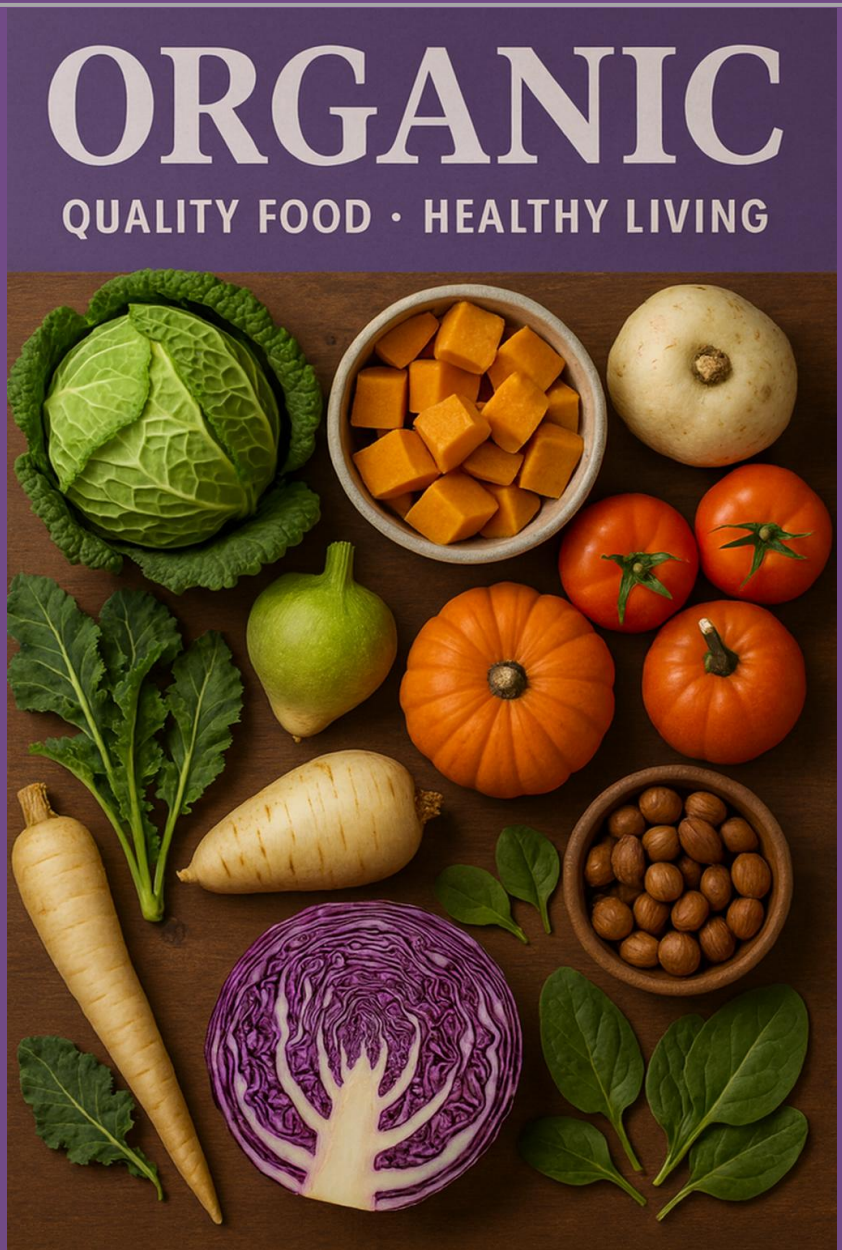
FQH
Organic Food Quality & Health

A biannual newsletter filled with news, trends and updates in the field of organic food quality & health. Conveying opinions of researchers, policy makers and other stakeholders in the field.

FQH ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER (WINTER 2025)

THE ORGANIC Food Quality & HEALTH NEWSLETTER



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Editorial & Leadership

From the Editor's Desk

Welcome to the Winter 2025 edition of the FQH Association Newsletter. In this issue, we bring you updates on our recent activities, upcoming events, and the latest research from our community.

As the organic sector continues to evolve and grow, FQH remains committed to advancing scientifically sound research that reshapes our understanding of food and its impact on health and sustainability. This newsletter highlights our ongoing work and the vibrant community that makes it possible.

We hope you find the content informative and inspiring. As always, we welcome your feedback and contributions for future editions.

Happy reading!

The FQH Editorial Team

Prof. Carola Strassner

Message from the Chairwoman

Dear Members and Friends of the FQH Association,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Winter 2025 edition of the FQH newsletter. As this year draws to a close, the breadth and depth of activities presented in this issue demonstrates the growing maturity, relevance, and international reach of our community. Across research, dialogue, and collaboration, FQH continues to contribute to a deeper understanding of how organic food systems can support human and planetary health.

One of the highlights of this season was our presence at the IUNS-ICN 2025 Congress in Paris. The FQH symposium showcased cutting-edge research spanning microbiome science, community-led food systems, and long-term epidemiological evidence on organic food consumption and health.

Our seminar series has continued to provide a valuable platform for knowledge exchange, addressing topics from organic food and non-communicable diseases to multifunctional animal husbandry and successful national organic market strategies. Looking ahead, the upcoming seminars and events announced in this issue, along with our continued engagement at BIOFACH underline our commitment to supporting both established researchers and the next generation of scholars in the organic field.

