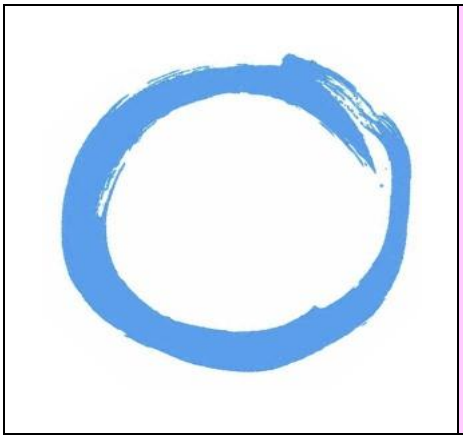
German-Turkish Bilateral Project Organic Agriculture
(Projet number TUR 11-01)



Organic Agriculture Research Priorities Workshop

Organic agriculture research in Turkey: How to join forces between scientists and the private sector for better quality

3 - 5 November 2013 Özdere / Izmir

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE RESEARCH PRIORITIES WORKSHOP DECLARATION

Between 3-5 November 2013, 13 researchers, 15 private sector professionals, 1 CB (Control Body) officer, 1 EIB (Aegean Exporters' Union) officer, 1 international speaker and 4 project officers came together in Özdere/Izmir and accepted the following declaration formed throughout the sessions they held.

We accept the following as basic principles:

1. Product-specific organic cultivation booklets must be prepared
2. Research results related to organic agricultural issues must be communicated to the private sector widely and effectively. Access to resources must be facilitated, a database that provides access to research sudies and that is similar to organic e-print but in Turkish, needs to be developed.
3. There needs to be rapidly increasing number of new researches carried out in line with the private sector's needs.
4. Solutions found as results of the researches must be presented in applicable forms for the project stakeholders to implement.
5. Government subsidies need to be increased for R&D activities and organic product processors.
6. Consulting units need to be obligatory by law and regulations, in organic agriculture projects.
7. Organic product based educational activities need to be organized with cooperation of research institutes, universities and respective NGOs on frequently encountered issue areas such as diseases, pests, caprification, harvest, drying, storage, processing and transporting.

8. It is mandatory for producers and technical staff to be trained. A multi-diciplinary education must be organized in vocational highcshools, bachelor's degree programs and master's degree programs.

We summarize weaknesses in organic agriculture as follows:
Sectoral size must be precisely reflected on the official records in order to obtain necessary recognition for research. Invariably, a continuous and valid registration system must be established to make demand estimations possible regarding trading developments. It is not possible to develop applicable projects without access to real data about our organic product export. An urgent action plan is necessary to bring MoFAL (Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock), Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Customs and Trade and Exporters' Unions together to put the organic production and foreign trade data into meaningful results.

1. Conservancy of local structure and misuse of production areas
2. Climate change
3. Residues (contamination and misuse)
4. Difficulties encountered in accessing alternative inputs: Absence of local, cheap, effective, easily accessible inputs (ie. phosphor source)
5. Deficiency and expensiveness of plant protection preparations
6. Inadequacy of organic fertilizers
7. Malpracticed cultural processes (wrong trimming, canopy management, over tilliage, wrong irrigation techniques)
8. Field-based distribution of subsidies, where it needs to be production-based
9. Market distress

Our priority research requests are the following:
1. Clear statements of the economic effects of organic agricultural practices
2. Soil fertility studies, identification of appropriate plant nutrition products (compost etc.), studies on composting
3. Studies on weed management
4. Advice to producers on alternative techniques, instead of pesticide use, in disease, pest control, products that are not commercial preparations and taking necessary initiatives for these to enter the technical regulations (sparkling water, sodium silicate, stinging nettle extract etc.)
5. Development of alternative plant nutrition and plant protection preparations
6. Studies towards spraying periods and effective timings for fighting diseases and pests (ie. by using pheromone traps etc.)
7. Studies on cover crops, mulching materials, trap crops, repellant (crops and preparations), green manure, increasing biodiversity
8. Identification of species that are suitable for organic agriculture (respond well to minimum input), resistant to diseases and pests and conformable with the climatic conditions of the region, or breeding studies of new species that will adapt to these conditions
9. Studies on harvesting and post-harvest processes
10. Development of safe and non-chemical solutions for prolongation of shelf life in the post-harvest phase
11. Studies on prevention and reduction of mycotoxin contamination in dry and fresh fruit and vegetables after harvest
12. Studies on alternative solutions against storage diseases and conservation in organic fruits

13. Studies on designing projects for and trading fresh fruits
14. Organic production of export-oriented, industrial production focused and traditional processed alternative products (jam, molasses, sucuk [Turkish pepperoni] etc.) and development of species that are suitable for this
15. Studies on how organic agriculture costs can be reduced
16. Studies on increasing the quality
17. R&D studies focusing on resolution of marketing related issues
18. Studies on product package, boxing and design

Necessities for research institutes and private sector to work more closely are identified as follows:

1. Meetings, technology platforms etc. must be organized where stakeholders (local and external markets) and researchers can get together.
2. Websites of MoFAL institutes may be taken as an example for cooperation of researcher and stakeholder, this subject needs to be developed further also for universities.
3. Private sector's needs need to be shared with the public.
4. Private sector must provide financial and informational contribution to research projects.
5. The role of NGOs need to be determined.
6. While solution oriented projects that have been prepared upon complaints from the producers, are being carried out, it is necessary that private sector's participation is also obtained as a stakeholder.
7. Necessary actions must be taken in order for the organic agricultural projects in the Agricultural Research Masterplan to be turned from low priority to high priority, having increasing number of organic agriculture researches must be a strategical goal.
8. An organic agriculture research institute needs to be opened and/or the number of organic agriculture group researchers needs to continue to be increased.
9. Support centers must be established for producers to get international competitive advantage and to realize R&D activities in organic agriculture, increase in the quality must be secured.
10. Funds that provide collaboration among private sector, university and research institutes must be increased, collaboration opportunities such as technical and infrastructure support must be provided.
11. Inducement prize contests must be organized in universities in order to foster R&D for new technologies and input needs.
12. Producers need to get organized (union, cooperative) to provide collaboration (find funds etc.) for solutions with research institutions for product specific issues.
13. It is necessary to learn about opinions and necessities of those who produce the products and communication with producers' bodies must be increased.
14. Periodical evaluation and information exchange meetings need to be held with participation of product/region based private sector, researchers, public institutions and NGOs.
15. Meetings need to be organized in order to evaluate and exchange information on municipality's drafts (ie. organic fertilizer draft) and get support from institutions such as universities.
16. Marketing capacity needs to be developed by supporting marketing channels and enterpreneurs must be supported on this matter.
17. Demonstration farms and farmers must be publicized, sectoral visits must be organized, domanstrative activities must be realized.

18. Platforms where experienced producers can pass on their experiences must be designed.
19. Guided projects (ie. managing value chain in organic dry figs), priority projects (ie. soil management in organic fig production) must be encouraged.

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