have delegated the derogations process to Control Authorities or Control Bodies (depending on whether the control and certification has been delegated in a public or private body). The regions that haven't delegated the derogations process are those where Competent and Control Authority are in the same department: the Canary Islands or Extremadura. Castilla la Mancha's and Aragón's Competent Authorities have kept the final decision on whether to authorize or not the derogations, but the Control Bodies are responsible for receiving the petitions from the farmers and then transferring them to the CA and then going back to the farmers with the CA's final decision.

1.3. Expert Group

1.3.1. Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Request the Ministry to create a working group in which representatives of all competent authorities, control authorities, organic producers, actors of the agri-food chain and representatives of civil society are involved

The request for the creation of a working group was presented to the Subdirector General for Food Quality and Organic Farming in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policies in April 2020. The Department of Organic Agriculture contacted all stakeholders involved in organic and seed production aiming to create a mixt working group. The invitation to participate was sent to: all Regional Competent Authorities and Spanish Organic Control Authorities and Bodies that are part of the National Advisory Body MECOECO, the organic sector organizations (such as SEAE, ECOVALIA and INTERECO), the Spanish Networks for seed producers and for local and traditional varieties conservation and production and the Spanish Office for Vegetable Varieties. The response on behalf of most of the regional competent authorities and of the Spanish Office for Vegetable Varieties was nil so it has been postponed until the beginning of 2021. This process is still ongoing as SEAE and ECOVALIA will continue insisting and also accompanying the Ministry.

From April 2019

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

Xxx

A workshop is being organised by SEAE to try to get regional competent authorities and the Spanish Office for Vegetable Varieties in the establishment of a task force on the implementation of the new organic regulation on seeds and plant reproductive propagating material. It will be an online event with the participation of a member of the organic department and one from the Spanish office of vegetable varieties (both from the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture), a member of a Spanish regional competent authority and a member of the Organic Area from the Commission that could explain the Commission's view and aim of the changes in the new organic regulation. It will be organised in coordination with INTERECO (organic control authorities association), some competent authorities that we've managed to get involved, breeders, the national network of local varieties associations, organic control bodies and, of course, ECOVALIA.

13th October 2020

1.3.3. Regulatory and general developments concerning the expert group

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project

New structure in the Ministry concerning Organic Farming: There have been changes in the Ministry Of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policies structure and from the beginning of 2020, the National Competent Authority on the Organic Control System is a different Sub-direction than the

Since 2020



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one responsible for Organic Regulation and the organic seeds database. However, up to now, the resources allocated for Organic in the Ministry are still the same.

1.4. Research

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

Xxx	
Different Research centres and entities have been contacted by UPV, SEAE, NEIKER and ECOVALIA and many have become interested in starting research on organic production and some, in organic seeds' production. These research groups or centres are established in different regions in Spain and there is no coordination between them.	2020
The Research Task Force of SEAE has the commitment of setting a public database where this information will be centralised.	2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITACYL has included several hectares of different varieties of cereals and quinoa testing their behaviour when applying organic methods. GENVCE (Group for the Evaluation of New Varieties of Extensive Crops in Spain) has created a network with essays on organic wheat, as a result of the PANECO Project developed by NEIKER (among others) including trials in Castilla y León, Basque Country, Navarra, Aragón, Catalonia, Castilla la Mancha and Andalucía. INEA is also starting some trial son organic management of cereals in coordination with ITACyL. In Navarra, INTIA, has 20 ha of organic cereals, vegetables (in green houses and at open sky), fruit trees and quinoa. IRTA is developing several trials on organic grown wheat and barley trigos 	2019-2020
Adrián Rodríguez (UPV), through the Liveseed project, has focused on 300 traditional varieties of tomato and divided the trials into two blocks (Valencia and Cádiz). Tested was: field response, acceptance in tastings and selecting 20 to 25 for the trials in Valencia and also 20 to 25 for the ones in Cádiz, to end the process with a selection of 10 to 12 varieties per region.	2018-2021
<p><i>Adrian Rodriguez is also in charge of the paprika peppers initiatives, where several ecotypes (bell fleshy type) have been selected for their adaptation to organic conditions, their high nutritional value (ascorbic acid, flavonoids and carotenoids) and organoleptic quality (sugars and volatiles), after 5 years of evaluations of about 60 accessions.</i></p> <p><i>The same process has been applied for the white (wax) peppers in the territory of Villena (Alicante). After two years of evaluations with about 20 accessions (ecotypes kept by old farmers, accessions from the UPV seedbank and modern F1 varieties as controls), two ecotypes have been selected, based on adaptation to organic cultivation in this area and their nutritional value and organoleptic quality (aroma and taste, including panel tests with consumers). Villena's Agrarian Cooperative's collaboration has been very strong and important in the project.</i></p>	2015-2021
This task has been complemented with non-committed trials on different varieties of brassica; cabbages, broccoli, cauliflowers and kohlrabi, planted in Valencia and Murcia.	
Valencia's Region Competent Authority is developing trials on field acceptance and nutritional quality of White pepper, Villena's White pepper, Villena's Cherry and Purple carrot, grown	2019-2021



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<p>organically from traditional varieties, kept by local farmers. This entity has other ongoing research projects such as the nutritional and organoleptic characterization of 20 monovarietal oils obtained from organic olives and the recovery of several wine vines grown, comparing conventional and organic management.</p> <p>The Spanish Network for Local Varieties is raising funds for different trials to be developed organically on farm fields on cereals in Andalucía and on apples and walnuts in the Basque Country, and the establishment of a private germoplasm bank.</p>	
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1.4.2. Regulatory and general developments concerning research