Finally, I would like to warmly welcome our new members and acknowledge the valuable contributions of colleagues across our network. The diversity of expertise and perspectives within FQH, spanning nutrition, agriculture, socio-economics, and systems research continues to be one of our greatest strengths.

Thank you for your continued engagement, commitment, and collaboration. I invite you to stay actively involved in our activities as we move into 2026, working together to advance research, dialogue, and action for food systems that nourish people and the planet.

With warm regards,
Prof. Dr. Carola Strassner, MBA
Chairwoman, FQH Association

FQH in Paris (IUNS-ICN 2025)

The FQH Symposium at this year's IUNS-ICN Congress drew a full room and a vibrant atmosphere, reflecting the growing momentum at the intersection of food, farming, nutrition, and health. Participants engaged enthusiastically with cutting-edge research and practical examples that showcased how integrated, sustainable food systems can improve human and planetary well-being.

This year's symposium was expertly chaired and hosted by an exceptional team whose leadership set the tone for a dynamic and insightful session. Their stewardship ensured a seamless flow of ideas and a welcoming environment for meaningful exchange.

Session host, chair and speakers at the FQH Symposium IUNS-ICN Paris

Tracking the Microbiome from Farm to Fork - Prof. Dr. Gabriele Berg

Prof. Berg presented on the exploration of the edible plant microbiome and its surprising contributions to human health.

Prof. Gabriele Berg presenting at the FQH Symposium

She highlighted:

- The rich microbial diversity present in everyday plant foods, preserved especially through traditional fermentation techniques.
- The growing evidence that plant-associated microbes can reach and shape the human gut microbiome, particularly when diverse plant foods are introduced early in life.
- The potential of microbiome-based strategies to improve nutrition, safety, sustainability, and even tackle antimicrobial resistance within a One Health framework.

Key takeaway: Diets are ecosystems. By understanding and stewarding plant microbiomes, we can boost resilience across food systems and human health.

Session chair and speakers at the FQH Symposium IUNS-ICN Paris

FQH in Paris (IUNS-ICN 2025) *Contd.*

Dr. Jonathan Dolley presenting at the FQH Symposium

Hansalim: Socio-Ecological Transformation in Food Systems - Dr. Jonathan Dolley

Dr. Dolley presented the Hansalim movement in South Korea as a powerful example of how community-led cooperatives can reform food systems. Hansalim's integrated model, built on trust-based contracts and cooperative networks, has:

- Created fairer value distribution among producers and consumers.
- Influenced national policy, most notably the School Meals Act, advancing universal access to safe, high-quality meals.
- Demonstrated how grassroots initiatives can serve as living prototypes for sustainable, equitable food networks.

Key takeaway: Community-driven cooperatives like Hansalim can shape policy, strengthen local economies, and embed sustainability into daily practices, such as school meals, at scale.

Dr. Kesse-Guyot presenting at the FQH Symposium

Organic Food Consumption & Health: Insights from BioNutriNet - Dr. Emmanuelle Kesse-Guyot

Dr. Kesse-Guyot shared compelling findings from the BioNutriNet project, showing that consumers who prioritize organic foods tend to follow healthier diets and may experience protective effects against chronic diseases including obesity, diabetes, and certain cancers. A notable result was the reduced risk of breast cancer associated with lower exposure to synthetic pesticide mixtures.

She emphasized that true sustainability in food systems requires action across the full chain—from how food is produced to how it is processed—and that all dimensions of sustainability must be considered: nutritional, environmental, socio-cultural, and economic.

Key takeaway: Organic food consumption supports healthier outcomes and lower environmental impact, but scaling these benefits requires urgent policy action and collective commitment.

FQH Seminars Highlights

Over the past months, the FQH Seminar Series has continued to bring forward leading-edge perspectives on food quality, health, and sustainable food systems. Below is a snapshot of recent and upcoming sessions.

Photo courtesy of Dr.Julie Louise Munk Andersen/Danish Cancer Institute

29th FQH Seminar: Org-anic Food & Non-Communicable Diseases — Dr. Julie Louise Munk Andersen

In September, Dr. Julie Louise Munk Andersen (Danish Cancer Institute) presented an overview of the latest evidence on whether organic food consumption influences the risk of non-communicable diseases. Drawing on findings from the Danish Diet, Cancer and Health cohort, she discussed associations between organic diets and risks of cancer, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

This seminar offered a clear and timely update on the growing scientific interest in organic food and health outcomes.

Photo courtesy of Alexander Greiner /Winner BioThesis Prize 2025

30th FQH Seminar: Multi-functional Animal Husbandry — Alexander Greiner

Alexander Greiner introduced the concept of Multi-functional Animal Husbandry (MAH). A holistic framework that prioritizes ecological integrity, animal welfare, and social value over production maximization. Using examples from cattle farming in Germany, he illustrated how MAH could reduce environmental impacts, support resilient food systems, and align closely with principles of organic agriculture.

His talk highlighted both the promise of MAH and the practical challenges of implementation.

