



# BIO AUSTRIA

*The Association of Organic  
Farmers in Austria*



bio-austria.at

# Introduction

**Austria looks back** on a long history of organic agriculture. The beginning of the movement goes back to the 1920s, in 1959 the first organic association was founded. Numerous others followed, affiliating to two organic umbrella organizations\*. In 2005 they merged and founded BIO AUSTRIA in order to unite the organic agricultural movement. This has given us more strength and a powerful voice to represent the interests of Austrian organic farmers in matters of (agricultural) politics in Austria and Europe.

**Our impulse** is to further develop organic agriculture and to continue its story of success. Today we have established organic agriculture as an attractive way of farming: far more than 20 percent of Austrian farmers are farming according to the EU-Organic-Regulation, two thirds of them to the even stricter guidelines of BIO AUSTRIA.

They do so because they are convinced of the societal benefits of organic agriculture regarding clean water, pure air, animal welfare, fertile soil etc. But obviously they also do so, because they are seizing the new opportunities the organic market offers them. The consumers' demand for organically produced food has been continuously growing in the last years, but is still far from being satisfied. There is further potential for organic agriculture and we are looking forward to continuing to support our member farmers and partners as well as to inform the public about the added value of organically farmed products for the whole society.

**We aim** at establishing organic agriculture as a model for agriculture in general so that sustainability becomes a matter of course — for the sake of our future generations.

\* ARGE Biolandbau (including the biggest association, Bio Ernte für das Leben) and ÖIG (österreichische Interessensgemeinschaft für Biolandbau)



*Gertraud Grabmann*

**Gertraud Grabmann**

Chairwoman BIO AUSTRIA

# Who we are

BIO AUSTRIA is the association of 12,500 Austrian organic farmers. We represent about two thirds of Austrian organic agriculture and are the biggest European organic association in terms of members.

BIO AUSTRIA is organized in the federal organization, located in Linz and Vienna, and 8 regional ones. Throughout the country more than 100 people are employed in order to support the work of the BIO AUSTRIA member farmers.

The most important body is the Assembly of Delegates, meeting twice a year. It is them who elect the chairman or -woman and the board, both responsible for the strategic development of BIO AUSTRIA. BIO AUSTRIA'S young farmers group BANG (BIO AUSTRIA next generation), is represented in the board by a co-opted member.

The operational work is defined by the managing directors and realized both in the regions as well as in the following business units of the federal organization: Agriculture, Agricultural Policy

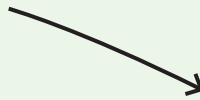
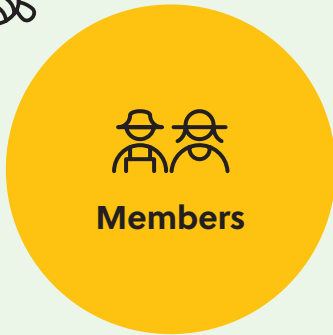
and International Affairs, Quality Management, Marketing and Information and Media Work. The BIO AUSTRIA Marketing GmbH, a 100 percent subsidiary of the association, handles the BIO AUSTRIA standard and works closely together with about 430 partners from the feed and food industry.



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As a strong network organization, we work closely together with our partners from other organic associations, i.e. Bio-Landwirtschaft Ennstal, DEMETER and ORBI, also represented in the board by one co-opted member.

# Our Structure



Media Work

Agriculture Policy and Intl. Affairs

Marketing and Information

Agriculture

Quality Management (Agriculture)

B2B Marketing activities (e.g. trade fairs)

Quality Management (Processing)

# Mission & Activities

Informing the public about the impact agricultural systems have on a society and promoting the advantages of organic agriculture regarding food quality, environmental protection, animal welfare, healthy soil etc. we raise awareness and encourage consumers to buy organic products.

As a strong network organization we represent the interests of Austrian organic farmers regarding agricultural policy and public authorities.

Participating in important political boards in Austria and Europe enables us to shape the political framework in favour of organic agriculture.

A wide range of advisory and training services ensure that our member farmers keep up with new developments and are always up to date. The Quality Management makes sure that the products labelled as BIO AUSTRIA quality meet our strict requirements.

- *We ensure Austrias best organic quality*
- *We represent organic farmers interests*
- *We shape tomorrows agriculture*



# Success Factors

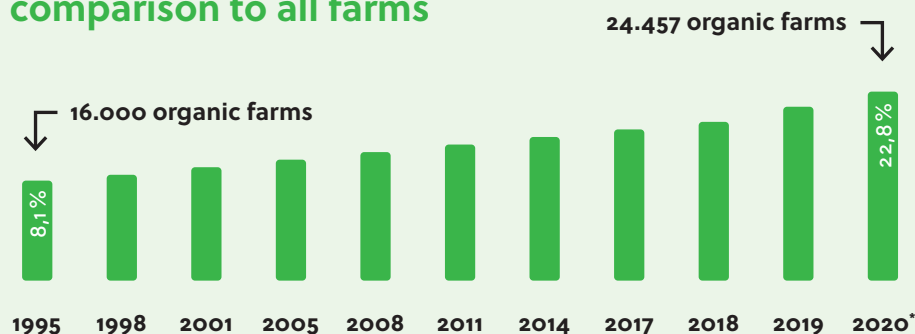
There are several reasons why organic agriculture has been so successful in Austria. One of them is that the typical topographical conditions favour a rather small scale agriculture, predestinated for high quality production, such as organic farming.

Politics have also been in favour of organic farming. Long before the EU-Organic-Regulation was established, organic agriculture had been defined in the Austrian Codex Alimentaris. And a sustainable way of farming was financially compensated by the political Programme for Rural Development, ÖPUL.

Farmers initiatives, the early formation of organic associations, successful marketing projects and the entrance of the organic market by Austrian supermarket chains in the 1990s were further factors pushing forward organic products and agriculture.

Alongside with a special environmental consciousness of the Austrian population, all these were essential components, accountable for the extraordinary success of organic farming in Austria.

## Share of organic farms in comparison to all farms



Source: BMLRT, AMA 2020. \*) Provisional figures

## **BIO AUSTRIA Federal Organization**

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