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>Regional Public Research Centres are including Organic Trials with different vegetable varieties.</p> <p>NEIKER (Basque Institute for Agrarian Research) will participate in the temporary experiment on organic potato variety testing, managed by the EU Commission.</p>	<p>Starting mainly on 2019-2020</p>

1.5. Training/Information/Communication

1.5.1. Committed Actions of the Declaration of Organic Seeds

Improvement of transmission/dissemination of existing information to promote use and production of organic seeds, through platforms of the representative organisations of the sector	
<p>SEAE included a presentation on the Liveseed Project and the need of increase the production and use of organic seeds in a meeting of the National Rural Network (a consultative body at the state level coordinated</p>	<p>2020</p>



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<p>by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge and which brings together all representatives of the agricultural sector and the competent regional authorities) that took place in the Ministry on 25/2/2020. ECOVALIA and SEAE will develop a National Workshop on the learnings and progresses of the LIVESEED project.</p>	<p>2021</p>
<p>Sharing of initiatives and successful results with participants</p>	
<p>SEAE's National Workshop 2019; a Communication on Liveseed project was presented and a tasting and information point on the importance of the use of organic seeds was set during the whole of the Workshop.</p>	<p>2019</p>
<p>2 dissemination workshops to share good practices and knowledge from the Cross visits have been developed in the North and East of Spain (Vitoria in May 2019 and Gandía in October 2019)</p>	<p>2019</p>
<p>SEAE's 2020 National Workshop will be virtual and on indicators for organic farming, including communications on planted biodiversity and organic seeds.</p>	<p>2020</p>
<p>A webinar on the use of organic seeds and organic heterogeneous material in the Neu Organic Regulation was developed on April the 6th with 97 participants from the organic and seed sectors.</p>	
<p>2 Articles focussing on organic seeds have been published in Ae magazine for the organic sector and information on the Liveseed project, the importance of the use and production of organic seeds and the first Liveseed Booklet available in Spanish, has been shared in ECOVALIA and SEAE's social media (facebook and twitter) and websites. Since 2017 several articles had been published in Ecovalia's magazine "Valor Ecológico", informing about the project, the cross visits, new regulation and the project activities in the country.</p>	
<p>Compilation of information on the benefits of using organic seeds to promote incentives for its use</p>	
<p>Publication of SEAE's compilation document "Scientific evidences in favour of organic production" (https://www.agroecologia.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Evidencias-cientificas-produccion-ecologica-va.pdf)</p>	<p>2019</p>
<p>SEAE's Research Task Force has the commitment of setting a public database where this information will be centralised.</p>	<p>2021</p>
<p>Gathering of information on the possible ways to develop organic seeds for legumes</p>	
<p>NEIKER and UPV have contacted several researchers, such as Valencia's Regional Competent Authority's Research Centre to promote trials on organic seeds for legumes.</p>	<p>2020</p>
<p>SEAE's Research Task Force in coordination with NEIKER and UPV, will set a specific area on the public database where this information will be centralised.</p>	<p>2021</p>

1.6. Production and Use of Organic Seeds

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

<p>Xxx</p>	
<p>The information received from different Organic Control Authorities and Bodies confirms that the production, offer and use of organic seeds have increased, although it is not growing as fast as the organic production. Connecting regional trials and researchers on organic seed production with regional seed producers and multipliers could help increase this production. SEAE and ECOVALIA will include regional researchers from those research groups in regional trainings on organic production and/or organic regulation.</p>	<p>Last quarter of 2020 and 2021.</p>



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

Regulatory and general developments compared to previous years of the LIVESEED project	
<p>Amendments and suggestions were presented to the Ministry of Agriculture, asking for the inclusion of local landraces as Organic Heterogeneous Materials and several meetings with regional seed networks and organic farmer’s associations were held to inform on the new organic regulation on seeds. The basque group called “Organic seeds’ Group” met on 11/2/2020.</p> <p>Some Seed producers have substantially increased organic production as i.e. Semilas Clemente and new seed producers have been included in the National Database.</p>	2020

3. Summary of Progress

- The Ministry of Agriculture has made an effort to increase the frequency of the update of the National Database of Organic Seeds. However, changes in the internal structure of the Ministry and personnel rotation mean that connections of the organic sector with the responsible person have to be re-established.
- At current rates, the area of land under organic conditions grows faster than the increase in use of organic seed. This has led to a de-facto increase of derogation authorizations. Connecting regional trials and researchers on organic seed production with regional seed producers and multipliers could help increase this production. SEAE and ECOVALIA is planning to include regional researchers from those research groups in regional trainings on organic production and/or organic regulation.
- The expert group is still work-in-progress: first steps to establish a working group on organic seeds have been initiated and an invitation was sent to some stakeholders already. However, the process was postponed and will require continued attention, also from sector organizations SEAE and ECOVALIA.
- A considerable number of variety testing trials under organic conditions have been conducted. More coordination between the research initiatives could yield great benefits. The commitment of the research task force of SEAE to set up a database where the information is centralized could be a first step to achieve more coordination.
- Since the LIVESEED national workshop, the dissemination of information was effective. Results from LIVESEED was translated to compile booklets in Spanish language, outcomes were presented in stakeholder meetings and more webinars are planned.



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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>



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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	<p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Article 45: Use of seed or vegetative propagating material not obtained by the organic production method	<p>6. The authorisation shall be granted before the sowing of the crop.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p> <p>9. Authorisation may only be granted during periods for which the database is updated in accordance with Article 49(3)</p>
Article 54: Annual report	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 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.



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