Photo courtesy of Birgitte Jørgensen /Organic Denmark

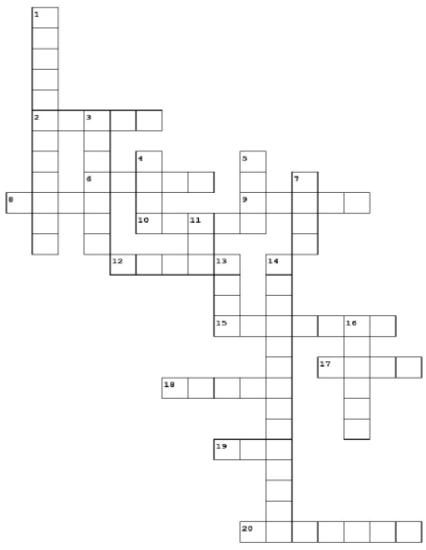
31st FQH Seminar: Denmark's Organic Market Success Story — Birgitte Jørgensen

Closing the series for 2025, Birgitte Jørgensen (Organic Denmark) shared insights from Denmark's remarkable journey to achieving a 12% organic market share one of the highest in the world.

Her talk examined the strategies behind the success of the iconic red Ø label, including strong cross-value chain collaboration, data-driven market development, and a consistent focus on consumer trust and transparent communication.

Her session provided valuable lessons for countries and stakeholders aiming to grow and strengthen organic markets.

WINTER CROSSWORD



Across

2. A nice warm outdoor bath
6. when there is strong wind
8. under the kotatsu, you feel ___
9. you wear it to walk in the snow
10. the color of snow
12. how you feel in winter
15. a warm place to sit under in winter
17. If you get cold, you might get ___
18. you wear it around your neck
19. you wear it on your head
20. In winter I lay under a ___

Down

1. a nice sweet drink in winter
3. a man made of snow
4. it falls in winter
5. a winter food made of vegetable, meat, sauce and mushroom
7. the opposite of hot
11. when water freezes it becomes
13. when there is little light
14. a festival in winter
16. a winter sport you can do at Zao

New FQH Member Spotlight

Each newsletter, we highlight one of the newest members joining the FQH network—individuals whose expertise, research, and passion enrich our shared mission of advancing knowledge on organic food quality and health. This edition, we are pleased to introduce Inga Megne, whose interdisciplinary work bridges regional sustainability, organic production systems, and bioactive compound innovation.

Photo courtesy of Inga Megne

Meet Inga Megne

Inga Megne is a PhD researcher at the Faculty of Economics and Social Development of the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies (LBTU) , specializing in bioregional development, rural sustainability and strategic regional planning. Her academic work explore place-based innovation, the potential of organic production and the bioeconomy transition in Latvian municipalities. In parallel, Inga Megne leads a personal applied research initiative focused on high-value bioactive compounds from organically grown chokeberry berries, with the long-term goal of developing pharmaceutical-grade (API-level) and functional extract ingredients. This dual experience – territorial sustainability and bioactive compound development – provides her with a unique position in international discussions on organic food quality and sustainable value chains.

Current Project

Academic Research (LBTU Doctoral Studies)

Inga's main academic project, implemented at the Faculty of Economics and Social Development of LBTU, investigates how bioregions can promote resilience, innovation and high-quality organic production using integrated regional development models. Her doctoral thesis develops a multidimensional analytical framework that combines economic indicators, spatial analysis, multivariate assessment and policy evaluation.

Personal Applied Research (Development of Bioactive Compounds)

At the same time, Inga Megne is developing a private research line focused on the extraction, analysis and potential commercialization of anthocyanins and other high-value phenolic compounds from chokeberry berries. Current analytical targets include cyanidin-3-glucoside, delphinidin-3-glucoside and quercetin, based on initial consultations with the Dobele Institute Horticulture (https://www.darzkopibasinstituts.lv/en). The long-term vision is to create a functional extract and API-level ingredient platform based on organically grown raw materials, supporting innovation in nutritional supplements and biopharmaceuticals.

Why She Joined FQH

Inga Megne joined FQH to connect her interdisciplinary expertise - bioregional development, organic production systems and the quality of natural compounds, with the wider international community. She is particularly interested in how territorial approaches, organic farming ecosystems and regional innovation capacities influence the quality, authenticity and health effects of organic food and botanical extracts.

FQH offers a valuable platform for collaboration, scientific exchange, and visibility for both her academic and applied research. She hopes to bring insights from bioregion modeling and leverage FQH's expertise in food integrity, analytical quality standards, and health-related research

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Become Part of a Global Movement for Food Quality and Health!

Join the FQH Association and connect with a dynamic international network committed to advancing research in organic food quality and health. We offer:

- Individual Membership
- Institutional Membership for universities and research institutes
- Supporting Membership for companies and organizations

Ready to get involved? Complete the membership form on our website or reach out to any member of our Board. We look forward to welcoming you to our community!

FQH Membership Fees

Based on Human Development Index (HDI) of your country

Individual Membership Fees (in Euros)

	Very High HDI	High HDI	Medium HDI	Low HDI
	>0.80	0.70 – 0.79	0.55 – 0.69	<0.55
Standard	80 €	40 €	20 €	10 €
PhD / MSc. Students	40 €	20 €	10 €	5 €
Retirees / Unemployed	40 €	20 €	10 €	5 €

Institutional	Support
Universities, Research Institutes	Companies, Organizations
1,000 €	1,000 €

Note: Individual membership fees are based on the Human Development Index (HDI) of your country of residence

Conference Highlights from FQH Member

Featuring Dr. Wahyudi David

New FQH Member Spotlight *contd.*

A Few Personal Notes

Professional quote: "Strong regions create strong products — quality begins long before the laboratory, in the landscape and communities that shape our food systems."

Hobby / Personal note

I enjoy studying how different countries design their bioeconomy and organic food systems — through travel, reading, and visiting local producers. Understanding international experiences inspires my own research and helps connect regional development with food quality and innovation.

Advice for newcomers

Interdisciplinary thinking is essential — meaningful solutions emerge by connecting policy, science, and practice.

Be part of the change. Support FQH's mission to advance scientifically sound research and reshape perceptions of food and its impact on health. Learn more about membership and how you can contribute at https://www.fqhresearch.org/membership/become-a-member.html

Conference Highlights from FQH Member

Revolutionising Organic Rice Quality Assessment: Insights from the 8th Organic Agriculture Conference

16–19 September 2025, Ninh Binh, Vietnam.

Dr. Wahyudi David presenting at the 8th Organic Agriculture Conference 2025

At the 8th Organic Agriculture Conference, held under the theme "Organics for a Better Future," Dr. Wahyudi David (ISOFAR Board Member and Professor at Universitas Bakrie) presented his work on Ricetag, a mobile application designed to assess organic rice quality through non-destructive, image-based analysis.

His presentation addressed the varied perceptions of rice quality among farmers, processors, and consumers, and demonstrated how Ricetag can provide a standardized, reliable, and transparent tool for quality evaluation across the supply chain. With accuracy rates of up to 90%, the application offers benefits for farmers, traders, and consumers alike, while also contributing to reduced food waste and better nutritional awareness. Future developments include geographic origin detection for improved traceability.

Organic Agriculture: A Key Player in Climate Change Mitigation and Low-Carbon Transition

25–28 June 2025, Xichong, China

Dr. Wahyudi David presenting at the 2025 Sichuan-Nanchong Organic Innovation conference

Dr. Wahyudi David was also a featured speaker at the 2025 Sichuan–Nanchong Organic Innovation Conference, where he explored how organic agriculture can support climate change mitigation and the transition toward low-carbon food systems.

He highlighted current climate risks—including rising sea levels and increased greenhouse gas emissions—and emphasized the role of organic practices in both mitigation and adaptation. Examples included methane-reducing strategies in organic rice production, enhanced soil health through non-synthetic inputs, and biodiversity preservation. Dr. David also addressed the technological and policy challenges of low-carbon transitions, calling for rapid and innovative responses supported by international collaboration.

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Conference Highlights from FQH Member

Featuring Dr. Wahyudi David

Rethinking Organic Food Quality: A System Approach for Health and Sustainability

1–4 September 2025, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

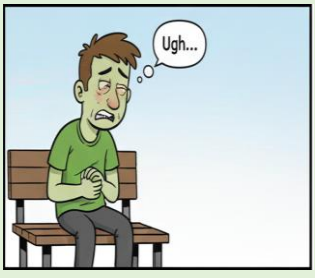
Dr. Wahyudi David at the OrgaTrop 2025

At OrgaTrop 2025, Dr. Wahyudi David presented "Determine Organic Food Quality Using a System Approach," advocating for a more holistic assessment of organic food quality across production, processing, and consumption.

His presentation examined consumer motivations—health, environmental concerns, ethics, and taste—and pointed out the limitations of traditional quality assessment methods. Rather than focusing on single compounds or narrow indicators, he argued for a system-based approach that considers both the absence of harmful elements (pesticides, GMOs, additives) and the presence of positive attributes (nutritional value and bioactive compounds).

Using organic rice as a case study, he shared findings from multi-year research on farming practices, milling processes, and consumer preferences—highlighting the need for better communication and education around whole-grain benefits. He concluded with a call for healthier, resilient, transparent, and economically balanced food systems

FQH COMEDY CORNER



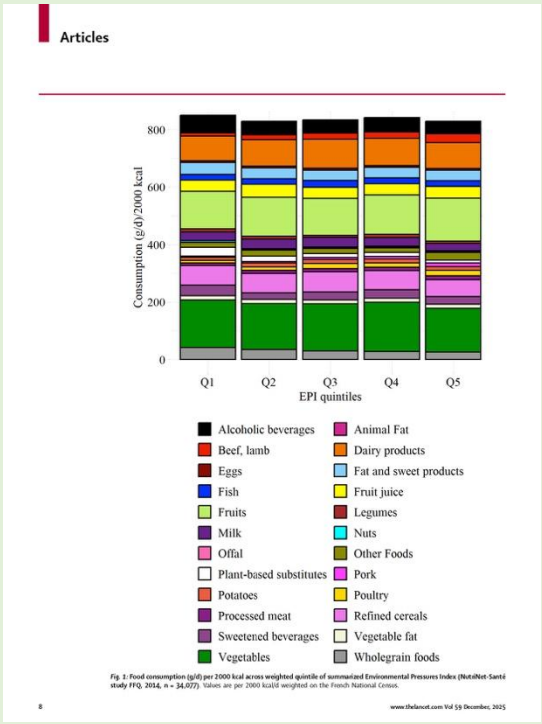
Research Highlights

The FQH community continues to produce ground-breaking research that advances our understanding of organic food quality and its relationship to health and sustainability. This section features recent publications and research initiatives from our members.

Association between dietary environmental pressures and major chronic diseases: assessment from the prospective NutriNet-Santé cohort

Dr Denis Lairon, PhD, Emeritus Research Director at INSERM (French National Institute of Health and Medical Research)

Dr. Denis Lairon, PhD, Emeritus Research Director (INSERM) an OFSP steering committee member, together with colleagues published this article assessing the association between dietary environmental pressures and major chronic diseases.



Association between dietary environmental pressures and major chronic diseases. E. Kesse-Guyot et al, The Lancet Regional Health - Europe 2025;59: 101481. DOI: 10.1016/j.lanepe.2025.101481

Background: Plant-based diets offer co-benefits for human health and the environment, but assessments often consider only specific aspects. This study comprehensively examines the links between six diet-related environmental pressures and risk of human chronic diseases as well as mortality.

Methods: Data from a population study of 34,077 participants to the NutriNet-Santé French adult cohort were used. Dietary data were collected using a food frequency questionnaire, distinguishing between organic and conventional foods, and were merged with food production environmental indicators. The associations between greenhouse gas emissions (GHGe), energy demand (CED), land occupation (LO), ecological infrastructures (EI) reflecting biodiversity, water use reflecting irrigation, and pesticide treatment frequency reflecting food production systems and a synthetic environmental pressures index (EPI) combining these 6 indicators and incidence of cancer, cardiovascular diseases (overall (CVD), coronary (CHD) and cerebrovascular diseases (stroke), type 2 diabetes and mortality were estimated using weighted multivariable cox proportional risk model and with adjustments for numerous confounding factors.

Findings: The weighted mean of baseline age of the study population was 48.4 years (SD = 16.3). After weighted adjustment, women composed approximately 52% of the sample. When considering food consumption per 2000 kcal, diets with a high level of EPI were characterised by high consumption of meat (pork, ruminants, poultry, offal and processed meat). Conversely, the consumption of wholegrain foods and pulses and organic foods was significantly lower in diets with the highest EPI than in diets with the lowest one. The diet of the participants in the 5th weighted quintile of EPI (compared to the 1st) exhibited +286% higher food-related GHGe, +219% higher CED, +264% higher LO, +272% higher EI, +240% higher pesticide use and +129% water use.

Over a mean median follow-up of 8.39 years (256,891 person-year), the diet's overall environmental pressures (EPI) was positively associated with the risk of all tested chronic diseases except stroke. The hazard ratio (HR for 1 Standard Deviation increment ranging from 1.15 (95% CI = 1.03–1.28) for cancer (all locations) to 1.50 (95% CI = 1.29–1.73) for coronary heart disease and type 2 diabetes. No association was detected with stroke (likely due to the low number of cases) or death (possibly due to the moderate mean age of participants and limited duration of the follow-up) (see figure a). The individual impacts of the six indicators used ranged in the decreasing order : energy used, pesticide treatment index (see figure b), greenhouse gas emissions, land occupation, ecological infrastructures, water use. We found that diets with high environmental pressures, less adherent to the French dietary guidelines and EAT-Lancet diet, were positively associated with the risk of chronic diseases except for stroke. Findings were robust in sensitivity analyses, particularly in causal inference models that simulate intervention changes in EPI.

Interpretation and comments: Diets with low overall environmental pressures are associated with important human health benefits as regards non-communicable chronic diseases, suggesting that food systems with lower environmental impacts could be key drivers of

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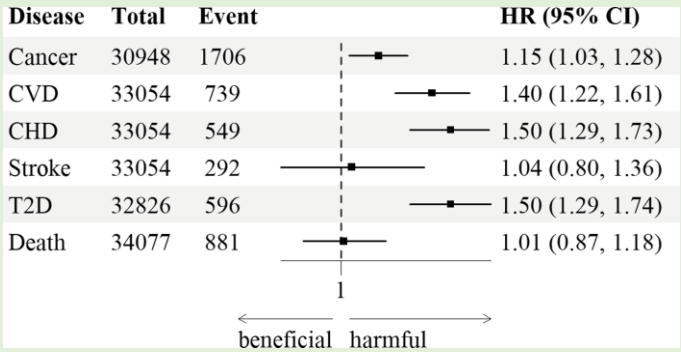
Research Highlights *Contd.*

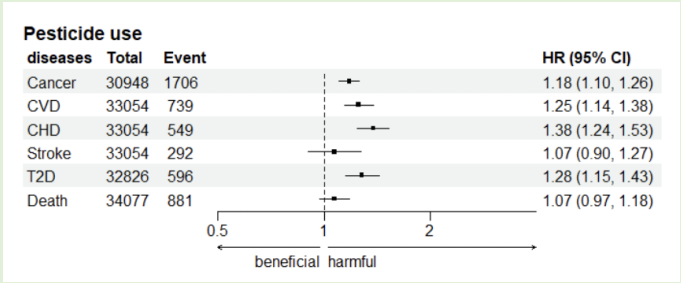
both environmental and human health sustainability.

This study is, to our knowledge, the first to explore the links between a wide range of environmental indicators distinguishing more or less sustainable diets and the risk of morbidity and mortality based on prospective cohort data.

Three previous studies modelled environmental indicators as exposure to human health risk in prospective studies. The first, conducted in EPIC-NL, examined the prospective link between diet-related greenhouse gas emissions (GHGe) and land use and mortality. The second study, involving the entire European EPIC cohort, looked at the association between GHGe and land occupation and risk of mortality (overall and cause-specific). The third study, conducted in EPIC-Spain, examined the relationship between diet-related GHGe and the risk of cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and type 2 diabetes.



Prospective Association between the summarized Environmental Pressure Index and risk of chronic diseases and mortality (NutriNet-Santé study, 2014 – 2024)

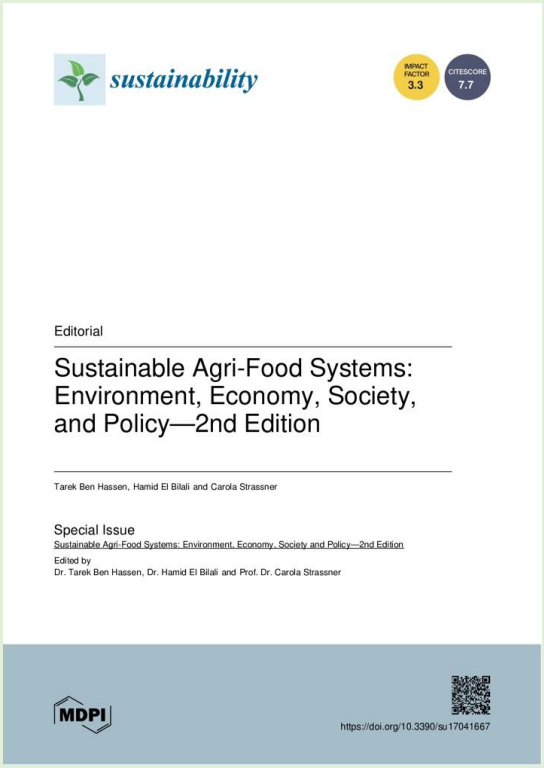


Association between pesticide treatment index indicator and chronic diseases and mortality (NutriNet-Santé study, 2014 – 2024).

Sustainable Agri-Food Systems: Environment, Economy, Society, and Policy — 2nd Edition (Open Access)

The FQH Chairwoman Prof. Dr. Carola Strassner, together with international collaborators, has published a new volume of their book addressing the future of food quality, sustainability, and health. This second edition of Sustainable Agri-Food Systems: Environment, Economy, Society, and Policy offers a timely and multidimensional

global food systems more resilient, equitable, and sustainable. Anchored in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the volume responds to mounting pressures on food systems—climate change, biodiversity loss, geopolitical instability, and socio-economic inequality—while acknowledging the sector's



Sustainable Agri-Food Systems: Environment, Economy, Society, and Policy—2nd Edition by Hassen *et al.* 2025

own role in exacerbating these challenges.

The book adopts a food systems lens, emphasizing that sustainability cannot be achieved through isolated interventions. Instead, it requires coordinated action across production, processing, distribution, consumption, and governance. The contributions collectively underscore that food system sustainability is not solely a technical challenge, but a deeply social, cultural, economic, and political one.

The volume brings together 14 contributions, which can be read across three interlinked thematic areas.

1. **Community-Based Sustainability and Socio-Economic Resilience**

Several chapters foreground the role of communities, local knowledge, and social innovation in driving sustainable transitions. Case studies from Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East illustrate how participatory design methods, women-led home gardening initiatives, food movements such as Slow Food, and sustainability-oriented agri-entrepreneurship

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Research Highlights *Contd.*

can enhance food security, economic resilience, and social cohesion. Importantly, these contributions caution that transitions imposed without cultural sensitivity—particularly among Indigenous and marginalized communities—can undermine psychological well-being and erode traditional food practices. Sustainability, in this sense, is shown to be inseparable from dignity, identity, and agency.

2. **Environmental Sustainability, Shocks, and System Resilience**

A second cluster of chapters addresses the complex relationship between agri-food systems and the natural environment, spanning farm-level assessments, regional analyses, and ecosystem-scale dynamics. Empirical studies demonstrate that sustainability outcomes vary significantly by production system, geography, and governance context. Contributions also examine systemic shocks—such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia–Ukraine conflict—revealing how food waste, input costs, and food affordability become stress points even in otherwise food-secure regions. These analyses reinforce the argument that resilience, food security, and sustainability are tightly interconnected and must be addressed through integrated policy frameworks rather than siloed responses.

3. **Consumption Patterns, Valuation, and Food System Dynamics**

The final thematic strand shifts attention to consumption, perception, and valuation within food systems. Chapters explore how aesthetics (such as food coloring), socio-material practices, and historical dietary transitions shape what societies value as "food" and "quality." By examining everyday practices—how ingredients are perceived, priced, and promoted—the volume highlights often-overlooked leverage points for sustainability transitions. These insights suggest that food professionals, consumers, and cultural narratives play a critical role alongside farmers and policymakers.

Cross-Cutting Insights and Policy Relevance

Across all contributions, the book makes a compelling case for holistic, systems-based approaches to agri-food transformation. Governance, power relations, trade-offs, and actor interests emerge as recurring themes, pointing to the need for integrated food policies that align environmental objectives with social justice and economic viability. The volume is particularly valuable in showing that there is no single pathway to sustainability; instead, context-specific strategies grounded in local realities are essential.

Overall, this second edition serves as both a diagnostic and a roadmap for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners engaged in food system transformation. It reinforces the idea that sustainable agri-food systems are not only about producing food differently, but about reimagining relationships between people, food, and the environment in ways that are just, resilient, and future-oriented.

Download the book:
(https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/17/4/1667)

Research Members

ICROFS

Heliopolis University for Sustainable Development

Eesti Maaülikool
Estonian University of Life Sciences

itab
l'Institut de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation biologiques

FiBL

Fachhochschule Münster University of Applied Sciences

1816 SGGW
WARSAW UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES

University of Maribor
Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Supporting Members

Triodos Bank

BERAS International
Building Ecological Regenerative Agriculture and Societies

Upcoming Events

FQH Seminars 2026

1. **32nd FQH Seminar**: Jan 2026-01-16: "Visualising Organic Food Research Hotspots" by **Azliyana Azizan** – MARA University of Technology Malaysia, Author of "Organic food research: Key contributors, research hotspots, and emerging trends" in Applied Food Research, December 2025 - will share insights. Proposed title "Visualising Organic Food Research Hotspots"
2. **33rd FQH Seminar**: Feb 2026-02-20 : **Roberta Milardo** - Ph.D. Student, Dept. of Agricultural and Food Sciences - DISTAL, Alma Mater Studiorum, University of Bologna. Her studies concern advisory and assistance services for agriculture, with particular reference to the organic agri-food value chain. She is author of the recently published paper "The Role of Knowledge and Innovation in Organic Farming Systems: A Systematic Literature Review" and will present a general introduction to her PhD research followed by a brief overview of the results
3. **34th FQH Seminar**: March 2026-03-20: "Beyond the buzz: analyzing actors promoting regenerative agriculture in Europe" by **Loekie Schreefel** - postdoctoral researcher at the Farming Systems Ecology group, Wageningen University & Research. His research interest includes designing, monitoring, and modelling resilient farming and food systems, more specifically regenerative agriculture and circular food systems. His talk will give insights into his current paper "Beyond the buzz: analyzing actors promoting regenerative agriculture in Europe"
4. **35th FQH Seminar**: April 2026-04-24: **Ji Lu** - Author of "Chinese consumers' perceptions, attitude, and purchase intention of organic products"

For more details visit:

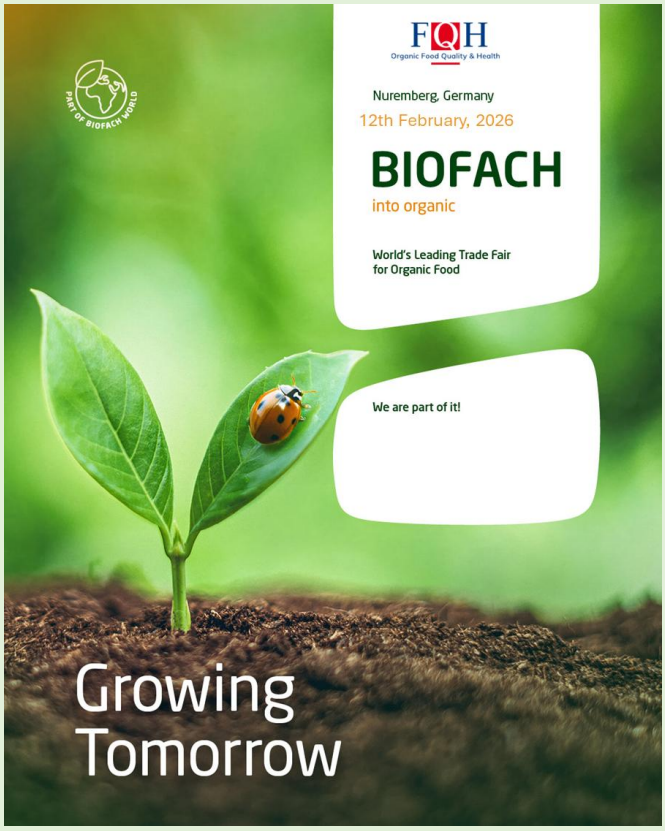
https://www.fqhresearch.org/activities/seminars.html

Join FQH at BIOFACH 2026 on Thursday, 12 February 2026

Two bold conversations shaping the future of organic food systems:

- A global network of observatories for organic food systems
- Young organic researchers—from PhDs to professions: where does organic go next?

Don't miss the discussion at BIOFACH 2026.



FQH workshop at BIOFACH 2026

BioThesis Awards @ BIOFACH 2026

BioThesis
Forschungspreis
Bio-Lebensmittelwirtschaft

📅 11 Feb 2026 | ⏰ 15:00–17:00
📍 Hall 9, Spot 475 – Workshop Area

FQH Initiatives and Partners

Together with IFOAM Organics Int. And Beras Int., FQH initiated the Organic Food System Programme, OFSP (www.organicfoodsystem.net). FQH is the legal holder of this programme. FQH board members are furthermore coordinators of OFSP. The OFSP is a programme on taking and further developing the organic food system as a pilot model and living laboratory for sustainable food systems. We use the organic food system as a model to understand drivers of sustainable food consumption and to link this to real-world examples of sustainable production and consumption. It is important to understand that the OFSP will use the organic food system as a kind of window for exploration but not as the exclusive solution. Overall, the central question is: how to make food systems more sustainable? The goal of OFSP is to learn from the organic food system as a living laboratory for sustainable food systems The programme intends to contribute to global activities such as IFOAM Organic 3.0 and brings together initiatives and stakeholders at international, national, regional and local levels. The Sustainable Food System Programme's Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC) endorsed the OFSP as one of eight "core initiatives" of the UN-10YFP Sustainable Food System Programme!

OFSP at AFROREC 2025: Advancing Evidence on Organic Food and Health

Dr. Denis Lairon, photo courtesy: https://organicfoodsystem.net/the-ofsp-programme/

The Organic Food System Programme (OFSP), an initiative of FQH, was represented at the 2nd African Organic Research Conference (AFROREC), held on 24–25 November 2025 in Egypt. The conference was hosted by the SEKEM Group, Heliopolis University, and the Egyptian Biodynamic Association (EBDA), bringing together researchers, practitioners, and policymakers working on organic and agroecological systems across Africa and beyond.

Dr Denis Lairon, PhD, Emeritus Research Director at INSERM (French National Institute of Health and Medical Research), presented on behalf of OFSP. His presentation, "Organic food consumption and impacts on human and planetary health: Data from the French NutriNet-Santé cohort," highlighted robust evidence linking organic food consumption to positive health outcomes, while also underscoring its potential contributions to environmental sustainability.

Drawing on findings from the NutriNet-Santé cohort, the presentation emphasized the value of large-scale epidemiological data in strengthening the scientific basis for organic food systems and informing policy discussions around sustainable diets and planetary health.

FQH's participation in AFROREC 2025 reinforced its commitment to international research exchange, evidence-based dialogue, and South–North collaboration in advancing organic food systems that support both human and planetary health.

Organic farming innovations network Europe (OH-FINE) project – summary

The OH-FINE project, running from 2024 to 2028 and funded by Horizon Europe, aims to increase organic farming production by discovering new knowledge, best practices and innovations. It uses successful models from EIP-AGRI and similar initiatives to strengthen AKIS. The central objective is to create a pan-European knowledge community, regional advisory centers and digital platforms for the flow of information between researchers, farmers, advisors and decision-makers. Particular emphasis is placed on understanding yield variability during the transition to organic farming. OH-FINE will conduct in-depth research on the impact on yields in different crops and regions, during and after conversion.

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FQH Initiatives and Partners *Contd.*

In addition, economic models will be developed, and advisory services will aim to counteract yield declines and develop profitable market strategies for farmers through the exchange of knowledge on organic farming, new technologies, farm management, pricing, promotion and distribution strategies

. The OH-FINE project will translate the findings from best practices of innovative farms into practical insights for smaller farms by conducting targeted case studies on best practices and then adapting this information through regional workshops and digital tools to the specific circumstances and challenges faced by new and developing agricultural businesses. The OH-FINE project will support small, new and growing farmers by offering detailed cost-benefit analyses of organic farming practices, providing insight into the financial aspects of adopting organic methods. The project addresses challenges such as production costs, inefficient marketing and distribution in organic farming, and the need for specialist knowledge. Its approach includes increasing efficiency and automation to reduce labour costs and supporting cooperation between organic farmers to achieve economies of scale. In addition, the OH-FINE project advocates government support and emphasises community involvement and consumer awareness to increase demand for organic products.

Partners from Poland: WULS, coordinator Prof. Renata Kazimierczak

Association Forum of Organic Farming (AFOA), coordinator, Prof. Ewa Rembiałkowska

Photo courtesy of Prof. Ewa Rembiałkowska

'Innovative, locally-driven, multi-actor Organic Food Labs' project (acronym InnOFoodLabs) addresses the challenges of organic food processing and distribution, aiming to transform value chains into pillars of local economies.

Photo courtesy of Prof. Ewa Rembiałkowska

It implements and evaluates 27 innovations in 12 Living Labs in 9 European countries. The project will establish a Community of Practice to serve as a platform for learning and capacity building in organic value chains. Appropriate exploitation pathways will be developed for all innovations to ensure their long-term legacy after the project concludes. The innovations covered by the project focus on small-scale food processing, links between farmers and processors, and innovative supply and distribution models. InnOFoodLabs will assess the environmental (including climate), social, health and economic impact of all innovations through a tailored assessment framework developed by Living Lab members, based on recognised sustainability tools and life cycle assessment. In line with the Farm to Fork Strategy and the EU Organic Farming Action Plan, the project contributes to the ambitious goal of increasing the share of organic farmland to 25% by 2030 by recognising that the growth of organic farmland requires a parallel increase in consumption, leading to new market opportunities for existing organic farmers and farmers who want to convert to organic production. The project will strengthen local processing, reinforce sustainable packaging solutions, increase the added value of organic products, enhance market orientation, and improve the availability, affordability, and accessibility of organic products. By promoting organic production and consumption, the project will improve soil health and biodiversity, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This will facilitate the transition towards healthier, more inclusive food systems, contributing to local innovation and responsible consumption. InnOFoodLabs is a transdisciplinary, multi-stakeholder project that involves all stakeholders in the value chain, from farmers and processors to retailers, consumers, and AKIS entities.

Partners from Poland: WULS, coordinator Prof. Ewa Rembiałkowska

Closing Thoughts

As we conclude this edition of the FQH Newsletter, we want to express our gratitude to all members, partners, and supporters who make our work possible. The collaborative spirit of our community is our greatest strength as we work together toward more sustainable and health-promoting food systems.

We invite you to stay connected with FQH through our website, social media channels, and upcoming events. Your engagement and contributions are essential to our collective impact.

Until next time, we wish you health, inspiration, and meaningful connections in your work and life.

www.linkedin.com/company/organic-food-quality-and-health

Organic Food System

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